

August 16, 2022

TO: Interim Finance Committee

FROM: Marta Meana, Ph.D.

As a Member of the Grant a Gift Ackerman Center Steering Committee, I write to express my strong support of ARPA funds in the service of this incredible organization. As a former president of UNLV and a clinical psychologist by training, I have witnessed first-hand the tremendous need in our community for their services, as well as the steadfast dedication of their professionals and staff.

Of late, we have heard much about the mental health needs of our community and this is nowhere more evident or crucial than in our children. Our families should not have to leave town to get the care they need and most of them do not have the resources to do this. With a 5,000-person waitlist, we are doing a disservice to a large population of children and families who struggle with the complex challenge of autism and a number of other neuro-developmental disorders. The good news is that we have treatments that make an impact. The bad news is that too few families can access them.

You have the power to change that if you approve the ARPA funds to this purpose. The return on investment will be high as thousands of children will get the care they need to become well integrated into our community and have a chance at fulfilling the dreams they all have and from which we can all benefit.

Respectfully,

Marta Meana, Ph.D.

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Las Vegas, Nevada 89147