Dear Autism Community Member:

As we approach the end of the Autism Society of Minnesota’s 42nd year of service to the Minnesota autism community, we are incredibly inspired by your dedication to your families, clients and students; your countless hours of volunteering and giving; your thoughtful feedback; and your participation in our programming.

Many of you offered financial support for AuSM’s programs, and each dollar you contributed stayed in Minnesota to support local families and individuals across our state. Here are a few of the ways your support made an impact in 2013:

• **Information and Referral:** Our team fielded more than 2,600 inquiries in 2013, allowing connections with therapeutic programs, recreational resources, schools and special education, employment for adults with ASD, assistance with legal and medical issues, and our own AuSM offerings including Mental Health Services and support groups.

• **AuSM Camps:** 274 children and young adults had amazing summer camp experiences where they made friends and participated in activities that were tailored for their unique needs.

• **Steps of Hope:** More than 1,500 families and individuals touched by autism raised awareness about the state’s fastest growing disability and interacted with resources to make their lives a little better. $5,000 in grants raised through the walk were awarded to local educators and families for projects designed for individuals with autism.

• **18th Annual Minnesota Autism Conference:** Featuring keynote speaker Temple Grandin, PhD, this year’s conference was our biggest to date, with more than 1,800 participants attending breakout sessions on cutting-edge topics; learning about autism resources; and enjoying fun-filled Autism Community Day activities.

• **AuSM Advocacy:** News and alerts helped you stay informed about laws and public policies affecting people living with autism. AuSM also gave you a voice at the capitol and a connection to the Autism State Task Force, which helped expand autism coverage by Minnesota insurance providers and increased state funding for autism resources.

• **AuSM Social Skills:** Participants in AuSM’s education programs picked up paint brushes, got up-close-and-personal with exotic plants and animals at Como Zoo and Conservatory, took on a high ropes course, developed confidence through improv, and practiced job searching skills - all while learning social skills, making friends, and building self-esteem.

• **Autism Training:** AuSM led training for first responders, airport personnel, hair stylists and more in 2013. Answering a need for professionals who work with individuals with ASD, AuSM launched an ASD Certification course for direct service providers.

As 2013 comes to a close, please consider giving a tax-deductible donation to help continue the success of AuSM programs and services for individuals and families with autism in Minnesota. As a nonprofit organization, we rely on your generosity and support. Whether you contribute $10 or $10,000, your gift will help make a difference in the lives of many living with autism.

Make your donation via our secure website, www.ausm.org, by clicking on the Donate to AuSM button on the right side of your screen, or send your donation in the enclosed envelope to: 2380 Wycliff St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55114.

We wish you a wonder-filled holiday season that begins a positive 2014. And, thank you again for your support of the Autism Society of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

*Jonah Weinberg*

AuSM Executive Director