PROTECTING RIGHTS.
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES.
CHANGING LIVES.

The Revolutionary Work You Made Happen
Amanda was a 12th grade student who was severely depressed and shut down. She wouldn’t leave home and wasn’t attending school. The previous school year, Amanda had attempted to overdose on prescribed medications at school.

Her mother, as you can imagine, was concerned about placing too much pressure on Amanda for fear that she would feel overwhelmed and try to overdose again. But the school counselor insisted that Amanda “deserved” to experience all of the Senior activities and the graduation ceremony. She just wasn’t listening to Amanda or her mother. Amanda had special needs and she needed to be heard.

Amanda’s mother was able to find an advocate through COPAA’s online referral directory.

“We called for an IEP meeting. The parent was on board with the approach of inviting the school-based members to ‘convince’ us that their plan would work,” Missy, Amanda’s COPAA trained advocate explained. “For each of their very enthusiastic plans, we asked how it would work as she wouldn’t leave home.

When we reviewed her scheduled classes and compared them to the 2 credits she needed to graduate, the team began to shift their focus from Amanda ‘deserving’ to participate in all senior year activities to Amanda being afforded the dignity of self-advocacy and self-determination.”

*The most important thing the mother said to the team was, “I just want my child to be alive in June.”*
Amanda received her high school diploma. She is interested in volunteering as a first responder in her community. Once she experienced her decisions being respected by others, in this case the IEP Team, it empowered her to try new things.

“I’m convinced none of this would have happened if we hadn’t used the approach I learned at a COPAA conference session,” said Missy. “Hundreds of children in Maryland have benefitted, and continue to benefit, from what I learned at the COPAA conference.”

Because of your support and hard work, Amanda and many other children have a full life. They have the resources they need.

And they are thriving.
EVERY CHILD DESERVES A QUALITY EDUCATION

Every child deserves to be treated with dignity.

And yet, for thousands of children with disabilities and their families, our public schools are failing them.

Because of your kind and caring support, because of your hard work, we’re here, every single day to respond to the unique needs of students with disabilities.

You’ve provided support when families need an expert... resources to answer their questions... and training so parents can advocate for their children.

You’ve made us a leader in protecting the educational rights of students with disabilities and their families.

Not only that, you’ve helped protect the rights of students with disabilities in the courts... and won.

COPAA is everywhere the voices of students and families need to be heard.

You’re part of our story. It’s a big job you’ve done.

Thank you for your help. Thank you for you compassion. It means the world to so many families.

Denise Stile Marshall, M.S.  
Chief Executive Officer  

Maureen van Stone, Esq.  
Chair of the COPAA Board
OUR AMAZING MEMBERS

It can be difficult raising a child with a disability. Whether the child has a learning disability, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorder, chronic disease, physical disability, or any one (or more) of the thirteen recognized disabilities under federal law, students with disabilities and their families face day to day obstacles that families with typical children do not.

In addition to the financial challenges families often face, there are doctor and therapy appointments, stressors on time, mental and emotional fatigue, guilt of not paying enough attention to their typically developing children, and so much more.

And so when a public school fails... the place where every child should be safe, cared for, and educated... it can all seem insurmountable.

Schools fail our children every time a student is placed in “seclusion rooms;” restrained by adults several times a day, a week, a month; sent home early; removed from the general school population (i.e., sent out of the classroom, suspended, expelled, arrested); or, is not given the proper assistance, support, and specialized instruction needed to excel.

Where do families turn for help?
Thanks to you, they turn to COPAA.

With members in every state and several territories, COPAA is uniquely positioned to assist in obtaining the equal opportunity for education students deserve and are entitled to under federal and state law.
As of February 20, 2020, COPAA membership is 2613 members.

New and Lapsed Members – January to February 20, 2020

New Members Approved 228
Memberships Lapsed 295

Scholarships

In 2020, we’ve offered 8 membership scholarships of which 6 have been accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Offered</th>
<th>Accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Racial Demographics

As a result of strategic efforts the racial profile of COPAA continues to diversify. The following is the breakdown by race.

7% Black/African American
69% Caucasian
3% All other

7% Spanish/Hispanic /Latino
6% Multiracial
6% Declined to answer
OUR GENEROUS DONORS

With your support, and the revolutionary work of COPAA, kids can get the education they’ve been promised in the safe environment they deserve. Your support is a testament to how strongly you believe that every child is precious, every child deserves a chance. Thank you!

**Vanguard $1,000+**
- Make It Better Foundation
- Jesse Cutler
- Barbara D. Merino Mayper
- Laura M. Gunn
- Jonathan Zimrin

**Impacter $500-999**
- Matthew Cohen
- Michele Kule-Korgood
- Christina Keller
- Snow Benedict Parrott
- Catherine Merino Reisman

**Defender $200-499**
- Selene Almazan
- Robert Berlow
- Andrew Feinstein
- Craig Goodmark
- Mark L. Gross
- Kimberly Jackson
- Jennifer D. Laviano
- Ellen Saideman

**Activist $100 -199**
- Raymond J. Ahearn
- Robert K. Crabtree

Alicia Czerwinski
M. Fuller
Sanjiv Gray
David Jefferson
Monika Jones
Keri Kornelson
Leslie Seid Margolis
Alice K. Nelson
Susan Ostrander
Kylie Phillips
Ellen M. Saideman
Andrea Sollitto
Lori Scott
Sharon Tropf
Torin Togut
Maureen L. van Stone
Jenny Millsap Crutchlow
Cynthia Daniels-Hall
Krista Dean
Kelly Duenckel
Marc Duisenberg
Mandy Favaloro
Michai Freeman
Shane Fulton
Wafaa Gomaa
Michael Gilberg
Tara Colleen Labonte
Honey J. Low
Denise Marshall
Judith New
Therese Ricks
Iuliana Rivers Latranae
Rouse Nanette Saturn
Suzanne Schneider
Sandra Schiffli-Salerno
Russell A. Sibley
Denise Smith
Joyce Isabel Steingass
Rick and Kathy Stile
Naomi Tarpley
Aimee Vance
Carolina Watts
Jessica Weiss
Loretta Zayas-Revai

In 2019-2020 COPAA hired a fundraising expert and increased donations by 26%.
THE WORK YOU SUPPORT

COPAA Conference and Training

Throughout each year, COPAA provides opportunities for hundreds of beginner advocates and attorneys as well as seasoned professionals to hone their skills through on-line training courses and webinars. COPAA’s Special Education Advocate Training course and our New Attorney Training are nationally recognized trainings and fill to capacity every time. In the last year we trained over 1,100 people.

In March of each year, COPAA brings together the country’s leading legal experts and COPAA veterans to provide the opportunity for parents, attorneys, related professionals, students, and advocates to learn effective strategies. Having access to information and approaches to support each student through the spirit and letter of the law leads to students being as independent, self-sufficient, and self-advocating as possible, enforcing their civil right to equal opportunity.

Thank you to our 31 sponsors and many exhibitors in 2020 – we are so thankful for your partnership!

“COPAA is not a conference for theorists to discuss what should be, but for the warriors who will fight battles in the tranches and the generals who will map strategy, knowing what it is and how to do it.”

~Wrightslaw, THE SPECIAL ED ADVOCATE

Our thanks to the many volunteer guest speakers who participate each year in our Conference, Webinar, SEAT and New Attorney online training.
In 2018 COPAA ventured into litigation and to date has filed 4 lawsuits defending the rights of students with disabilities. In the past year we received positive results for students and families in two of the suits. Two are still pending.

**COPAA v. Devos, Collet**, Civil No. 18-CV-01636-TSC. COPAA prevailed on March 7, 2019 and the Department was required to comply with the disproportionality regulations as promulgated and set to go into effect on July 1, 2018. We are represented by Seth Galanter at National Center for Youth Law (NCYL) and JC Andre at Sidley. Seth and JC were honored for distinguished service on March 7th at the COPAA conference.

**NFB, NAACA, COPAA v. US DOE, DeVos, Jackson** Case number: 1:18 CV 01568 TDC. This matter was settled on February 6, 2020. The settlement agreement stipulates that without the need for further litigation, and without any admission of liability, the OCR has agreed to [in summary]:

- Resolve website accessibility complaints and reissue letters of findings to complainants;
- Offer the opportunity to appeal to complainants whose complaints were dismissed; and,
- Resolve a certain number of [relevant] open investigations in accordance with the law.

Our lead attorney, Eve Hill of Brown, Goldstein, Levy (Baltimore) was honored for distinguished service on March 7th at the COPAA Conference.

**Q.T., A.O., D.O., C.T., COPAA, ASAN and Communication First**, v. Fairfax County School Board, Dr. Scott Braband and Teresa Johnson Case Number 1:19-CV-1285. Virginia case challenging abuse of restraint and seclusion. The lawsuit was filed on 10/08/19. COPAA is represented by Brown, Goldstein and Levy.

**COPAA and unnamed Plaintiffs v. DOE of Oregon, Brown (Governor of Oregon) and Gill (Director of Oregon/Superintendent)** This case is about illegally subjecting students with disabilities to a shortened school day. Oregon Department of Education filed a motion to dismiss. Oral arguments were heard in Oregon in July 2019.
Amicus Briefs
Amicus briefs are legal documents filed in appellate court cases by non-litigants with a strong interest in the subject matter. The briefs advise the court of relevant, additional information or arguments that the court might wish to consider.

COPAA is a leader in shaping the body of case law protecting and enforcing the rights of students with disabilities and their families. Our Amicus Committee provides technical assistance to members and files briefs in cases of national significance. The issues for amicus are issues affecting all children with disabilities and topics of the briefs are varied.

In the past year COPAA filed 13 briefs.

Attorney and Advocate Directory
When parents of students with disabilities need help protecting their children’s rights, COPAA is the place they can turn. With a directory of thousands of COPAA member attorneys and advocates from all over the US, families can locate a skilled professional in their area to fight for their children’s rights.

COPAA Committees
In 1998, COPAA started as a small membership and training organization for attorneys and advocates serving the needs of families; a place where parents could find the help they needed to fight for the rights of their children. Today we are a nationally recognized force – a unique organization that harnesses the strength and determination of families (over 90% of our members, including professionals, are family members), attorneys, advocates, related professionals, and students. The COPAA Board designates the following committees to advance our mission and provide peer-to-peer support:


Much of our work is done by over 300+ volunteers. We thank you for your service to COPAA!
WHAT WE MUST DO... WITH YOUR HELP

Over a span of 13 – 16 years... that is the time each child with a disability will spend in school. That’s not a lot of time to get it right. Without proper support and education, our children will reap the consequences... good or bad... into adulthood.

And so will we.

Thanks to you, COPAA has shaped educational policies that protect students with disabilities. Thousands of children and families have benefited from our work. But we MUST do more, and we must do it NOW because there are still kids and families that need us.
KIDS ARE COUNTING ON YOU.
OUR FUTURE IS AT STAKE

This is our plan.

- Strengthen and grow resources COPAA provides to attorneys, advocates, related professionals and parents of students with disabilities.

- Increase educator and stakeholder capacity to serve students with disabilities well.

- Expand COPAA’s ability to protect rights and create systemic change through impact litigation.

- Create a think-tank to determine how provision of education and related services and the legal rights that support should change or improve to produce better outcomes for students with disabilities.
# FINANCIALS

December 31, 2019 and 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$261,897</td>
<td>$401,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable, net</td>
<td>3,082</td>
<td>3,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>32,414</td>
<td>35,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
<td>297,393</td>
<td>440,818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>424,668</td>
<td>164,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer equipment</td>
<td>3,159</td>
<td>2,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>14,839</td>
<td>14,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total net property and equipment</strong></td>
<td>17,998</td>
<td>17,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less accumulated depreciation and amortization</td>
<td>17,065</td>
<td>16,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$722,994</td>
<td>$606,207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Liabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>$33,760</td>
<td>$17,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued expenses</td>
<td>13,875</td>
<td>18,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>368,714</td>
<td>296,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current liabilities</strong></td>
<td>416,349</td>
<td>332,945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Net Assets

Without donor restrictions:

Undesignated          | 196,708 | 160,898 |
Board designated      | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| **Total net assets** | 296,708 | 260,898 |

With donor restrictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,937</td>
<td>12,364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total net assets</strong></td>
<td>306,645</td>
<td>273,262</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$722,994</td>
<td>$606,207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support and Revenue</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donated services</td>
<td>$ 722,058</td>
<td>$ 672,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference fees, net of refunds of $595 in 2019 and $50 in 2018</td>
<td>$ 411,525</td>
<td>$ 399,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership dues</td>
<td>$ 225,215</td>
<td>$ 205,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinar training, net of refunds of $4,077 in 2019 and $3,603 in 2018</td>
<td>$ 201,967</td>
<td>$ 141,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contracts</td>
<td>$ 3,350</td>
<td>$ 55,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$ 31,394</td>
<td>$ 23,561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and dividends</td>
<td>$ 7,708</td>
<td>$ 6,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments</td>
<td>$ 29,571</td>
<td>(14,614)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$ 9,598</td>
<td>$ 7,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets Released from Restriction</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,642,386</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,498,160</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total unrestricted support and revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,652,386</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,501,327</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program services</td>
<td>$ 1,491,083</td>
<td>$ 1,404,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and general</td>
<td>$ 106,990</td>
<td>$ 82,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$ 18,503</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,616,576</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,486,698</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributions</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets Released from Restriction</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,573</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,955</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction of restriction</strong></td>
<td><strong>(10,000)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(3,167)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change in net assets with donor restrictions</strong></td>
<td><strong>(2,427)</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,788</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


COPAA Board of Directors 2019-2020

Missy Alexander (MD)
Alexis Casillas, Esq.(CA)
Matthew Cohen, Esq. (IL)
Eileen Crumm (CA)
Jesse Cutler, Esq., Secretary (NY)
Cynthia Daniels-Hall (NC)
Mandy Favaloro, Esq. Vice Chair, (CA)
Andrew Feinstein, Esq. (CT)
Michael Gilberg, Esq. (NY)
Craig Goodmark, Esq. (GA)
Kimberly Griffie Jackson, J.D. (FL)

David Jefferson, Treasurer (AZ)
Monika Jones, J.D. (CA)
Michele Kule Korgood, Esq. (NY)
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Shenikwa Medlock (TX)
Catherine Merino Reisman, Esq. (NJ)
Ellen Saideman, Esq. (RI)
Denise Smith (TX)

Maureen van Stone, Esq., Chair (MD)
Carolina Watts, J.D. (CA)
Jonathan Zimring, Esq. (GA)

COPAA Team

Denise Stile Marshall – Chief Executive Officer
Selene Almazan – Legal Director
Marcie Hipple - Director of Membership and Meetings
Jessica Salonus – Consulting Attorney
Ilana Lopez -Education Coordinator
Jamie Anderson - Membership Assistant

2019/2020 SEAT Lead Instructors and TA’s
Gretchen Adams, Missy Alexander, Lorraine Bees, Eileen Crumm, Cynthia Daniels-Hall, Courtney Hansen, David Jefferson, Mark Kamleiter, Claudia Roberts, Paula Senigar, Karsan Witcher, Andres Ybarra

2019/2020 New Attorney Online Lead Instructor
Selene Almazan