

BEST BUDDIES



YLC

YOUNG LEADERS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORT

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

The following report will discuss the successes and shortfalls of this past year for Best Buddies International: Young Leaders Council. This past year provided the current leadership team an opportunity to independently organize and run the council of 24 international members.

LEADERSHIP TEAM (2022 - 2024):



Garrett Tomasek
Texas, USA



Margo Meley
Connecticut, USA



Maddie Quigley
Missouri, USA



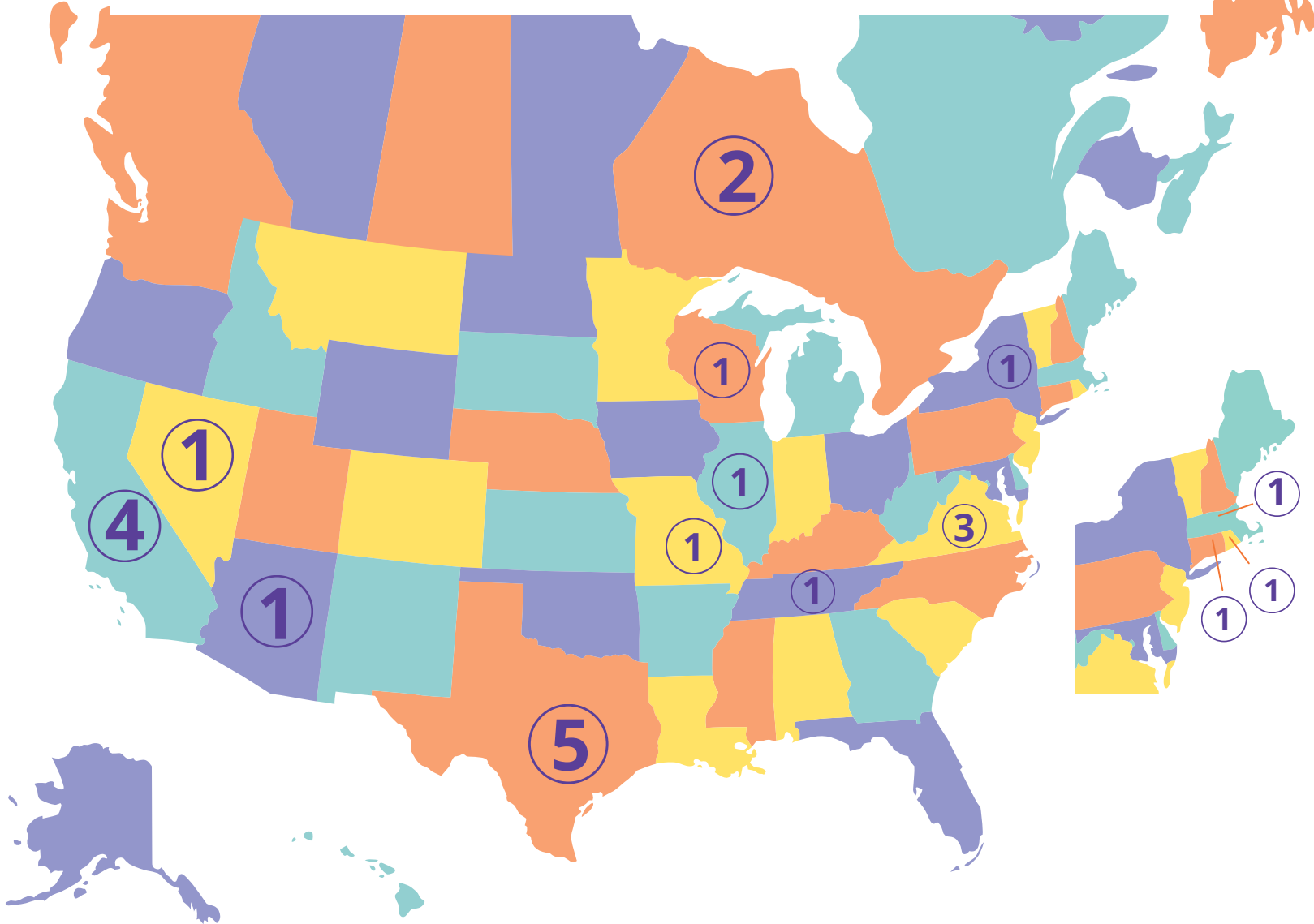
Sofie Dalton
Virginia/D.C., USA



(Left to Right)

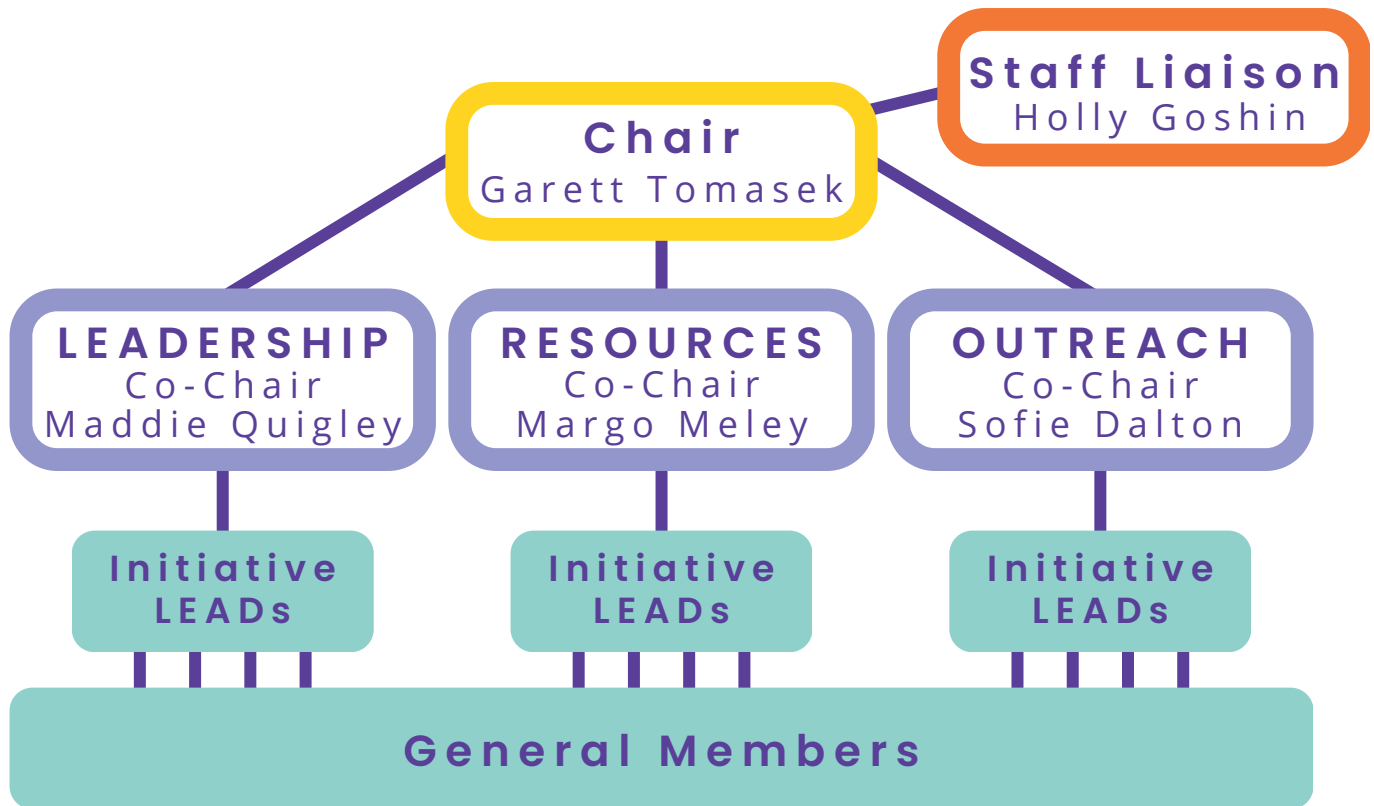
Garrett Tomasek, Maddie Quigley, Margo Meley and Sofie Dalton

YOUNG LEADERS COUNCIL



Mission Statement: The Young Leaders Council (YLC) is a diverse group of leaders of all abilities who bridge the gap between the participant perspective and staff experience for Best Buddies International initiatives. Individuals conceptualize, design, and execute unique initiatives that apply to all aspects of the Best Buddies ecosystem: Friendship, Leadership, Jobs, and Inclusive Living. The YLC is dedicated to leaders' education, engagement, and empowerment in Best Buddies through peer-to-peer support and innovation.

COUNCIL STRUCTURE



ROLE DESCRIPTION:

Staff Liaison: Serves as the bridge between the Young Leaders Council (YLC) and Best Buddies International (BBI) Headquarters to work collaboratively on BBI-related initiatives.

Chair: As the participant representative on the Best Buddies International Board of Directors, the chair of the council is responsible for providing support to co-chairs and members relaying their participant driven ideas to headquarters.

Co-Chair: Each co-chair leads a unique cohort; leadership, resources, and outreach. Each cohort has a set of initiatives that are designed to further develop Best Buddies International programs.

Initiative Leads: Tasked with keeping the initiative on track during meetings and advocating to chairs for any support the initiative needs throughout the term. This leadership role provides members the opportunity to lead groups between 2-5 individuals.

Member: Each member will work on an initiative(s) based on their personal strengths and passions. The placement of member assignments will be determined by the YLC Chair, Co-Chairs, and the Staff Liaison. The initiatives and their respective purposes are to be determined and defined by the members of the YLC.

INITIATIVE LEADS

In previous years, there was no designated leader for each initiative other than the Co-Chair overseeing each cohort. In an attempt to increase productivity and expand leadership opportunities on the council, the chairs decided to have Leads guide the progression of the group.



MATIAS GONZALEZ
Arizona, USA
Student Advisory Board



MICHELLE RAITMAN
Ontario, Canada
Employment



ZACH SIEGEL
Texas, USA
Fundraising



MARINA ROUSE
Massachusetts, USA
Social Media



DANIELLE TRAN
California, USA
Mental Health & Wellness



SOFIE DALTON
Virginia/D.C., USA
YouTube



VANESSA OCANA
California, USA
Accessibility



NATHAN MOLDAVSKY
Wisconsin, USA
YLC Blogs



ZANE LANDIN
Virginia/D.C., USA
BBI DEI Committee x YLC

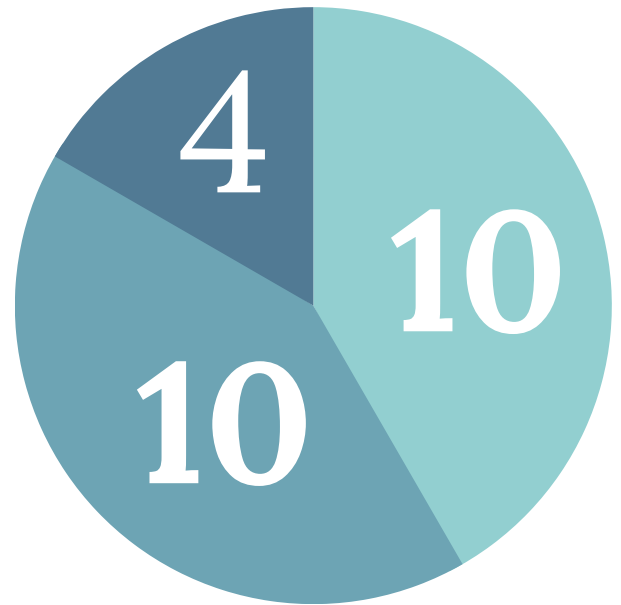
COUNCIL IN NUMBERS

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

Leadership (Chairs)

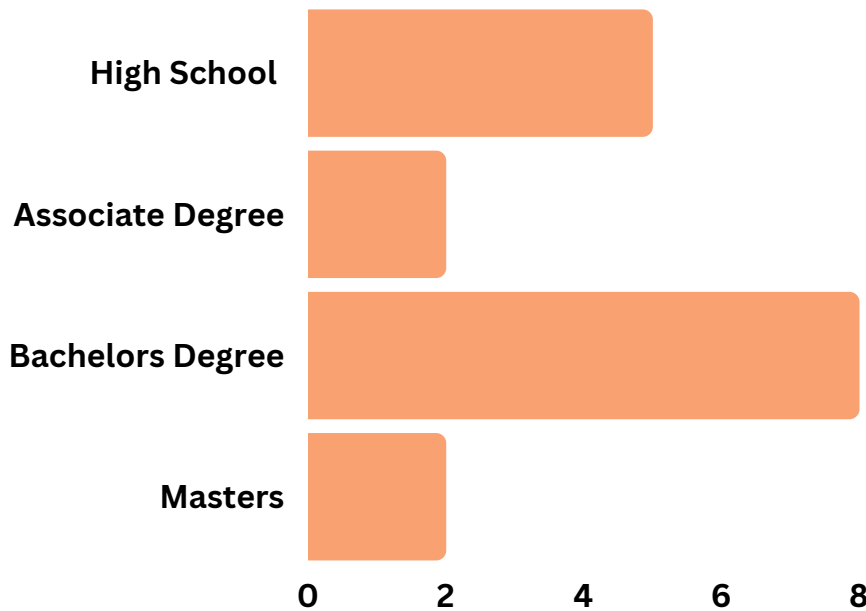
2nd Year Members

1st Year Members



LEVEL OF EDUCATION

*CURRENT MEMBERS ONLY



List of Degrees: Communication, Computer Science & Applications, Cybersecurity, Economics, English - Ancient Greek & Roman Studies, Engineering, Finance, Marriage & Family Therapy, Nursing & Global Health, Psychology & International Development, Special Education



MEMBERS' CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

Information Desk Assistant, Job Coach, Product Specialist (Business Analyst), Customer Clerk, Academic Tutor Guide, Event Planner, Resident Advisor, Cybersecurity Awareness & Culture Specialist, Internal Communications Specialist, Teaching Assistant (2), Next Gen Advisor, Gym Attendant, Activity Assistant, Salesforce Administrator, Instructor Therapist, Office Assistant

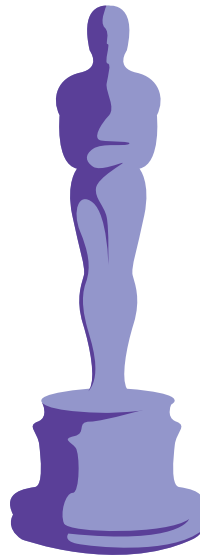
COUNCIL IN NUMBERS

\$41,787



AMOUNT RAISED
FOR BEST BUDDIES

*CURRENT MEMBERS ONLY, FOR FRIENDSHIP WALK
AND CHAMPION OF THE YEAR GALAS (2022 ONLY)



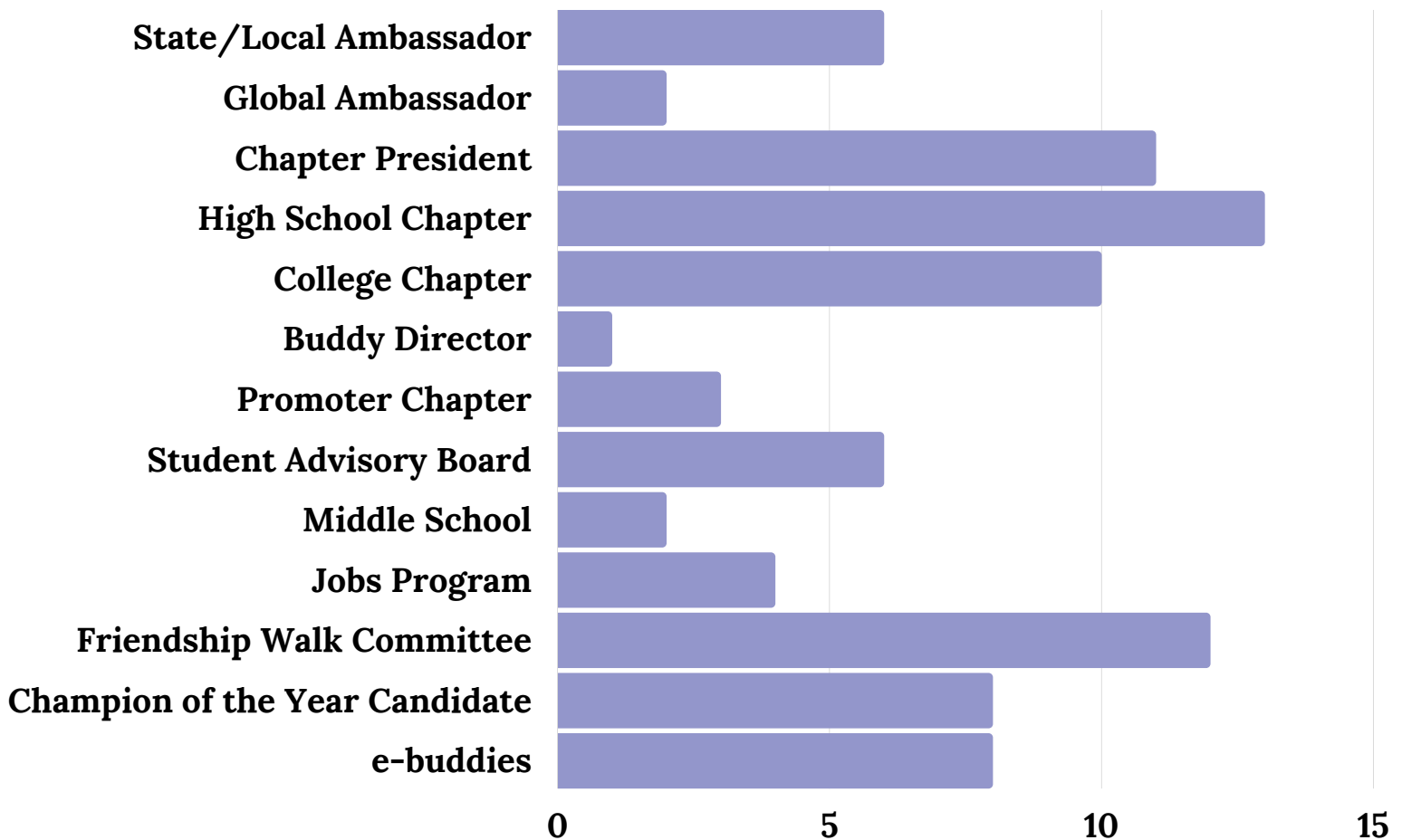
AWARDS EARNED BY MEMBERS

*CURRENT MEMBERS ONLY, SINCE
THEY HAVE BEEN WITH BEST BUDDIES

Chapter President of the
Year (3), Most Outstanding
Chapter (3), Top 5 Friendship
Walk Chapters (4), Employee
of the Year, Champion of
Inclusion (2), Spirit of
Courage Award

BEST BUDDIES INVOLVEMENT

*CURRENT MEMBERS ONLY, SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN WITH BEST BUDDIES



REPORT TAKEAWAYS

- Changed the time period Best Buddies International participants can apply for the YLC to July - August allowing the YLC to better aligned with the traditional academic calendar.
- The Chairs conducted a 2-month Mid-Term Check-In, scheduling 1x1 meetings with each member to gain insight on where support was needed.
- 100% completion of all 8 YLC initiatives.
- The council made Bylaw improvements to further support the special interests of the YLC.
- YLC had one of its highest BBLC involvements in 23 different states and 20 different leading/organizing roles.
- The YLC established an avenue for accepting funding and raised \$3,600.
- The YLC is searching for the next set of Chair leadership which will be announced in Spring 2023.

- There are 6 states with at least one Student Advisory Board (SAB) and 4 states have pledged to start an SAB in Fall 2023.
- The Mental Health initiative produced several 'Mental Health Corner' posts across YLC Blogs, social media and on our newsletter.
- The Mental Health and Employment initiatives worked on a collaborative project producing the following resources, 'A How-to guide on approaching mental health with employers' and 'What accommodations can I request from my employer?'
- The YLC Blogs initiative has made 80+ posts to date.
- The Accessibility initiative presented an 'Event Accessibility Proposal: Friendship Walk' with the goal to increase natural incentives for all states to adopt more universal accessible event practices.
- The Accessibility initiative created a resource graphic for improving accessibility on social media.
- The YLC has partnered with the Best Buddies International DEI committee to work collectively on an accessibility-related project to be presented at BBLC 2023.

YLC PROJECTIONS FOR 2024

1. Increase the YLC application pool by 53 - 70% (130 - 167) with hopes of increasing geographical and identity diversity among YLC members.
2. Increase international geographical diversity among YLC members by 10% (2 -3 members).
3. Increase fundraising revenue for the YLC by 50%.
4. Maintain advocacy for improved universal accessible policies in Best Buddies.
5. Improve security and efficiency on the YLC database which houses resource development, currently utilizing free platforms with Google.
6. Chairs strategically increase support to members resulting in improved Mid-Term Check-In results with a higher number of 'Exceeds Expectations' from Chairs for both individual members and initiatives.
7. Increase output per initiative by finalizing more sustainable goals at the beginning of the term that can be achieved within the designated timeline.
8. Improve full-term retention rates by taking a greater evaluation of each submitted application assuring a goal of having 95% of YLC members achieve full-term completion.
9. Further, develop guidelines to improve the branding of the YLC on social media and exterior-facing media.
10. Strengthen relations between the YLC and staff (HQ & State) by increasing the opportunities staff are able to interact with the members of the YLC.

COUNCIL IMPROVEMENTS

MID-TERM CHECK-IN:

The YLC conducted a council-wide check-in with each member over a two-month period. This process provided the YLC Chairs with the opportunity to evaluate the support status for each individual and initiative on the council. To learn more about the analytics and results, read, [Mid-Term Check-In](#).

COUNCIL APPLICATION:

In years past, the YLC has conducted the general member application cycle from February - March, with each term starting in April. In an effort to align with the academic calendar and to increase application submissions, we are moving the application to July - August. A formal application report will be released in the Fall of 2023.

INITIATIVE REPORTS:

In an effort to increase accountability and productivity, the Chairs implemented a new component to the structure of our initiative construction: Initiative Reports. The initiative timelines began in April 2022, projecting completion by February 2023. Once the initiative is finalized, the members of the initiative will be required to conduct a presentation report to each of their state staff and any Best Buddies International (headquarters) affiliated staff. The reports will include information such as the steps taken, successes, shortfalls, any data collected, and any resources created. To learn more about the successes and challenges of this new implementation, read, [Initiative Reports](#).

COUNCIL HUB:

Over the past two years, the council has internally constructed a YLC database housing all meeting minutes, attendance, progression trackers, internal files, forms, and resources. Before this online platform, all YLC documents were individually shared with each person. The new platform has improved efficiency, allowing each member to quickly integrate themselves into the working dynamics of their colleagues. Beginning Spring 2023, the YLC platform will gain a new look and location!

COUNCIL IMPROVEMENTS

BYLAW LANGUAGE CHANGES:

Throughout the year, the leadership team has made a significant effort to update the Young Leaders Council Bylaws, as it is a living document that dictates the direction of the vibrant council. Since April 2023, the YLC has made over 60 changes to word choices and added two new sections. The improvements to the document will further propel future leaders and members of the YLC. For any changes to be finalized, all members must cast a vote, and there must be a 2/3 majority. To learn more about the changes implemented, please read, [Bylaw Language Changes](#).

BEST BUDDIES EMAILS:

At the beginning of the 2021-2022 term, the YLC gained Best Buddies domain emails for each member. This tremendously improved communication between staff members and members of the YLC. It also allowed the YLC to generate a streamlined shared calendar with all members.

CHAIR SELECTION 2023

The Chairs have a significant influence on the dynamics that face Best Buddies International, and due to this impact, it is essential that we take a holistic review of each applicant. The 2023 Chair selection process will consist of a paper application, two interviews, and an election by the members of the YLC. Interview one will consist of the current YLC leadership team, the applicant, and the YLC staff liaison. Interview two will be a panel interview of current Best Buddies staff, at least 1 BBI (HQ) staff, 1 state staff, and 1 current YLC Chair. All steps weigh equally, and each will be considered when selecting the next Chair-Elects. The Chair-Elects official term will be 2024 - 2026. The Chair-Elects will begin shadowing their assigned roles in 2023 and lead the Young Leaders Council following the 2023 general council application cycle. The current Chairs (2022-2024 term) will serve as support to the Chair-Elects and will work on initiatives to further expand the influence of the YLC. The selection process began in February 2023, with finalized results released Thursday, May 11, 2023. The changes made to the selection process are reflected in the updated version of the YLC bylaws.

COUNCIL IMPROVEMENTS

YLC DONATIONS:

In February 2022, the YLC began accepting direct monetary donations to be used by the members of the council to support our special interests of further pushing the mission of the organization. Due to this establishment, the council generated its first 'fundraising' initiative with the initiative Lead being Zachary Siegel. To learn more on the steps taken and successes of this initiative please read, '[Initiative Report: Fundraising](#)'.

BEST BUDDIES INTERNATIONAL - YOUNG LEADERS COUNCIL FUNDRAISING BUDGET (2022)

Revenue	First QTR (2022)	Second QTR (2022)	Third QTR (2022)	Fourth QTR (2022)	Total
Individuals	45	545	15	0	605
Groups		3000			
Total Revenue					\$3,605
Expenses	First QTR (2022)	Second QTR (2022)	Third QTR (2022)	Fourth QTR (2022)	Total
Apparel		826			826
Total Expenses					\$826
CURRENT FUNDING BALANCE					<u>\$2,779</u>

BYLAW LANGUAGE CHANGES

The following are language changes proposed and voted to be implemented by at least 2/3 of the current YLC members. Highlighted below are the changes made. To learn more about our updated version, read [YLC ByLaws](#). We began making slight changes to reflect a greater inclusive language document, such as 'his/her' to the pronoun of 'their' and 'student' to 'participant.'

Article II: Membership

Section I: Members

"Once a person has served on the YLC, they cannot reapply to the Young Leaders Council (YLC). This is also true to the following situations if an applicant is accepted and accepts the offer but does not complete their term fully; if an applicant applies and accepts their offer but does not complete onboarding expectations; if a member is terminated or exits their term early voluntarily." Prior to this clarification, there was a broad interpretation of term limits.

Article III: Member Duties

Section III: Code of Conduct

"Members are to respect communication boundaries and uphold online professionalism. Each person is responsible for their own actions. Members are expected to complete all council tasks (initiative, Chairs, etc.) by the assigned due date. All YLC members are expected to hold a sense of professionalism whenever representing Best Buddies International and the Young Leaders Council (YLC)." There was no prior code of conduct.

ARTICLE VI: Amendments

Section I: Amendment Process

The language was changed to "Bylaws amendment sessions can be held at each leadership conference, and the Chair can call for special sessions to amend the Bylaws at any time throughout the term." Previously, amendment sessions could only be held during the annual leadership conference. This limited the capabilities of the current council.

MID-TERM CHECK-IN

The YLC leadership's greatest undertaking since the start of the term, April 2022, was the Mid-term Check-In. For this project, we conducted an internal audit of productivity, relationship dynamics, and overall performance of the members of the council. This was a 360 evaluation; the chairs evaluated each member and each initiative while each member evaluated the chairs, themselves, and the initiative's performance. We wanted to quantify the product-to-support ratio asking questions like: Do members have what they need to be successful in reaching their goals, both short and long-term? Do members feel and have the support of the chairs? Once each member and Chair completed their designated evaluations, each member scheduled a 1x1 meeting with their assigned Chair to discuss the results of the member's individualized performance.

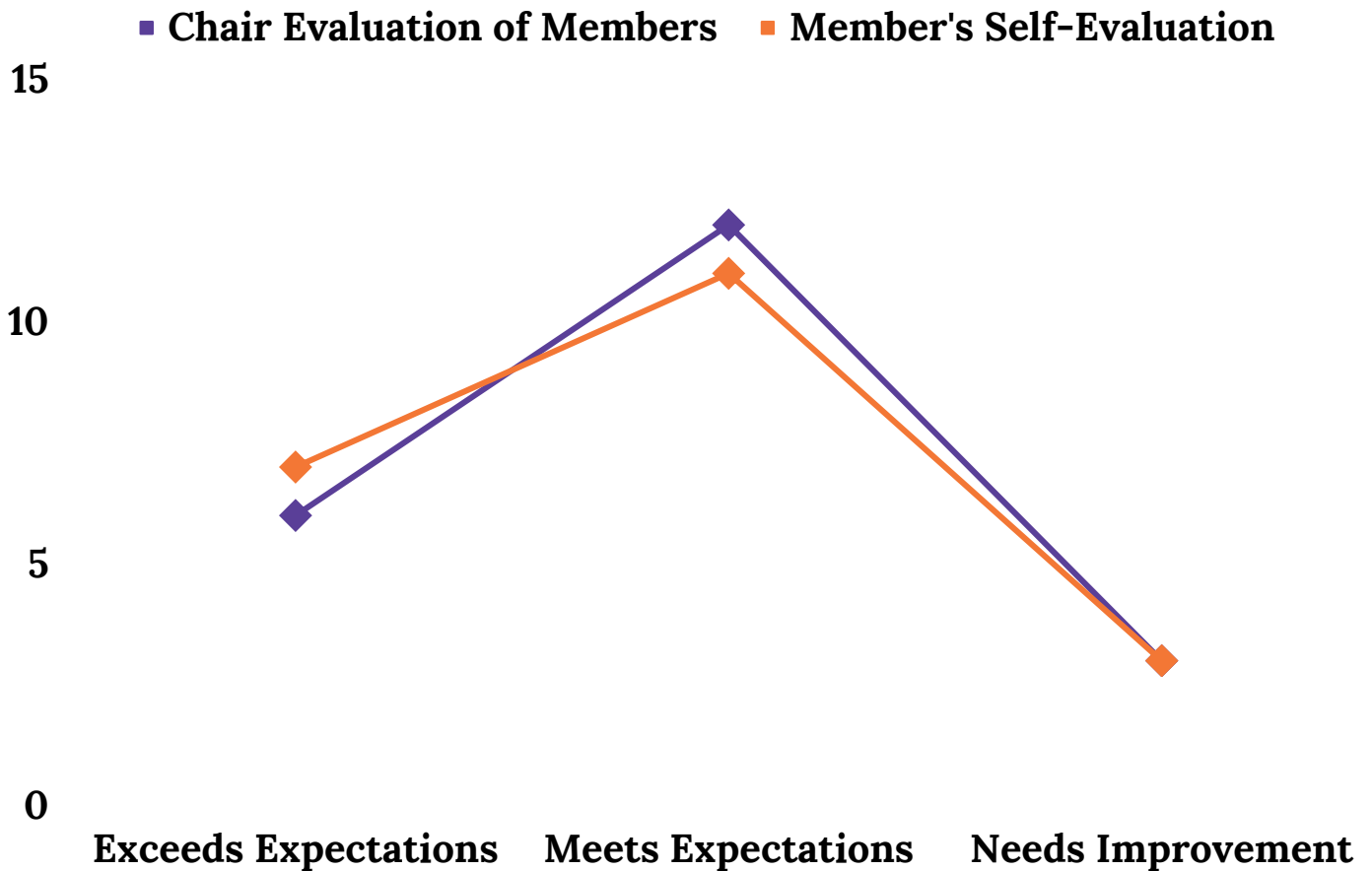
Time period: October - November

Each section (self check-In, Initiative check-in, and Chair evaluation) followed the same criteria:

- **Communication and Interpersonal Skills** - *able to respond in a timely manner and work productively within a team*
- **Time Management** - *ability to prioritize YLC responsibilities and manage workload*
- **Critical Thinking** - *ability to ask questions on tasks assigned and apply previous knowledge learned to the current situation*
- **Initiative** - *ability to work independently and willingness to take on more challenging tasks*
- **Receptiveness** - *ability to receive and adapt to feedback*
- **Technical Proficiency** - *ability to complete tasks by due dates*
- **Overall Performance**

For each criterion, the individual was tasked with ranking the item with one of the following: Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Needs Improvement. Providing a limited range of three options guided each evaluator to be precise in their decisions. It provided the opportunity for each person on the council time to reflect on their goals and impact since the start of the term. It also proved to be a successful experiment for the Chairs to gain members' perspectives of the council.

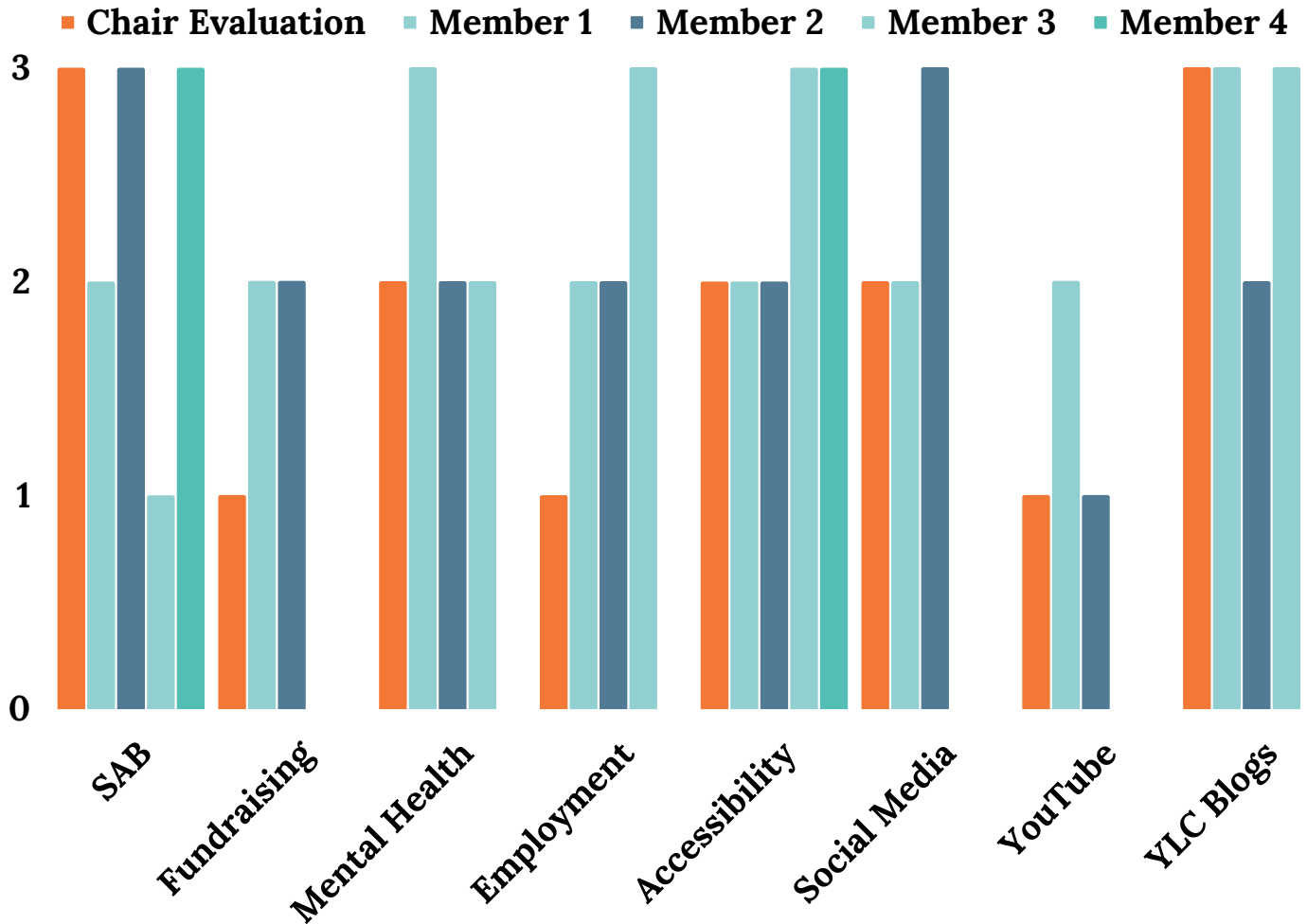
MID-TERM CHECK-IN RESULTS



This line graph is an illustration of a comparison of how each member self-evaluated their performance since April 2022 and how the Chairs evaluated their performance. The solid purple line shows that the Chairs identified six individuals who achieved 'exceeds expectations', twelve members selected as 'meets expectations', and three individuals who 'needs improvement'. As a leadership team, we believe this is an overall successful outcome, with 85.7% of members categorized as 'meets expectations' or higher. It should be noted that among the individuals who self-evaluated themselves as 'needs improvement', only one matched with the Chair evaluation. Specifically, two individuals who were evaluated as 'needs improvement' by the Chairs self-evaluated themselves as 'meets expectations' and 'exceeds expectations'. These two examples are perfect reasons for this exercise as it allows both parties, the member and leadership, to reflect on goals, individual expectations, and council expectations.

MID-TERM CHECK-IN RESULTS

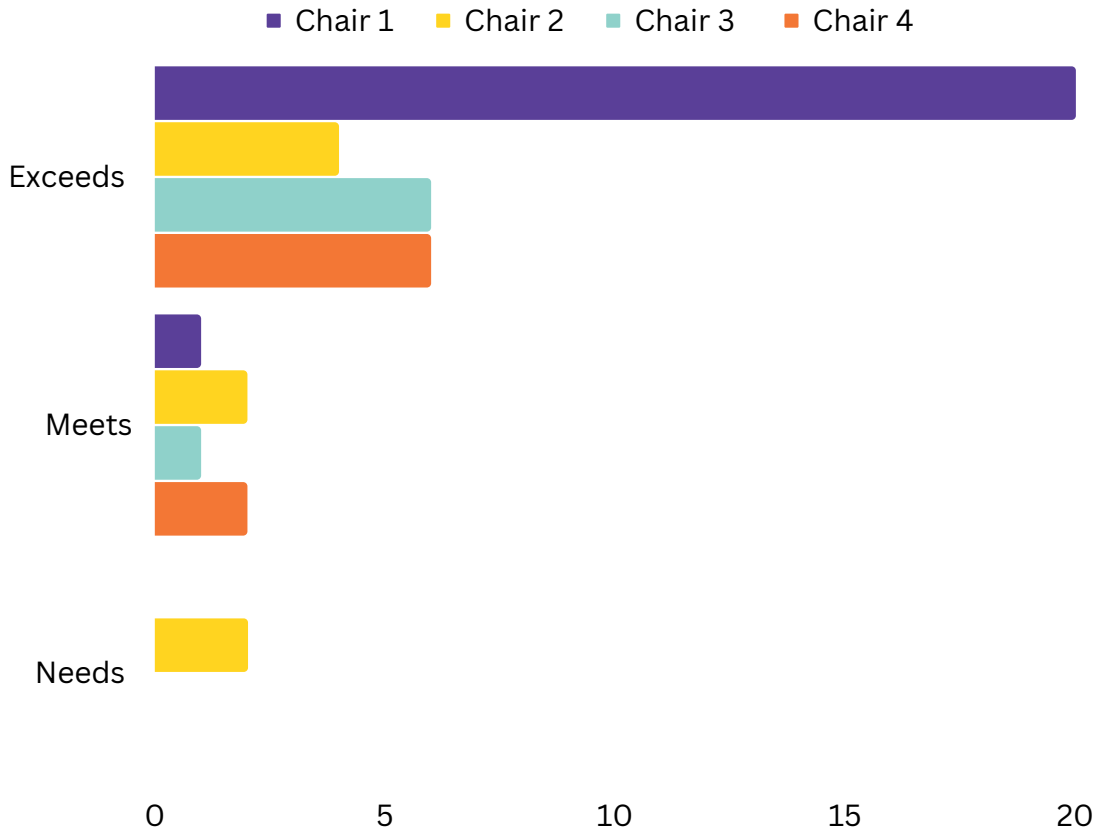
THE EVALUATION OF EACH INITIATIVE



This bar chart illustrates the evaluation of each member to their initiative and the Chairs overall score. The orange bar represents the Chair's overall evaluation of the initiative. Each initiative has a range of 2-4 members who work collectively. It should be noted that members 1, 2, 3, and 4 are not the same individuals for each initiative. For precision in presenting the data, a bar chart was chosen; for this, only numerical identifiers could be used when constructing the diagram. The numerical numbers represent the following, 1 means "Needs Improvement", 2 means "Meets Expectations" and 3 means "Exceeds Expectations." From the Chair's perspective, the Student Advisory Board (SAB) and the YLC Blogs are the highest achievers. If one is looking from an average member's viewpoint, the SAB, Accessibility, Social Media, and YLC Blogs are amongst the highest earners of 'Exceeds Expectations'. We note the DEI Committee and Council Breakdown initiatives are not featured on this graph due to being formed after the Mid-Term Check-In concluded.

MID-TERM CHECK-IN RESULTS

MEMBER'S EVALUATION OF EACH CHAIR



Chair 1 received a higher number of entries compared to Chair 2, Chair 3 and Chair 4 because all members were required to evaluate Chair 1 and an estimated 6-9 members were required to evaluate their respective Co-Chair (Chair 2, Chair 3 and Chair 4).

Definitions the Chairs provided the council when using the spectrum of "Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, and Needs Improvement".

Exceeds Expectations: One not only performs their duties well; they go above and beyond the role expectations to further innovate their capabilities.

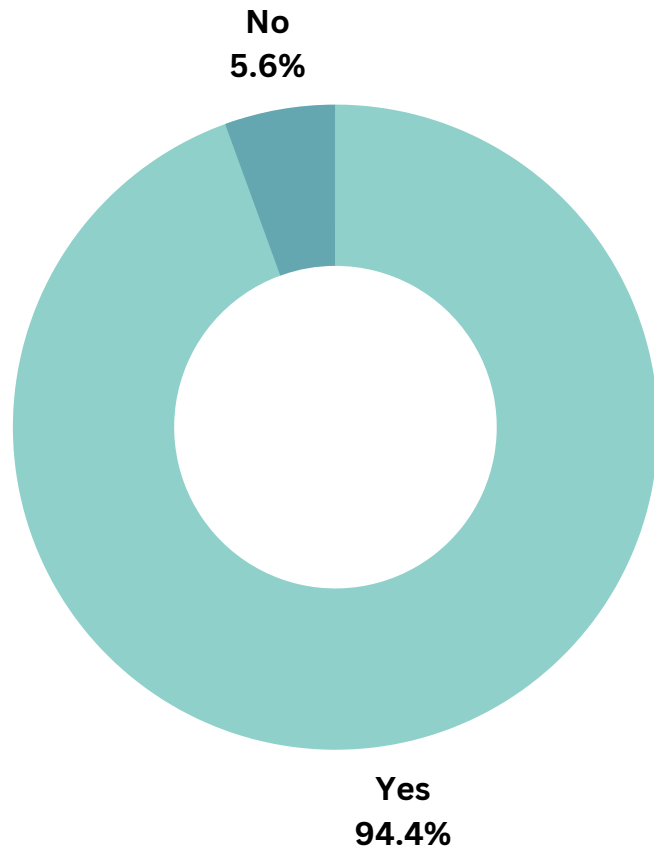
Meets Expectations: These individuals are expectational performers of their duties and do everything they are asked to the best of their abilities.

Needs Improvement: These individuals fall short of YLC expectations, are often unreliable, and frequently need communication reminders.

MID-TERM CHECK-IN RESULTS

Following the Mid-Term Check-In exercise, the Chair leadership team discussed concerns, successes, and improvements. They also asked all members to complete a short anonymous survey to gain their insight on the new implementation. The results are as follows below.

Would you like for the YLC to continue conducting yearly Mid-Term Check-Ins?



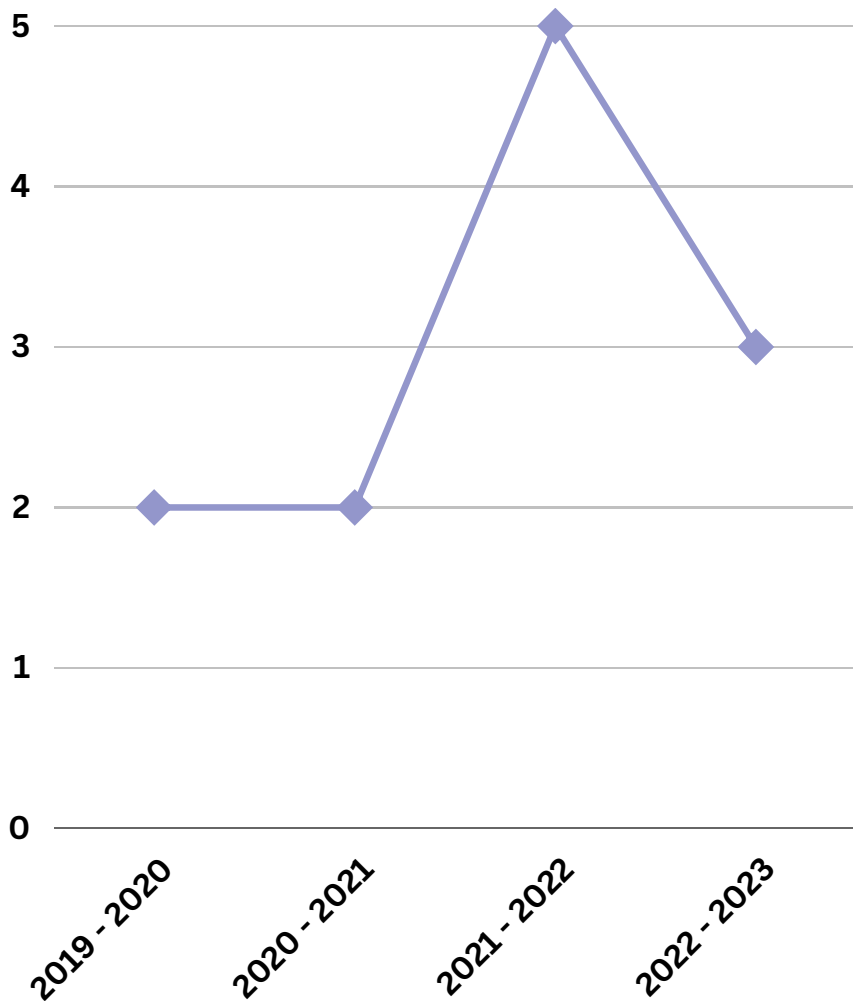
The following are suggestions for future Mid-Term Check-Ins if the incoming Chair-Elects decide to conduct these in 2023. The Chairs would like an improvement in the platform used so that notes and scores can be seamlessly uploaded following each 1x1. Members would like greater separation in the categories provided, as many viewed they overlapped. An improvement might be the choice of the words provided in each definition rather than identifying new categories. This may provide improved clarification on what each category is requesting of the evaluator. Members would also like designated time for each initiative to reflect on the initiative's overall performance together instead of just the Chairs with each member.

THE INNER WORKINGS OF YLC

MEMBER RETENTION:

The YLC is a rigorous leadership program in that not all members succeed until the end of their term. This further exemplifies the determination each member dispenses as they complete this laborious program. Unfortunately, this past year was not an exception; in fact, we lost three members. Two were advised to terminate their terms early due to not adhering to the expectations outlined for all Young Leaders Council members to abide by. The third person voluntarily resigned to improve self-development.

Every member who exited their term early was provided multiple opportunities of support to work with their unique situations to further their influence on the council. At the end of the day, this is a purely self-motivated leadership development program.



The line graph shows the number of members who exited their term early over the years since 2019. Our greatest drop in the number of members is between 2021-2022 and can be attributed to the prolonged complexities that were brought by the 2020 pandemic.

THE INNER WORKINGS OF YLC

YLC ALUMNI:

Since the founding of the Young Leaders Council in 2012, the number of YLC alumni has grown exponentially. Previously, there had not been an official formation of an alumni group. It took a great undertaking by the members to track contacts down and formulate a communication forum to keep alumni informed of all the great things the YLC is doing. The future projection of this group will be a network of individuals who inspire each other. The current group stays in communication via GroupMe and LinkedIn with a total membership of 62 individuals. It should be noted that all members who exited their term early are prohibited from being in the YLC Alumni program.

NEWSLETTER:

The YLC has produced a monthly newsletter since August 2021 and is led by our Co-Chair Sofie Dalton. Each newsletter has contained a progress recap of what various initiatives worked on in the past month. It contained a variety of perspectives of the council, member spotlight, YLC alumni, an outstanding chapter of the month, and articles from our YLC Blogs. This year the letter has evolved to add a mental health corner and a DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) corner to discuss the interworkings and importance of these topics. The newsletters have received exposure from staff and have been a great way to inform staff of what the YLC is doing (staff has provided positive feedback). Our goal for expansion is an increase in student/participant subscribers. Since the launch of the newsletter, the YLC has gained a new platform that strengthens the Best Buddies YLC branding.

THE INNER WORKINGS OF YLC

YLC RESOURCES:

One of our greatest difficulties is creating a central location for Best Buddies participants and staff members to easily access YLC resources.

Over the last two years, the YLC leadership has been updating the PM library (One Drive) also known as, Mission Memo. The goal is to maintain a resource bank for improved resource access. We understand this is not a complete fix which is why we are in the process of constructing a revamped site through SharePoint with the assistance of several headquarters staff members. We are hoping for the site to be launched and operational by Fall 2023.

LEADERSHIP PATH AFTER THE YOUNG LEADERS COUNCIL:

There is currently one path for leadership progression in Best Buddies following the Young Leaders Council, which is to be a Global Ambassador. Typically many of our leaders who have an IDD have already been a Global Ambassador and it is fairly difficult for leaders without an IDD to become state or Global Ambassadors. Due to these barriers, the leadership team is encouraging (2nd year) YLC members to contact their state/local offices to join their state advisory boards. We see this as the next leadership progression in Best Buddies because it will improve the participant perspective on advisory boards across the organization, and it will hopefully encourage states to increase efforts to push their participants to apply for the YLC.

THE INNER WORKINGS OF YLC

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE:

This annual event provides the opportunity to test the YLC's abilities to be effective in communication, professionalism, and presentation of our leadership skills. Sofie Dalton (Co-Chair) is our primary communication and operation coordinator between the YLC and the Best Buddies Leadership Conference organizers. She is responsible for communicating between members and their states to align their specialized knowledge with the needs of their state chapters. This is a great undertaking and takes weeks in the making to produce success. Below you can find the YLC impact in numbers on the Best Buddies International community at the 2022 Leadership Conference.

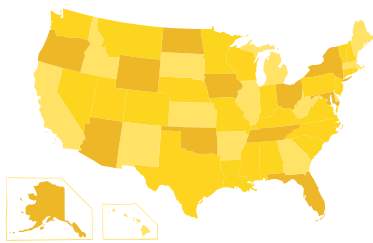
28 MEMBERS



6 ALUMNI



23 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS



20 UNIQUE ROLES



I See You
2022 BEST BUDDIES
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



THE INNER WORKINGS OF YLC

COMMUNITY RELATIONS BUILDING:

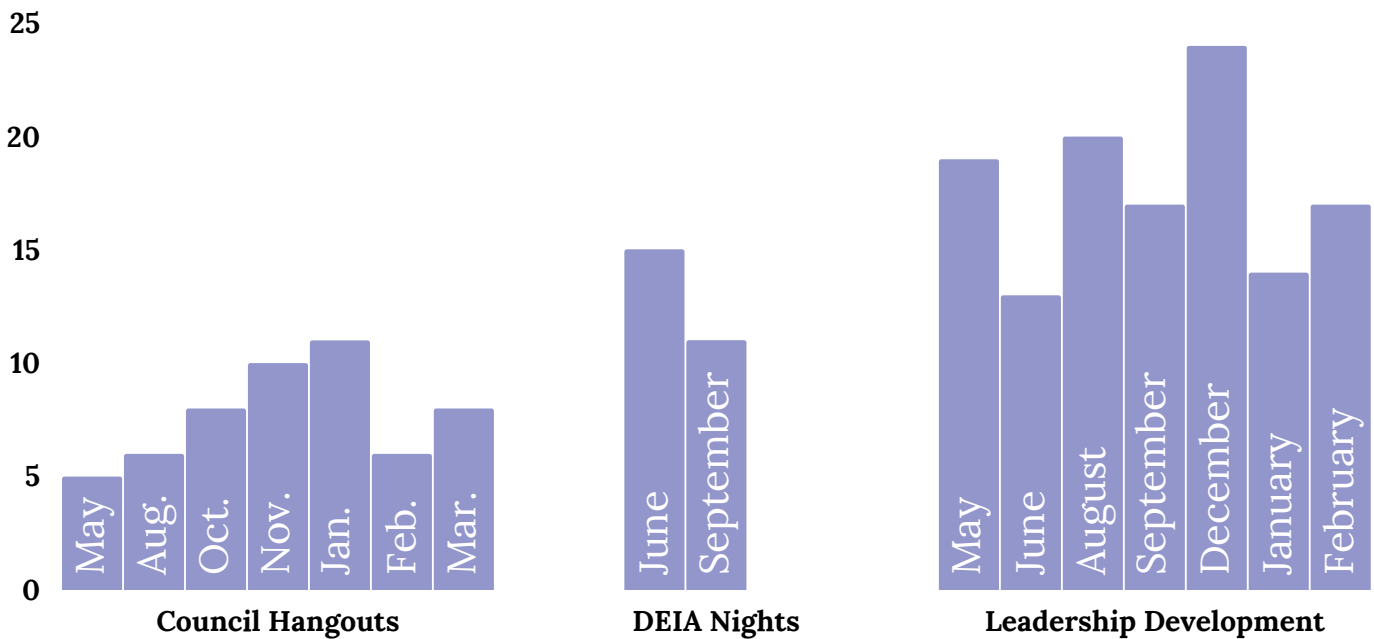
The YLC works virtually throughout the year. Since everyone on the council is spread across the country, it is difficult to formulate long-lasting relationships post the YLC. As a means to improve relationships across the council and to boost morale, we developed community relations-building programs – leadership development and council hangouts.

Leadership Development calls allow the chairs to present on a topic that improves the members' leadership skill sets and share pressing information. During the call, we also allow time for members to present their initiative progress. Some topics discussed by chairs include but are not limited to networking, communication, stress management, teamwork, time management, and self-care. Attendance by all members is expected.

Council Hangouts are facilitated by our Co-Chair Margo Meley. These calls are held once a month, designating an hour to build relations on the council by having game nights, movie nights, and we have selected alumni nights that YLC alumni are invited to attend.

DEIA Nights are similar to our Council Hangouts which are also facilitated by our Co-Chair Margo Meley. These calls provide a safe environment for the members of the YLC to have difficult, yet increasingly important conversations around diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Discussions have ranged from Barbie's new diversity line and Pottery Barn creating accessible furniture, to how Best Buddies can improve accessibility both at a chapter and an international level. These opportunities are not designed to produce effective solutions; however, they are an opportunity to gain a new perspective on the topic.

COUNCIL ATTENDANCE



The chart above shows the attendance by numbers for each type of call that has been held on the council since the first meeting in May 2022: Council Hangouts, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Nights (DEIA), and Leadership Development. One is able to immediately notice that the Leadership Development attendance on average is significantly higher, which is attributed to required attendance. We do not require attendance at DEIA Nights and Council Hangouts since members are also expected to attend all initiative calls. Requiring three calls on average each month can become overwhelming as many of the members are involved in various programs within Best Buddies and outside organizations. We take great pride in the level of diverse perspectives we have present on the council which is attributed to the steep involvement of our members in a variety of outside opportunities. Leadership Development calls are held every month except July for the Leadership Conference and October and November for Mid-Term Check-Ins. The attendance numbers do not reflect the number of alumni who attended designated alumni nights.

INITIATIVE REPORTS



LEADERSHIP

INITIATIVES:

- STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD (SAB)
- FUNDRAISING



RESOURCES

INITIATIVES:

- ACCESSIBILITY
- EMPLOYMENT
- MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS



OUTREACH

INITIATIVES:

- SOCIAL MEDIA
- YOUTUBE
- YLC BLOGS

WHAT IS AN INITIATIVE?

A project that YLC members work collectively on to conceptualize, design, and execute ideas that further develop the mission of Best Buddies International. Through targeted outreach, material development, and collaboration, members combine feedback to make these developed ideas a reality.



A group is created by the members of the YLC to **further the special interests of the organization.**



The initiative works collaboratively for **10 months to achieve long-term goals** that were designed at the start of the term.



Members of the initiative **present their analysis and recommendations** to affiliated BBI staff and their state staff.

INITIATIVE REPORTS

STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD (SAB)

Cohort: Leadership | Co-Chair: Maddie Quigley (MO)

Initiative LEAD: Matias Gonzalez (AZ)

Initiative Description: The YLC will facilitate, provide resources, and encourage states to adopt a Student Advisory Board (SAB) program. The council will also continue our relationships with SAB programs through consistent communication with currently established, processing, and future SAB programs. The council will be holding meetings (on a need basis) to discuss our progress on opening SAB programs, the creation of specific resources (if necessary), and discuss any questions that states may have about the program. If you are a program manager, co-chair, or member of an SAB program, please do not hesitate to reach out to the council for any questions you may have. We are here to make your leadership experience the best it can be!

Members of the initiative: Amy Gibson (TX), Isabelle Hughes (TX), Michelle Raitman (CAN)

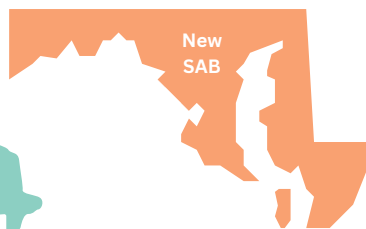
A report was presented to: Chloe DeMers (CAN), Cheyenne Jock (TX), David Kosnosky (TX), Deanna Alakoozai (CAN), Kristin Dryanski (TX), Linda Kordek-Milton (TX), Rusty Tolliver (TX), Shaneika Brown (CAN), and Sabine O'Donnell (CAN).

Link to recorded presentation: https://youtu.be/fa_y3lgcgFU

Initiative Short-term Goal: Communicate internally with the state offices to quantify the number of established student advisory boards across the country and gain interest in potential expansion locations.

Initiative Long-term Goal: Collaborating with at least four new states to help them establish a Student Advisory Board.

Largest Challenge: Receiving responses from all the states when reaching out to seek interest in potentially starting a SAB in their area.



INITIATIVE REPORTS

STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

INITIATIVE TIMELINE

June

The current SAB initiative team was assembled, consisting of three 1st year members and one 2nd-year member.

October

The SAB team hosted two information sessions, followed by a Q&A portion for the states that expressed interest in starting a SAB in their area.

August - September

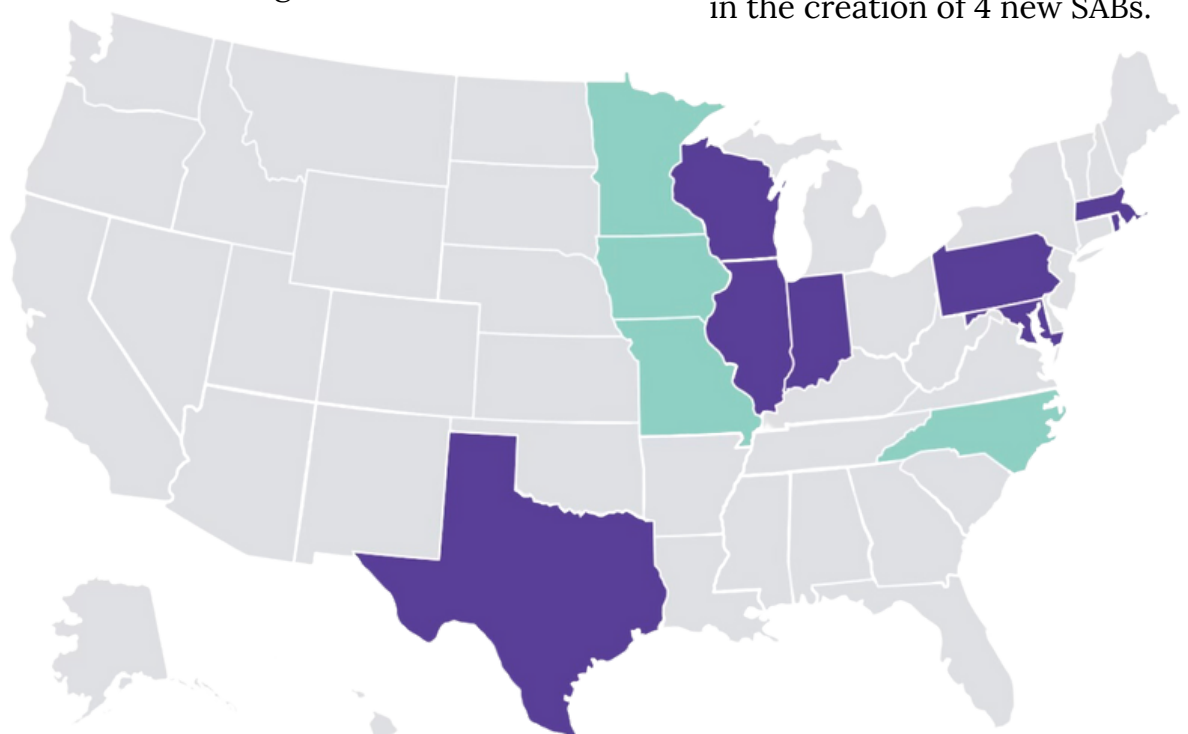
The SAB team split up Best Buddies offices throughout the U.S. and Canada to start contacting them individually. The goal was to gauge interest in starting a SAB or check on the status of their existing SAB.

December - Today

Starting in December, the SAB team initiated a follow-up with all the states who attended the October information sessions and still expressed interest. We are here to support each and every PM and are hopeful that we will be able to meet our goal of aiding in the creation of 4 new SABs.

ESTABLISHED SABS

NORTH TEXAS
HOUSTON TEXAS
CENTRAL TEXAS
PENNSYLVANIA
INDIANA
ILLINOIS
MARYLAND
MASSACHUSETTS/
RHODE ISLAND
WISCONSIN



ESTABLISHED SAB



PROJECTED OPENING FALL 2023

INITIATIVE REPORTS

FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISING:

Cohort: Leadership | Co-Chair: Maddie Quigley (MO)

Initiative LEAD: Zach Siegel (TX)

Initiative Description: This project was tasked with brainstorming sustainable practices the YLC can implement to further increase our monetary resources. These monetary donations would be utilized in a multitude of forms such as scholarships to leaders in the organization, elevating the YLC brand, and further equipping the special interests of the council.

A report was presented to: Cheyenne Jock (TX), Lauren Preischel (TX), Linda Kordek-Milton (TX), Thomas Moore (TX), Tucker Thompson (TX), and Victoria Jones (TX).

Challenges: Since this is a new initiative with significant decision effects, we chose to take strategic steps forward that could provide a solid base. Constructing a solid foundation increases the time and dedication needed. We anticipate to include measurable results, successes, and shortfalls of the practices implemented in our next initiative report.

To learn more about our council budget read, [Best Buddies International - Young Leaders Council Fundraising Budget \(2022\)](#).

INITIATIVE REPORTS

A C C E S S I B I L I T Y

ACCESSIBILITY:

Cohort: Resource | Co-Chair: Margo Meley (CT)

Initiative LEAD: Vanessa Ocana (CA)

Initiative Description: This initiative strives to educate the Best Buddies community on the importance of accessibility and to develop resources that foster more universal accessible practices within Best Buddies.

Members of the Initiative: Kendall Liesching (MA/RI) and Zane Landin (CA)

A report was presented to: Catherine Belous (CA), Katelyn Quintero (CA) Jazzmine Santos-Kendrick (CA), and Julianne Sullivan (MA)

Link to recorded presentation: <https://youtu.be/5QO9rVe2gf0>

Challenge: The initiative had a goal to generate support in increasing the level of accessibility on Best Buddies websites for all levels of abilities. The team envisioned collecting data on individuals' personal experiences on website accessibility. This was later discovered as an infeasible path at the time. However, the members pivoted to an alternative option, social media accessibility. This was a supported idea by BBI and the YLC, as it would be a tangible impact the YLC could make with the current resources available.

Impact:

- Created a shareable social media graphic resource to encourage states and chapters to make their social media content more accessible to all audiences.
- Some resource tips include but are not limited to,
 - Graphic design
 - Appropriate text for image description and video description
- Disability PRIDE Month
 - Created a video. Watch the video, '[All About Disability PRIDE Month](#)'
- Wrote a blog on accessibility. To learn more about the post, read, '[Accessibility Blog](#)'
- Presented an 'Event Accessibility Proposal: Friendship Walk' to the leadership cohort team. To access this document, please email, ylc@bestbuddies.org.
- The initiative has increased awareness of accessibility by working directly with BBI staff to implement more accessible practices.
- BBI has established a new project brainstorming resources for leadership conference.

INITIATIVE REPORTS

EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT:

Cohort: Outreach | **Co-Chair:** Margo Meley (CT)

Initiative LEAD: Michelle Raitman (CAN)

Initiative Description: This initiative aims to improve workforce accessibility for individuals with disabilities and assist with job retention. They seek to motivate employers to be more understanding of the various unique needs people with disabilities have and transition their hiring process to be more accommodating. The hope is that companies will be open to creating more opportunities for those with disabilities as well as giving them better support during training to ensure they succeed in the workplace.

Members of the Initiative: Paul Brooks (NV), Vanessa Ocana (CA),

A report was presented to: Amy Lenefeld (HQ), Catherine Belous (CA), and Sabine O'Donnell (CAN)

Link to recorded presentation: <https://youtu.be/8Re9knB4Oxg>

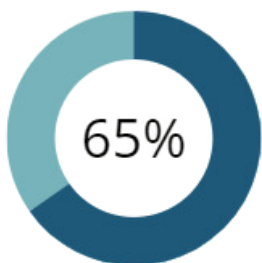
Goals: Creating a visual resource that would provide tips on maintaining accessible and considerable hiring practices for new staff.

Challenge: Losing 50% of the team over the course of this term.

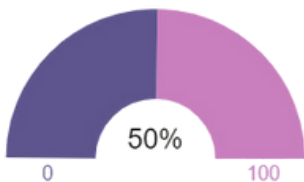
Impact:

- Launched a survey via Qualtrics to gain the perspectives of individuals with disabilities on accessibility to employment opportunities.
- Collaborated with the Mental Health initiative to create a how-to resource on self-advocacy for mental health support from employers.

Highlighted Survey Results:



Percentage of Survey Participants that Have Faced Barriers to Getting a Job



Percentage of Survey Participants that Have Faced Barriers to Keeping a Job



INITIATIVE REPORTS

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

Cohort: Resource | Co-Chair: Margo Meley (CT)

Initiative LEAD: Danielle Tran (CA)

Initiative Description: The purpose of this initiative is to develop resources and strategies to increase mental health awareness within Best Buddies and to support Best Buddies participants in taking care of their own mental health.

Members of the initiative: Eleanor Hawkins (D.C.), Jada Thompson (IL)

A report was presented to: Abby Gustafson (IL), Ali Yancey (IL), Ciara Kriegler (IL), Ellen Morrell (IL), Kady Allen (CT), Kat Waks (IL), Justina Jennings (IL) and Roxana Handell (IL).

Link to recorded presentation: <https://youtu.be/eRuA7825yHo>

Initiative Short-Term Goal: Collaborate with YLC Blogs to generate consistent content provided by individuals sharing their experiences with mental health.

Initiative Long-Term Goal: Collaborate with the Employment Initiative to create a tangible resource for Best Buddies

Jobs program participants to advocate for their mental health.

Largest Challenge: The main challenge was collecting enough responses for the collaboration with the YLC blogs; however, the members overcame this barrier by sending frequent reminders and sending individual messages.

Resources produced by this initiative can be accessed via our linktree. A sample of the resources generated by this initiative can be found on the next page.



INITIATIVE REPORTS

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS



Mental Health X Employment Resource

A collaboration between the YLC Mental Health & Wellness and Employment initiatives aiming to support participants of Best Buddies' Jobs Program in taking care of their mental health.

QUICK TIPS & TRICKS

WHAT ACCOMODATIONS CAN I REQUEST FROM MY EMPLOYER?

ASK FOR A BREAK

If you're feeling overwhelmed, ask your employer for a 15-minute break so you can pause, take deep breath, and recollect yourself.

Helpful Resource

REQUEST A FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE

Whether it's working less hours or shifting your current hours, talk to your employer about finding a schedule that makes time for your needs.

Helpful Resource

ASK FOR MENTAL HEALTH DAYS

Talk to your employer about taking mental health days to comodate personal circumstances or to simply recharge.

Helpful Resource

ASK FOR MORE TRAINING

If your performance at work is causing you stress, remember: it's okay to ask for more training! Discuss with your employers how you can reach a level of comfortability at your job.

Helpful Resource



7

A HOW-TO GUIDE ON APPROACHING MENTAL HEALTH WITH EMPLOYERS

Writing an email to your employer

Introduce yourself:

First and last name
Role in company/work
Tell a snip about yourself
Disclose disability information

Outline problem:

Explain why you are contacting them and the problem (1-2 sentences)
EX: Transportation issue, unable to drive, and may be late to work

Describe needs:

Describe how your disability may affect your work performance
EX: If there's too much noise, I get overwhelmed

Request accommodations:

Research possible accommodations that best meet your needs, describe how accommodation will help you
EX: Auditory instructions, sign

Checklist for contacting your employer:

- Research accommodations specific to your workplace
- Write outline of problem and request
- Be clear and concise about needs
- Be open to further discussion

Practice a mock-talk with your employer using the link below

<https://revel.com/view/eQ4sbly3jvvtPzGh2F17>

INITIATIVE REPORTS

S O C I A L M E D I A

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Cohort: Outreach | Co-Chair: Sofie Dalton (VA/D.C.)

Initiative LEAD: Marina Rouse (MA/RI)

Initiative Description: The members of this initiative administer our social media accounts, (Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn) and manages YLC branding, which aims to maintain professional, informative, and engaging content across the YLC digital community.

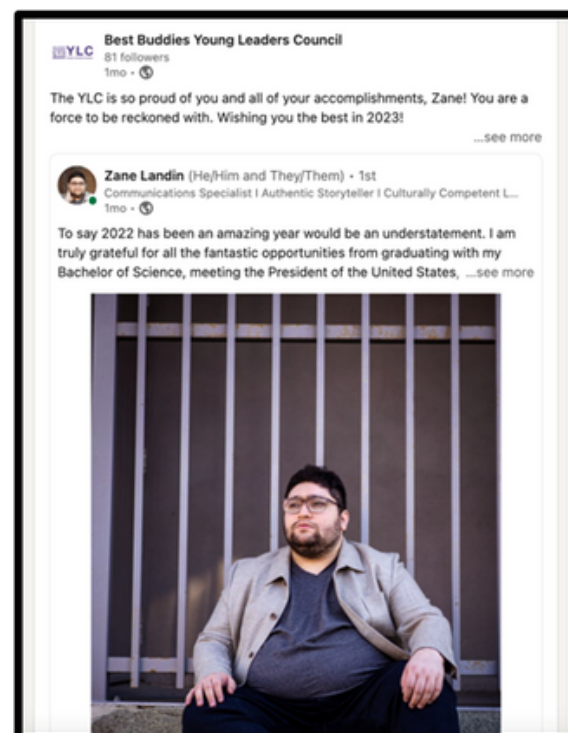
Member of the initiative: Grace Elmore (NY)

A report was presented to: Kara Falcone (MA/RI), Kelly Gardner (NY) and Mark Lantz (IN),

Link to recorded presentation: <https://youtu.be/Tulz5vx-vPY>

Initiative Goals:

- Establish an automated planned post calendar using tools via Canva
- Connect with Chapters across United States and Canada
- Collaborate with different Best Buddies Pillar programs (Friendship, Jobs, Living and Leadership Development)
- Increase followers by 2000+



INITIATIVE REPORTS

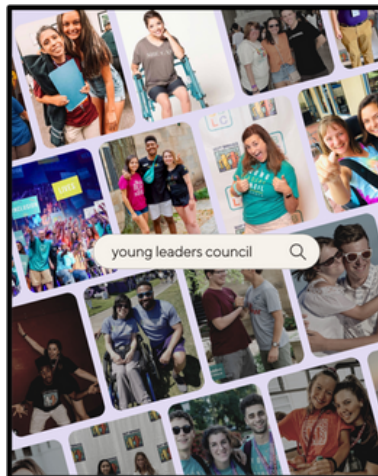
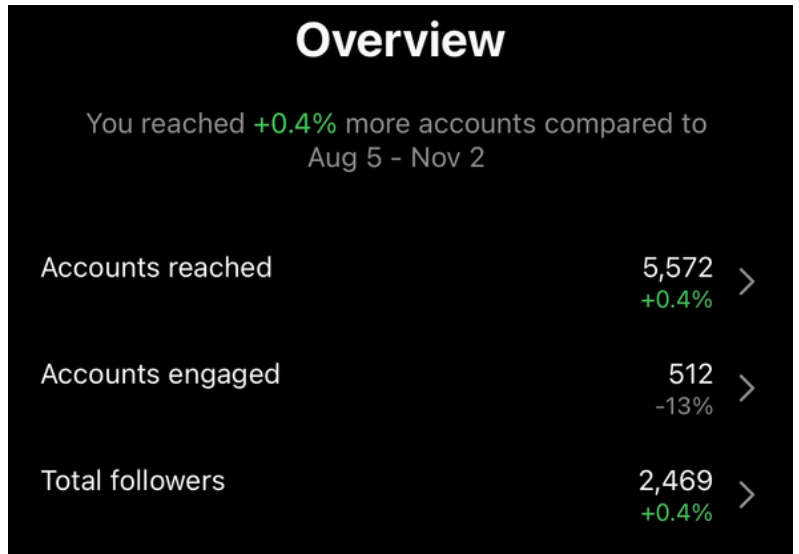
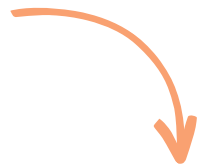
S O C I A L M E D I A



- 81 connections
- 121 impressions in the last 30 days which is a 404% increase
- 10.7% engagement rate



- Largest digital impact and most consistent following
- As of 2/17/23, 2469 followers
- Created 447 posts
- Hundreds of tagged posts



INITIATIVE REPORTS

Y O U T U B E

YOUTUBE:

Cohort: Outreach | **Co-Chair:** Sofie Dalton (VA/D.C.)

Initiative LEAD: Sofie Dalton (VA/D.C.)

Initiative Description: Serves to highlight Best Buddies participants, advocates, and content from initiatives. Past series include YLC Chats (interview series), Buddy Breakdowns, and videos made by different initiatives such as Online Ambassador Trainings.

Members of the Initiative: Vanessa Ocana (CA), Will McClennon (VA/D.C.)

A report was presented to: Caroline Fleury (VA/D.C.) and Mary Schafhauser (VA/D.C.).

Link to recorded presentation: <https://youtu.be/BM1Z8oIBaDQ>

Goals: Increase the number of subscribers to 200 by 2024, post content on a biweekly basis, and increase content on Best Buddies leaders.

Challenges: There were a few dynamics that limited the capabilities of the initiative, such as being a small team which led to difficulties in finding new content, posting consistently, and increasing the number of subscribers.

Impact:

- Highlighting diverse voices
- Spreading awareness about accessibility
- Showcasing the Best Buddies community
- Bringing awareness to newer programs such as Inclusive Living

Statistics: (May 2020 - February 2023)

- 9.0K Views
- 27.9K Impressions

Most Watched Videos:



502 Views



450 Views



402 Views

INITIATIVE REPORTS

Y L C B L O G S

YLC BLOGS:

Cohort: Outreach | Co-Chair: Sofie Dalton (VA/D.C.)

Initiative LEAD: Nathan Moldavsky (WI)

Initiative Description: Devise original, inspirational stories each week to highlight key topics within and outside of Best Buddies International.

Members of the Initiative: Jamie Galvin (TN), Maya Ali (TX)

A report was presented to: Laura Brackett (WI),
Linda Kordek-Milton (TX) and Will Macon (TN).

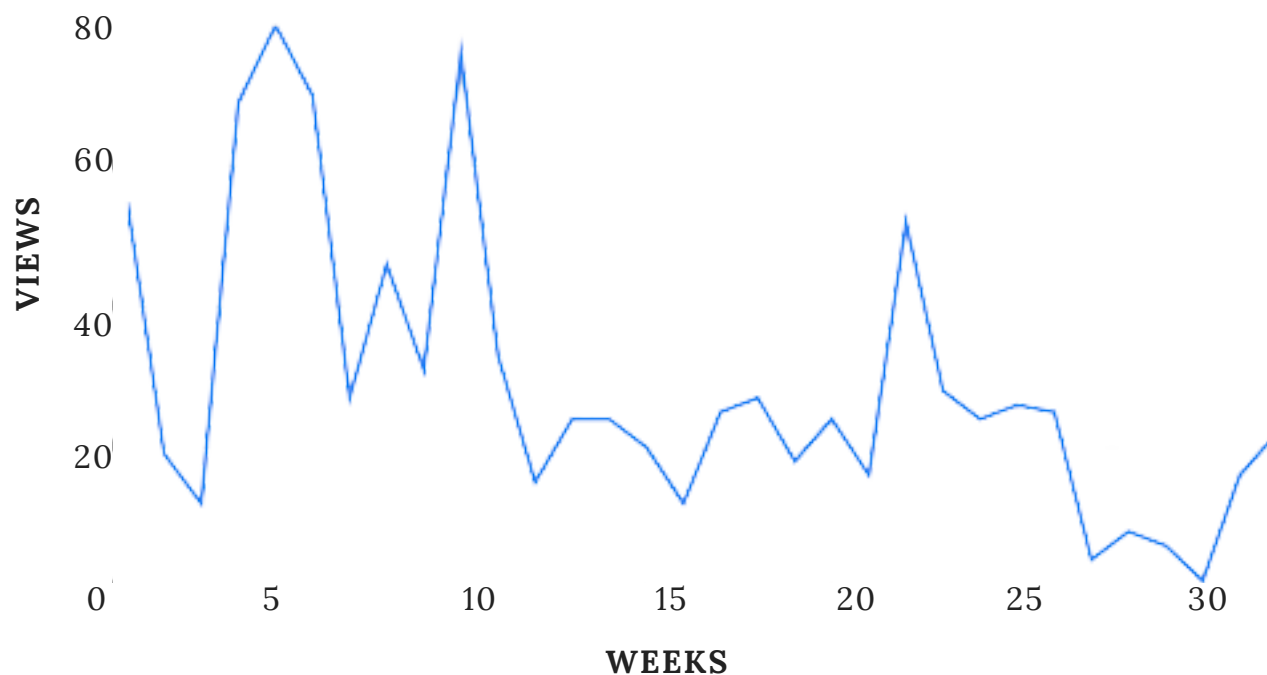
Link to recorded presentation: <https://youtu.be/Cn4WJXQgqVM>

Long Term Goals: Increase viewership (50 views per article on average) by spreading awareness of the blog and posting consistently every week (Monday).

Short Term Goals: Post the annual 'Meet the YLC Blog', ensure blogs are updated on BBU, and advertise at national Best Buddies events (i.e., BBLC and LLTDs, etc).

Greatest Challenge: Generating beneficial content that is not repetitive, lack of communication consistency with social media initiative, and precision with our audience.

VIEWS VS WEEKS



INITIATIVE REPORTS

COUNCIL BREAKDOWN

COUNCIL BREAKDOWN:

Cohort: Outreach | **Co-Chair:** Margo Meley (CT)

Initiative LEAD: Michelle Raitman (CAN)

Initiative Description: To interview influencers in the Best Buddies/disability community and provide a platform to highlight their involvement and help others better understand the challenges faced by this population. They strived to better educate viewers on the disability community and to help them develop a more inclusive as well as accepting perspective.

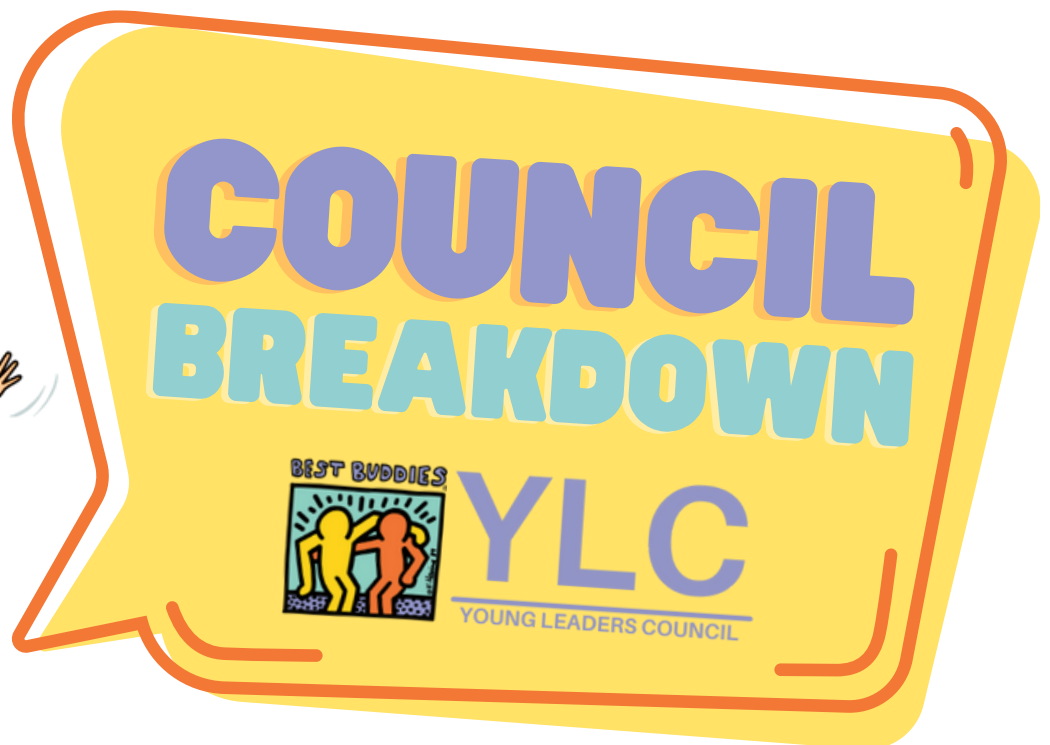
A report was presented to: Amy Lenefeld (HQ), Catherine Belous (CA) and Sabine O'Donnell (CAN)

Link to recorded presentation: <https://youtu.be/8Re9knB4Oxg>

Challenge: Had difficulties hearing back from the individuals the initiative contacted.

Impact:

- Filmed three episodes
- Provided a platform to amazing creators



INITIATIVE REPORTS

COUNCIL BREAKDOWN

PODCAST TIMELINE

September

The idea for a podcast was presented to the YLC Chair by Margo and Michelle. Several meetings took place to finalize their goals.

November

The two co-hosts made a list of guests they wanted to feature on the podcast, split up who would reach out to whom, and emailed them an invite to participate.

October

Margo and Michelle filmed their very first episode, where they discussed hot topics within the IDD community, which went live on October 5th!



December

They heard back from Ahren Belisle and set up a meeting to plan the episode. On December 22nd, the trio went live on Instagram.



February - March

Toward the end of February, Margo and Michelle met with some of the Global Ambassadors to discuss having them on the podcast. In early March, filming took place via Zoom. The episode is currently planned to be published on YouTube at the start of May.

INITIATIVE REPORTS

DEI COMMITTEE

YLC & DEI COMMITTEE (PARTNERSHIP):

Initiative LEAD: Zane Landin (CA)

Initiative Description: The members of this initiative worked with BBI staff members from the Best Buddies International DEI committee (Chaired by Joseph Canty, *Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion*) to organize a session at the 2023 Leadership Conference on the topic of accessibility. Members of this initiative were strategically selected by the YLC leadership for their effective organizational skills.

Member(s) of the initiative: Nathan Moldavsky (WI), Vanessa Ocana (CA)

Staff members the YLC worked directly with: Bill Maurer (HQ) and Liz Wolford (HQ).

**A proposal was sent to the Best Buddies International DEI Committee:
Completed - NOT fully approved**

Proposal submitted:

- Event Accessibility Panel at BBLC
- State and Regional Meetings
- World Cafe
- Resource Takeaway Outline

Highlights of the proposal is below:

Event Accessibility Panel at BBLC

- Panel Structure
 - 4 Panelists (2 External) and 2 Internal (BBI: Participants, Staff, YLC)
 - 2 Moderators
- Sample Discussion Questions
 - These questions are for the panelists to answer and the audience members to learn about.
 - How would you define accessibility? Why is accessibility important? What are some common accessibility concerns? What is the inaccessibility cycle? How does accessibility impact equity? Can inaccessibility impact mental health? How can we make virtual and in-person events accessible?

INITIATIVE REPORTS

DEI COMMITTEE

State and Regional Meetings (Partial Approval)

- Discussion Questions
 - These questions are to introduce the participants to accessibility.
 - What does accessibility mean to you? Why is accessibility important? Have you ever personally experienced or seen firsthand inaccessibility? Why is inaccessibility unfair? How would you define equity? If you experienced inaccessibility, how did you feel emotionally?

World Cafe

- Discussion Questions: These questions are to help us gain participants' insights into accessibility and how it impacts the organization.
- What is one accessibility concern in today's world? Are there any accessibility tips you'd like to share with us? What is one event you have held that was fully accessible? What is one event you have held that may have been inaccessible for your chapter members? How could you improve on this next time?

Resource Takeaway Outline: At the event, we would like to provide a resource for participants to make their chapter meetings and events more accessible. Each section will include a checklist,

- Choosing a Venue
 - Before booking any meeting or event, plan an on-site visit to the venue to determine whether barriers to accessibility exist.
 - Exterior and Interior (Checklist).
- Virtual Meetings and Events
 - Just as with in-person meetings and events, virtual meetings and events must be accessible to individuals with a disability.
- Post Meeting Event Survey
 - All meetings and events should include a survey for attendees to provide feedback to examine ways to increase and improve the accessibility of your future events. For instance, people could rate the accessibility of the registration process, accommodations process, presentation materials, disability etiquette, etc.

MEET THE YLC



Garrett Tomasek

Texas, USA | Chair & Board of Directors

"The YLC is a council of international architects who engineer innovative initiatives with long-term sustainable impacts on the organization and the IDD community. We are a group of trailblazers with a core passion for designing effective paths to opportunities that are universally accessible to all abilities."



Maddie Quigley

Missouri, USA | Co-Chair

"The YLC has given me so many opportunities throughout the years I have been lucky enough to be on the council. Opportunities to learn, grow and communicate with such amazing leaders throughout the country. As a working professional now, I came into the workforce with such essential tools. Tools have given me the ability to work through issues and roadblocks with perseverance and understanding. The YLC is such a prestigious council, and I encourage anyone who is looking to elevate their leadership skills, to apply. To those who make the council, take advantage of these opportunities in any way and every way you can."



Margo Meley

Connecticut, USA | Co-CHAIR

"It takes two to make a friendship and it takes you to make a difference."



Sofie Dalton

Virginia, USA | Co-CHAIR

"Throughout my time on the YLC, I've had the opportunity to work on various projects that grew my leadership skills and allowed me to connect with the broader Best Buddies community. I've also gotten the opportunity to work with incredible leaders who have inspired me with their passion and determination to make this world a more inclusive place. The YLC is not just a leadership organization: it is a community that connects you with people who are driven to enact meaningful change. Being on the YLC is truly a life-changing experience that leads to both professional and personal growth."

MEET THE YLC



Marina Rouse

Massachusetts, USA | 2nd Year

"The YLC has given me an opportunity to grow my leadership and networking skills by collaborating with a team and staff across the world. I have found a place where I work with people who share a passion for an all-embracing community and keep it at the forefront of all their actions. The YLC has allowed me to mature professionally, socially, and internally giving me a whole new outlook and grasp on life."



Kendall Liesching

Rhode Island, USA | 1st Year

"The YLC has enabled me to collaborate with people across the United States and Canada, who share my passion for Best Buddies and its mission. This outstanding group of people inspires me to emulate their work ethic and commitment."



Grace Elmore

New York, USA | 1st Year

"Being a part of Best Buddies and the YLC has forever changed how I carry myself for others. It has helped me grow into a better collaborator and friend, and I've learned so much about teamwork and the importance of having a support network of friends. I am forever thankful for my Best Buddies family!"



Michelle Raitman

Ontario, Canada | 2nd Year

"The YLC has been nothing short of a fantastic experience. From collaborating with like-minded individuals as passionate about Best Buddies as I am, to being provided with professional opportunities I never thought I would experience. Prior to the council, I had not seen such a strong youth-led group, where ALL opinions are valued and support is always available. Because of the YLC, I have grown more confident and certain about my leadership abilities. I will forever be grateful I took a chance and applied."



Stephanie Smith

Ontario, Canada | 2nd Year

"Best Buddies YLC has impacted me in a big way with friends, leadership and new opportunities."

MEET THE YLC



Nathan Moldavsky

Wisconsin, USA | 1st Year

"Through the YLC, I have not only gained an invaluable network of new friends from around the world, but I have also been able to enact tangible change for the Best Buddies participant experience. Additionally, I have acquired a new outlook on effective advocacy and collaboration, which has significantly helped me with both improving my local Best Buddies chapter and solving problems in the professional setting. I would strongly encourage any Best Buddies leaders to apply to the YLC, as it has been a truly incredible opportunity to take my ideas and passion to the next level."



Jada Thompson

Illinois, USA | 2nd Year

"YLC has helped me grow not only as a leader but as a person. Being part of the different initiatives have taught me a lot about how to work with a group and share great ideas."



Will McClennan

Virginia/D.C., USA | 2nd Year

"The YLC is a great mix of leaders from all across the United States and now Canada but I think what is even more impressive is how the members of the council all bring in years and years of experience volunteering and working with Best Buddies. I am blown away by my peers and try my best to keep up with all the amazing stuff my fellow YLC members are accomplishing."



Eleanor Hawkins

Virginia, USA | 1st Year

"Being on the YLC has been such an amazing experience, professionally and individually. I have learned so much about leadership and organization. But for me, the most impactful part of being on the YLC has been the community and developing friendships with the rest of the Council."



Jamie Galvin

Tennessee, USA | 2nd Year

"The YLC has impacted my life by giving me the gift of helping others and learning how to advocate for people. The YLC changed my life by being there for me and others. It opens my eyes to see how we can help others in the community."

MEET THE YLC



Zachary Siegel

Texas, USA | 2nd Year

"Being on the Young Leaders Council has allowed me the opportunity to learn and practice different skill sets that overall will make greater Best Buddies more accessible and inclusive."



Amy Gibson

Texas, USA | 1st Year

"The YLC has allowed me to make friends with other leaders from around the world who constantly inspire and grow my love for Best Buddies. I have had the opportunity to advance as a leader while on the YLC. The YLC has given me the chance to practice and apply my leadership skills with an organization that I love."



Isabelle Hughes

Texas, USA | 1st Year

"The YLC has helped me grow my leadership skills in ways I never could have imagined. Because of the YLC, I have become better prepared for my future and been able to make an impact on a program that means so much to me. Without the opportunities that the YLC has provided me, I would not be the strong, independent leader I am today."



Maya Ali

Texas, USA | 1st Year

"The YLC has opened my eyes to the scale of Best Buddies and the IDD community. It has not only allowed me to work with incredibly dedicated individuals, but also given me so much knowledge. The YLC has helped me grow as a person, as I am now informed about different aspects of the IDD community!"

MEET THE YLC



Matias Gonzalez

Arizona, USA | 1st Year

"The YLC has had a tremendous impact on me, from making new connections internationally to having an impact in my local community and bringing new ideas to my school's chapter which I am president of. The YLC has shown me the vast number of perspectives that we all have and bring to the table. When we work together with a common goal, no barriers are strong enough to stop us. I would highly encourage anyone who is passionate about their ideas in Best Buddies to apply to the YLC, it is truly a transformative experience which has taught me skills that I will take beyond my time on the council. "



Paul Brooks

Nevada, USA | 2nd Year

"The YLC has impacted me in so, many ways. It has helped me become a better leader in my community. YLC has helped me build better relationships with Best Buddies International. The opportunities are life-changing with ideas out of this world which have made Best Buddies a better place."



Vanessa Ocana

California, USA | 2nd Year

"Being a member of the YLC has provided me an opportunity to mentor others. As a person whose disability includes a mobility device, I am thankful for the opportunity to lead the Accessibility Initiative. If you are passionate about inclusion and implementing equal opportunity for all abilities, I encourage you to apply for the YLC!



Danielle Tran

California, USA | 2nd Year

"The YLC has played such a meaningful role in continuing my Best Buddies involvement beyond high school. Through the YLC, I'm able to align my passion for Best Buddies with my external interests, such as mental health and accessible design, and to learn about pillars I'm not familiar with, such as living and employment. However, the best part about the YLC is undoubtedly the fellow members, who continue to astound and inspire me daily!"

MEET THE YLC



Zane Landin

California, USA | 1st Year

"Best Buddies Young Leaders Council allowed me to be a better leader. I had the opportunity to connect and network with people worldwide and make a difference."



Benjamin Haworth

California, USA | 1st Year

"Best Buddies has impacted me very positively, introducing me to a lot of great speaking techniques. It has impacted my way of thinking on diversity and being an ally to individuals with an intellectual and developmental disability"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wanted to dedicate space to all the staff members who go above and beyond in supporting **Best Buddies International: Young Leaders Council**. Without you and the individuals listed below the YLC would not have the influential capabilities it currently possesses. We greatly appreciate the time and effort you graciously provide us so that we can fulfill our duties.

- Holly Goshin, *Director of Leadership Academy*
- David Quilleon, *Senior VP of Global Mission and State Development and Operations*
- Jeremiah Angel, *Senior VP of Web and Database Operations*
- Mia Mulholland, *Senior Director of Mission Impact*
- Amber Coffman, *Senior Director of Jobs*
- Bill Maurer, *Senior Database Administrator*
- Ashley Simmens, *Director of Global Ambassadors*
- Milli Protheroe, *Director of Volunteer Engagement*
- Liz Wolford, *Director of Mission Operations*
- Liz Thompson, *Director of Online Programs*
- Christopher Dourov, *Director of Jobs*
- Joseph Canty, *Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*
- Rhonda Gdasi-Lopez, *Executive Assistant to SVP*
- Kathy DiRusso, *Director of Jobs Operations*
- *Best Buddies International: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee*
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Thank you for taking the time to read through the April 2022 - May 2023 Council Report. Stay connected with the members of the YLC by following us on social media and subscribing to our monthly newsletter. To follow us on social media and to subscribe to our newsletter, learn more at our [LinkTree](#). If you have questions or concerns pertaining to the formation of the YLC, the initiatives we are working on, or the information presented, don't hesitate to get in touch with us at ylc@bestbuddies.org.

