

BESTBUDDIES[®] GLOBAL FORUM 2026

*Building A More
Inclusive World Together*

September 22-24, 2026



ABOUT THE GLOBAL FORUM

The Global Forum will bring together nonprofits, corporations, educators, government leaders, self-advocates, and community partners to share ideas, spark innovation, and build partnerships that advance inclusion worldwide.

The Forum will celebrate progress in the global inclusion movement while exploring new ways to expand belonging, leadership, employment, and opportunities for individuals with IDD.

KEY FORUM GOALS & OBJECTIVES



**Convene Global
Leaders**



**Strengthen
Collaboration.**



**Showcase
Innovative Practices**



**Foster Cross-
Cultural Learning**



**Elevate
Voices**



**Highlight
Global Impact**



**Inspire
Investment**



Includes special guest speakers such as, Best Buddies International Founder & CEO, Anthony Kennedy Shriver, Best Buddies Panama Country Director, Vivian Torrijos, and more!

LOCATION

JW Marriott Panamá City
Calle Punta Colón, Punta Pacífica
Panamá City, 0833-00118



REGISTER TODAY!

ABOUT BEST BUDDIES

Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, inclusive living, and family support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).



Questions? Contact: International@bestbuddies.org

BEST BUDDIES



BESTBUDDIES. GLOBAL FORUM AGENDA

TUESDAY, SEPT. 22

- 10:00-19:00 Arrival & Hotel Check-In
- 19:00-20:00 Welcome Cocktail Reception

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 23

- 8:30-9:00 Building a More Inclusive World Together
- 9:00-9:30 The Science of Belonging: What Communities, Workplace, & Schools Can Learn from Human Connection
- 9:30-10:00 Elevating Self-Advocate Voices Around the World
- 10:20-11:15 The Business Case for Inclusion: Why Leading Companies are Investing in Disability
- 11:15-12:00 Inclusion Across Borders
- 12:00-13:00 Networking Lunch
- 13:30-15:00 Private Tour of the Panama Canal
- 15:30-17:00 Optional 1:1 Meeting Time
- 17:00-20:00 Official Best Buddies Global Forum Dinner Reception

THURSDAY, SEPT. 24

- 9:00-9:30 Technology & Inclusion
- 9:30-10:30 Discover Your Strengths, Amplify Your Impact
- 10:45-11:30 Beyond Sponsorship: Building Partnerships That Create Shared Value
- 11:30-12:30 Best Buddies Country Program Updates
- 12:30-13:30 Networking Lunch
- 13:30-14:30 What Funders are Looking For in 2027
- 14:30-15:00 Belonging as a Global Strategy
- 15:30-17:00 Optional 1:1 Meeting Time
- 17:00-20:00 Global Forum Closing Dinner

FRIDAY, SEPT. 25

- 9:00-11:00 Hotel Checkout

SPEAKERS



ANTHONY KENNEDY SHRIVER
CEO & Chairman, Best
Buddies International



VIVIAN FERNANDEZ DE TORRIJOS
President, Best Buddies
Panama



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