MISSION PILLARS

One-To-One Friendships  Integrated Employment  Leadership Development  Inclusive Living
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Message From Our Chairman

Dear Best Buddies family,

In the face of significant challenges worldwide throughout 2022, Best Buddies events and programmatic activities returned stronger than ever nationwide and globally. As the year concluded, we became even more certain of the critical and transformative role that Best Buddies programs play in fostering connections and building a more inclusive world for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Reflecting on the past year, I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together through the power of one-to-one friendships, meaningful jobs, leadership training, and inclusive living opportunities. With your unwavering support, Best Buddies reached thousands of participants with IDD, equipping them with the resources to feel included, confident, and optimistic about the future.

As we contemplate the global reach of Best Buddies’ mission and the lives impacted, I extend my deep gratitude to each of you who has supported this organization, making our mission a reality. Thank you for contributing to a better world for individuals with IDD.

Your continued support will be vital as we strive to propel our mission forward, recognizing that there is still much work to be done. Together, we will rise to the occasion to change lives through the transformative power of inclusion.

In Friendship,

Anthony K. Shriver,
Founder, Chairman & CEO, Best Buddies International
Why We Matter

Society has made undeniable progress in improving the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Yet, we still have a long way to go. Many people with IDD remain unemployed and do not experience the simple joys of genuine friendships and a significant portion of the IDD community still faces access barriers, pervasive social isolation and discrimination.

This is where Best Buddies International plays a vital role as a model of inclusion and catalyst for change. Best Buddies is the world’s largest organization committed to ending the social, physical and economic isolation that 200 million individuals with IDD often experience. For those within the IDD community, Best Buddies represents a pathway to forging lifelong friendships, securing gainful employment, achieving independent living and gaining the skills and confidence to advocate for themselves.

An estimated 81%* of adults (18+) with IDD do not have a paid job in the community. This is where the Best Buddies’ Jobs program steps in. The Best Buddies’ Jobs program helps participants with IDD prepare for and secure supportive employment. This is a mutually beneficial venture for job candidates with IDD, businesses offering employment and society as a whole: not only do participants have the potential to garner substantial benefits and earn a cumulative income exceeding $900,000 over a 30-year period, but these individuals can also contribute up to $153,000 in tax revenue and diminish the need for nearly $895,000 in federal SSI and Medicaid benefits during the same span.

This is just one of the countless ways Best Buddies improves the lives of individuals with IDD while simultaneously improving whole-of-society outcomes. Through the cultivation of meaningful one-on-one friendships, the pursuit of integrated employment, the provision of inclusive living arrangements and the nurturing of leadership skills, Best Buddies is fostering a world that is full of opportunity for individuals with IDD.

For more information, please visit BESTBUDDIES.ORG

Together, we can build a world where everyone belongs.
Carey Larkin is a passionate advocate for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), like her son, Asher. She became involved in Best Buddies after attending a Best Buddies event in California and returned to Tulsa, Oklahoma, determined to bring Best Buddies to her home state.

And she did just that.

In 2022, Asher was named the national Best Buddies Champion of the Year, raising over $123,000 through his campaign with his mission partner and stepsister, Alyssa Larkin.

“When I chose the name Asher, I did so because the name means ‘happy and blessed,’” Carey said. “It brings me so much joy to say that it perfectly describes Asher in who he is. In all my worries with his diagnosis, I have learned that Asher is the most well-adjusted, independent person. He can do anything he sets his mind to. To see Asher thriving as an advocate for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and knowing him the way that I do, I would not expect anything less.”

“The greatest gift people with IDD possess is their incredible ability to teach us a better way to see the world...Supporting Best Buddies is a rewarding experience, no matter your role with the organization.” - Carey Larkin

“Best Buddies is all about friendship and helping people; I want to be a part of that. Everyone deserves to feel included and have friends. Being a Champion is an awesome opportunity to spread the word about Best Buddies. The more people know about Best Buddies, the better our world will be!” – Asher Ward

A Parent's Perspective

Asher with his mother Carey
2022 Highlights

Launches

- Best Buddies opened new state offices in Georgia and South Carolina. Georgia, which opened in September, serves the Atlanta and Savannah markets. The South Carolina office, which opened in October, hired two local staff members to directly serve Greenville.

- Best Buddies in North Carolina opened a Jobs program in Charlotte, and Best Buddies in California (BBCA) opened a Jobs program in San Diego.

- The Jobs program helped 300 participants secure employment with TJX companies, bringing the program to over 1,000 total placements nationwide.

- Internationally, new offices were opened in Costa Rica, Dominica, El Salvador and Portugal, and the Jobs Program expanded into Costa Rica, Ecuador and Serbia.

- The Best Buddies Elementary Schools program launched, utilizing teaching tools to help young students form accepting and inclusive mindsets.

- Best Buddies launched the Transitions program to help students ages 14-21 identify career ambitions, develop employment and leadership skills, explore post-secondary education options and prepare for independent living.

- Best Buddies Living expanded, opening a location at the University of Miami in Coral Gables to join the pre-existing locations at Georgetown University and Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

Partnerships

- Best Buddies Jobs, in partnership with Accenture, created the Train the Trainer campaign, a comprehensive training program for Accenture’s staff to become supportive colleagues and managers to people with IDD. On June 27, Best Buddies Jobs hosted the first Train the Trainer event, an in-depth and interactive learning experience for 13 new members of Best Buddies in Chicago.

- Best Buddies Jobs additionally launched a national partnership with Shutterfly and its affiliated brands: Snapfish, Spoonflower, and Lifetouch. Throughout the year, the Shutterfly team attended a virtual event to learn about the organization, participated in Best Buddies’ programs, volunteered as event photographers and created a photography journal for Best Buddies program participants.
Milestones

1987 - 1996

• In 1987, Anthony Kennedy Shriver launches BESTBUDDIES® Colleges by founding the first Best Buddies chapter at Georgetown University.
• In 1988, the iconic Best Buddies logo was donated to Best Buddies by legendary pop-artist, Keith Haring.
• On January 19, 1989, Best Buddies is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, becoming America’s first national, unified, social and recreational program for people with IDD.
• In 1992, Best Buddies Global Headquarters office moves to Miami, FL.
• In 1993, Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® Citizens to pair adults with IDD in one-to-one friendships with their working peers who do not have disabilities.
• In 1994, Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® Jobs, a supported employment program targeting high-paying, corporate jobs for people with IDD.
• In 1995, Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® High Schools to pair special education students in one-to-one friendships with high school volunteers.
• In 1996, Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® Middle Schools to pair students with IDD in one-to-one friendships with middle school volunteers.

1999 - 2008

• In 1998, Best Buddies hosts the first Best Buddies Miami Gala.
• In 1999, Best Buddies launches e-BUDDIES®, a cutting-edge online friendship program.
• In 2000, Best Buddies holds the inaugural Best Buddies Challenge: Hyannis Port, a 100-mile bike ride from Boston to Hyannis Port.
• In 2003, Best Buddies has participants in all 50 states on the US.
• In 2004, Best Buddies launches the nationally televised inaugural Volvo Best Buddies Challenge: Hearst Castle, a 100-mile bike ride along the Pacific Coast Highway.

2009 - 2019

• In 2009, Best Buddies launches Best Buddies Friendship Walk.
• In 2010, Best Buddies has programs in 50 countries around the world.
• In 2011, Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® Ambassadors to teach participants with IDD communication and self-advocacy skills.
• In 2012, Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® Promoters, the first Best Buddies program open to elementary schools; the inaugural of the Best Buddies Challenge: Miami takes place and the first Best Buddies Champion of The Year Gala is hosted.
• In 2014, Best Buddies celebrates its 25th anniversary and also celebrates 25 years of the Best Buddies Leadership Conference.
• In 2017, Best Buddies holds the first Best Buddies Breakaway Camp: Malibu and hosts the inaugural Best Buddies’ Celebrating Mothers in Malibu, CA, with Global Ambassador Cindy Crawford and her daughter, Kaia Gerber.
• In 2019, Best Buddies launches its fourth mission pillar, BESTBUDDIES® Inclusive Living, to provide individuals with and without IDD an opportunity to live independently in a dynamic environment where they can learn, grow and thrive.

2020 - Current

• In 2020, Best Buddies introduces BESTBUDDIES® Ventures, with the first launch being BESTBUDDIES® X Rosetta Bakery in Miami, FL, creates jobs for individuals with IDD and operates as a profit center via a bakery and coffee shop partnership.
• In 2022, Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® Transitions to help prepare young adults with IDD for independence and inclusion in their communities as they move from school into adulthood.
• In 2022, Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® Elementary Schools to teach inclusion to a younger age group to create a lasting effect on societal norms for the next generation.
Best Buddies has been an integral part of my life for many years. I have done it since high school and it has given me friends and many opportunities to grow that I wouldn’t have gotten anywhere else. Catherine and I have actually been friends since the 5th grade but Best Buddies gave us something that we could still do together when our schedules started to change in high school. Catherine is my best friend and I hope we stay friends forever. My life is better with her in it.” - Allison

Best Buddies participants; Alex, Sean, Amber, Allison, Catherine and, Carol
Our Impact

3,387
Chapters

120,408*
Participants

1,204,080
Impacted

50
States

49
Countries

**One-To-One Friendship**

180
Elementary Schools

9,415
Citizens

4,102
e-Buddies

23,806
Colleges

14
Elementary School Chapters

1,535
High School Chapters

528
College Chapters

600
Middle School Chapters

**Integrated Employment**

37,675
Weekly Hrs. Worked

1,846,052
Yearly Hrs. Worked

$5,541,849
Yearly Wages Earned

$27,709,247
Yearly Taxes Paid

1,866
Participants Employed

**Leadership Development**

618
Middle School Promoters

56,855
High Schools

11,896
Middle Schools

180
Elementary Schools

850
Ambassadors

68
College Promoters

4,708
High School Promoters

352
Elementary Schools Promoters Chapters

261
High School Promoters Chapters

3,387
Promoters Chapters

85
Middle School Promoters Chapters

**Inclusive Living**

4
Four residences in Washington, D.C. (2), Miami, FL and Los Angeles, CA

All program stats are as of 12/31/2021, and reflect the most recent Best Buddies program year (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022).

*Total number of participants does not include residents in Living location(s) and participants in the new pre-ETS curriculum, not listed.
We are BEST BUDDIES®

Best Buddies International is the world’s largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Our programs empower the special abilities of people with IDD by helping them form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure successful jobs, live independently, improve public speaking, self-advocacy and communication skills, and feel valued by society.

Mission

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 and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Vision

To put Best Buddies out of business. Best Buddies envisions a world where people with IDD are so successfully integrated into schools, workplaces and communities that its current efforts and services will be unnecessary. Until that vision becomes a reality, the organization will continue to educate middle school, high school and college students, community members, corporations and employers about the emotional, functional, and natural needs and abilities of people with IDD.

Who We Serve

The IDD community that Best Buddies serves includes, but is not limited to, people with Down syndrome, autism, fragile X syndrome, Williams syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury and other undiagnosed disabilities.

Programs

Best Buddies programs sit on the four key mission pillars below: One-to-One Friendships, Integrated Employment, Leadership Development and Inclusive Living.
One-To-One Friendships
Builds friendships between people with and without IDD, offering social mentoring while improving the quality of life and level of inclusion for a population that is often isolated and excluded.

BEST BUDDIES, Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges, and Citizens
Creates an inclusive community for students and adults with IDD, helping them become socially integrated with their peers at every age.

e-BUDDIES
Provides opportunities for participants with and without IDD to develop one-to-one friendships online and create connections using the power of technology.

Integrated Employment
Secures jobs for people with IDD, allowing them to earn an income, pay taxes, and continuously and independently support themselves.

BEST BUDDIES, Jobs
Matches skilled, qualified individuals with IDD with businesses seeking enthusiastic and dedicated employees. Through the Jobs program, Best Buddies develops partnerships with employers, assists with the hiring process and provides ongoing support to the employee and employer.

Integrated Employment
An estimated 81% of adults (18+) with developmental disabilities do not have a paid job in the community. The Best Buddies Jobs program strives to place participants with IDD in supported employment, with the potential to receive benefits and earn a total income upwards of $900K over 30 years. In turn, these individuals will contribute $153K in taxes back into the economy, rather than receive nearly $895K in Federal SSI and Medicaid benefits during that time period.

Leadership Development
Educates and empowers people with and without IDD to become leaders, public speakers and advocates.

BEST BUDDIES, Ambassadors
Offers people with and without IDD the opportunity to gain the public speaking skills, self-esteem and confidence needed to successfully advocate for themselves, their peers and Best Buddies in communities and workplaces.

BEST BUDDIES, Promoters
Empowers youth to become advocates for people with IDD and help open new Best Buddies chapters and programs by organizing special events that promote awareness to the disability rights movement.

Inclusive Living
Provides an integrated experience in which people with and without IDD are active, contributing citizens – living independently in a dynamic environment where they can learn, grow, and thrive.

BEST BUDDIES, Living
Provides individuals with and without IDD an opportunity to live together in a vibrant, educational community that supports all residents in advancing their employment, financial literacy, continued education, and life skills as they work to achieve their personal goals.
Without love, support and friends, life may feel isolating – this is a reality people with IDD have faced throughout history. Best Buddies offers people with IDD the chance to have a friend, gain self-confidence and self-esteem and share interests, experiences and activities that many other individuals enjoy.

**BEST BUDDIES. Elementary, Middle, High Schools & Colleges**

Best Buddies offers students with IDD the opportunity to have a friend and enjoy common interests, experiences, and social activities in the Middle School, High School, and College programs. Each friendship pair commits to speaking and spending time together every week throughout the year. These programs create lasting friendships and help facilitate an environment of inclusion throughout the school and in the community.

**BEST BUDDIES. Citizens**

For people with IDD, the absence of meaningful friendships extends into adulthood. Best Buddies Citizens pairs adults with IDD in one-to-one friendships with adults without IDD in corporate and civic communities. Citizen buddy pairs commit to a one-year friendship in which they will talk once a week and see each other twice a month. These relationships commonly grow into friendships that last a lifetime.

**e-BUDDIES.**

This program creates social inclusion and friendships for people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in a virtual space. Technology is an integral part of society and by participating in e-Buddies, participants can develop the skills needed to communicate across a variety of platforms.

In 2022, e-buddies served 4,102 total participants. These participants exchanged more than 50,000 emails. e-Buddies was also used as a teaching tool in the classroom by more than 100 special education teachers and other professionals across the country.
Ryan was introduced to Best Buddies as a freshman in high school. Throughout high school, he developed a deep appreciation for the Best Buddies mission and what it can do for individuals with and without IDD.

“I could not have known how much I would learn from students with IDD,” Ryan said. “They have made me more outgoing, and I now not only look after myself but after the new friendships I have made as well.”

One of the most meaningful catalysts in Ryan’s transformation was his buddy, Timothy. Two years ago, Ryan was matched in a one-to-one friendship with Timothy. They instantly hit it off and became significant parts of each other’s lives.

“I love hanging out with my buddy, Ryan,” said Timothy. “We go bowling and play basketball together...he is just an all-around awesome guy.”

“I love Timothy’s energy,” Ryan said. “He is the kindest soul I’ve ever met and shows love towards everyone he meets.”

Their genuine connection has not gone unnoticed.

“In all my years of doing this, I have never seen a friendship like Ryan and Timothy’s,” their chapter advisor said. “Ryan will come to my room every day to hang out with Timothy for lunch, and he consistently makes an effort in their friendship.”

Ryan and Timothy’s meaningful friendship has inspired a culture of inclusion at their school. Ryan is now the chapter president and has had an active role in growing their presence on campus. Ryan and Timothy demonstrate that so much can be learned from individuals of all abilities when we have integrated classrooms, peer groups, and communities.
Best Buddies Jobs furthers the integration of people with IDD into the community through supported employment. The focus is on facilitating competitive, integrated job placements that allow participants to earn an income, pay taxes and work in an environment alongside their peers in the community, leading to full inclusion and independence. Coaching is provided in essential job interviewing skills, and once employment is secured, there is assistance with on-the-job training.

The Jobs program prides itself on developing employment opportunities in professional environments and focuses on white-collar jobs such as receptionist, mail room assistant, file clerk, office assistant, front desk assistant, and retail associate. Employers range from some of the top law firms and talent agencies to well-known retail businesses and luxury hotels.

There is 34 cities in 18 states with active Best Buddies Jobs program as of December 31, 2022.
The office is a very comfortable environment. Plus, it is dog-friendly, and I love dogs.” - Elaina

Elaina had long been searching for meaningful and inclusive employment in a role that would allow her to use her friendly personality and organizational skills. She landed an interview with kubik, an event management agency.

Upon entering the interview, it became immediately apparent that this would be an excellent place for her to work: kubik was passionate about Best Buddies’ mission and was excited to hire inclusively.

Elaina aced the interview and was hired as a receptionist in May 2022. She began working part-time and instantly identified her first goal: full-time employment.

Within a month, Elaina achieved that goal.

Elaina’s new full-time salary is over $66,000 per year, and she has also earned vacation and retirement benefits.

Elaina’s coworkers have been wowed by her work ethic and seamless fit into the company culture. Elaina welcomes everyone into the office, assists with paperwork for many staff, orders office supplies, monitors shipping, and creates and files documents.

Elaina now has a new goal: to transform this opportunity from a job into a career.

“The office is a very comfortable environment,” Elaina said, “Plus, the office is dog-friendly, and I love dogs.”

Elaina continually seeks to improve her skills, a goal that kubik is helping her achieve by slowly expanding her responsibilities.

The culture that kubik has created for individuals with IDD, in no small part due to Elaina’s success, has created the exact workplace culture that the Jobs program is built to develop. This change in workplace culture, spearheaded by employing Elaina, has brought about kubik’s desire to employ more individuals with an IDD.
Key Jobs Program Stats

- **Total Participants:** 2,853
- **U.S Participants:** 1,507
- **International Participants:** 1,346
- **Employed:** 1,866
- **Employed U.S Participants:** 90%
- **Average Hours Worked Weekly:** 20.28
- **Average Hours Worked Yearly:** 1,054.36
- **States with active Jobs Programs:** 18
- **Retirement Plan:** 31.39%
- **Paid Vacation/Sick Days:** 26.98%
- **Medical & Dental:** 15.21%
- **401K Plan:** 7.77%

Top 5 Jobs Participants Highest Salaries With Benefits

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<th>Name</th>
<th>State</th>
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<td>Elaina C.</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Vacation Pay, Retirement Plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jessica S.</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Dental Care, Medical Care, Retirement Plans, Sick Leave, Sick Pay, Vacation Pay, Vision Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathaniel M.</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Vacation Pay, Holiday Pay, Medical Care, Fitness Center, Dental Care, Sick Leave, Sick Pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denzel A.</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Vacation Pay, Holiday Pay, Retirement Plans, Sick Pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony S.</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Wellness Programs, Company Discount, Free or Reduced Meals</td>
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**Best Buddies Jobs Around The World**

- **Middle East**: Qatar (1)
- **Europe**: England (1), Netherlands (3), Russia (3)
- **Latin America & The Caribbean**: Brazil (1), Chile (10), Colombia (34), Dominican Republic (1), Mexico (3), Peru (1)
- **North America**: USA (34 cities in 18 states)

*Top 5 Jobs Participants Highest Hourly Rates*

- **Chantom P.**, Central Park Conservancy, New York, NY: $35.44 hourly wage
- **John H.** Civic Edge Consulting, San Francisco, CA: $33.22 hourly wage
- **Elaina C.** Kubik, Maryland, MD: $32.00 hourly wage
- **Nathaniel M.** Sunstone Partners Management, LLC, San Francisco, CA: $30.00 hourly wage
- **Jessica S.** Employment Development Department, Sacramento, CA: $30.00 hourly wage

*Global jobs stats are calculated based on total jobs participants and U.S. Average hours and wages.

** Represents benefits received by US BB Job participants.

*** All Jobs Program stats are as of 12/31/2022
Best Buddies educates and empowers people with and without IDD to become leaders, public speakers and change agents. Through the Ambassadors and Promoters programs, participants inspire their communities to build a more inclusive world for people with IDD.

**BEST BUDDIES, Ambassadors**

Best Buddies Ambassadors is a program that provides training for participants with and without IDD in speech writing, public speaking, and self-advocacy. Ambassadors develop the skills to share their life stories, promote Best Buddies programs, network, and, most importantly, advocate.

Ambassadors participate in trainings focused on the art of public speaking and advocacy. Once trained, they share their stories and become more involved and empowered as citizens. Ambassadors are encouraged to speak about opportunities for people with IDD, present at recruitment fairs and Best Buddies events, and develop partnerships in the community.

**BEST BUDDIES, Promoters**

Best Buddies Promoters empowers youth to become advocates for people with IDD by organizing and attending special events that promote inclusion. Students attending a school without a special education program can join a Promoters chapter to develop connections with people with IDD or can start one by contacting their local Best Buddies state office.

Each Promoters chapter is led by a chapter president from the student body and a faculty advisor and is assigned a Best Buddies staff person who offers regular support and guidance. Once formed, Promoters chapters host events, activities, and fundraisers where they advocate for people with IDD, and promote the Best Buddies mission.
“Hello everyone! My name is Hunter Huff, and I’ve been a proud member of Best Buddies for nine years. My life before joining this organization was very challenging. It was hard for me to make friends. I had issues socially connecting, and I only interacted with people at lunch, school events, birthday parties, and other social gatherings. One big reason I didn’t have a lot of friends is that not everyone understood who I was and that I was just a normal human being who just happened to be on the Autism spectrum.

During my sophomore year in high school, I attended a match party for Best Buddies, and I met my best buddy, Stefany. I also got to meet so many new people in that chapter as well. That same year, I danced all night at my first-ever Friendship Ball and enjoyed participating in the Friendship Walk. My buddy and I were able to develop a true friendship.

Since joining this organization, my life has changed immensely. I attend the Champion of the Year Gala, activities in the Citizens program, and volunteer for Best Buddies events such as the Best Buddies Friendship Ball. I also serve on the Best Buddies Friendship Walk Committee, speak at events and other presentations, and today, I am an official Best Buddies Global Ambassador. I enjoy helping others learn about our incredible mission and working to ensure that people like me are included in the community. It has opened so many doors for me and allowed me to have a social life.

Best Buddies creates opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live out their dreams and goals. Most of all, it changes attitudes by making sure people see me for my abilities and understand the importance of inclusion.

No doubt, Best Buddies has made an impact on my life. It has empowered me to be a better friend and has encouraged me to inspire others like me to be part of this global movement. Never be afraid to make a name for yourself, to stand up for what is right, to be a light, to use your voice, achieve your goals through hard work and positivity, and most importantly, know that you are loved, valued, and accepted.

Thank you for supporting Best Buddies. You have made an impact on my life! I can’t wait to see how many other people will be able to experience the power of friendship because of your efforts today. My name is Hunter Huff, and on behalf of our entire Best Buddies family, THANK YOU. Go Best Buddies!”

- Hunter, Best Buddies Ambassador
Supporting and empowering individuals with IDD to live as integrated, contributing members in the larger community is the next frontier in the movement to create a more inclusive society. Best Buddies Living fosters a dynamic environment where people with IDD can learn, grow and thrive.

**Best Buddies, Living**

The Best Buddies Living program encourages people with and without IDD to live together in a vibrant community that focuses on supporting residents in accomplishing their life goals and dreams.

The Best Buddies Living program supports inclusion by:

- Developing programs that foster an opportunity for residents to experience living with friends and colleagues. Programs include weekly shared meals, fitness classes, cultural events, holiday parties, social activities, and sports.

- Offering an environment that encourages the development of independent living skills, life-changing relationships, and educational pursuits in connection with a college or university. Through an affiliation with a nearby school, all residents can immerse themselves in campus life, attending sporting events and enjoying fitness and dining facilities alongside their student peers.

- Matching people with and without IDD in a residential experience, and providing a supportive environment that encourages full-time or part-time employment.

As of December 31, 2022, Best Buddies operated four Living residences; two in Washington, D.C. (Georgetown and Union Market), one in Miami, FL and one in Los Angeles, CA.
AnnCatherine
Best Buddies Living Resident
Georgetown, Washington D.C.

Anne Catherine, also known as AC by her friends, joined the Best Buddies Living program in Georgetown in September 2022—a decision that would shape her future in ways she never imagined.

AC’s story serves as a testament to the profound impact of our Best Buddies Living program and showcases the power of friendship, independence, and a supportive community.

“Being a resident at Best Buddies Living: Georgetown has been an incredible experience. One of my favorite parts is having the opportunity to learn and practice independent living skills. I’ve learned how to clean my apartment, do my laundry, and handle everyday tasks with confidence. These skills may seem small to some, but they have given me the independence I’ve always wanted. With every step, I feel a sense of pride and accomplishment, knowing that I am capable of taking care of myself.

Best Buddies Living is more than just a place to live. It’s a community filled with wonderful people who have become my family. I enjoy attending group events and dinners, where I get to meet and connect with others who understand me on a deeper level. We love activities like watching *The Bachelor*, working out together, and having movie nights. These experiences have created bonds that will last forever. The support and friendships I’ve found within this community have brought me lots of joy and happiness.

In addition to personal growth and connections, Best Buddies has also helped me in my professional journey. I work as an office specialist at Holland & Knight law firm, and it has been an incredible experience. It gives me a sense of purpose and an opportunity to make a difference in my own unique way.

Every day, I wake up knowing that I have a community of friends who support me, celebrate my successes, and stand by me during challenging times. Best Buddies has become a second family—a place where I am accepted, understood, and loved for who I am.

Being a part of Best Buddies Living has taught me that it is possible to live on your own and discover a whole new world of possibilities. You will find a sense of belonging in a community that celebrates you.”

- AnnCatherine, Best Buddies Living resident
International Programs

2022 was a year of remarkable growth and achievements for Best Buddies’ International Programs (IP).

Key Updates

• Streamlined country accreditation and enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization’s global programs
• Hosted an in-person staff forum in Santiago, Chile, that promoted worldwide engagement and collaboration.
• Hired a new program manager to introduce new perspectives and to help further our initiatives.
• Translated all leadership conference materials into Spanish.
• Expanded Best Buddies’ programs into the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Portugal, and we also expanded the Best Buddies Jobs program into Costa Rica, Ecuador and Serbia.

Looking ahead to 2023, IP aims to establish new regional government, corporate and foundation partnerships, strengthen current programs in operation, and successfully launch Best Buddies in Abu Dhabi, which is scheduled to be completed in the fall.
The purpose of special events is to garner support, funds, and awareness for the Best Buddies mission. There are numerous ways to get involved with Best Buddies events including attending, volunteering, and pursuing sponsorship opportunities.
Best Buddies Challenge: Hyannis Port

June 3-4, 2022 | Boston to Hyannis Port

The Best Buddies Challenge: Hyannis Port, presented by Core Hydration and Shaw’s and Star Market Foundation returned to Massachusetts for its 23rd year. The Challenge weekend kicked off Friday, June 3 with a dinner reception at John F. Kennedy Presidential Museum & Library. On Saturday, June 4, hundreds of riders took to the start line at the JFK Library for the picturesque 100-mile ride portion of the event, from Boston to Hyannis Port. The Challenge concluded with a New England-style clambake and live musical entertainment by the Manhattan Band.

Best Buddies Challenge: California

October 15, 2022 | Marin County, CA

The Best Buddies Challenge: California presented by Core Hydration & Safeway Foundation returned for its 19th year at a new host location: the picturesque Summit Skywalker Ranch.

Hundreds of cyclists, advocates, and celebrity supporters alike attended the event and took to the start line to ride 70 miles down the majestic coastal vistas and beautiful countryside in Marin County, California. Safeway Northern California Division President Karl Schroeder presented a $560,000 check presentation to Best Buddies International during the opening ceremonies, hosted by Best Buddies celebrity supporter Jason Lewis. Event participants enjoyed a VIP reception and dinner on Friday, followed by a luncheon on Saturday, to celebrate their efforts in advocating for inclusion.

Anthony K. Shriver with Best Buddies Ambassadors Matthew, Jermoe, Paul, and Stacey at the 2022 Best Buddies Challenge: California, presented by Core Hydration & Safeway Foundation
Best Buddies Challenge: Miami
November 18, 2022 | Miami, FL

Four-time Tour de France winner Chris Froome joined professional cyclists Magnus Sheffield and Cam Wurf for the Best Buddies Challenge: Miami Chaired by Kenneth C. Griffin Charitable Fund and presented by Andrew P. Barowsky Foundation, Core Hydration and Mack Cycle & Fitness in South Beach. The world-class 80-mile cycling event took over closed roads with a motorcycle police-escorted peloton. The Challenge was followed by the Best Buddies Miami Gala that evening.

Best Buddies Miami Gala
November 18, 2022 | Miami, FL

The 24th Annual Best Buddies Miami Gala celebrated Best Buddies’ programs in Qatar and honored Global Ambassador Cindy Crawford with the 2022 Spirit of Friendship Award, Best Buddies’ highest accolade presented to distinguished luminaries who have shown great leadership, generosity and spirit in supporting the organization’s mission. The event also featured a fabulous cocktail hour, a gourmet dinner, live and silent auctions, and a live performance by DJ Khaled.
Best Buddies Breakaway Camps

Best Buddies Breakaway Camps provided athletes with an elite-level, pro experience that aimed to offer participants a holistic approach to training. Special attention was given to riding more efficiently, proper rider nutrition, post-training recovery, and leaving with the foundations for a sustainable healthy lifestyle. The camps used Tour de France wisdom to craft a healthy training program applicable to the mature or the amateur athlete.

Malibu, CA

March 30 – April 3, 2022

Best Buddies Breakaway Camp: Malibu Presented by Core Hydration offered cyclists a world-class, five-day riding experience through the scenic canyon roads and rock-studded hillsides of the Santa Monica Mountains overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Base camped at the world-renowned Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village, cyclists ended each ride focused on recovery with daily massages and gourmet meals handcrafted by sports nutrition experts.

December 7 – December 11, 2022

The second Best Buddies Breakaway Camp: Malibu Presented by Core Hydration offered cyclists another opportunity to once again take to the familiar but beautiful training roads just north of Los Angeles.

Asheville, NC

September 21 – September 25, 2022

Best Buddies Breakaway Camp: Asheville Presented by Core Hydration offered riders a once-in-a-lifetime cycling experience, taking the cyclists to the top of Mount Mitchell, the highest point in the US east of the Mississippi River, and all throughout the iconic Blue Ridge Mountains.

Sonoma, CA

May 25 – May 29, 2022

Best Buddies Breakaway Camp: Sonoma Presented by Core Hydration was based out of the Farmhouse Inn in Forestville, CA, and brought participants through the wine country and redwoods of Sonoma County.
Best Buddies' Celebrating Mothers

May 7, 2022 | Malibu, CA

The 5th Annual Best Buddies’ Celebrating Mothers honored the gifts of love and friendship that mothers give to their children, especially the amazing mothers of our Best Buddies participants. The celebration also featured sumptuous cocktails, food, live performances, a special award ceremony honoring the Mother of the Year, Madeline Borkin and fun activities for the entire family. Rima Fakih, Former Miss USA/Best Buddies Talent Relations Board Member & Volunteer since 2010, presented a special award to an outstanding Best Buddies Ambassador, dancer and actor Joshua Felder.

Madeline Borkin, Disability Rights Advocate and Executive at the Institute for Corporate Productivity, being honored as Mother of the Year at the 2022 Best Buddies’ Celebrating Mothers

Best Buddies Balls & Proms

Best Buddies Balls/Proms are an exciting way for Best Buddies' state offices and chapters to celebrate friendship. Best Buddies participants are the stars of the show, and local program leaders help create a night that attendees will never forget.

Guests at the 2022 Best Buddies Prom in Tennessee
Best Buddies Friendship Walk

The Best Buddies Friendship Walk continued to grow and expand, raising awareness and funds to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The Best Buddies Friendship Walks are fundamental in supporting local Best Buddies programs dedicated to ending the social, physical, and economic isolation of the 200 million people worldwide with IDD.

In 2022, over 32,000 participants in more than 61 cities walked to move Best Buddies’ mission forward. Collectively, over $5 million was raised as participants, sponsors, volunteers, and public figures joined the movement that celebrates friendship, inclusion, and unity. Over the years, Best Buddies Friendship Walks have profoundly impacted communities nationwide, providing a platform for participants to showcase the Best Buddies mission. Each walk provides an atmosphere for new friendships, promising opportunities, and, most of all, inclusion for all people.

Best Buddies Champion of the Year

Best Buddies Champion of the Year is a competitive fundraising campaign that unites and recognizes leaders of inclusion in local communities across the country. Champion candidates commit to raising funds and awareness for their local Best Buddies programs. At the end of the campaign, a Champion of the Year celebration takes place to honor the nominees and name the ultimate Champion of the Year: the person who raised the most funds in the designated region.

Champion of the Year continues to see rapid growth and 2022 was a record-breaking year. In total, 48 events were held nationwide, over 365 Champion candidates were recruited, and $7.7 million was raised for Best Buddies, surpassing the fundraising goal by $1.2 million. The 2022 national Champion of the Year, Asher Ward, raised over $123,000 for Best Buddies in Oklahoma. Asher is the first national Champion of the Year with an intellectual or developmental disability.

Champion of the Year events not only raise critical funds for Best Buddies but also create opportunities for community leaders to become advocates for the mission of inclusion.
Best Buddies Leadership Conference

The 2022 Best Buddies Leadership Conference (BBLC) was hosted locally by each Best Buddies state office as an in-person experience this summer and brought together leaders in their communities to learn about the Best Buddies movement. For the first time since 2019, student leaders, volunteers and staff were reunited in-person to participate in leadership development training and create connections with their peers. Conference events were hosted throughout July and included 46 unique training experiences, including two virtual global forums, with over 2,250 Best Buddies leaders participating.

Attendees participated in a robust educational experience that included keynote presentations, interactive sessions, and peer-to-peer connections. Several Best Buddies offices provided team building activities as part of BBLC. Best Buddies in Wisconsin hosted a scavenger hunt at the Milwaukee County Zoo, Best Buddies in Florida held an overnight experience in Fort Lauderdale at the Museum of Discovery and Science, and Best Buddies in Maryland created a camp-themed event at a local outdoor center. The incredible connections made at BBLC highlighted the commitment of Best Buddies leaders around the world during a critical time in the organization’s history as it reemerged from pandemic programming.

The BBLC I See You Awards Celebration was hosted on Facebook on July 13 to celebrate the outstanding leaders, chapters and volunteers who make Best Buddies a global movement. During the virtual awards ceremony, the following schools and individuals were recognized:

2021-2022 Outstanding Chapters of the Year:
- Elementary School Chapter of the Year: Bixby West Elementary School, Oklahoma
- Middle School Chapter of the Year: Kahler Middle School, Indiana
- High School Chapter of the Year: Lehigh Senior High School, Florida
- College Chapter of the Year: University of South Carolina-Beaufort, South Carolina

Jobs Employee of the Year: Zach Smith, NFL Network

Outstanding International Country: Best Buddies in Mexico

Spirit of Courage: Margo Meley, Connecticut

Best Buddies looks forward to the return to the Indiana University campus and an in-person conference experience in 2023!
EKS Day

Created in 2010, Eunice Kennedy Shriver (EKS) Day serves as a unique opportunity to celebrate her legacy, indomitable spirit and life-long commitment to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Even during a time when society did not, Eunice Kennedy Shriver believed in the abilities of people with IDD and led the effort to end the physical and social isolation they endured.

EKS Day promotes a global call for individuals to commit to actions of change, inclusion, and acceptance for people with IDD. Across the United States and in 100 countries, EKS Day is celebrated with love, justice, faith, hope and courage – her five key values. Activities included sports clinics, picnics, leadership trainings and disability rights awareness efforts.

March
Best Buddies Month

What began as a one-day celebration of the Best Buddies mission evolved into a month-long festivity to reflect on the importance of inclusion and acceptance for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities every March. In 2022, the celebration began with the annual Spread the Word: Inclusion campaign that encouraged participants to showcase how they promote inclusion in their communities. Throughout the month, participants hosted virtual chapter parties, awareness activities, and engagement campaigns to honor their unity in advancing opportunities for friendship, employment, leadership development, and inclusive living.
# Financials

## Consolidated Statement of Activities* (as of 12.31.22)

### Domestic Revenue

- **Total Domestic Revenue**: $33,814,848
  - Special Events: 36% ($12,273,176)
  - Individual: 8% ($2,712,414)
  - Foundations: 18% ($6,004,362)
  - Government: 34% ($11,410,711)
  - Other**: 4% ($1,414,185)

### Domestic Expenses

- **Total Domestic Expenses**: $32,108,839
  - Programs: 81% ($25,931,940)
  - Administration: 13% ($4,317,486)
  - Fundraising: 6% ($1,859,413)

### Domestic Net Asset Summary

- **Net Assets (beginning of year)**: $33,193,893
- **Change in Net Assets**: $1,706,009
  - Net Unrealized Gains (Losses) on Investments: (2,509,312)
- **Net Assets (end of year)**: $32,390,590

**Statement of Activities for calendar year 2022 based on Best Buddies International’s Form 990**

**“Other” represents revenue generated from a collection of sources including; Chapter Dues, Annual Best Buddies Leadership Conference, Investment Income and Cause-Related Marketing.**

**Gross consolidation of International Licensees that operate as their own NGOs.**

---

*Justin, Best Buddies Ambassador*
## Balance Sheet (as of 12.31.22)

### Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$7,313,045</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>$19,507,969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>$59,382</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions receivable, net</td>
<td>$1,156,818</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant receivable</td>
<td>$3,199,445</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inventory artwork</td>
<td>$58,359</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>$523,258</td>
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<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td>$31,818,276</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Property and Equipment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
<td>$461,645</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture and equipment</td>
<td>$85,105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auto</td>
<td>$24,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Property and Equipment, Cost</strong></td>
<td>$1,723,223</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less Accumulated Depreciation</td>
<td>($555,250)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Property and Equipment, Net</strong></td>
<td>$1,167,973</td>
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</table>

### Right-of-Use Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financing lease right-of-use, net of amortization</td>
<td>$78,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating lease right-of-use, net of amortization</td>
<td>$3,529,660</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Right-of-Use Assets</strong></td>
<td>$3,607,948</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Assets

| Category                                                        | Amount           |
|                                                               |                  |
| Long-term contributions receivable, net                        | $871,212         |
| Security deposits                                              | $91,665          |
| Investments - Rosetta Bakery x Best Buddies                    | ($66,160)        |
| Investments - deferred compensation plan                       |                  |
| **Total Other Assets**                                         | $896,717         |
| **Total Assets**                                               | $37,490,914      |

### Liabilities and Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Liabilities</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>$655,830</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>$606,706</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compensated absences payable</td>
<td>$125,948</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current portion of financing liabilities</td>
<td>$31,540</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current portion of operating liabilities</td>
<td>$1,069,510</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$2,489,534</td>
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<td><strong>Long-Term Liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>Security deposit</td>
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<td>Deferred compensation plan liability</td>
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<td>Long-term portion of financing liabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term portion of operating liabilities</td>
<td>$2,541,191</td>
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<td><strong>Total Long-Term Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$2,611,090</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$5,100,624</td>
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<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>With donor restriction</td>
<td>$5,425,751</td>
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<tr>
<td>Without donor restriction</td>
<td>$26,964,539</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>$32,390,290</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Total Liabilities and Net Assets | $37,490,914 |
Board of Directors

Brad Blank
President/Attorney
Brad Blank & Associates, Inc.

Olivia Culpo
Actress

Mark DeVincentis
Managing Director
Crescent Capital Group LP

Tamsen Fadal
TV Anchor, Executive Producer & Author

Joshua Felder
Global Ambassador
Best Buddies International

Robert Friedman
Partner
Holland & Knight

Aaron Gershenberg
Managing Partner
SVB Capital

Todd Michael Glaser
Developer

Evan Hainey
Partner
Untitled Entertainment

Stephen T. Hearst
VP & GM of Western Properties
The Hearst Corporation

Alexander Hernandez-Dessauer
Partner/Principal Ernst & Young

Gerard A. Klingman, CFP
President
Klingman & Associates

Carl Lewis
U.S. Olympic Gold Medalist

Chris Lindstrom
Professional Football Player
Atlanta Falcons

James Lintott
Chairman
Sterling Foundation Management

William V. Powers
Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Cambridge Mobile Telematics

Thomas Quick
Philanthropist

Anthony Kennedy Shriver
Founder, Chairman & CEO
Best Buddies International

Eunice K. Shriver II

Tom Sullivan
Founder
Lumber Liquidators

Garett Tomasek
Young Leaders Council Chair
Best Buddies International

Ralph Winter
Founder
Corestate Capital Group

Bernie Yuman
President
Bernie Yuman Mgmt.

Eunice K. Shriver II

Tom Sullivan
Founder
Lumber Liquidators

Garett Tomasek
Young Leaders Council Chair
Best Buddies International

Ralph Winter
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Corestate Capital Group

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Eunice K. Shriver II

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Lumber Liquidators

Garett Tomasek
Young Leaders Council Chair
Best Buddies International

Ralph Winter
Founder
Corestate Capital Group

Bernie Yuman
President
Bernie Yuman Mgmt.
Executive Team

Honorary Board Members

Eunice Kennedy Shriver
Founder, Special Olympics Int.

Keith Allen Haring
Pop Artist, Creator of the Best Buddies Logo
Our Supporters

CORPORATIONS

$500,000 and Above
CORE Hydration
Safeway Foundation

$250,000 to $499,000
Andrew P. Barowsky Foundation
Ansin Foundation/Channel 7 Foundation & WSVN/WHDH MOD Pizza
Pratt Holdings, Inc.
Rolex Watch U.S.A., Inc.
Shaw’s & Star Market Foundation
The TJX Companies, Inc.
Wedu, Inc.

$100,000 to $249,999
Accenture
Hearst Corporation/Steve & Barbara Hearst
John Drew/Crossover Ventures
Klingman & Associates
Live Nation Worldwide, Inc.
Sterling Foundation Management/ Jim Lintott & May Liang
PLAN - Planned Lifetime Assistance Network of MA & RI
Silicon Valley Bank
Sun Capital Partners Foundation/
Marc Leder
The Albertsons Companies Foundation
The GEO Group Foundation, Inc./
George & Donna Zoley
The Kenneth C. Griffin Charitable Fund
Wells Fargo & Company

$50,000 to $99,999
Absolute HCBS LLC
Anthem, Inc.
Bader Philanthropies, Inc.
Bank of America
Citizens Bank Corporate Giving Program
E & J. Gallo Winery
Janssen
KFORCE
Meelain Enterprises A.V.V.
MoneyGram Foundation
Sephora USA, Inc.
SGII Inc
Wealth Management & Trust
Wilmington Trust

$25,000 to $49,999
AbbVie
Admiral Transfer & Rigging
AETNA INC.
Allianz Life Insurance Company of
North America
Bank of Hawaii
Blue Cross Blue Shield of
Massachusetts
Braman Motors
Brauer Material Handling
Crescent Capital Group
Dart Group Foundation Inc
Eaton Vance Management/Morgan Stanley/Parametric
Enterprise Holdings
Fifth Generation Inc.
Holland & Knight LLP
Insight Global
Kelly Services
Lawrence A. Moens Associates, Inc.
Mack Cycle & Fitness
MALS PALS
Mark Edward Partners LLC
Match Group
Mercedes-Benz
Merck - HQ
Midland National Life Insurance Company

$10,000 to $24,999
ABC Promotions Unlimited Inc.
Altria Group Inc.
American Equity Investment
Life Ins. Co.
Ansys, Inc.
Arc Stores
Arizona Coyotes Foundation
Atlantic Management Corporation
BankUnited, N.A.
BlackRock Financial Management, Inc.
Bloomberg L.P.
BNY Mellon
Buffalo Sabres Foundation
Canon
Channel RE LLC
Chesire Half Marathon
Climatec, LLC
Compass Group - National
Headquarters
Cooper’s Steel Fabricators, Inc.
CSAA Insurance Services, Inc.
Diversant ACS Solutions
DLA Piper LLP
DNICORP
Dome Construction
Douglas Elliman Real Estate
Eastern Bank Foundation
Genovese Jolove & Battista PA
GTE Financial & Foundation
Hand2Mind
Hardwick Tactical Corporation
Health Care Service Corporation
Impact Wayv, Inc.
JOH Kids 360
Jones Lang LaSalle America Inc.
Kendra Scott LLC
Kokua Na Lani
KOVAR
Kramer Casey Enterprises
Royal Media Partners
Lipscomb University
Loan Pronto, Inc
MAG Aerospace
McCormick & Co., Inc.
Meaningful Beauty, LLC
Midstate Auto Group Inc
Moore Communications Group, Inc.
Movement Mortgage Foundation
Nordson Corporation Foundation
Northeast Florida Association of
Realtors Inc.
Ocean Automotive Group
Old National Bank Foundation
Ole Smoky Distillery, LLC
Oracle Corp
Participant Media, LLC
PECO Corporate Relations
Pentair Management Company
Phantom Administrative, LLC
Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation
Prairie Meadows
Promoter Line Incorporated Festival & Concert Division
Qintel
RBC Capital Markets, LLC
Rock-It Cargo U.S.A., LLC
Royal Yacht SARL
Sandy Spring Bank
Shulman, Rogers, Gandal, Pordy & Ecker, P.A.
Speedway Children’s Charities
Spotify - US Headquarters
SPT Inc.
Sullivan Investment Corporation
Suncoast Federal Credit Union Foundation
Swire Properties Inc.
Tavistock Development Management, LLC
Team Construction, LLC
The Advance Financial Foundation
The Bellamy Companies LLC

Anthony K. Shriver with ambassadors and actor Jason Lewis (far right), receiving a check donation from Karl Schroeder, Safeway Northern California Division President, at the 2022 Best Buddies Challenge. California, presented by Core Hydration & Safeway Foundation
The Comcast NBC Universal Foundation
The Driven Group LLC
The Meltzer Group
The National Football League Foundation
The PNC Charitable Trusts
The Town of Golden Beach
The U.S. Charitable Gift Trust
The Walt Disney Company
TheraPeeds Inc.
TUUCI LLC
United Phoenix Firefighters Association, Inc.
Universal Music Group - Santa Monica
Value Store It Management, Inc.
Vegas Golden Knights Foundation Inc.
Warren Averett Companies LLC
Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.
Wool-Bittman Charitable Lead Trust

$5,000 to $9,999

33 Floors
4R Ventures LLC
Abarta CC Beverage LLC
Abdo Consulting Group, Inc.
AdventHealth
All Community Events
Ally Financial Inc.
Anheuser-Busch
Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield
Aramark Global Business Services
Barket Epstein
Baywood Hotels Inc.
Berchem Moses PC
BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Community Trust
BMO Harris Bank
Bose McKinney & Evans LLP
Brabants Enterprises Inc.
Brandon Hyundai
Brunello Cucinelli USA Retail, LLC
Buch Construction, Inc.
Business Computer Rentals LLC
Businessolver Foundation
BWG Strategy, LLC
Capital One - McLean
Car Crafters, Inc.
Cardinals Charities
Career Group Companies
CentiMark
Charlotte Knights Charities
Chevron Products Company
Christopher’s Fine Jewelry
Cognizant
Colliers International - WA
Commonwealth Edison Company
Continental Casualty Company
Coza Technologies, L.L.C.
Credit Union of Texas
Culinary Institute LeNotre
Current Builders Construction Services, Inc.
DDA Services, Inc.
Delaware North Companies Sport Services, Inc.
Deloitte Services LP
Elder Law Firm of Kinser & Fuller
Employee’s Community Fund of The Boeing Company
EM-Power Services, Inc.
Envoy Global
Equitable Trust
Eventbrite, Inc.
Evolution Risk Advisors, Inc.
Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company of Iowa
Farnam Street Financial, Inc.
Findlay
First Hawaiian Bank
Florida Power & Light Company
Focalpoint Securities, LLC
Founders Series of Lockton Companies, LLC
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
Frontstream
Glens Falls National Trust And Investment Group
Goldman Sachs Gives
Good Karma Brands Milwaukee, LLC
Goodman Campbell Brain & Spine
Harvest Sensations
Hawaii Protective Association, LLC
Hilton
Hyannis Air Service, Inc.
Hy-Vee, Inc.
Inktel
International Paper
Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
J.C. Edwards Corporation
J.E. Dunn Construction Company
J.P. Morgan Charitable Giving Fund
Johnson Bank
Johnson, Mirrman & Thompson
Engineering A Brighter Future
Junior League of Indianapolis
Kosair Charities Committee, Inc.
Law Offices Of Samer Habbas & Associates
Layton Construction Company, LLC
Lemonade Insurance Agency, LLC
M. A. Mortenson Company
Major League Baseball Players Trust
Matson, Inc.
Miami United Way, Inc.
Memorial Healthcare System
Miami University
Misericordia Home
Modern Woodmen Fraternal Financial
Montgomery College
Networking To Help Children Inc
Nicoz Gas
North Shore LI Chapter of Unico National
Northwest Pump & Equipment Co.
Otis Elevator Company
Outfront
Park Hotels and Resorts
Phantom Fireworks
Philips
PNC Foundation
Polk County Auditor’s Office
Prisma Health
Property Works
Publix Super Markets Charities, Inc.
Reliaquest
Rhino Capital Advisors LLC
Roger Reynolds, CPA
Ronald Book PA
RSM US LLP
Sandia National Laboratories
SBM Management Service, LP
Sea Otter Securities Group LLC
Sodexo, Inc. & Affiliates
Sonik Automotive Inc.
STAG Industrial, Inc.
Sun Communities Operating LP
Sun Life Financial
Synergy Productions LLC
Technology Advice
Texas Roadhouse Intermediary LLC
The Boerke Company, Inc.
The Cellular Connection, LLC
The E.W. Scripps Company
The J.M. Smucker Company
Timothy E. McNutt, Sr. D.D.S.
Total Wine & More
TTexiles LLC
TUV Investments LLC
UMPCH Changing Medicine
Umqua Bank Charitable Foundation
United Food And Commercial Workers Union
UNM Hospitals
USPS Money Order
Variety - the Children’s Charity
ViStar Credit Union
Wasabi Ankeny
WHAS Crusade For Children, Inc.
Zuckerman Gravely Management, Inc.

FOUNDATIONS

$250,000 to $499,000
Taft Foundation

$100,000 to $249,999
Fundacion MAPFRE
May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust
Stavros Niarchos Foundation
The Frederick A. Deluca Foundation
The Golisano Foundation

$50,000 to $99,999
Accenture
Bader Philanthropies, Inc.
Delman Family Charitable Fund
Fidelity Investments
Liberty Mutual Foundation
M.J. Murdoch Charitable Trust
MoneyGram Foundation
PHLY Foundation
Poston Gardens Foundation Inc
The Batchelor Foundation, Inc.
The Genentech Foundation
The Jim Moran Foundation
The Moody Endowment
The Sharon D. Lund Foundation
The Tepper Foundation
Tina and Richard V Carolan Foundation, Inc.
VoLo Foundation

$25,000 to $49,999
AbbVie
Achelis and Bodman Foundation
CenterPoint Energy Foundation
Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust

 Enterprise Holdings
Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation Inc.
Hawaii Community Foundation
Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation
Kessler Foundation
Manpowergroup Foundation Inc.
Mosaic Global Sales LLC
PwC Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Taco Bell Foundation, Inc.
Texas Mutual
The Anthony R. Abraham Foundation
The Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation
The Carl C. Anderson Sr. & Marie Jo Anderson Charitable Foundation
The Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norrise Foundation
The Merancas Foundation Inc
The Rees-Jones Foundation
The Walt Disney Company
United Way of Central New Mexico
William S. Abell Foundation

$10,000 to $24,999
Anne L. and George H. Clapp Charitable and Educational Trust
APT Family Charitable Activities
Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas Community Foundation
Connelly Foundation
Donald B and Dorothy L Stabler Foundation
DuPage Foundation
Fairfield County Community Foundation
George Kaiser Family Foundation
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Harper Family Foundation
IPA Foundation
Jack Buncher Foundation
Jana Foundation Inc.
June Rockwell Levy Foundation
Karpus Family Foundation
KOVAR
Libra Foundation
Maine Community Foundation
Marr-Anderson Family Foundation
Merrill Family Foundation Inc
New Mexico Oil and Gas Association
Nora Roberts Foundation Inc
Nordson Corporation Foundation
Old National Bank Foundation
OrthoIndy Foundation
Peter and Elizabeth Tower Foundation
Rochester Area Community Foundation Depository, Inc.
Speedway Children’s Charities
Suncoast Federal Credit Union Foundation
TD Charitable Foundation
Tempe Diablos Charities, Inc.
Texas Women’s Foundation
The Dreher Foundation Inc.
The Eamon Foundation
The Feigenbaum Foundation
The G.R. Lincoln Family Foundation
The George C. Marshall Foundation
The Graham and Carolyn Holloway Family Foundation
The Laffey McHugh Foundation
The Sorenson Legacy Foundation
The Thomas W. Bradley Foundation Inc.
The Waive Foundation Inc.
Valley Kids Foundation
Vanguard Charitable
Wells Fargo Foundation
$5,000 to $9,999
Commonwealth Edison Company
Cralle Foundation Inc
Crosier Family Foundation
Field Family Foundation
Freeman E. Fairfield Foundation
George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation
George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation
GN Wilcox Trust
Greater Washington Community Foundation
International Paper
Junior League of Indianapolis
Kelley Foundation
Major League Baseball Players Trust
Matthew A. and Mildred Hunter Foundation
Mauri United Way, Inc.
McNerney Foundation
Million Dollar Round Table Foundation
Networking to Help Children Inc
Nicer Gas
Nusenda Foundation
Phillips Charitable Foundation Inc
Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation
PNC Foundation
PNM Resources Foundation
Richard R. & Karen Bertrand Charitable Fund
Roes Family Foundation
Rotary Club of Deerwood Charities, Inc.
Sandia National Laboratories
Shutterfly
Stackner Family Foundation Inc
State Farm Companies Foundation
Target Foundation
Tesorri Family Foundation Inc
The Albert and Ethel Herzstein Foundation
The Bloedorn Foundation
The Carolina Panthers Charities
The Chorro Foundation
The Fuller Foundation, Inc.
The Gheens Foundation
The Glens Falls Foundation
The Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation
The James & Juli Boehm Foundation
The John E. Fogarty Foundation
The Katharine Matthes Foundation
The Lindy Lou Foundation
The National Football League Foundation
The Silicon Valley Bank Foundation
The William & Sheila Konar Foundation
Umpqua Bank Charitable Foundation
Valley Community Foundation Variety - The Children’s Charity

GOVERNMENT

$500,000 and Above
California Department of Developmental Services
Florida Department of Education
Illinois Department of Human Services
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
Texas Education Agency
U.S. Department of Education

$250,000 to $499,000
Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
New Mexico Public Education Department
$100,000 - $249,999
Boston, Massachusetts Public Schools
California Department of Rehabilitation
Central Valley Regional Center
Connecticut Department of Developmental Services
Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services
Indiana Department of Education
Maryland Department of Health
Maryland State Department of Education
Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services
Miami-Dade County, Florida Office of Management and Budget
New Jersey Department of Workforce Development
New York Office of Persons with Developmental Disabilities
Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

$50,000 to $99,999
Arizona Department of Economic Security
Delaware Legislature
Harbor Regional Center
Indiana Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services
Mauicounty, Hawaii Department of Housing and Human Concerns
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
Miami-Dade County, Florida Public Schools
New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
New York Adult Career & Continuing Ed Services, VR
Regional Center of Orange County
Rhode Island Office of the Post-Secondary Commissioner
Social Security Administration
State of Kentucky
Texas Workforce Commission
Utah Department of Human Concerns

Westside Regional Center
$25,000 to $49,999
Alta Vista Regional Center
Cuyahoga County, Ohio
Fairfax County, Virginia
Iowa Department of Education
Montgomery County, Maryland
Department of Human Services
Peoria Care and Treatment Board, Illinois
Regional Center of the East Bay
San Andreas Regional Center
U.S. Department of State

$10,000 to $24,999
Anne Arundel County, Maryland
Bernalillo County, New Mexico
College of New Jersey
Golden Gate Regional Center
Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities
Lanterman Regional Center
Maricopa County, Arizona
Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services
Polk County, Iowa
Shelby County, Tennessee
St. Louis, Missouri, Office of Developmental Disabilities
Salt Lake City, Utah
Tempe, Arizona
Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services

$5,000 to $9,999
BlueCare Tennessee
Butler County, Ohio
City of Gilbert, Arizona
City of Peoria, Arizona
Community Services Board
Fairfax County, Virginia

Fairfax County, Virginia
Franklin County, Ohio
Indiana Division of Developmental Disabilities Services
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania
Scottsdale, Arizona

TOP FUNDRAISING TEAMS

$250,000 and Above
Team Silicon Valley Bank (SVB)

$100,000 to $249,000
Team Eaton Vance/MSIM/Parametric
Team Guardino
Team King James Buddies
Team MACK Cycle
Team Natixis

$50,000 to 99,000
Team Steptoe

$25,000 to $49,000
Team Current Builders
Team Kates & Barlow
Team MAG
Team Mals Pals
Team Miami Country Day Upper School
Team New York Life NH
Team Real Fun Content
Team ServiceNow
Team Smart & Horford
Team Snyk
Team Sunshine
Team Volvo
Team Webcor

$10,000 to $24,000
Team $ GOAT $
Team 603 Pride
Team Academy of the Holy Names
Team Ashleie Coffman Courage

Cyclists on Team SVB at the 2022 Best Buddies Challenge: Hyannis Port, presented by Core Hydration and Shaw’s and Star Market Foundation
PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS

**Agriculture**
Devil Mountain Nursery
Empower Farms

**Animal Services**
Bark Public
Barking Bad
Camp Bow Wow

**Construction**
Consor

**Arts & Culture**
Aurora Hill Library
Bryant Park
Capital One Hall
Houston Museum of Natural Science
Lyric Opera of Chicago
Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth
Museum of Contemporary Art
Old Sturbridge Village
Pinspiration
Sacramento Childrens Museum
Shedd Aquarium
The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis

**Automotive**
Advance Auto
Advance Auto Parts
ATCS PLC
Evanston Subaru
Findlay Toyota
Koons Tysons Toyota
Lightbourn Equipment Company
Lithia Subaru of Fresno
Miami Lakes AutoMall
Ocean Mazda
South Bay MINI / BMW

**Communications**
ActiveCampaign
Atena Partners
Civic Edge Consulting
Conill Advertising
Dupree Miller & Associates
Gannett Company, Inc
Kel & Partners
Komit Digital
kubik
Participant Media
Team One
Williams Lea
WSVN News

**Education**
Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
Alcott Elementary School
Alexandria City High School
Alpine Elementary
Ben Davis University High School
Big and Tiny
Bishop Moore Catholic High School
Boston University
Bright Horizons Newton
Catholic University
City of South San Francisco-Sieberker Center
Clark County School District
Coleen Hoose Elementary
Curley Academy
Dana Middle School
Dean College
Dunlap High School Unit 323
Genessse Community Services
Good Hope Tutoring Services
Gordan Jewish Community Center
Harvard University Health Services
Holy Spirit School
ISP Management at Northeastern University
Ivy Prep Early Learning Academy
JRE Lee Educational Center - Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Kerman Unified School District
KinderCare
Miami Dade County Public Schools
Montessori School in Holmes Run
Montgomery County Public School-New York Public Library - 5th Ave
Port View Preparatory
Promise Child Development Center
Richardson ISD
Robert Morgan Educational Center
Scottsdale Unified School District
Shorelight Education
Sodexo @ Anna Maria College & Assumption University
Springstone Montessori
The Learning Experience
The Work Family Connection
UCLA Career Center
UCLA Department of Intercollegiate Athletics
UMASS Lowell
Virtuous Inc.
Wachusett Regional School District
Waxahachie Family YMCA
Worcester Child Development Head Start
Worcester Public Schools

**Employer**
Department of Rehabilitation Menlo Park
Disneyland Resort
H-E-B
Kroger Oakland/Normal
Lionsgate
Michael Page
Office Depot-820
Restoration Pizza

**Facilities Management**
ABM Facilities
Accenture Dallas
Ally Universal Security
Anderson Security
ARCA
CBRE Microsoft
Cushman and Wakefield
District Private Security
ESFM @ Google X
Ibis Gulf and Country Club
JLL
Lutheran Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center
North East Security
PHD Services
SBM
Service Systems Associates-Zoo Miami
Sodexo @ Merck
The Bay Club

**Finance & Insurance**
Amwins
Amwins CC3
Bank of America
Bank of New York Mellon
Boston Private
Crescent Capital
Eaton Vance
Finaccess Advisors, LLC.
H.I.G. Capital, L.L.C.
IMC Financial Markets
Imperial Capital
JLL@Capital One
John Hancock
Kayne Anderson Capital Advisors, LP
Klingman and Associates
Mapfre Insurance
Mastercard Worldwide
Morgan Stanley
National Tax Group
Natixis Global Asset Management, L.P.
Natixis Investment Managers
Randstad Technologies
Red Mountain Properties/Ocedan Properties/US Loan Servicing
Silicon Valley Bank
Sunstone Partners Management, LLC

**Fitness**
Blink Fitness
Club Sport Fit
Franklin Family YMCA
Northwest YMCA
YMCA

**Food & Beverage**
99 Restaurant
Amazon
Amazon Fresh
AMC Dine In Theater
Anise
Apple Bees
ASM - Aquarium of the Pacific
Bahama Buck’s
Bertucci’s Italian Restaurant
Best Buddies X Rosetta Bakery
Bickford Senior Living Home
Big Bowl
Bishop Moore Catholic High School
BJ’s Restaurant & Brewhouse
BJ’s Wholesale
Blaze Pizza Disney Springs
Bon Appétit at Google
Bosque Brewing Company
Cafe Blu
Capital One Restaurant Associates
Carrabba’s Italian Grill
CAVA
Centerville Pies - Sandwich
Chartwell’s
Cheesecake Factory
Chick-fil-A
Chili’s
Clean Juice
Compass Group
Law Firms
A Legal
Baskett Epstein Kearon Aldeia & LoTurco
Bielsinsa Law
Chasen and Boscolo
Elder Law Firm of Kirson & Fuller
Fried Frank Harris Shriver & Jacobson
Gelfand, Rennert & Feldman
Holland & Knight
Kates & Barlow
Latham & Watkins
Manatt, Phelps &Phillips, LLP
Pacific Workers’ Compensation Law Center
Rayas Law
Seyfarth Shaw
Shuffle Lowman
Shulman, Rogers, Gandal, Pordy & Ecker, P.A.
The Ferraro Law Firm

Manufacturing/Distribution
AAA Candle Company
ABF Freight
Amazon Fulfillment
Atlas Embroidery & Screen Printing
Baby K’tan
BrandsMart USA
Caterpillar
Eggers Imprints
Good 360
Hermes Deliveries
Independent Purchasing Cooperative
Lake Country Manufacturing
LOGO Brands
Northrop Grumman
NPW Companies South Dade
Office Depot
Park Street Companies
Premiere Collectibles
Primary Colors, Inc.
RDS Same Day Delivery
Sakura Finetek USA, Inc.
Telamon - Kem Krest
The UPS Store
Tucci
Valin Corporation

Non-Profit/Foundations
Best Buddies
Central Park Conservancy
Chicago Park District
Dave & Mary Alper Jewish Community Center
Developmental Disabilities Service Organization (DDSO)
Goodwill - ROC
Harbor Regional Center
Institute for Community Inclusion
Los Angeles Habilitation House
QSAC
Second Muse
Special Olympics Northern California
St. John XXIII Catholic Community
Support for Families of Children with Disabilities
The Mentor Network
Westside Regional Center
YMCA

Recreation
Amelia Earhart Park - Miami Dade County
Busch Gardens- Tampa
Fidelity Bank Worcester Ice Center
Learning Tree Daycare
Lucky Strike
Marcus Theatre-2521
Maryland Farms YMCA
Mt Pleasant Ice Arena
National Aquarium
Presidio Golf Course
Princeton University Athletics
Sloomoo Institute

Retail
99 Cent Only Store
99 Cents Only Store (#266)
AEG/Meandisising- Staples Center
Aventura Mall
Bargains In A Box
Barnes & Noble Cool Springs
Bath and Body Works
Big Lots
Big Y
BJ’s Wholesale Club
Boot Factory Outlet
Bristol Farms-Santa Monica
Build A Bear (Store 9)
Burlington
Confidence Shoppe
Cost Plus World Market
Costco
Crate & Barrel
CVS
Dick’s Sporting Goods
Dillard’s
Discount Welds
Disney Store
Divine Flowers
Dollar General
Doug Russell Marine
El Super
Finish Line
Goodwill - Fresno (Blackstone / Sierra)
GoodWill Land of Lincoln
Goodwill Whitestown
Goodwill-Greater East Bay
Hallmark Gold Crown
H-E-B
Home Depot
Home Depot
Home Goods
HomeSense
Hot Topic
Hunters Creek- Once Upon a Child
Hy-Vee
Jewel-Osco
Jonde
Kesslers Diamonds
Kohls
Kroger
LEGOLAND Discovery Center Boston
Lowe’s & Lowe’s Home Improvement
Lululemon
Macy’s Cycl
Macy’s Furniture Gallery
Market 32
Marshalls
Michaels
MOOms Organic Market
Nike
Nordstrom- Espresso Bar
Nouria Energy
Office Depot
Office Max
Onec Upon a Child
Pavilions
Pemberton Farms Marketplace
Primark
Publix
Ralphs
Sam’s Club
Sav A Lot
Scentnational Shoppe
Sephora
Sierra
Smart & Final
Stop and Shop - Edison
T. J. Maxx
Target
The Fresh Market - Delray
The Home Depot
Thrift on Blackstone (MCC Thrift Shop)
Under Armour
UNTUCKit
Vector Marketing
Vons
Walgreens
Walmart
Wawa
Weis Market
Wild Cat Tees LLC

Sports & Entertainment
AMC
Arizona Coyotes
Axe Hockey Group
Boston Red Sox
Charlotte Knights Baseball
D.C. United
Entertainment Industry Foundation
Grand Ole Opry
Madison Square Garden
Milwaukee Brewers
Monumental Sports & Entertainment
Nashville Predators
Nashville Sounds
National Football League
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra
NewTV
NY Giants
Oakland Athletics
Orlando Science Center
Orlando Progappe Content
Santa Ana Star Casino
Staples Center
The Milwaukee Bucks
The Preserve at Eisenhower Golf Course
Topgolf
Universal Studios-Orlando
Washington Football Team
Worcester Railers
Worcester Red Sox

Talent & Staffing Agencies
Aston Carter
Career Group Companies
Career Strategies
K Force
Kelly
Kelly Services
Kelly Services - Kirts Building
Managed Career Solutions - Los Angeles
Sodexo @ Sanofi
Walt Disney Television
William Morris Endeavor

Technology
Accenture Federal Services
Accenture Workplace
Apoee Computer Technologies
Avid
CIC Boston & Cambridge
Enjoy
Genentech
Nortup Patents
Office Depot # 3266
Rapid7
Xactly Corporation

Telecommunications
BrightStar
TCC

Transportation
Brightline - Miami Central
Dulles International Airport
Envoy Air
FastPark
Fontainebleau Aviation
McGee Air Services
National Loading Services
Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.
SMS International Shore Operations
Total Transportation Services, Inc.
Tower WAV
U-Haul Moving & Storage
Wawa

Warehousing & Storage
Amazon
Amazon- Baltimore
D.S. Hull Company, Inc.
First Class Vending
Imperial Freight Brokers
Iron Mountain - Cerritos
Leadpoint
Park West Gallery
Sebco Books
TDS Logistics LLC
Value Store It
Wawa
2022 was a year of rebuilding at Best Buddies in Connecticut (BBCT). We remained steadfast in our commitment to spreading inclusion and friendship throughout the state. Despite the remaining challenges from COVID, Best Buddies continued to move its mission forward and grow its programs, participants and supporters. I am incredibly grateful to our participants, staff, board members, sponsors, donors and community partners who made it all possible.

During a time when people were being excluded, our socially distanced mission was needed more than ever. We continued with our virtual events, which are here to stay, and continued to hold in-person events. Despite some challenges, BBCT expanded its school Friendship programs. We also implemented a Transitions program for people looking for a job that taught soft skills for the basics of employment.

The Best Buddies Friendship Walk was held at a new venue, Dunkin Donut Stadium, the home of the Hartford Yard Goats, and hosted over 400 walkers. Our walkers, participants, sponsors, partners and friends thoroughly enjoyed the day!

In the fall, we hosted our Best Buddies Champion of the Year Derby Party. It was a memorable evening filled with hats, bowties, great food, fun and friendships that culminated with Christine Sullivan and Abby Senich being crowned as our Champions. I want to give a special thank you to our sponsors and friends who helped make the event memorable!

As we approach 2023, we have a new team of staff members excited to do great things in Connecticut and move our state forward by growing school and Citizens chapters. Making more matches and developing our funding sources is a priority so Connecticut can stay strong and Best Buddies can become more of a household name.

Lezlye Zupkus, State Director, Connecticut

Connecticut Office
101 Centerpoint Ave, Suite 231, Middletown, CT 06457
P 203.234.3996
Christian and Alania (Laney) are a part of Best Buddies Middle Schools and have known each other since elementary school. Christian had a lonely early childhood experience despite his early friendship with Laney.

“Before Best Buddies, I did not have many friends,” Christian recalled. “I was bullied in elementary school, and I felt humiliated.”

Laney dealt with similar struggles, but not only has Best Buddies helped her social life -- it also has helped her chart her future.

“Best Buddies showed me what I want to do with my life, which is to work with kids with IDD,” Laney said. “Being friends with people like Christian has brought out the best of me and has helped me see the good in others.”

Christian says his favorite thing to do with Laney is to work together on projects during their shared free period. The duo frequently text and play together inside and outside JFK Middle School’s walls.

Laney admires Christian’s spirit, positivity and resilience and has come to value their friendship deeply.

“Christian is always so positive,” Laney commented. “He is always so kind to me, and he is just a ray of sunshine.”

Christian and Laney both acknowledge that Best Buddies has made their growing friendship possible. Without the program, Christian believes he would still be shy and self-conscious and not the “Mayor of JFK,” as his friends at school call him.

“Being friends with Christian has helped me get out of my comfort zone,” Laney said. “But it is more than that; being friends with Christian has taught me how to be a good friend.”

"Being friends with Christian has brought out the best of me and has helped me see the good in others"

- Alania
Daniel and I have been matched for two years now at Fairfield University. Daniel and I enjoy getting pizza together, having track practice together and writing pen-pal letters to each other. We also like to attend Fairfield University events together, such as the Christmas tree lighting and the Fairfield University basketball games. Daniel is such a kind, supportive and caring person, and I am so thankful to have him as my friend.”

- Caroline

Caroline and Daniel, Friendship program Buddy Pair
Best Buddies Colleges
Angelo Santiago
Leadership Development
Ambassador, Willimantic, CT

Angelo was introduced to Best Buddies in 2013 while he was in a post-high school transition program at Windham High School. Before joining Best Buddies, Angelo said that his life was repetitive, involving going to work, going home and sometimes playing in Special Olympics Basketball.

“Prior to joining Best Buddies, I was timid and encased in my own little world,” Angelo said. “Now, Best Buddies has made me feel like I am a champion.”

A former Connecticut program manager approached Angelo to attend an Ambassador training in 2015.

“I had experience in self-advocacy but never thought it would go anywhere,” Angelo recalled.

Angelo’s self-advocacy skills, despite his initial trepidation, went somewhere: straight to the Connecticut Best Buddies Champion of the Year Gala in 2022.

“Best Buddies helped me realize there is a lot more to me than I could ever imagine,” Angelo said.

Angelo has since spoken at the Connecticut Friendship Walk, among other events, regaling his tales about his personal development and how he went from being a shy introvert to an outgoing advocate. With many speaking opportunities under his belt, it is no wonder Angelo aspires to become a Global Ambassador.

“If you have the opportunity to join the many programs Best Buddies has to offer, do not pass it up.”

“Best Buddies helped me realize there is a lot more to me than I could ever imagine.” - Angelo

Leadership Development
Key Program Stats CT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ambassadors</th>
<th>Promoters</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Communications, Marketing and Strategic Development Department thanks Best Buddies International Headquarters, state offices, and International Programs staff for their collaborative effort in creating this report. Individuals listed below played a major role in its development:

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Thank you,

Mark Lewis, Senior Vice President, Development, Marketing & Technology