Lincoln and Jeremiah, Best Buddies participants in Arizona.
One-To-One Friendships

Integrated Employment

Leadership Development

Inclusive Living
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Dear Best Buddies family,

Amid the profound challenges of 2020 as the world battled a global pandemic, Best Buddies’ fundamental purpose and vision never wavered. The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health and economic crisis that has deeply affected the lives of many people around the world, particularly individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who know all too well the feelings of isolation and loneliness.

How we respond to times of crises is a defining moment. When the pandemic struck, Best Buddies quickly adapted to the challenges by pivoting our programs and events to the virtual space to deliver uninterrupted services and resources for Best Buddies participants when they needed us the most.

The obstacles of the past year also exposed stories of optimism, compassion, and resilience that helped inspire each of us to stay strong, and to come together virtually to achieve a shared goal of creating a more inclusive world for people with special abilities. In the face of adversity, the resolution of our program participants and their families inspired our own fortitude at Best Buddies. We ended the year more certain than ever of the essential and life-changing role that Best Buddies programs play in connecting people, improving lives and developing a more inclusive world for people with IDD.

I want to express my sincerest appreciation to the staff and leadership team at Best Buddies, as well as to my fellow board members and our dedicated partners in the public and private sectors, for showing incredible strength and compassion throughout the challenges of 2020.

With your support, Best Buddies reached thousands of participants with IDD and provided them with the resources needed to feel included, confident and optimistic about the road ahead.

While 2020 wasn’t the year any of us had planned, I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together over the past year. Our Best Buddies staff, volunteers and supporters quickly adapted to unprecedented change, while at the same time continuing to support and engage with Best Buddies participants here in the U.S. and internationally.

Looking ahead to 2021, we will need each of you to help lead our mission forward as we emerge from this crisis because there is still much more work to be done.

As we reflect on the global impact of Best Buddies’ mission and the millions of lives touched, please know that I am eternally grateful to each of you who have supported this organization. Thank you for making this world a better place for individuals with special abilities.

In Friendship,

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

Throughout nearly six decades, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) have gained access to opportunities that have improved their lives. Despite this, society is far from being inclusive in every aspect. The number of people within the IDD community who still face access barriers, social isolation and discrimination is staggering. Many people with IDD are unemployed and do not experience the simple joys of genuine friendships that people without disabilities often take for granted.

This is where Best Buddies International plays a vital role. Best Buddies is the world’s largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with IDD. For individuals within this community, Best Buddies serves as a lifeline to creating life-long friendships, securing successful jobs, living independently and gaining self-confidence.

Currently, an estimated 81%* of adults (18+) with IDD 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 $900,000 over 30 years. In turn, these individuals will contribute $153,000 in taxes back into the economy, rather than receiving nearly $895,000 in Federal SSI and Medicaid benefits during that time period.

Best Buddies is the world’s largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with IDD. This is just one of the countless examples of how Best Buddies is working to improve the quality of life for individuals with IDD.

Through the creation of meaningful one-to-one friendships with peers without disabilities, the pursuit of integrated employment and inclusive living opportunities, and the development of leadership skills for individuals with IDD, Best Buddies is changing lives and building a more inclusive world for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. For more information, please visit BESTBUDDIES.ORG

Meet Erica Asbury, parent of Best Buddies participant Allen Asbury. She has demonstrated unwavering faith in her son, Allen, and his capabilities throughout his entire life – even when the odds were against him. Allen was born prematurely, weighing only one pound with the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck, and the doctors said he would not live. With no hesitation whatsoever, Erica responded, “No. He will be fine.” Allen is now a vibrant 20-year-old, with a wonderful group of friends he met in college and a passion for football and video games.

“I loved being Allen’s mom before I even met him. I wanted to be a mom so badly, and the very thought of him made me full of joy.”

After Allen was matched with his Best Buddy, Jessica, he said it was like the movie Madagascar 2, when a zebra is able to connect with other zebras for the first time. He wasn’t alone; he had found his place and his people. He and Jessica are still close, and she even drove 3 hours to spend time with him at last year’s Friendship Walk.

One of my biggest challenges of 2020 was keeping our spirits high when everything shut down, the way that racial relations deteriorated, the disconnection from a routine, and the scarcity of everyday items made life feel like nothing that we had ever experienced. For Allen, I also feared that he would lose his fire for being independent. It was tough to go from being in college and totally on his own to being back home with his mom, but he’s found ways to stay connected with his community through Best Buddies.

Looking ahead towards the future, my hope is that Allen has every opportunity that any other young adult has: a quality and affordable education; the opportunity to be employed so that he can be an independent and productive citizen; and the chance to contribute as a subject matter expert concerning the lives of Black men with additional needs. Allen has completely bloomed before my eyes. It was one thing for me and his family to believe in him, but it has been unequivocal to what he has gained in self-worth by having the university staff and members of the Best Buddies program to see him as a valuable member of the community. I no longer feel like I have to convince people that my child is worth it – they know he is.”

- Erica Asbury, mother of Best Buddies participant Allen.
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 (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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One-To-One Friendships</th>
<th>Integrated Employment</th>
<th>Leadership Development</th>
<th>Inclusive Living</th>
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**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.

**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.

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 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, workplaces and government.

**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.
Best Buddies opens an office in Serbia in November 2020 to serve a new community of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on a global scale.

The Best Buddies Jobs program begins operating in two new markets: Des Moines, Iowa; and Phoenix, Arizona.

Best Buddies launches BESTBUDDIES® Ventures, creating a new source of revenue independent of traditional methods of fundraising. The first-ever venture opens in Miami, FL; BESTBUDDIES® X Rosetta, The Italian Bakery --- an equal partnership that creates employment opportunities for individuals with IDD, and serves as a profit-center for Best Buddies through a store-front bakery and coffee shop.

Best Buddies teams up with Global Ambassador and Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady to launch the organization’s first-ever specialty license plate in the state of Florida benefiting Best Buddies.

As a result of the pandemic, Best Buddies pivots its Best Buddies Challenges, Best Buddies Friendship Walks, and the annual Best Buddies Leadership Conference into the virtual space, uniting thousands of participants, supporters, and volunteers to continue its mission of inclusion.

Best Buddies’ celebrity supporters from across the globe including Miss Universe Zozibini Tunzi and International superstar Maluma hosted Instagram Live virtual hangouts with Best Buddies participants and supporters, proving that inclusion isn’t canceled, it’s evolving.
Anthony K. Shriver charters the original Best Buddies Chapter while a junior at Georgetown University in 1987.

Incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization on January 19, 1989, BEST BUDDIES® becomes America’s first national, unified, social, and recreational program for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Best Buddies establishes the Best Buddies Fine Art Collection, featuring masterpieces by Keith Haring, Roy Lichtenstein and Robert Rauschenberg.

Best Buddies hosts the first unified Leadership Conference, training both college student leaders and people with IDD by providing intensive lessons in public speaking, management, team building, problem solving and leadership skills.

Best Buddies launches BEST BUDDIES®, Citizens, a friendship program that pairs adults with IDD with their working peers who do not have disabilities.

Best Buddies launches BEST BUDDIES® Jobs, a supported employment program, targeting high-paying, white-collar jobs for people with IDD in Florida, California and Massachusetts.

Best Buddies establishes BEST BUDDIES® High Schools, pairing special education students in one-to-one friendships with high school volunteers without IDD.

The BEST BUDDIES®, Middle Schools pilot program launches, reaching out to an even younger age group with the hope that inclusion of people with IDD will have a lasting effect on societal norms for the next generation.

BEST BUDDIES® launches as a cutting-edge online friendship program.

Best Buddies launches the most successful fundraising event in its history, the nationally televised inaugural Volvo Hearst Castle Challenge, a 100-mile bike ride along the Pacific Coast Highway chaired by California First Lady Maria Shriver.

For the first time, Best Buddies has programs in all 50 of the United States and on six continents.

For the first time, Best Buddies has programs in 50 countries around the world.

BEST BUDDIES® Ambassadors becomes Best Buddies’ seventh formal program.

BEST BUDDIES® Promoters officially launches as the organization’s eighth program for the 2012-2013 school year. It is the first Best Buddies program open to elementary schools.

Best Buddies celebrates 20 years of friendships and jobs in 2009.

For its 20th Anniversary, Best Buddies updates its mission statement: “To establish a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with IDD.”

BEST BUDDIES®, Ambassadors becomes Best Buddies’ seventh formal program.

Best Buddies launches the I’m In To Hire campaign to promote the business benefits of hiring people with IDD.

In October 2015, A&E Network partnered with Best Buddies International and premiered a new docu-series, “Born This Way,” which chronicled the lives of seven young adults with Down syndrome, several of whom were Best Buddies participants.

In May 2017, Best Buddies hosts the inaugural Mother’s Day Brunch in Malibu, CA, with Global Ambassador Cindy Crawford and her daughter, Kaia Gerber.

In April 2018, Best Buddies Global Ambassador Tom Brady travels to Qatar to launch an integrated employment initiative in partnership with the country’s Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, Qatar Museums and Best Buddies Qatar participants.

In October 2018, Best Buddies is featured on ESPN’s 50 Game Changers – a docu-series about the achievements of individuals with IDD and the game changers who promote inclusion for people with IDD in the sports world and beyond.


Best Buddies officially launches its fourth mission pillar, Inclusive Living. BEST BUDDIES®, 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.

In March 2019, Best Buddies with Fundación MAPFRE launches a Pre-Employment Training Program in Massachusetts to prepare Friendship program participants ages 14-22 with IDD for the transition into the Jobs program.

In October 2019, under the leadership of the Entertainment Industry Foundation, Best Buddies, Special Olympics and Autism Speaks, launch Delivering Jobs, a campaign to create pathways to one million employment and leadership opportunities for people with IDD by 2025.

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Without love, support and friends, life may feel isolating – this is a reality people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (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.

Middle Schools, High Schools & Colleges

In today’s schools, students with IDD enter the same building and walk the same hallways as their peers, but they often miss out on key elements of the school experience such as sitting with friends at lunch, attending homecoming or prom, or joining a club.

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 they also help facilitate an environment of inclusion throughout the school and in the community.

Citizens

For people with IDD, the absence of meaningful friendships extends into adulthood. After age 18, some individuals with IDD may never spend time with anyone besides a paid caregiver and family. 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

In 2020, e-buddies served 3,526 total participants. These participants exchanged more than 51,000 emails. e-Buddies was also used as a teaching tool in the classroom by more than 120 special education teachers and other professionals across the country.
Alysa & Isaiah
Friendship Program Buddy Pair, Shadow Ridge High School, Surprise, AZ

Alysa and Isaiah both joined Best Buddies as freshmen at Shadow Ridge High School. For Isaiah, a person with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), making friends was challenging but once he found Best Buddies he knew he had a place where he was truly accepted and where he could have friends — no matter what.

Alysa knew she wanted to live a life of inclusion, but didn’t know how to fully put those goals into action. For her, joining Best Buddies wasn’t just another club; it became a place where actions spoke louder than words. “How hasn’t our lives changed since getting involved with Best Buddies?!?” she said.

Then came the pandemic. At first, it was challenging for Alysa and Isaiah to hang out, but they figured out ways to stay in touch. Texting is their go-to way to chat, and they also love playing mobile games together through GamePigeon!

“We both just missed hanging out,” Alysa said. “The biggest thing we miss are hugs! Isaiah is a big hugger, so it has been really sad not being able to hug it out.”

Alysa is the co-president of Best Buddies, the yearbook editor, involved in the National Junior Honor Society and is starting an Arizona Youth Climate Coalition chapter at her school. Isaiah is not only a member of Best Buddies, but also loves to sing and is involved with choir — which he loves!

“During 2020, which was my first year as co-president, I found the biggest challenge was communicating with our members,” Alysa said. “This year was super hard with the pandemic, and I have come to realize there’s no ‘one size fits all’ when it comes to communicating. You have to be able to find what works for everyone individually.”

In November, Alysa and Isaiah won the 2020 Spirit of Friendship Award, Arizona’s top award presented to a buddy pair, and become stronger as a match every day! They have been officially matched for two years and have no plans to stop being friends. Not only do they love hanging out during school, they also love picking up lunch and cruising around jamming out to Avril Lavigne. “She’s Isaiah’s favorite,” Alysa said. “There is never a bad time for a dance party!”

Alysa and Isaiah love Best Buddies because they believe everyone deserves love and friendship. Best Buddies is a place for everyone where you can create a more inclusive world and continue inspiring others, said Alysa.

“There is never a bad time for a dance party!”
- Alysa
Since its inception, Best Buddies Jobs has assisted thousands of participants in earning an income, paying taxes, receiving benefits and working in an environment alongside others in the community. The Jobs program offers the opportunity for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to become financially independent through their own efforts, removing the need for government assistance or parental support. This program focuses on white-collar jobs, which sets it apart from so many others. Best Buddies assists individuals in finding jobs that are enjoyable, inclusive and competitive in terms of pay.

Jobs

Best Buddies Jobs furthers the integration of people with IDD into the community through supported employment. The focus is on developing competitive, integrated jobs 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. Best Buddies Jobs conducts a person-centered approach with each participant, working with the individual to ultimately achieve his or her personal employment goals. Coaching is provided in essential job interviewing skills, and once a job is secured, there is assistance with on-the-job training. Job placement for participants depends on factors such as their skills and abilities, location and vocational preference. Once fully adjusted to their job, Best Buddies supports participants with job coaching for continued career development.

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. The states with an active Best Buddies Jobs program as of December 31, 2020 include Arizona, California, Capitol Region, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin.
Key Jobs Program Stats

**Top 5 Jobs Participants Highest Salaries With Benefits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1</th>
<th>$55,036</th>
<th>Michael D.</th>
<th>Genentech, CA</th>
<th>Vacation Pay, Holiday Pay, Medical Care, Retirement Plans, Fitness Center, Dental Care, Vision Care, Other, Sick Pay, Complimentary Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>$53,708</td>
<td>Chantom P.</td>
<td>Central Park Conservancy, NY</td>
<td>Life Insurance, Vacation/Pre, Holiday Pay, Retirement Plans, Education Assistance Programs, Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Wellness Programs, Company Discount, Sick Leave, Sick Pay</td>
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<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>$50,796</td>
<td>Anthony S.</td>
<td>Kaiser Permanente South Bay Medical Center, CA</td>
<td>Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Wellness Programs, Company Discount, Free or Reduced Meals</td>
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<td>#4</td>
<td>$50,668</td>
<td>Cristen M.</td>
<td>Holland &amp; Knight, MA</td>
<td>Life Insurance, Vacation Pay, Holiday Pay, Medical Care, Retirement Plans, Dental Care, Sick Pay</td>
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<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>$48,651</td>
<td>Jean Paul L.</td>
<td>Jones Lang Lasalle (JLL) Google, CA</td>
<td>Medical Care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top 5 Jobs Participants Highest Hourly Rates**

- **John H.** Civic Edge Consulting, San Francisco, CA | $33.22 Hourly Wage
- **Chantom P.** Central Park Conservancy, NY, NY | $29.51 Hourly Wage
- **Anthony S.** Kaiser Permanente South Bay Medical Center, Long Beach, CA | $27.91 Hourly Wage
- **Michael D.** Genentech, San Francisco, CA | $26.46 Hourly Wage
- **Eric H.** Fried Frank Harris Shriver & Jacobson, New York, NY | $25.40 Hourly Wage

**Average Total Yearly Wages Earned**

$12,597,820

**Average Total Yearly Taxes Paid**

$2,719,564

**Average Total Yearly Wages Earned**

$12,597,820

**Average Total Yearly Wages Earned**

$2,719,564

**2021 Best Buddies Jobs Around the World**

- **11 Countries**
- **89 Cities**

*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 12/31/20.
Raul
Jobs Program Participant,
Trader Joe’s, CA

Before landing his current job through Best Buddies’ Jobs program, Raul was receiving job training at the nearby airport. He was learning about aviation and cleaning planes but when opportunities there decreased, he realized the program he was in was no longer a good fit, and he wanted more for himself.

At 22, Raul wanted independence and had a goal of getting a job. With the support and encouragement of his mother, he joined the Best Buddies Jobs program and secured a position at Trader Joe’s. Now, with two years of work at Trader Joe’s under his belt, he has not only reached his goal, but has hope for so much more in the future. His mom, Beatriz, said, “If it wasn’t for Best Buddies, my son’s job at Trader Joe’s would have been nothing more than a beautiful fantasy. They made it a reality!”

Like many in the workforce, when COVID-19 hit it brought about a lot of changes. While most adjusted to working from home, Raul and his co-workers were adjusting to an overflow of customers in their stores, items quickly disappearing off the shelves, and implementing new health and safety protocols. As an essential worker, Raul did not hesitate to take on more responsibilities.

“At first it was difficult, but after a few weeks I got used to all of the new rules and I earned more responsibilities at work,” he said.

Raul’s hard work did not go unnoticed. In July of 2020, Raul was announced as the Best Buddies Employee of the Year for the entire Jobs program, a recognition that he truly deserved. This award was just the tip of the iceberg for what Raul has gotten out of his job at Trader Joe’s.

“I feel more independent. I am spending my money more wisely and saving more. I have also developed strong people skills and I have better communication skills because I talk to so many people at work and help customers out.”

With a job and his own income, he has big goals for the future. Raul says, “I plan to own a house sometime in the future. Maybe I will buy a car—my own car.”

Both Raul and his mom are grateful for his job at Trader Joe’s. She says, “I don’t have the words to express the gratitude that I feel for Best Buddies who devote time to helping people like my son have a chance at a better future… their help is truly life-changing.”

“At first it was difficult, but after a few weeks I got used to all of the new rules and I earned more responsibilities at work.”
- Raul
Leadership Development Programs

Best Buddies educates and empowers people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (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.

Ambassadors

Ambassadors is a program that provides training for participants with and without IDD in areas of 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. The program prepares people to become active agents of change, and informed, compelling advocates for the disability rights movement.

Ambassadors participate in trainings focused on the art of public speaking and advocacy. Once trained, they are expected to identify opportunities in their chapters, communities and states to share their stories and become more involved and empowered as citizens. They are encouraged to make high-profile connections, speak to state and national legislators about opportunities for people with IDD, present at recruitment fairs and Best Buddies events and develop partnerships in the community. Ambassadors also help fundraise, present to other interest groups and train their peers with IDD.

Participants are paired with a speech coach for the duration of their Ambassador training to assist with the writing and presentation of a speech. Speech coaches help Ambassadors in areas of brainstorming and organization, and serve as guides who provide one-on-one attention, as needed.

Promoters

Promoters empowers youth to become advocates for people with IDD by organizing and attending special events that promote inclusion and bringing awareness to the disability rights movement. 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, fundraisers and assemblies where they advocate for people with IDD, educate the public about inclusion and promote the ideals of Best Buddies’ mission. Throughout the school year, Best Buddies encourages all Promoters chapters to host as many activities as possible on and off campus that are inclusive of people with IDD.
Ray
Best Buddies Ambassador, New Jersey

Ray is a Best Buddies Ambassador in New Jersey. Throughout the pandemic, he participated in virtual Ambassador trainings where he worked on his self-advocacy skills and speech writing. Ray participates in his local school chapter at The College of New Jersey where he serves as the co-buddy director, and is very involved in his local community in several different programs.

Since joining Best Buddies, Ray has formed friendships that he hopes will last a lifetime. As Ray’s involvement grew, he joined the Ambassadors program to continue to work on his self-advocacy skills throughout his college journey. The year 2020 presented many challenges for Ray.

“My biggest challenge of 2020 was getting used to the COVID protocols,” said Ray. “I could not hug anyone; I have not hugged my family members or cousins in a long time. I hope that I can hug my best buddies and cousins soon. It’s very hard not being able to go to events in person with my family members and Best Buddies.”

Ray was able to overcome the obstacles COVID-19 presented by using FaceTime to connect with his friends and Zoom meetings to get together with his Best Buddies chapter.

Ray has been an incredible advocate for himself. He shares that Best Buddies has changed his life, saying, “I joined Best Buddies in 2013 and I’ve been part of the organization ever since. My middle school and high school had Best Buddies programs, and it really changed my life for the better. Best Buddies has helped me to be more social and to come out of my shell. Before Best Buddies, I wasn’t very outgoing … but Best Buddies changed that.”

As Ray continues his journey as an Ambassador with Best Buddies, he wants other people with IDD to know the following: “Do not let [your disability] be a challenge to you, a lot of people with disabilities will change the world. Use that to motivate yourself and become the best version of yourself. If you put your mind to it, you can do it and in the words of Michelle Obama ‘When they go low, you go high.’

Best Buddies in New Jersey is thankful for the exemplary leadership that Ray has presented and is incredibly proud of the self-advocacy skills he continues to strengthen to lead the effort within his community and beyond to build a more inclusive world for people with IDD.

“Best Buddies has helped me to be more social and to come out of my shell.”
- Ray
Participants at the Best Buddies Living – D.C., Union Market residence

Best Buddies Living fosters an integrated experience for people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to live independently in a dynamic environment where they can learn, grow and thrive. The Living program encourages people with and without IDD to live together in a vibrant community that is focused on supporting all 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 college life. Through an affiliation with a nearby college, 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 providing a supportive environment that encourages full-time or part-time employment.

As of December 31, 2020, Best Buddies operated one Living residence in Washington, DC.
Hannah
Best Buddies Living Resident
George Mason University, Washington, D.C.

Before I joined Best Buddies Living, I was in college at George Mason University (GMU) in Virginia, living in the dorms on campus like a typical college student. After graduating from GMU, I relocated to Washington, D.C. and now I am here at Best Buddies Living – D.C. Union Market residence.

I currently work at Marshall’s department store and when I am not at work, I enjoy spending time with my housemates. Every week, I look forward to the different social activities such as our group dinners, game night, and decorating our Christmas tree during the holidays.

I love living on my own and the independence that it brings. I also love being able to work out when I can to stay healthy and in shape.

Now that I am settled into my new place here at Best Buddies Living – D.C., two of my main goals are to make more friends and start dating.

Everyone should live here, if they can.

“I look forward to the different social activities such as our group dinners, game night, and decorating our Christmas tree during the holidays.” - Hannah
Best Buddies
International Programs

Programs Around the World

50 States
57 Countries & Territories
5 Continents

Asia
- China
- Hong Kong, China
- Macao, China
- Indonesia
- South Korea
- Malaysia
- Mongolia
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Thailand
- Vietnam

Africa
- Egypt
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Nigeria
- Tanzania
- Uganda

Middle East
- Lebanon
- Qatar

Europe
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Denmark
- England
- Faroe Islands
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Ireland
- Netherlands
- Northern Ireland
- Norway
- Poland
- Russia
- Scotland
- Spain
- Turkey

North America
- Canada
- USA

Latin America & The Caribbean
- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Haiti
- Mexico
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Venezuela
Expansion in the U.S.

The goal within the Best Buddies Expansion department is to build enriching programs, a dedicated volunteer base, and diverse revenue streams to launch states into an official self-sustaining office. Despite the pandemic and many unforeseen challenges in 2020, the Expansion team worked tirelessly to create opportunities for individuals with and without disabilities to connect virtually, open new programs, and host over 20 fundraising events throughout 14 states. Directors of Mission Advancement were added in Minnesota, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Washington during the year. These on-the-ground staff members are tasked with building awareness and momentum through volunteer recruitment, programmatic initiatives, and successful fundraising strategies.

Across Expansion states, our Programs team opened 33 new school-based chapters. Currently, 13 Citizens chapters exist, seven of which were new chapters that opened in 2020. The organization quickly adapted to social distancing protocols and hosted more than 70 virtual programmatic engagement activities. In addition, the Expansion team hosted 21 virtual Ambassador trainings which trained more than 250 individuals with and without disabilities.

Year after year, our team continues to grow partnerships with community organizations and companies that are committed to inclusive communities and furthering the Best Buddies mission. Some of these notable partnerships include SPMB and Diversant in Colorado, Georgia DECA and Reeves Foundation in Georgia, WHAS Crusade for Children in Kentucky, Tesson Foundation in Louisiana, Anthem and Unum in Maine, Kelly Services and Sun Communities in Michigan, Premier Banks and United Healthcare in Minnesota, Northwest Pump & Equipment and the Karen Gaffney Foundation in Oregon, Sorenson Legacy Foundation and Eccles Foundation in Utah, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust and i4cp in Washington, and Sinclair Oil in Wyoming.

Best Buddies relies heavily on dedicated volunteers to support program efforts and fundraising initiatives to further the mission of inclusion in expansion states. The Expansion staff, with support of volunteers, hosted 13 Friendship Walks (11 of which had to be virtual due to COVID-19) in 12 states that collectively raised over $146,000. All nine Champion of the Year Expansion events were virtual and raised over $689,000.

On behalf of Advisory Boards and the staff on the Expansion team, we would like to thank you for your continued support of our efforts to serve more individuals across the country. We have big plans for 2021 and cannot wait to impact the lives of even more individuals!
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 volunteering, advocating, and pursuing partnership and sponsorship opportunities. As a result of the pandemic, Best Buddies pivoted many of its signature events in 2020 into the virtual space and created Do-It-Yourself Challenges to ensure that inclusion was not canceled. A few of the organization’s prominent events are featured on the following pages.
**Signature Events**

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**BEST BUDDIES CHALLENGE: HYANNIS PORT**

September 26, 2020

The Best Buddies Challenge: Hyannis Port, presented by Pepsi-Cola and Shaw’s and Star Market Foundation found itself going virtual for the first time in its 20 year history. On Saturday, September 26, 2020, all riders, runners, and walkers were invited to participate in the DIY Best Buddies Challenge, and encouraged to share their efforts with friends, family, and the Best Buddies community on social media. It was a great day with a robust turnout, allowing participants to get outside and remain part of the Challenge community. We are excited to return to a hybrid in-person/virtual model in 2021 for what is sure to be our best Challenge yet!

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**BEST BUDDIES CHALLENGE: HEARST CASTLE**

September 26, 2020

Following safety guidelines, the Best Buddies Challenge: Hearst Castle, presented by Pepsi-Cola transitioned to a virtual event this year. Much like our programs, the Challenge community quickly adapted and rode, ran, and walked hundreds of miles from the safety of their neighborhoods all in support of Best Buddies. The DIY Best Buddies Challenge was the perfect way for participants to strengthen their commitment to Best Buddies while still participating in the event. We are excited to return to a hybrid in-person/virtual model in 2021.

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**HUBLOT BEST BUDDIES CHALLENGE: MIAMI**

November 20, 2020

The Hublot Best Buddies Challenge: Miami, presented by Abaco Wines, Braman Miami, Mack Cycle, Makarov Foundation, and Pepsi-Cola is a six-star 100K cycling event, limited to just 50 cyclists beginning and ending at The Ritz-Carlton, Key Biscayne. Cyclists were treated to an intimate, socially distanced kick-off dinner the night before the Challenge, as well as a celebratory luncheon following the ride.
The Best Buddies Friendship Walk is the leading walk in the country supporting inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Since 2009, more than 250,000 participants in 70 cities have walked to raise awareness for inclusion, friendship, leadership development, integrated employment, and inclusive living opportunities for people with IDD.

In 2020, over 22,000 participants in 66 cities walked, drove, or virtually participated to move our mission forward. Collectively over $3,500,000 was raised as participants, sponsors, volunteers, and public figures joined the movement that celebrates friendship, inclusion, and unity. Over the years, the Best Buddies Friendship Walks have made a profound impact in communities nationwide, providing a platform for participants to showcase the mission in action. Each Walk provides an atmosphere for new friendships, promising opportunities and most of all, inclusion for all.

BEST BUDDIES SOCIAL EVENTS

This year, Best Buddies social events continued to raise critical funds and awareness for our life-changing organization. Our Champion of the Year, Chef Tasting Events and Best Buddies Galas all went virtual in 2020. While it was an unprecedented time, our community leaders, corporate partners and Champions for inclusion remained constant and showed unwavering support. We pivoted to host virtual trainings, committee meetings and inspirational virtual events to celebrate our Champions, participants and sponsors. Despite not being together in-person, Champions continued to create transformative change in their communities and showed us that inclusion isn’t canceled, it’s just virtual.

These core events collectively raised over $2.8 million dollars. Of that, Champion of the Year – a Best Buddies Signature Event- engaged 353 Champions in generating over $2.5 million dollars. These events and the people that lead them, continue to provide life-long support and opportunities for individuals with IDD.
Citizens buddy pair Meg and Rachel enjoy a special night at the Best Buddies Prom in Tennessee.

BEST BUDDIES COMMUNITY EVENTS

Each year, Best Buddies’ celebrity supporters host community events that engage and inspire our program participants and corporate partners to promote the organization’s mission of inclusion. As our communities continued to navigate physical isolation due to COVID-19, Best Buddies worked to shed light on the importance of inclusion for people with disabilities through a series of virtual events hosted via platforms such as Zoom and Instagram Live. Best Buddies’ celebrity supporters rose to the challenge to ensure that our mission of inclusion continued to thrive and participants with intellectual and developmental disabilities remained connected and engaged with their peers. These virtual events were incredibly successful and proved that inclusion was not canceled in 2020.

BEST BUDDIES BALLS/PROMS

Best Buddies’ Balls/Proms are a unique way for the organization’s state offices and chapters to showcase their achievements and celebrate friendship. Due to COVID-19, the 2020 Best Buddies Proms went virtually in an effort to celebrate friendship and inclusion in a safe manner. Best Buddies in Capitol Region put together a two-week virtual Prom campaign in Summer 2020, featuring engagements from different pillars and programs each day through video, graphics, game nights with trivia and bingo, and a dance party, hosted by DJ Neekola. Best Buddies in Florida hosted an incredible Virtual Friendship Ball in May 2020. Everyone came together to make it a magical event for over 400 viewers. What a powerful way to showcase our mission and it gave our participants something to look forward to during this time. Best Buddies in Illinois had over 300 people attend their virtual Prom via Instagram Live and Zoom in June 2020. Ulta Beauty partnered by hosting a make-up tutorial prior to the dance portion of the event. Best Buddies in Massachusetts/Rhode Island had around 200 people attend virtual Prom via Zoom in June 2020. “Prom prep” sessions were hosted by various Miss USA title holders and ambassadors. Red carpet hour followed where participants were spotlighted and shared dance moves, their outfits, favorite BB memories, and then finished the night off with lots of dancing.
Best Buddies Ambassador Joshua, recipient of the 2020 Spirit of Courage Award

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.

Best Buddies Ambassador Joshua, recipient of the 2020 Spirit of Courage Award

More than 4,300 Best Buddies student leaders, 350 Best Buddies staff, and special celebrity guests including Voices of Inclusion from Hollywood, NFL superstar Tom Brady, NBA star Andre Drummond, Broadway sensation Lea Salonga, pop stars Rebecca Black and Quincy Brown, actor Jason Lewis, and Miss USA Cheslie Kryst, gathered virtually for the 2020 Best Buddies Leadership Conference: Voices of Inclusion. Best Buddies participants from 35 countries, including Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, England, Greece, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Ireland, Macau, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Korea, Spain, Uganda, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates all attended virtually. Using an interactive digital platform for instructional sessions and workshops, attendees had the opportunity to participate in interactive activities such as leadership development classes and roundtable sessions with global leaders. Educational panels allowed professionals who are engaged in the disability rights movement to connect with student leaders and share the tools and techniques for success and expansion of the Best Buddies mission in their communities.

BEST BUDDIES MONTH

March 2020

March is 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. The month kicks off with the annual Spread the Word: Inclusion campaign, which invites all members to showcase how they promote inclusion in their communities. In March 2020, 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.

BEST BUDDIES EKS DAY

July 20, 2020

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.

There is no purpose nobler than to build communities of acceptance for all.”
- Eunice Kennedy Shriver
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Kelly Services
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Wealth Management & Trust
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Gifts Program
John Hancock Financial
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Silicon Valley Bank
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$50,000 to $99,999
James Rufrano
Marlyne Sexton
INDIVIDUALS
$10,000 to $24,999

INDIVIDUALS
$100,000 to $249,999
The Albertsons Companies
The Makarov Foundation
The GEO Group Foundation
Ann G. and James B. Ritchey
Annenberg Foundation
Color Street Foundation
The George Soros Expeditions Foundation
Thekl Foundation
PHIL Foundation
The John and Mable
Tulsa Community Foundation
$50,000 to $99,999
American Online Giving Foundation
B. Thomas Golisano Foundation
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Stephen Lowy
Donna L. Lucas
Kevin J. McKenna
Michelle McMullen
Ira Rosner
Brad Tidman
Sally Vitello
Tom Werner
Lane Wilson
Sarah Richie
Peter Bulcavage
Paul R. Wiegert
Bert Kahn

INDIVIDUALS
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Financials

Consolidated Statement of Activities* (as of 12.31.20)

Domestic Revenue

$25,908,135
Total Domestic Revenue

$30,000,000
Total International Revenue**

$55,908,135
Total Gross Revenue

Domestic Expenses

14% $3,275,361 Foundations & Corps.
32% $8,268,556 Government
37% $9,566,720 Special Events
13% $3,221,132 Fundraising
5% $1,277,399 Administration
81% $18,729,662 Programs

$23,228,153
Total Domestic Expenses

Domestic Net Asset Summary

Net Assets (beginning of year) $14,549,315
Change in Net Assets $2,679,982
Net Unrealized Gains/(Losses) on Investments (130,564)
Total Domestic Net Assets (end of year) $17,098,733

Balance Sheet (as of 12.31.20)

Assets

Current Assets
Cash in Bank $3,802,685
 Marketable Securities $12,404,108
 Pre Paid Expenses $422,196
 Accounts Receivable $119,375
 Contributions Receivable $1,810,436
 Grant Receivable $3,626,561
 Investments - BB x Rosetta Bakery LLC $43,505
 Investments - Deferred Compensation Plan $95,221
 Total Current Assets $22,324,087

Fixed Assets
Computers $10,291

Total Assets $22,334,378

Liabilities and Fund Balance

Liabilities
Accounts Payable $540,820
Deferred Revenue $865,603
Deferred Compensation Plan Liability $95,222
PPP Payable $3,727,600
Refundable Security Deposit $6,400
Total Liabilities $5,235,645

Fund Balance
Fund Balance $17,098,733

Total Liabilities and Fund Balance $22,334,378

Beginning Balance With Current Year Adjustments $14,549,315

Net Surplus/(Deficit) $2,549,418

Ending Fund Balance $17,098,733

* Statement of Activities for calendar year 2020 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.

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The Marketing and Strategic Development Department would like to thank Best Buddies International Headquarters, state offices, and International Programs staff for all of their help in creating this report. This collaborative effort was supported by the entire organization and across all departments.

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Thank you,

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