MISSION PILLARS

One-To-One Friendships
Integrated Employment
Leadership Development
Inclusive Living
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Message From Our Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Why We Matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>A Parent’s Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>2022 Highlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Milestones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Our Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mission, Vision, Who We Serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>One-To-One Friendships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Integrated Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Inclusive Living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>International Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Signature Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Financials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Executive Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Our Supporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Participating Employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Sate Year in Review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leadership Development
Inclusive Living
One-To-One Friendships
Integrated Employment
Leadership Development
Inclusive Living
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
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

- 14 Elementary School Chapters
- 1,535 High School Chapters
- 600 Middle School Chapters
- 528 College Chapters

Program Participants

- 180 Elementary Schools
- 11,896 Middle Schools
- 56,855 High Schools
- 23,806 Colleges

Integrated Employment

- 1,866 Participants Employed

Average Total Participant Stats

- 37,675 Weekly Hrs. Worked
- 1,846,052 Yearly Hrs. Worked
- $5,541,849 Yearly Taxes Paid
- $27,709,247 Yearly Wages Earned

Avg. hrs worked per week 20, Avg. hrly wage $15.01 (in the U.S.).

Leadership Development

- 352 Elementary Schools Promoters Chapters
- 85 Middle Schools Promoters Chapters
- 26 High Schools Promoters Chapters
- 12 College Promoters Chapters

Program Participants

- 6,044 Elementary School Promoters
- 618 Middle School Promoters
- 850 Ambassadors
- 68 College Promoters
- 4,708 High School Promoters

Inclusive Living

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

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

Santiago, Best Buddies Ambassador and Jobs participant
Best Buddies Colombia

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

**BESTBUDDIES**, 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.

**BESTBUDDIES**, 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.

**BESTBUDDIES**, 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.

**BESTBUDDIES**, 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.

**BESTBUDDIES**, 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.
Timothy & Ryan
One-To-One Friendships
Tesoro High School, Las Flores, CA

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.

“\nIn all my years of doing this, I have never seen a friendship like Ryan and Timothy's.” - Chapter Advisor
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.
Elaina
Integrated Employment
kubik, Odenton, MD

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.

“’The office is a very comfortable environment. Plus, it is dog-friendly, and I love dogs.” - Elaina
Key Jobs Program Stats

- **2,853** Total Participants
- **1,507** U.S Participants
- **1,346** International Participants
- **1,866** Employed
- **2,853** States with active Jobs Programs
- **18** States with active Jobs Programs
- **$62,004** Average Hours Worked Yearly
- **90%** U.S Retention Rate
- **26.98%** Paid Vacation/Sick Days
- **7.77%** 401K Plan
- **15.21%** Medical & Dental
- **31.39%** Retirement Plan
- **1,054.36** Average Hours Worked Yearly
- **20.28** Average Hours Worked Weekly
- **$66,560** Elaina C. Maryland
- **$62,400** Jessica S. California
- **$62,400** Nathaniel M. California
- **$62,004** Denzel A. Illinois
- **$61,588** Anthony S. California

Top 5 Jobs Participants Highest Salaries With Benefits

- **Elaina C. Maryland**
  - Vacation Pay, Retirement Plans
- **Jessica S. California**
  - Dental Care, Medical Care, Retirement Plans, Sick Leave, Sick Pay, Vacation Pay, Vision Care
- **Nathaniel M. California**
  - Vacation Pay, Holiday Pay, Medical Care, Fitness Center, Dental Care, Sick Leave, Sick Pay
- **Denzel A. Illinois**
  - Vacation Pay, Holiday Pay, Retirement Plans, Sick Pay
- **Anthony S. California**
  - Wellness Programs, Company Discount, Free or Reduced Meals
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

Best Buddies Jobs Around The World

- 11 Countries*
- 92 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 12/31/2022

Felipe, Best Buddies Jobs participant
Harvest Sensations

BESTBUDDIES.ORG
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
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

“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.”

- 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.
Best Buddies Around The World

49 Countries & Territories

Europe
- Cyprus
- Croatia
- England
- Germany
- Greece
- Ireland
- Northern Ireland
- Poland
- Portugal
- Russia
- Scotland
- Serbia
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Turkey

Asia
- China
- Hong Kong, China
- India
- Indonesia
- Macao, China
- Malaysia
- South Korea
- Taiwan
- United Arab Emirates

MENA
- Egypt
- Lebanon
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates

Latin America & The Caribbean
- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Mexico
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru

North America
- Canada
- USA

49 Countries & Territories
5 Continents
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.
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.

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.
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.

Participants at one of the 2022 Best Buddies Friendship Walks

2022 Best Buddies Champion of the Year attendees
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

- Special Events: $12,273,176 (36%)
- Individual: $2,712,414 (8%)
- Foundations & Corps.: $6,004,362 (18%)
- Government: $11,410,711 (34%)
- Other**: $1,414,185 (4%)

Total Domestic Revenue: $33,814,848

Domestic Expenses

- Programs: $25,931,940 (81%)
- Fundraising: $4,317,486 (13%)
- Administration: $1,859,413 (6%)
- Other**: $33,814,848

Total Domestic Expenses: $32,108,839

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)
- Total Domestic 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.
## Financials

### 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>
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</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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<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>$59,382</td>
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<td>Contributions receivable, net</td>
<td>$1,156,818</td>
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<td>Grant receivable</td>
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<td>Inventory artwork</td>
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<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
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<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Property and Equipment</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
<td>$461,645</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture and equipment</td>
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<td>Auto</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>$1,152,473</td>
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<td><strong>Total Property and Equipment</strong>, <strong>Cost</strong></td>
<td>$1,723,223</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Less Accumulated Depreciation</strong></td>
<td>($555,250)</td>
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<td><strong>Total Property and Equipment, Net</strong></td>
<td>$1,167,973</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Right-of-Use Assets</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing lease right-of-use, net of amortization</td>
<td>$78,288</td>
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<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>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Assets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term contributions receivable, net</td>
<td>$871,212</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security deposits</td>
<td>$91,665</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments - Rosetta Bakery x Best Buddies</td>
<td>($66,160)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments - deferred compensation plan</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other Assets</strong></td>
<td>$896,717</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**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><strong>$2,489,534</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long-Term Liabilities</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security deposit</td>
<td>$22,660</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred compensation plan liability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term portion of financing liabilities</td>
<td>$47,239</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term portion of operating liabilities</td>
<td>$2,541,191</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Long-Term Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,611,090</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,100,624</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With donor restriction</td>
<td>$5,425,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without donor restriction</td>
<td>$26,964,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$32,390,290</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Liabilities and Net Assets** | **$37,490,914**

---

*Domestic Net Asset Summary

*Domestic Revenue

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.**

---

**Domestic Expenses**

81% | $25,931,940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>$1,859,413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>$4,317,486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Domestic Revenue** | **$32,108,839**

**Total Domestic Expenses**

8% | $2,712,414

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>$6,004,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations &amp; Corps.</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>$11,410,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>$12,273,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$1,414,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Domestic Expenses** | **$28,831,699**

**Net Assets**

**(beginning of year)** | **$33,193,893**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in Net Assets</td>
<td>$1,706,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Unrealized Gains (Losses)</td>
<td>($2,509,312)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Domestic Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$32,390,590</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Best Buddies Friendship Program participants*
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

Jamie Hintlian
Partner/Principal
Klingman & Associates

Gerard A. Klingman, CFP
President
Best Buddies International

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
Founder
Council Chair
Best Buddies International

Ralph Winter
Founder
Corestate Capital Group

Bernie Yuman
President
Bernie Yuman Mgmt.
Executive Team

Jeremiah Angel  
Vice President  
Web Operations

John M. Carlin  
Senior Director  
Major Gifts & Planned Giving

Michael Collins  
Vice President,  
Best Buddies Challenges

Lisa Derx  
Vice President  
Government Relations

Alexander Hernandez-Dessauer  
VP, International Programs & Special Projects

Mark Lewis  
Senior Vice President  
Development, Marketing & Technology

Nicole Maddox  
Vice President  
Communications

Stephanie Moore  
Vice President  
State Operations & Mission Advancement

Lori Penaloza  
Senior Vice President  
Finance & Operations

David Quilleon  
Senior Vice President  
Global Mission, State Development & Operations

Jessica Schwartz  
Vice President  
Marketing & Partnerships

Anthony Kennedy Shriver  
Founder, Chairman & CEO  
Best Buddies International

Julie Torres  
Vice President  
Human Resources & Operations

Scott Tracy  
Vice President  
Challenges, National Events & Special Projects

Mark J. Wylie  
Vice President  
Talent Relations

Stephanie Moore  
Vice President  
State Operations & Mission Advancement

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
Ansins 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
Brannan 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
Milwaukee Brewers Baseball Club, LP
Mosaic Global Sales LLC
National Philanthropic Trust
Pantheon Venture
Pfizer, Inc
PGW Charitable Foundation
Race Roster
Raymond James Financial, Inc.
Rubin Family Foundation
Sevita
Seyfarth
Sony Music Entertainment
Southern Glazer’s Wine & Spirits
State Street Corporation, State Street Global Markets, LLC
Stanford Health Care
TD Bank
Teddie Peanut Butter
Texas Mutual
The Ferraro Law Firm
The GivenGain Foundation
The Leavitt Corporation
The Morrison & Foerster Foundation
The Tom Sullivan Foundation
UNUM Group
USB Financial Services, Inc.
Vertex Pharmaceuticals
Vanguard Charitable
Volvo Car USA
Walmart Inc./Foundation
Walt Disney World Resort
Waymo LLC
Webcor

$10,000 to $24,999

ABC Promotions Unlimited Inc.
Altia Group Inc.
American Equity Investment Life Ins. Co.
Ansys, Inc.
Arc Stores
Arizona Coyotes Foundation
Atlantic Management Corporation
BankUnited, N.A.
BlackRockFinancialManagement, Inc.
Blooming L.P.
BNY Mellon
Buffalo Sabres Foundation
Canon
Channel RE LLC
Cheshire 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
Genovesse Jolivoe & Battista PA
GTE Financial & Foundation
Hand2Mind
Hardwick Tactical Corporation
Health Care Service Corporation
ImpactWayv, 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
PESCO 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., Miami
Tavistock Development Management, LLC
Team Construction, LLC
The Advance Financial Foundation
The Bellamy Companies LLC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOUNDATIONS</th>
<th>$250,000 to $499,000</th>
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<tr>
<td>Taft Foundation</td>
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<td>$100,000 to $249,999</td>
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<td>$50,000 to $99,999</td>
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<td>Bader Philanthropies, Inc.</td>
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<td>Accenture</td>
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<td>William S. Abell Foundation</td>
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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 Dresher 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 Wawa 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
Maui United Way, Inc.
McNerney Foundation
Million Dollar Round Table Foundation
Networking to Help Children Inc
Nicol Gas
Nusenda Foundation
Phillips Charitable Foundation Inc
Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation
PNC Foundation
PNM Resources Foundation
Richard R. & Karen Bertrand Charitable Fund
Roles Family Foundation
Rotary Club of Deerwood Charities, Inc
Sandia National Laboratories
Shutterfly
Stackner Family Foundation Inc
State Farm Companies Foundation
Target Foundation
Tesori Family Foundation Inc
The Albert and Ethel Herzstein Foundation
The Bloedorn Foundation
The Carolina Panthers Charities
The Charro 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 Katherine Matthes Foundation
The Lindy Loo Foundation
The National Football League Foundation
The Silicon Valley Bank Foundation
The William & Sheila Konar Foundation
Umpqua Bank Charitable Foundation
Valleym 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
Mai County, 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
Resources
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 Mais 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 Ashliee 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

Doggie Daycare and More
Olde Towne Pet Resort
Paw-some Dog
Pet Resort Dallas
Pet Supplies Plus
Petland Kendall
PetSmart
Pompano Pet Lodge
Urban Paws
Zionsville Country Vet Clinic

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-Siebecker Center
Clark County School District
Coles Elementary
Curley Academy
Dana Middle School
Dean College
Dunlap High School Unit 323
Gennesee 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 Golf 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
Finaccor Advisors, LLC.
H.I.G. Capital, L.L.C.
IMC Financial Markets
Imperial Capital

BESTBuddies.ORG

Team Best Buddies Citizens
Team Bike Zone of Cape Cod
Team Blazing Saddles
Team Blue Brook Management
Team Bobcat Buddies
Team Boeing
Team Bonjay & The Funky Bunch
Team Citizens Catch ‘Em All
Team Cliff’s Crew
Team Creekside High School
Team Cruzin’ 4 Inclusion
Team Danielle & Coley’s Buddies
Team Dylan’s Dominators
Team Gallo
Team Greenberg Traurig
Team Gunnison Consulting Group
Team Henry
Team Holland & Knight
Mission:Possible
Team Jacksonville Citizens Group
Team KIDS 360
Team Macon Friends for Makin’ Friends
Team Mali
Team Malo
Team Marks Buddies
Team Marlowe
Team Meg
Team Merck - North Jersey
Team Novâ© p/b PRethirteen
Team Pirtle Construction
Team Plant High School
Team Ratchet and Clank
Team Ravenwood High School
Team RockDJ
Team Seminole Ridge High School
Team Tavistock
Team Ten Pins - Cape Cod Cruisers
Team The James Gang
Team THS Best Buddies
Team Tom
Team UF Best Buddies
Team Wyatt - Domestiques
Team Xcitebike Racing

Johnston Mirmiran & Thompson
Mas Tec
Whiting Turner

BESTBUDDIES.ORG

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/Ocедan
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 Appetit at Google
Bosque Brewing Company
Cafe Blu
Capital One Restaurant Associates
Cararra’s Italian Grill
CAVA
Centerville Pies - Sandwich
Chartwell’s
Cheesecake Factory
Chick-fil-A
Chili’s
Clean Juice
Compass Group
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurant Name</th>
<th>State or Location</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>NexDine</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
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<tr>
<td>New City Microcreamery</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dignity Health Sports Park/Levy Restaurants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fancy’s Market</td>
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<td>Fazenda Coffee Roasters</td>
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<td>Fiji Water</td>
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<td>Five Guys</td>
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<td>Flagship at Facebook</td>
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<td>Flik</td>
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<td>Flik Hospitality Group</td>
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<td>Friends Marketplace</td>
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<td>Fruit Center of Milton</td>
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<td>Fry’s – Signal Butte Mesa</td>
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<td>Fry’s Food - Tempe</td>
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<td>Fry’s Marketplace - Val Vista</td>
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<td>Golden Pride</td>
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<td>Gundalow Gourmet</td>
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<td>Hannaford</td>
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<td>Harvest Sensations</td>
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<td>H-E-B</td>
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<td>HMS Host</td>
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<td>Katelea Bakery</td>
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<td>Lady Baker</td>
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<td>Levy</td>
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<td>Lidl</td>
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<td>Lost Dog Cafe’</td>
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<td>Mahoney’s Bar &amp; Grill</td>
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<td>Main Event - Gilbert</td>
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<td>Market Basket</td>
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<td>Mata G Vegetarian Kitchen</td>
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<td>Misha’s Cupcakes</td>
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<td>Mod Pizza</td>
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<td>Morrison Healthcare at Saint John’s Hospital</td>
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<td>New City Microcreamery</td>
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<td>NexDine</td>
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<td>Smoothie King</td>
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<td>Sodexo @ Dana Farber</td>
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<td>Texas Road House</td>
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<td>The Boathouse</td>
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<td>The Cake Bake Shop</td>
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<td>The Paramount Group</td>
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<td>Uncommon Grounds, Students of Georgetown Inc (The Corp)</td>
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<td>Val’s Restaurant</td>
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<td>Wawa</td>
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<td>Wegmans @ Capital One Center</td>
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<td>Wendy’s</td>
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<td>Whittsons Culinary Group</td>
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<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
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<td>Accenture Federal Services-DC</td>
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<td>Alexandria Library - James M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duncan Branch Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arlington Central Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>City of Bal Harbour</td>
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<td>City of Baltimore</td>
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<td>City of Coral Gables Adult Activities Center</td>
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<td>City of Hialeah</td>
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<td>City of Indianapolis</td>
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<tr>
<td>City of Los Angeles Mayor’s Office of Economic Opportunity</td>
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<td>City of Miami Beach</td>
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<td>City of South San Francisco-REAL Program</td>
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<td>Department of Rehabilitation - Fresno Employment Development</td>
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<td>Department (EDD)</td>
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<td>Exchange Nellis Air Force Base</td>
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<td>MAG Aerospace</td>
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<td>Marion County Prosecutor’s Office</td>
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<td>Massachusetts Development Disabilities Council</td>
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<td>Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation &amp; Open Spaces - Zoo Miami</td>
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<tr>
<td>MVA- Annapolis</td>
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**Hospitality**

- Block By Block
- Century Rio 24
- Chatham Bars Inn
- Courtyard by Marriott
- Elior North America (Trío Community Meals)
- Embassy Suites
- Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott
- Flik Hospitality @ Citi
- Franklin Marriott Cool Springs
- Harvard Maintenance @ Google
- Holiday Inn Express
- Homewood Suites
- Jani King Cleaning
- La Quinta
- Marriott
- MGM Resorts International PinStack
- Restaurant Associates
- Saint Kate - The Arts Hotel
- Seaport Hotel
- SeaWorld
- Texas Star Community Management, LLC
- The Buckingham Hotel
- The Gardens of Bellaire
- The Ritz-Carlton Coconut Grove
- UCLA Housing & Hospitality W Scottsdale (Marriott Hotel)
2022 saw a long-time goal come to fruition. In addition to our long-established offices in North Texas and Houston, we hired staff to expand our programs into Central Texas. With great appreciation to the Texas Education Agency, we received additional funding that allowed us to hire new staff and leadership throughout Texas.

We also held many localized meetups this year to share the Best Buddies mission. This included events like a wine tasting, a private dinner at a restaurant, National Disability Employment Awareness Month events, and so many more.

As we grow our Citizens program, we are creating monthly group events, including a Best Buddies night with the Texas Legends, bowling nights, and movie nights.

We are working hard on our goals to expand Best Buddies programs into diverse communities. The Orchid Giving Circle granted us funds to specifically work with us to engage the many cultures that make up the Pan-Asian community, and we have already seen our demographics change.

We were pleased to take our first step back towards an in-person Leadership Conference; we celebrated regionally and had fantastic trainings for over 100 student leaders.

The Friendship program expanded into 23 new schools across the state, bringing our total chapters to 123 statewide. Our total school chapters now serve 4,429 students of all abilities. In addition, 215 student leaders attended Best Buddies trainings, and 32 students with IDD became Ambassadors. Best Buddies Jobs continued to thrive, placing 15 participants across Texas and engaging 12 employers. The Jobs program served 80 participants in 2022.

We held three Friendship Walks in the spring, including our first in Central Texas. Across our three walks, we raised $195,000 and hosted over 1300 people!

The fall was filled with special events, including two Champion of the Year Galas and a Party with a Purpose in Central Texas. Collectively, we raised $584,000, with two of our Grand Champions raising over $80,000 each!

As we head into the new year, Best Buddies Texas remains committed to expanding the Friendship, Leadership Development, and Jobs programs throughout the state, serving even more students and adults with and without IDD. We will continue working alongside our supporters, including the advisors, teachers, board members, volunteers, corporate partners, and employers who make our mission a reality. Together, we can continue to make an impact across Texas and move our mission of inclusion forward.

Linda Kordek-Milton, State Director, Texas
Houston Office
13100 Northwest Fwy, Suite 310, Houston, TX 77040
P 832.673.0305 | F 832.673.0304
“Before becoming involved with Best Buddies, I participated in Special Buddies at my elementary school, but the program was very small. My brother, Thomas, has IDD and ASD, so I would accompany him to his occupational, speech, and physical therapies. I became very familiar with the challenges individuals with IDD must face. Once my middle school teacher told me about Best Buddies, I knew I had to join. Seeing the impact organizations like Best Buddies can have on the buddy and their family inspired me to get involved with Best Buddies once I got to high school.

I love being friends with my buddy Anna. When we hang out, we love to watch Gilmore Girls. I’m always yelling at the TV over the character’s poor decisions, and Anna giggles at how passionate I get about a simple TV show about a girl and her mom. We also do arts and crafts together, but our favorite thing to do is gossip and discuss the drama that happens. I love seeing her smile at my very unfunny jokes, and she’s always the first person to laugh when my clumsiness manifests itself, and I inevitably bump into something. Her wit and humor brighten my day, and the more time I spend with her, the more she amazes me with her vibrant personality.

Becoming friends with Anna has opened my eyes to the world of different abilities. She has shown me other ways to connect beyond conversation. She has shown me the value of the unspoken. Anna and I have such mutual love and respect for each other. She is incredibly witty and spunky, and I always have an amazing time, no matter what we are doing.

Every time I hang out with her, I see how happy it makes her—and I hope she sees how happy it makes me. I hope every friendship made through Best Buddies is just as joyful and fulfilling as ours. That is why I love Best Buddies so much. It has allowed me to form a life-long and invaluable friendship, and this friendship has truly changed my life.”

Becoming friends with Anna has opened my eyes to the world of different abilities. She has shown me other ways to connect beyond conversation. - Samantha
From Charlie’s dad:

“After being diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Charlie has been working with various agencies, therapists, therapeutic schools, and most recently with Best Buddies and Sonia Martinez, his job coach. Sonia has been instrumental in helping Charlie obtain much-needed “real-life” experience outside of the relatively sheltered atmosphere afforded him by his schools.

Initially, Sonia was able to arrange an unpaid intern position with a retail organization, Soap Hope, for several weeks, which exposed Charlie to a more structured work environment. Being able to work with others and learning to work on structured projects, either individually or with a team, was a great learning experience for Charlie.

Afterward, in conjunction with Best Buddies, Sonia placed Charlie in a paid position with the Credit Union of Texas (CUTX) union, which is a less structured environment than he’s been in historically. This is allowing Charlie to both grow his people skills as he interacts with CUTX customers and coworkers and help him grow his confidence, as his job allows him to stretch his wings by adding other duties that will allow him to learn a work ethic, take on more job responsibilities and continue to develop his interpersonal skills.”

“I feel like this job experience will help me grow in my career and help me gain more independence,” Charlie said. “Best Buddies helped me find my place in the workforce.”

These "real-life" work experiences will continue to lay a foundation for Charlie for the rest of his life in whatever endeavors he takes on and for whatever path he chooses to follow.
Fran
Leadership Development
Ambassador, Waxahachie, TX

“Before Best Buddies, I didn’t really have any direction, especially in my career. I always knew I wanted to help people and give back to the community, but I never had a job like I have now, and Best Buddies guided me in the right direction. I currently work at Promise Development Center, and I enjoy going to work every day! Right now, I am a Jobs participant and a North Texas Ambassador with Best Buddies.

Cheyenne Jock, my amazing job coach, really changed my life through Best Buddies. I wanted to get more involved with Best Buddies, which led me to become an Ambassador for North Texas. I want to help other people find the same experience I had, find a job they love, and make friends. I want to speak at schools and talk to students to spread motivation, inspire people, and teach about inclusion. Courtney Page at Best Buddies has also been a huge inspiration. She has encouraged me and helped me find more opportunities to get involved.

I joined Best Buddies in January 2021, and since then, I have grown in many ways and am more inspired to help the IDD community every day. Best Buddies has helped me find many opportunities. I also had some teaching experience, which has helped me become wiser and more understanding. I also see how different we are – it is neat to see what different jobs people want and what people are good at. We are all so different and all so special.

I want others never to doubt themselves and always love themselves the way they are. You do not have to change to be successful; you don’t have to be like everyone else to follow your dreams!”

Fran, Best Buddies Ambassador

Leadership Development
Key Program Stats TX

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I want others never to doubt themselves and always love themselves the way they are. - Fran
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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**Supporters**
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**Financials**
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**Art Direction, Design & Imagery**
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Thank you,
Mark Lewis, Senior Vice President, Development, Marketing & Technology

Thank You!

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