

PALS



2022 Annual Report



It's the **happiest**
place I know!

- PALS Partner



From the Executive Director

The past few years have been quite a roller coaster for the PALS organization, and for so many others. After canceling our biggest summer ever scheduled in 2020, we transitioned to virtual and single day events to carry us through much of the pandemic and 2021. While we continue to be inspired by the strength and passion of our community, we were absolutely thrilled to return to full-week programs in 2022.

PALS has spent the past several years continuing to evaluate how we best achieve our mission. Our staff and Executive Board have worked on actualizing our 2025 Strategic Plan, building deeper partnerships and communities in every region where we hold programs. We've worked to focus our evaluations and data to better understand our impact and hold ourselves accountable to the goals in this plan. We hosted 15 programs in 2022, serving all 10 of our focus hubs. This includes the eight hubs we were serving in 2019: Philadelphia, Mid-Atlantic, New York City, New England, South, Ohio, Illinois and Northern California. This past summer we were able to launch full-week programs in our final two hubs of our strategic plan - Southern California and the Pacific Northwest. Our camps in both LA and Seattle enabled us to enhance our representation on the West Coast and identify new partnerships and opportunities.



Jenni Newbury Ross
Co-Founder & Executive Director

Jenni Newbury Ross

2022 also represented a significant year of infrastructure growth and accomplishment for PALS. Through the support of a generous grant in 2020, PALS began pursuing official accreditation from the ACA (American Camping Association). This process enabled us to better understand and implement the highest quality standards in camping programs. In addition to submitting written documentation of our policies, we also hosted ACA visitors at several of our sites to confirm that PALS is able to meet these high standards at each of our program locations. We are proud to have officially received accreditation as an Inclusive Camp for all of our week-long programs across the country. We look forward to continuing to learn and grow alongside the ACA community as we build our camp programs of belonging.

Returning to full week programs also enabled PALS to reconnect with many donors and supporters. We are so grateful for all of those who supported PALS in 2022 and continue to be committed to our mission of inclusion and acceptance. We also want to thank all of our volunteers who join us every summer as Peers and Leaders. We know that this experience changes the lives of both those with and without Down syndrome. As one of our PALS leaders shared this year, "PALS gave me a giant piece of my life back that I didn't know was missing, I want to give that experience of finding home again to other people."

We hope you will join us in celebrating 2022. We are looking forward to an exciting 2023 as we help more and more people find their home at PALS.

PALS Programs began in 2004. The vision was clear—changing perspectives through relationships built on shared experiences. We pair up individuals with Down syndrome one-on-one with their peers to grow in independence, to tackle new experiences, and to build friendships along the way.



The programming is simple—we go on trips, we try out new activities in small groups, we compete in the PALS Olympics, and we host the best dance parties you’ve ever seen. While the programming is simple, the rest of it is magic. Over the years we’ve built a commitment to this place—to this world where the boundaries of judgment, the fear of exclusion, and the stress of fitting into some pre-designed mold are gone.

Our programming centers around our week-long, overnight camps held on college campuses across the country. And we strengthen our community with The Congratulations Project, reaching out to congratulate and welcome new families of babies with Down syndrome through letters written by our participants.

While our programming continues to expand, our model stays the same. We believe in one-to-one pairings that create strong bonds and lifelong friendships. We focus on peer-to-peer relationships, trusting in young volunteer leaders to develop age appropriate programming and to be eager to enact social change. We value residential experiences — recognizing that real impact comes from immersive experiences, and real change comes in the moments you least expect it. We hold specific values of who we are. We are welcoming and supportive. We are a family that is passionate and genuine, and always has fun.

PALS has shaped the lives of thousands of individuals since our first program in 2004. Half of us have Down syndrome, but all of us know the value of friendship, the thrill of being on a team, and the best place to experience summer. Together, we challenge each other to be a little better, and to see the world a little differently.

A smiling woman with long brown hair and glasses is sitting on a colorful inflatable structure. The structure has red, yellow, and blue sections. She is wearing a dark red top. The background is bright and colorful.

our

mission

PALS Programs creates inclusive camp experiences for people with and without Down syndrome. Our volunteer-led programs change attitudes, transform lives, and inspire a world of belonging.

our

values

We are:

welcoming
genuine
passionate
supportive
and fun.

Our family is so grateful to PALS for this incredible experience. We are so glad we took a chance. Gabby will be back for sure! Thank you for creating this amazing experience for these amazing humans!

- PALS Parent



WELCOME
JESSICA!!!

Welcome
CJ!

Welcome
Logan!

Welcome
Cass

LET'S GOOOOOO
PATRICK

Summer

2022

Snapshot

15 in-person programs
+ 1 virtual program

424 Partners with Down syndrome

490 Peers and volunteer leaders





Being at PALS is like being a family.

- PALS Partner

I don't feel like I'm just volunteering. I'm having fun and learning things at the same time.

- PALS Peer

My favorite part of PALS is just the overall environment. I love watching people come together to be nice and have fun with each other. At PALS, nothing in the outside world matters for the week. We are able to come together and just have fun and create a meaningful experience for everyone involved.

- PALS Team Lead

Exciting stats

Net promoter score

85

Overall satisfaction

4.69/5

96%

“I can be myself at PALS.”

96%

“I felt included in the PALS community.”

97%

“I made new friends at PALS this summer.”

Parent/Guardian Survey

97%

“PALS is an important part of my young adult’s independence.”

97%

“PALS offers opportunities my young adult may not have otherwise experienced.”

99%

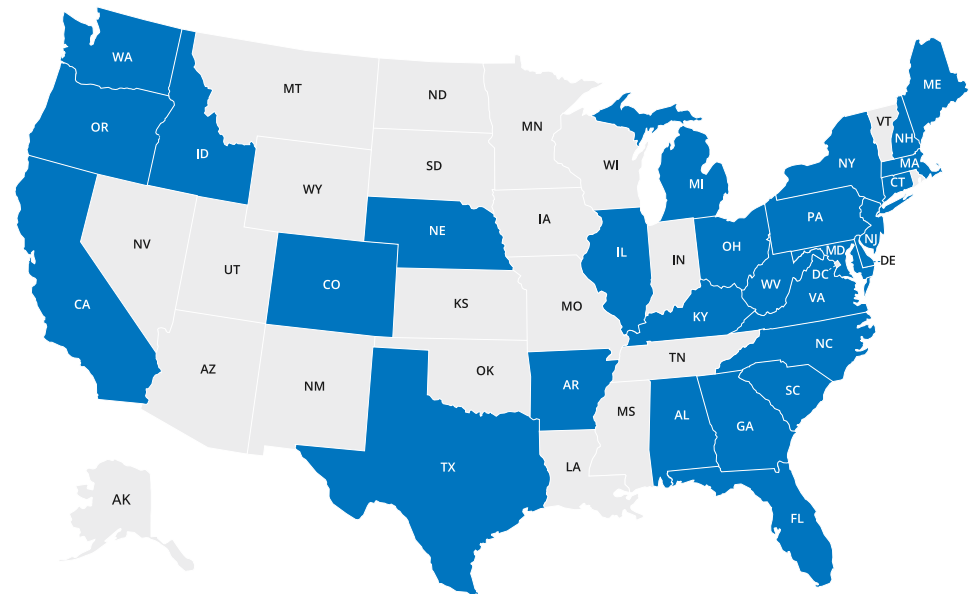
“PALS is somewhere safe for my young adult to go.”

Partner

stats



Partners came from:

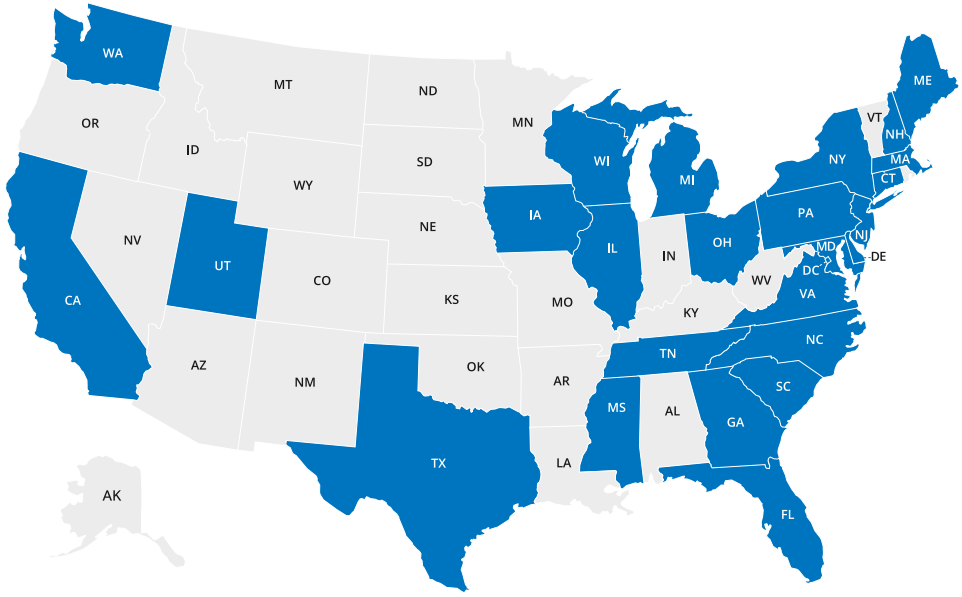


81%

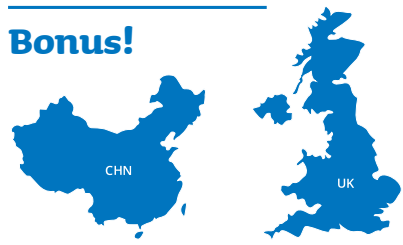
of Partners who attended PALS
in 2021 applied in 2022.

Peer stats

Peers/Volunteer Leaders came from:



Bonus!



63%
of Peers & Volunteer Leaders
were new to PALS in 2022.

Camp Highlights

PALS Atlantic City



- Ocean City boardwalk
- Steel Pier
- Lucky Snake Arcade & Bally's Beach Bar



PALS Baltimore



- Wonderfly Arena
- National Harbor
- Baltimore Yacht Club



PALS Boston



- Quincy Market
- Boston Museum of Science
- New England Aquarium



PALS Chicago



- Lincoln Park Zoo
- Millenium Park
- Navy Pier



PALS Cleveland



- Play:CLE
- Nautica Queen
- Cleveland MetroParks Zoo



Camp Highlights

PALS
DC



- DC Boating
- Bowlero
- Sandy Point Park



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

PALS
Los Angeles



- Santa Monica Boardwalk
- Grammy Museum
- Down for Dance



PALS
Maine



- SailMaine
- Adaptive Outdoor Education Center
- Portland Lobster Company



UNIVERSITY OF
NEW ENGLAND
INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET

PALS
New Jersey



- Point Pleasant Beach
- Casino Night
- Dancing with A Work of Heart Productions



PALS
New York



- Jones Beach
- Coney Island
- AMF Wantagh Lanes



Camp Highlights

PALS
North
Carolina



- Bitty & Beau's Coffee
- Wilmington Water Tours
- Wrightsville Beach



PALS
Philadelphia I



- Ocean City Boardwalk
- Spirit of Philadelphia
- Dave & Buster's



PALS
Philadelphia II



- Ocean City Boardwalk
- Philadelphia Zoo
- Dorney Park



PALS
San Francisco



- Google
- Santa Cruz Boardwalk
- Ripley's Believe It Or Not Museum



PALS
Seattle



- Point Defiance Zoo
- Pike's Place Market
- Oxbow Conservation Center



**PALS showed me a whole different
perspective on acceptance and inclusivity.
Making so many memories with many
people that I never met before.**

- PALS Peer



Perspectives from Participants

with Down syndrome on their Experiences at PALS Programs

Executive Summary by Tori Cedar

Since 2004, PALS has built programs around the US on five core values:

Genuine, Fun, Supportive, Welcoming & Passionate.

PALS intends to instill these five values into all aspects of its programming. In 2021, a PALS Leader completed a dissertation for Rutgers University.

79% of participants strongly agreed and 21% agreed

that after PALS, they felt happy
(Supportive, Genuine)

63% of participants strongly agreed and 37% agreed

that they are more confident in themselves
because of the support received at PALS
(Support, Genuine)

89% of participants strongly agreed and 11% agreed

that the friendships they made at PALS
are very important to them
(Genuine, Welcoming)

89% of participants strongly agreed and 11% agreed

that they would recommend PALS to a
friend with Down Syndrome
(Welcoming)

74% of participants strongly agreed and 11% agreed

that they look forward to coming back
to PALS after the week has ended
(Fun, Passionate)

79% of participants strongly agreed and 21% agreed

that PALS helped them to be who
they want to be
(Genuine, Passionate)

79% of participants strongly agreed and 21% agreed

that they think about themselves in a more
positive way because of PALS
(Welcoming, Genuine)

75%

of the open ended responses reflected either the participants **perceptions of enjoyableness** or an impactful experience that **brought positive change.**

Inclusion and Belonging

“I have Down syndrome and the doctors didn’t know what to do. I would want people to know that PALS is a place for people that want to know more about Down syndrome. It’s a program that’s inclusive and it’s a space that’s very important to you and me.”

Reasons to Return/Programming

“This will be my 8th or 9th time at PALS. PALS is my family, that’s why I keep coming back.”
“I love myself. This is me. And I love everything about PALS. I’m more confident and PALS has helped me love myself more.”

Personal Development

“(The) first time I went to PALS it was the first time I ever went away. PALS makes people want to grow up and move out in the future. I want that for myself in the future too. I felt loved and happy to be accepted. I felt confident.”

The logo for PALS, featuring the word "PALS" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below the letters "A" and "L" is a green curved line that resembles a smile or a stylized horizon line.

The

Congratulations Project

2022

1,750+
Letters distributed
since 2012

10
Distribution
Partners

2,500+
Books distributed
since 2018

50
Countries Reached

50
States Reached



The Congratulations Project reaches new families having a baby with Down syndrome by sharing participants' words of hope, joy, and welcome. Sharing the words of individuals with Down syndrome gives insight and changes attitudes for new families. Each letter welcomes the family into the PALS community to build a more inclusive world of belonging.

It gave me so much hope and strength when I was still trying to figure out what Down syndrome would mean for our son. Thank you for giving me that first glimpse into what a great life he will have.

- Letter Recipient

My words of encouragement are beauty, grace, strength, kindness and patience. I have kept our letter of congratulations on our card tree since we got it over three years ago. It was touching and much needed in a time of uncertainty.

- Letter Recipient



The feeling of togetherness, friendship, acceptance and working together to achieve a wonderful week full of great experiences. It gave me an opportunity to work with young people and to enjoy their company. PALS has been one of the greatest blessings in my life. I look forward to it every year!

- Medical Volunteer

2022

Expenses

2022 Financials

	Programming	Administration	Fundraising	Total
Food	\$18,1740	\$2,808	\$12	\$184,560
Housing	\$331,902	–	–	\$331,902
Supplies & Apparel	\$48,697	\$5,184	\$3,322	\$57,203
Travel	\$106,348	\$10,964	\$84	\$117,396
Programming	\$123,904	–	–	\$123,904
Office Expenses	\$27,935	\$23,817	\$10,017	\$61,769
Insurance	–	\$12,146	–	\$12,146
Employee Salaries and Related Expenses	\$339,494	\$58,751	\$119,106	\$517,351
Employee Training	\$9,619	\$1,154	–	\$10,773
Professional Fees	\$55,836	\$26,980	\$4,817	\$87,633
Bad Debt	\$2,541	–	–	\$2,541
Total	\$1,228,016	\$141,804	\$137,358	\$1,507,178

2022

Revenue

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Contributions	\$607,134	\$85,437	\$692,571
Contributions, In-Kind	\$247,168		\$247,168
Grants	\$146,000		\$146,000
Tuition, Net	\$742,366		\$742,366
Misc Income	\$7,520		\$7,520
Investment Returns, Net	\$1,748		\$1,748
Total	\$1,751,936	\$85,437	\$1,837,373

2022

Change in Net Assets

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$758,493	\$181,073	\$939,566
Net Assets - End of Year	\$1,184,324	\$85,437	\$1,269,761
Net Gain	\$425,831	-\$95,636	\$330,195

Thank you

2022 major donors!

\$10,000+

Crane Fund for Widows and Children • Cohen Vieira Charitable Foundation, Inc. • Beth & John Foraker • Georgetown University • Mike & Jill Gerawan • Mark & Judi Goldstein • Kevin & Susan King • Lockheimer Family Giving Trust • Hiroshi Lockheimer • Manuel Gordon Foundation • Steve & Jennifer Ross • Charles H & Susan Spilman • Jason & Cristina Toff • The H.Chase Lenfest Foundation, Inc • The James and Patricia White Fund • The J. Ralph and Lois Stone Family Foundation • The Noll Foundation, Inc. • The Selz Foundation, Inc • The Snider Foundation • The Wawa Foundation • Triad Foundation • Sarah & Dan Wernikoff • WS Abell Foundation

\$5,000-9,999

Adelson Family Foundation • Renee Ausherman • Stephen & Mary Brogan • Amy & Peter Gerney • Sue & Todd Heller • Sonya Li • Louis N Cassett Foundation • Soeren & Jennafer Palumbo • Michael & Melanie Petras • Tim Shriver, Jr. • Joel & Beth Spenadel • The Allegis Group • The Tobin Family Foundation • Antoine & Guad Yver

\$1,000-4,999

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\$500-999

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Thank you

2022

Supporters!

These supporters contributed Value-in-Kind donations and program activities.

13th Street Bikes & Bath House

AAA Quality Maintenance Corp.

Alecci's Delight

Argosy Cruise

Atlantic Pier Amusements, Inc

Baltimore Yacht Club

Bitty & Beau's Coffee

Bob's 14th Street Bikes

Casino Night

City Experiences - Spirit of Chicago

Down for Dance

Driftwood Water Adventures

Furry Friends

Geigers Limosine

Google (Casino Night)

Jamie Ellis

Jungle Rapids

Lucky Snake Arcade

Mane in Heaven

Middle Branch Park

National Aquarium

Nautica Queen

Navy Pier

New England Aquarium

Nick Ellis

OCNJ Mayor's Office

Oxbow Conservation

Paws4People

Play:CLE

Pointe Park Willoughby

Portland Lobster Company

Quincy Market

Ripley's Believe It Or Not

SailMaine

Santa Cruz Boardwalk

Spirit of Philadelphia

The Museum of Science

Wilmington Water Tours

Woboba Inc.



Words can't describe what you do to give our children the opportunities they would not otherwise have. They feel loved without judgment.

- PALS Parent



PALS