

A photograph of two young women high-fiving outdoors. The woman on the left is wearing a red t-shirt and has her hair in a ponytail. The woman on the right is wearing a white t-shirt, sunglasses, and has her hair in a braid. They are both smiling. In the background, there are wooden picnic tables and green trees.

PALS

2019 Annual Report

PALS is a place of hope, family, fun and love. It is the greatest place and I know that you will soon love it too

- PALS Camper



From the Executive Director

2019 was a year of many firsts for PALS. We launched our first adult program open to individuals 25 and older in Wildwood, NJ. We also hosted our first “Camp Night,” a large-scale fundraiser in Philadelphia that shared the PALS magic with new community members and donors, and raised over \$50,000. We opened up a new region in the South, launching our first program in North Carolina.

Perhaps our most exciting first was our decision to partner with UMASS Boston in conducting the first-ever research study on the impact of PALS on our volunteers. The research team worked with our 2018 participants during and after the summer, conducting pre- and post- camp evaluations as well as long-form interviews. For many years, we’ve talked about how PALS impacts both individuals with and without Down syndrome, but for the first time we got extensive data to demonstrate this change in our volunteers. We released the full report and summary in early 2019 and it is now available on our website. We are proud to


learn that PALS is changing attitudes about how people see those with Down syndrome and their capabilities. And we were thrilled to see that volunteers themselves experience change in self-esteem, build new leadership skills, and forge lifelong friendships. Researchers even found trends around the likelihood of our volunteers wanting to create new opportunities for inclusion and advocacy after their PALS experience.



We ended this summer with a large fundraising campaign across all of our programs. We are so grateful for the support from campers, volunteers, families, and donors across the country to help us continue our work and expand our reach.

One volunteer participant from the UMASS study described learning at PALS that: “I can change someone else’s life for the better while they are changing mine.” Together, we are committed to transforming lives for years to come.

Jenni Newbury Ross
Co-Founder & Executive Director

A photograph of three young women smiling and hugging each other. The woman on the left is wearing a red shirt, the woman in the middle is wearing a blue shirt, and the woman on the right is wearing a green shirt. They are all looking towards the camera with joyful expressions.

PALS Programs began in 2004. The vision was clear—changing perspectives through relationships built on shared experiences. - Individuals with Down syndrome are paired one-to-one with their peers to grow in independence, to tackle new experiences, and to build transformative friendships.

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 is gone.

Our programming begins with Camp PALS, our week-long summer sleep-away camps held on college campuses across the country. The experiences continue with weekend getaways during our off-season at PALS Holiday and PALS Great Wolf Lodge. 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 campers.

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.

This is our place.



our mission

PALS Programs creates immersive experiences where young adults with Down syndrome and their peers have fun, grow as individuals, and build transformative friendships.



**PALS gave me confidence
that I can be away from
home and be successful.**

- PALS Camper

2019

growth



2019

growth

595

Campers

762

Volunteers

15

Camps

2019

programming

One reason why she is so successful in life is because of the personal growth she experienced as a result of attending PALS. She is such a light in our family and you help her shine brighter.

- PALS Parent



2019

programming

97.2%

**Overall
Programming
Satisfaction Score**

90.3%

net promoter score



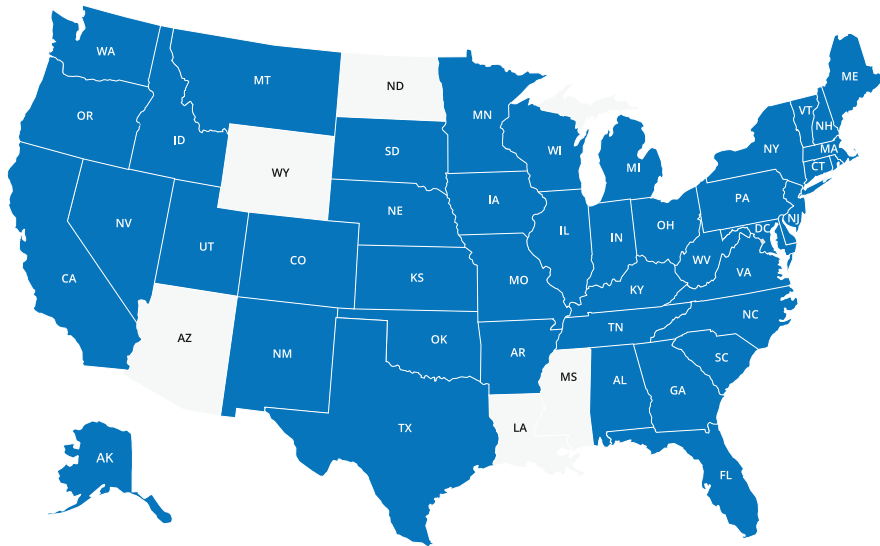


camp night

PALS held our first major fundraising event in 2019, Camp Night. Camp Night allowed guests to experience the joy of Camp PALS by participating in the exclusive activities that make PALS so unique and transformative for our community. Activities included an olympic athletic course, an epic PALS fashion show stage, a traveling casino, and a quick popular trip down the boardwalk for a night of fun guests will never forget! The evening continued with cocktails, an hour of games and competition, and a short program during dinner including impactful speeches by popular TV host and PALS board member Meredith Vieira and Philadelphia mayor James Kenney.

2019

campers



2019 Camper Locations



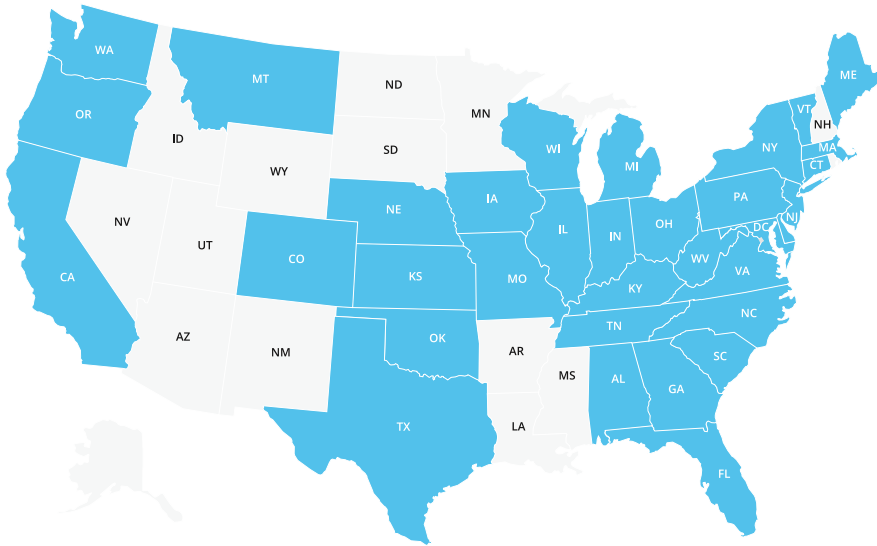
127
first-time
campers

91%
camper retention
from 2018 season

14%
enrollment increase
from 2018 season

2019

volunteers



- Japan
- Puerto Rico



2019 Volunteer Locations

291
first-time
volunteers

41%
volunteer retention
from 2018 season

11%
enrollment increase from
2018 season

2019

volunteer leadership

PALS Ambassadors

In 2019, PALS enlisted the help of more than 65 PALS Ambassadors and 20 Congratulations Project Ambassadors. Our Ambassador Program is made up of true champions for PALS--those that believe in our mission and continue to promote PALS and inclusion year-round. Tasked primarily with helping the organization on major initiatives in recruitment and fundraising, our Ambassadors were able to help recruit hundreds of campers and volunteers, and raised more than \$20,000.



Leadership Summit

In January, PALS brought over 50 volunteer leaders together for its Annual Leadership Summit. Over three days, leaders learned about inclusive community building, personnel, logistics, fundraising, programming, and conflict resolution. PALS was honored to be one of the first audiences to screen *The R-Word* film, which concluded with an amazing Q&A with the director, Amanda Lukoff, immediately following. This movie provided a great message for PALS leaders on how words matter.

A photograph of three young men smiling and posing together at what appears to be a camp or event. They are wearing blue t-shirts and lanyards. The man in the center is wearing a black baseball cap and a red backpack. The man on the left is wearing glasses. The man on the right has his arm around the man in the center. In the background, there are green metal structures and a sign with the number '16'.

UMASS Findings

Since 2004, PALS Programs has been fostering relationships between peers with and without Down syndrome through weeklong summer programs held on college campuses across the country. In 2018, PALS Programs, in collaboration with the Center for Social Development and Education at the University of Massachusetts Boston, carried out a formal evaluation of the impact Camp PALS has on the volunteers.

We change attitudes.

The PALS experience changed volunteers' attitudes about individuals with Down syndrome, and about their own capabilities.

- New volunteers became significantly more positive in their perceptions of the capabilities of people with Down syndrome as a result of their experiences with campers.
- 78% of volunteers gained confidence in themselves and their overall abilities, including the ability to lead, advocate, and speak in front of others.
- Volunteers learned the importance of compromising (75%), how their attitudes affect others (78%), and learned to be more patient (85%) with all individuals

We transform lives.

Volunteers develop new friendships, and new perspectives that will change their lives forever.

- 80% of volunteers felt they experienced a positive turning point in their life at Camp PALS
- Volunteers described their friendships as “genuine” and “lifelong” - 97% of returning volunteers kept in touch with campers or co-volunteers from previous summers.

We inspire a world of belonging.

Our campers and volunteers create a uniquely inclusive community and are inspired to bring that experience to the world.

- 74% of returning volunteers reported coming back to camp each summer because it provided them with a sense of belonging
- 88% of new volunteers reported that they began to think more about their personal future and career path because of Camp PALS.
- Almost all new volunteers (83%) reported that they joined Camp PALS to make a difference. New and returning volunteers alike ended their session even more motivated to make a difference in the lives of marginalized communities, and in the world in general.

2019 Camps & Programming Highlights

PALS
Baltimore



- National Aquarium
- Middle Branch Park
- Oriole Park at Camden Yards



PALS
Boston



- Brockton Fair
- New England Aquarium
- Fenway Park



PALS
Chicago



- Chicago Yacht Club
- Chicago White Sox
- SHEDD Aquarium



PALS
Cleveland



- Kalahari
- Nautica Queen
- Great Lakes Science Center



PALS
Georgetown



- FBI Museum
- DC Boating
- AMC



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

2019 Camps & Programming Highlights

PALS
Maine
In memory of Myrna



- Camp Tall Pines
- Portland Lobster Company
- SailMaine



PALS
New Jersey
In memory of David Frieri



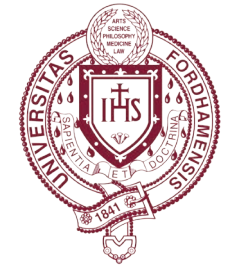
- Six Flags
- Ocean City NJ
- Dave and Busters



PALS
New York City



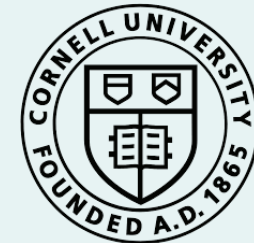
- Luna Park at Coney Island
- Yacht Mariner III
- Bronx Zoo



PALS
New York
Inspired by Hope & Family



- Ithaca Yacht Club
- Robert Treman State Park
- Cayuga Lake Wine Trail



PALS
Philadelphia
The Julian & Tina Krinsky Program



- Six Flags
- Philadelphia Independence Day Parade
- Ocean City New Jersey



2019 Camps & Programming Highlights

PALS
Poconos



- Montage Mountain
- Knoebels
- Promised Land State Park



PALS
North Carolina



- Bitty and Beau's
- The Terraces on Sir Tyler
- Jungle Rapids Waterpark



PALS
San Francisco



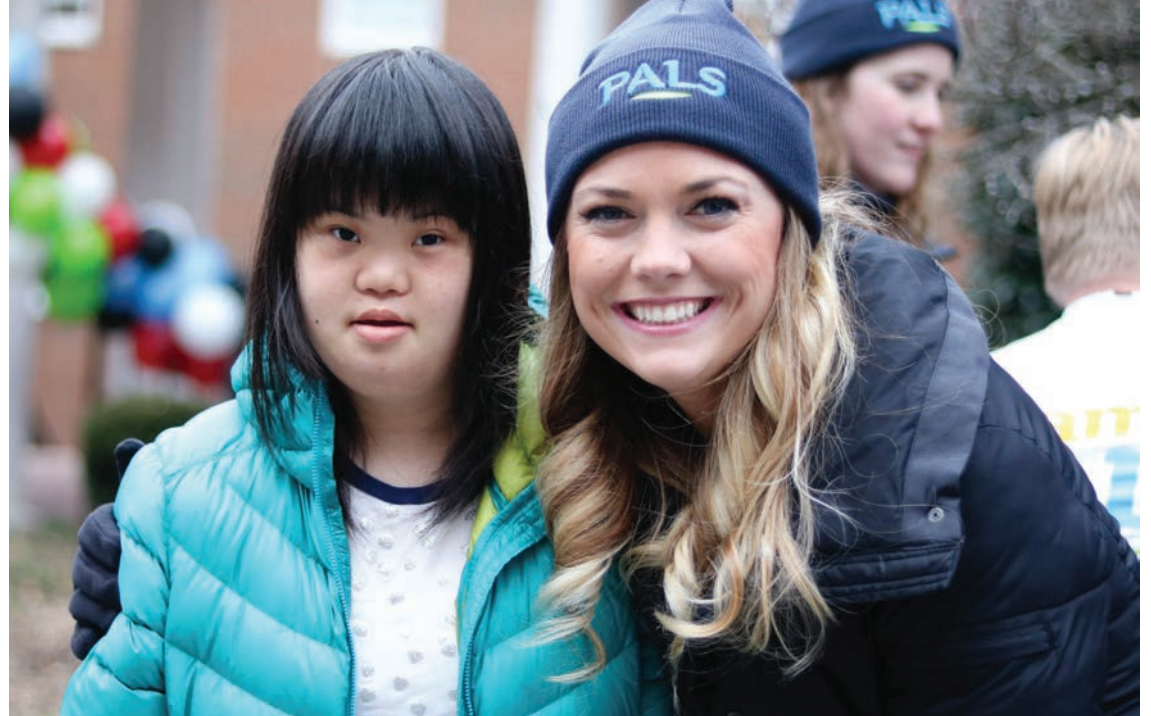
- Exploratorium
- Aqua Adventure Waterpark
- Santa Cruz Beach



PALS Holiday

Winter programming allows PALS to provide an opportunity for our participants to get together during the offseason. In 2019, we hosted three off-season programs: PALS Holiday in Washington DC, PALS Holiday in Philadelphia, PA, and Great Wolf Lodge weekend in Scranton, PA.

Along with on-campus activity staples such as PALS Got Talent and The Congratulations Project, more than 200 participants went on fun trips such as a Spirit of Philadelphia cruise, the National Mall, Lehigh Valley Zoo, and even an FBI tour!



The

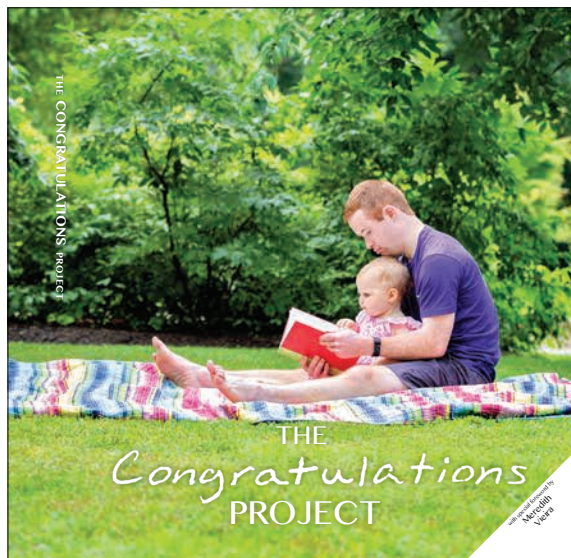
Congratulations Project

946

letters sent since
founding of
project in 2012

1,627

books distributed



Thank you for congratulating us on our bundle of joy. We loved the handwritten letter we received while we were pregnant. We still have her letter on our refrigerator and look at her smiling face every day. It really felt good reading the word, “Congratulations.”

- Congratulations Project Letter Recipient

Led by our belief in the power of hope, joy, and welcome, PALS continued to greet new families of children with Down syndrome with the same, simple message – “Congratulations” – handwritten by individuals with Down syndrome and delivered through standard mail. Congratulations Project letters are changing attitudes and perspectives about Down syndrome, providing an opportunity to learn about the diagnosis and recognize the value of every person, essential to the mission of PALS.





2019 Financials

Camp PALS really is the best week of the year, if only I could capture the love, excitement, support and acceptance - put it in a bottle and share with the world. If only.

- PALS Volunteer

2019

Expenses

	Programming	Administration	Fundraising	Total
Food	\$426,899			\$426,899
Housing	\$604,537	\$1,021		\$605,558
Supplies	\$40,117	\$2,647	\$6,106	\$48,870
Apparel	\$34,561			\$34,561
Travel	\$86,120	\$7,619	\$335	\$94,074
Programming	\$164,446	\$232		\$164,678
Office Expenses	\$20,857	\$21,592	\$4,301	\$46,750
Insurance	\$10,449			\$10,449
Employee Salaries	\$251,794	\$46,223	\$69,256	\$367,273
Employee Benefits & Training	\$7,536	\$31,220	\$1,169	\$39,925
Payroll Taxes	\$22,455	\$3,418	\$5,611	\$31,484
Professional Fees	\$48,567	\$24,500		\$73,067
Total	\$1,718,338	\$138,472	\$86,778	\$1,943,588

2019

Revenue

Contributions	\$675,873
Contributions, In-Kind	\$465,396
Contributions, Non Cash	\$13,467
Tuition, Net	\$826,570
Special Event Revenue	\$52,387
Misc Income	\$8,451
Investment Returns, Net	\$18,018
Total	\$2,060,162

2019

Change in Net Assets

Expenses	\$1,943,588
Revenue	\$2,060,162
Net Gain	\$116,574

Value of Camp

\$2,888



thank you

2019 major donors!

\$5,000+

The Snider Foundation • The Selz Foundation, Inc • Anonymous • Wawa Foundation • Georgetown University • Meredith Vieira • Manuel Gordon Foundation • Beth Foraker & Family • Crane Fund for Widows and Children • Tina & Julian Krinsky • The H. Chase Lenfest Foundation, Inc • Anonymous • David Salz • The J. Ralph and Lois Stone Family Foundation • Mark and Judi Goldstein • Louis N Cassett Foundation • Patrick Dooley • Jason Toff & Family • Erik Schouten • Todd & Sue Heller • Meredith Seigle • Samuel Heller • Karen & Bill Matthews • Jared Culotta & Family • Charles Spilman • Triad Foundation • Andrew Perry • The Tobin Family Foundation • Michael Petras & Family

**\$2,500-
\$5,000**

Sonya Li • Robyn & Mark Newbury • Shane & Rosina Kent • Jonathan Gusdorff • Frieri Law Group, LLC • Mike Gretz • Jessica Trief • Stephen Brogan • John & Lisa Butler • DSNMC INC. • Dale L. Reese Foundation • Sandra Lowe Household • Fox & Roach Charities • Adelson Family Foundation • Pierce Keating • S. Matthew Hamilton Jr. • Anonymous • The Beth and Steven Soferino Charitable Fund • Advanced Integrated Health, LLC • The Star Fund, Inc. • Richard Green

**\$1,000-
\$2,500**

Conor Hawes • Patricia Gorman • Maureen & Brian Abbe • Harvard Coop Grant (FKA Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund) • Teach A Man To Fish Foundation • Lori and John Hunt • Christine Delaunay • Amy Obrien-Bird • Jeffrey Warmke • ECHO Northrop Grunman • Colette McKenzie • Joanne Diskint • James Gorman • Michael Hawes • O'Toole Scrivo, LLC • Soeren Palumbo • Craig Rees DMD • James M McFadden • AM Skier Agency, Inc. • Tom Balz • Suzanne Quinn • Barbara LK Siegel • Marisa Atsatt • Harold Byrne • Bob White • Michael Stock • Kyle Stolarz • Richard Aldrich • James Moslow • Lindy Snider • Ellen Trief • Warren High • Andrew Berkheimer • Carl Ghiselli • Vincent Palumbo • Paul Reischman • Camilla Schroeder • Amy Julia and Peter Becker • Steve Kernie • Steven & Marilyn Abbe • Christopher Keesling • James Kenney • Knights of Columbus Council 1711 • Erlbaum Family Foundation • Emily Dodge • Gabrielle Conklin • Alisa Skatrud • Todd Mowry • Jennifer Ta • Walmart Foundation • Triangle Down Syndrome Network • Paul & Andrea Merkert • Rajeev Bahman • Michael Feinman • Tish Jones • Amy Coes • Thomas Farrell • Derek Weber • Pansy Mcrae

thank you 2019 value-in-kind donors!

Adventure Aquarium • Alecci's Ice Delights • AMC Theaters DC • Aqua Adventure • Baltimore State Parks • Blue & Gold Fleet • Boating in DC • Boeymonger Catering • Boston Aquarium • Brockton Fair • Bruegger's Bagels Cleveland • Bryn & Dane's Restaurants • Camp Tall Pines • Capital Chickn & Waffles • Chicago White Sox • Chicago Yacht Club • Chickie & Pete's Philadelphia • Cleo's Restaurant • Dave & Busters PA • Dogs on the Curb • Exit Row Band • Fenway Park • Fireside Grille • Fitz's Spare Keys • FunFlicks • FunPlex • Georgetown Day School • Gola Osteria • Great Lakes Science Center • Greeks of Peaks • Happy Mixer Bakery • Island Bowl • Ithaca Yacht Club • Jet's Pizza • Kalahari Water Park • Knoebel's Amusement • Meatheads Chicago • MELT Cleveland • Metropolitan Shuttle • Montage Mountain • Morey's Pier • National Aquarium • Nature's Path • Nautica Queen • Navy Pier • Orioles Park • Panera Bread Cleveland • Paniniz BBQ • Pasta Tivo • Paul Mitchell Beauty • Penn's Landing Summerfest • Playa Bowls PA • Raging Waves • Red Arrow Tap Room • Ripcord Music • Rising Tide Brewing Company • SailMaine • Shedd Aquarium • Short Stop Deli • Six Flags America • Six Flags Great Adventure • Spectacle Island Ferry • Spirit of Chicago • Spirit of Philadelphia • SUP Guys • Surftopia • The Exploratorium • The Franklin Institute • Tropical Sno • UNE Ice Skating • York Theater





looking

ahead

He's had the opportunity to try out his independence, define a place for himself outside of his family, and forge relationships with a fabulous group of creative, warm, and caring individuals.

- PALS Parent