

FDD

Impact Report

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Foundation for Developmental Disabilities

6050 Santo Road, Suite 145

San Diego, CA 92124

858-256-2222

www.foundationfordd.org



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MISSION

We generate and distribute funds to innovative programs that enhance the quality of life for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) in San Diego and Imperial County.

VISION

Equitable access to opportunities that maximize the potential of individuals with IDD.



WHAT WE DO

Through the generosity of our community partners including corporations, businesses, and individuals, the Foundation for Developmental Disabilities provides:

- Affordable housing development.
- Micro-enterprise job development and creation.
- Emergency assistance for persons with IDD.
- Scholarships for students entering the field of IDD.
- Training for individuals with IDD and their families.
- Funding for innovative community programs.

A LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to present The Foundation's annual Impact Report, highlighting our achievements and strategic initiatives in the past year. At FDD, we aim to provide equitable access to opportunities that maximize the potential of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I am proud to report on our progress toward this goal.

As we work to bring awareness to the remarkable initiatives that serve individuals with IDD, we also provide scholarships to students entering the IDD field and emergency funds to the San Diego Regional Center's 42,000 clients facing financial hardship.

Our growth is evident in the numbers. In FY2023–2024, we increased our program funding, awarded 10 scholarships, hosted two successful in-person fundraisers, funded an affordable housing development that set aside 18 units for people with IDDs, and provided emergency assistance to 266 individuals with IDDs and their families. This is a testament to our commitment and the impact we are making.

Thanks to you, we continue to develop relationships that work to enhance the quality of life for individuals with IDDs. Our achievements are not ours alone. They result from the dedication and support of our stakeholders, board, staff, and donors. Your contributions make our work possible. Together, we have achieved significant milestones, but there is still much to be done. With your continued support, I am confident that the Foundation will continue to make a profound difference in the lives of those we serve.

Join us in accelerating access as a community for one of the most under served groups in our community.

Our achievements are not ours alone. They result from the dedication and support of our stakeholders, board, staff, and donors. Your contributions make our work possible.

SITARA SETHI, CEO



Sitara Sethi

Sitara Sethi
Chief Executive Officer
Foundation for Developmental Disabilities

OUR GOVERNANCE AND STAFF

FDD is led by an accomplished staff along with its volunteer board of directors—ensuring successful operational management and strategic planning. FDD’s committee membership includes professionals with strong business, law, and nonprofit acumen who are dedicated to the Foundation’s mission.

BOARD COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Jan Adams, Chair
Lori Kay, Vice Chair
Angela McNeece, Secretary
Jerry Harris, Treasurer
Wade Wilde, Member

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Jerry Harris, Chair
Falon Leszczynski
Rose Hanson
Dan Clark

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Wade Wilde, Chair
Bruce Wexler
Falon Leszczynski
Darius Davis (Non-Board City National Bank)
Kevin Foley (Non-Board Umpqua Bank)

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

Rose Hanson, Chair
Jan Adams
Jerry Harris

PETERSON SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Sylvia Paulson-Peterson, Chair
Lori Kay
Angela McNeece
Dr. Raymond M. Peterson

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Linda Bay, Chair
Lori Kay
Angela McNeece
Jan Adams
Dan Clark

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Falon Leszczynski, Chair
Angela McNeece
Rose Hanson
Wade Wilde

NOMINATING AND BYLAWS/ CONFLICT COMMITTEE

Bruce Wexler, Chair
Jan Adams
Lori Kay
Wade Wilde

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Falon Leszczynski, Chair
Kim Keane (Non-Board)

STAFF

EXECUTIVE

Sitara Sethi
Chief Executive Officer

DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

Jill Weber
Development and Marketing Manager

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Rebecca Engard
Office Manager

PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGY

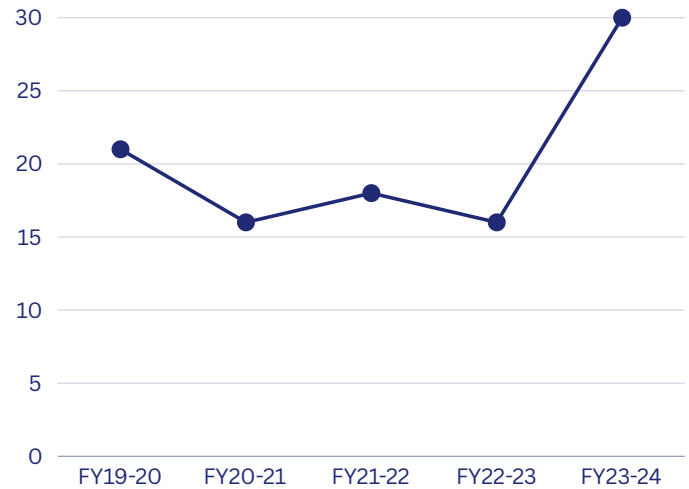
We consider the evolving needs of our community and make strategic decisions surrounding initiatives that focus on individuals with IDD.

Our programs support all individuals with IDD including their families to enhance their quality of life.

Over the past five years, FDD has **provided 1.4 million dollars in grants to support 125 nonprofit organizations throughout San Diego and Imperial County.** More recently, the Foundation has strategically focused financial support on a select few nonprofit organizations, channeling increased funds to these partners to maximize their impact and create a concentrated effort within the IDD community.

GRANT MAKING OVER TIME

Our funded programs over the past five years.



Over the past five years, we have provided grants to 125 nonprofit organizations in San Diego and Imperial County.

FUNDING OVER TIME

In FY2023-2024, we offered \$789,788.97 in grants—ensuring that our community received the support that it needs.



GRANT MAKING IN FY2023-2024

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT	PROGRAM	YEAR
Adjoin	\$9,170.50	Path NOW, Self-Advocacy Conference	2023
Amanda's Adaptive Martial Arts	\$15,000.00	Karate Kids and Cubs Program	2023
Autism Society San Diego	\$4,000.00	Social and Mental Health Conference	2023
Casa de Mosaic	\$3,000.00	Holiday Fair	2023
Dancing Around the Oak Tree Studio	\$582.97	General Supplies	2023
Home of Guiding Hands	\$10,000.00	Social Club	2023
Include(ED) SD	\$14,950.00	Early Childhood Inclusive Program	2023
Kidpower International	\$7,600.00	Health and Safety Powers Initiative	2023
Noah Homes - People First	\$7,500.00	Regional Conferences	2023
Poway Unified Foundation - Kitchen Table Academy (Poway Foundation)	\$10,000.00	Cooking Classes, Job Training	2023
SD-ID Developmental Services	\$4,000.00	Self Determination Conference	2023
San Diego Children's Discovery Museum	\$17,000.00	Sensory Programming	2023
San Diego Air & Space Museum	\$15,000.00	Engage individuals with I/DDs through Hands-On Activities	2023
San Diego Museum of Art	\$8,000.00	Community Art Workshop	2023
Special Olympics of Southern California	\$5,000.00	Maintenance and Replace Sports Equipment	2023
UCSD Neurodiversity in Tech Camp	\$15,000.00	Summer Camp	2023

GRANT MAKING IN FY2023-2024

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT	PROGRAM	YEAR
Arms Wide Open	\$10,000.00	Performing Arts Classes	2024
Beacons Community Art Fair	\$10,000.00	Community Art Fair	2024
Ben Hulse Elementary Circle of Friends	\$4,600.00	Snacks and Materials for Meetings	2024
Best Step Forward	\$10,000.00	Provide Sports and Recreation Opportunities for People with I/DDs	2024
Boys and Girls Clubs Oceanside	\$14,860.00	Fit and Fun Program	2024
Community Interface Services	\$13,325.50	Work Incentive Benefits Practitioner Certification	2024
Gigi's Playhouse	\$10,000.00	Music Therapy and Tutoring	2024
Mirka Investments, LLC	\$506,000.00	Affordable Housing	2024
New Village Arts	\$10,000.00	Extraordinary Character Program	2024
Outside The Lens	\$14,984.00	Media Makers' Virtual Reality Programing	2024
San Diego People First	\$10,000.00	2024 Conference	2024
St Madeline's Sophie's Center	\$8,000.00	Aquatics Program	2024
Unified Esports League	\$14,216.00	Expansion of Gaming and Technology Program	2024
Westmorland Food Pantry	\$8,000.00	Payment of Individuals with IDD's	2024

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS –

ADJOIN SELF-ADVOCACY CONFERENCE

focuses on advocating for the civil rights and inclusion of individuals at local, state, and federal levels and actively pushes for increased resources and policy changes to ensure people have the foundation to belong in their community. Through this partnership, FDD supports and promotes staff development by encouraging participation in conferences and other professional development opportunities, equipping the team with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively advocate and lead in the initiatives we serve.

AMANDA'S ADAPTIVE MARTIAL ARTS,

Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant Amanda Piepgras has masterfully combined her passion for martial arts with her dedication to children with special needs, creating an inclusive and transformative program. Amanda's unique approach addresses various challenges faced by these children, including sensory processing issues, attention span difficulties, impulse control, body awareness, and muscle strength deficiencies. Through adaptive martial arts, she provides tailored coaching that helps children master new skills, build confidence, and enhance their physical and mental well-being.

HOME OF GUIDING HANDS is one of the largest organizations in San Diego and Imperial Counties providing disability support services. HGH is dedicated to helping individuals learn, grow, and live quality lives and offers a wide range of services, including Residential, Respite, Tailored Day, Independent Living Skills, Early Childhood Development, Transportation, and Life Planning. Moreover, HGH is committed to delivering high-quality education and support through their programs, making a positive impact on individuals of all ages in the community.

INCLUD(ED) As a teacher and the Founder & Director of Includ(Ed), Anna Chiles faced widespread rejection when seeking a school for her son Theo, who has Down syndrome. Preschool directors cited a lack of resources without meeting Theo or understanding his abilities.

Anna discovered that many parents in the disability community share similar experiences, with children often excluded from early education in San Diego County. This exclusion leaves them less prepared for kindergarten and forces parents to become primary caregivers.

In response, Anna is building a fully inclusive school where children with disabilities can learn alongside their peers.

KITCHEN TABLE ACADEMY supports students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) by providing hands-on training in culinary arts, nutrition, smart farming, and waste management, preparing them for careers in the culinary and hospitality industries. Students learn essential cooking techniques, kitchen safety, meal preparation, healthy eating, dietary planning, and food service management, equipping them for roles in restaurants, catering services, and health and wellness sectors. Training in sustainable practices, such as smart farming and waste management, further prepares them for employment in farm-to-table restaurants, urban farming, and environmentally conscious enterprises. The Academy's comprehensive, practical education and supportive learning environment help students with IDD gain the skills, confidence, and experience needed for fulfilling careers.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT FOUNDATIONFORDD.ORG.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Nurturing Kind Hearts and Curious Minds: San Diego Children's Discovery Museum Celebrates 24 Years of Enriching Experiences

In its 24th year, the San Diego Children's Discovery Museum (SDCDM), a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, remains devoted to providing engaging educational exhibits and programs. With an annual visitation of over 100,000, encompassing children, families, and school groups, the Museum fosters kind hearts and curious minds with a focus on social-emotional learning (SEL) and STREAM (science, technology, reading, engineering, arts, and math).

SDCDM passionately encourages children to explore and comprehend the world through hands-on experiences, imagination, and joyful experimentation. Continuing its commitment in its 24th year, the Museum strives to maintain an interactive and enriching environment for young minds to thrive.

Recognizing the San Diego Children's Discovery Museum's dedication, the Foundation for Developmental Disabilities (FDD) generously donated \$17,000. This specific contribution aimed to enhance the Museum's Sensory Sunday initiative.

Sensory Sundays, held every Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., cater to families with children on the spectrum or those with sensory sensitivities. These sessions are meticulously designed to create a warm and inclusive space, offering a serene setting for children and families to enjoy the museum's experiences.

"Part of working with neurodiverse children means patience and understanding. Some families we see during our Sensory Friendly Mornings feel that time is especially made for them because they won't be judged. After all, our staff and other families understand their needs."

~ JANIS BENTON, OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES MANAGER



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Unified Esports League --- A Gaming and Technology Education Program

The Unified Esports League is a non-profit committed to bringing together individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) through the transformative power of technology and gaming. Unified Esports empowers those with IDD by enabling them to translate their passion for gaming and technology into prospective career or educational opportunities.

By leveraging the benefits of team sports and gaming, Esports aims to bolster communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills among individuals with IDD. Simultaneously, it introduces them to potential opportunities within the gaming and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) industries. Program leaders are dedicated to broadening the horizons of those with IDD by cultivating positive and constructive gaming environments. Specifically designed curriculum units empower students to pursue ambitious goals like career or college pathways, acquire driving skills, and participate in team-based competitions.

Their program operates throughout the year, unaffected by school timetables, except on holidays. Notably, no restrictions exist on how often students can attend these sessions.

FDD's funding was crucial in procuring the necessary furniture and technology for gaming and technology education. This encompassed curved monitors, gaming and workstation computers, virtual reality headsets, video editing and game design software, audio engineering tools, gaming consoles, and accompanying peripherals. FDD funding has not only facilitated the upgrade of equipment but has also enabled the expansion of the program's reach and impact to new locations in San Diego County.

"There is so much potential in all the people we work with. Unfortunately, far too few are blazing a trail to give those we work with more choices. Everyone needs a loving community of people, a sense of identity, and somewhere to believe in and work on what they are enthusiastic about. We are incredibly grateful for the support of FDD in helping us to build this program and supply those things."

~ MATHEW ISKE, FOUNDER UNIFIED ESPORTS LEAGUE





HELP FUND PROGRAM

The FDD Help Fund program assists San Diego Regional Center clients facing emergency situations. The individuals with IDD and families supported by this program are **granted emergency funds for rental and housing, utility assistance as well as other situations that could negatively affect their quality of life.**



\$250,000.00

Total funding disbursed to individuals with IDD and families in San Diego and Imperial County.

266

Number of individuals with IDD and families supported by the Help Fund.



HELP FUND PROGRAM

Our Help Fund program is one of our most impactful programs. Since 1986, we have provided approximately \$2,000,000 to directly assist the San Diego Regional Center clients in emergencies such as homelessness prevention and assistance with utilities, including water and electricity.

Below are some stories of our impact.

MAYA is a 7-year-old girl on the autism spectrum. Her mother works full-time in a nursery as the sole provider for Elizabeth and her older sister. The family was given one week's notice to move out of the place they were renting, and they had to use all their savings to look for a new place to live. The Foundation helped them with their first month's rent in the new apartment to help prevent them from becoming homeless.

Ann is a senior with a severe developmental disability. She lives on a fixed income, which is used for housing, medications, transportation, and appointments. She received an eviction notice after living in one residence for 12 years. With the assistance of her Supportive Living Service, she found a mobile estate that would meet all her needs. The Foundation assisted in paying the deposit on the new residence, allowing her to maintain her fixed income and stabilize in her new situation.



*"As a family experiencing homelessness, **FDD's Help Fund** provided the necessary funds to secure housing. The assistance covered immediate needs and allowed us to transition to stable living conditions. FDD's support was a positive change, and we are now on a path towards a brighter future."*

*"The **Help Fund** from FDD came to our rescue during a challenging time. As a single mother, I faced financial strain due to medical leave without pay. The support helped cover immediate needs and allowed me to rebuild and secure a stable future for my daughter and me. FDD's assistance made a significant difference, and I am grateful for their lifeline."*

*"**FDD's Help Fund** was instrumental in preventing a potential crisis for our family. Facing the risk of homelessness, the support we received ensured our child's access to vital therapy and education services remained uninterrupted. This program profoundly impacted our lives, offering hope and stability during a critical period."*

**Names have been changed to protect the privacy of those represented.*



RAYMOND M. PETERSON SCHOLARSHIP

Each year, FDD provides funding through the Raymond M. Peterson Scholarship, a resource for the leaders of tomorrow.

Scholarships are available to university or college students who are planning a career or presently working in the field of IDD or related fields. Recipients of the scholarship are residents of and/or attending colleges in San Diego and Imperial County.



"The FDD and the Raymond M. Peterson scholarship has provided me with financial support and left a profound emotional impact. It's deeply validating to feel recognized as someone living with epilepsy, and it inspires me to persevere in my journey of providing radical care and support for my students with disabilities and families as a future bilingual school psychologist in San Diego."

~ GRECIA A.
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT



"Receiving this scholarship is a tremendous honor that fuels my dedication to becoming a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst. This recognition inspires me to continue creating inclusive learning environments where individuals with disabilities can thrive. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and committed to making a meaningful impact in the field of special education."

~ MITCHEL M.
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

\$42,000

Total in funding disbursed in FY2023-2024 to students who are planning a career or furthering their education in the field of IDD.

10

Number of college or university students awarded the Peterson Scholarship in San Diego and Imperial County.

A YEAR OF IMPACT AND GRATITUDE

*We are creating a community
where all individuals with IDD
can thrive*

The Foundation for Developmental Disabilities extends heartfelt thanks to our supporters for their unwavering commitment to our mission. Your generous contributions have enabled us to continue providing outstanding programs and initiatives that serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) and their families.

We are deeply appreciative of our community of supporters and individual donors. Your dedication has significantly improved the quality of life for individuals with IDD and their families in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Together, we are fostering an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone can thrive. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey and for helping us make a meaningful difference in our community.

MAJOR SUPPORTERS

Debra E. and Warner C. Lusardi Foundation

Pauline & Peter Weeks

Chelsea Investments

Creative Planning

DSC, Inc.

Meissner Commercial Real Estate Services

Mirka Investments

OneWell Health Care

Sylvia Paulson-Peterson and Dr. Raymond M. Peterson

Umpqua Bank

Wakeland Housing

We invite you to support the Foundation for Developmental Disabilities and help us create meaningful opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Your donation can make a profound impact, empowering those we serve to lead fuller, more enriched lives. Join us in making a difference today.

LEARN MORE AT FOUNDATIONFORDD.ORG

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