

# Annual Report

FY 2023-2024



[www.pacificautism.org](http://www.pacificautism.org)  
Pacific Autism Center for Education



# Pacific Autism

CENTER FOR EDUCATION

As we reflect on the 2023-2024 fiscal year, I am proud to share how PACE has continued to grow and evolve to better serve our students and residents. One of the most significant milestones of this year was the expansion of our PACE School program with the opening of the PACE San Aleso campus. Our new facility allows us to provide dedicated support for our high school and post-secondary students, equipping them with vocational training and life skills that foster greater independence. This expansion represents a pivotal step in our mission to empower autistic individuals by creating tailored learning environments that meet their unique needs.

None of this would have been possible without the passion and commitment of our incredible staff, the generosity of our donors, and the trust and partnership of our families. Your support allows us to expand our programs and create life-changing opportunities for those we serve. As we look ahead, we remain dedicated to strengthening our programs, advocating for our students, and fostering a community where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for being a part of our journey—your support ensures that PACE continues to be a place of growth, opportunity, and hope.

With Gratitude,



**Kurt Ohlfs, Executive Director**

## PACE Leadership



**Karen Kennan,  
Assistant Executive  
Director**



**Karyn Caradonna,  
Director of Human  
Resources**



**Melissa Watkins,  
Director of  
Marketing and  
Development**



**Nancy Elghiani,  
Finance Manager**



**Lori Strickland,  
School Director**

## PACE Board of Directors

- Debbie McCarroll, President
- Mark Peper, Vice President
- Nancy Brown, Treasurer
- Kurt Ohlfs, Secretary
- Joe Dermer
- Marina Djordjevic
- Lisa Grisalin
- Mark Gilfix
- Dave Setti



To enhance the lives of people impacted by autism, through innovation, exceptional education, and compassionate care.

OUR MISSION

## About Us

In 1989, a group of parents, community members, and educators formed the Pacific Autism Center for Education to meet the critical need for high-quality programs for children and adults with autism. Over 30 years later, PACE continues to be at the forefront of autism services and staff training in the Bay Area.

Our comprehensive services include the PACE School serving ages 6-22, Sunny Days Preschool, an inclusive early intervention preschool for ages 3-6, PACE Residential group homes, Faces Behavioral Services, and Porchlight Autism Education Series, our free online eLearning resource, and Porchlight University, our eLearning program for teachers and paraeducators.

PACE is a private 501c3 non-profit organization. Our Tax EIN is 77-0259858. To learn more about our programs, visit us at [www.pacificautism.org](http://www.pacificautism.org).



A world where people of all abilities live fulfilled lives.

OUR VISION

## Our Community (June 2023 - July 2024)

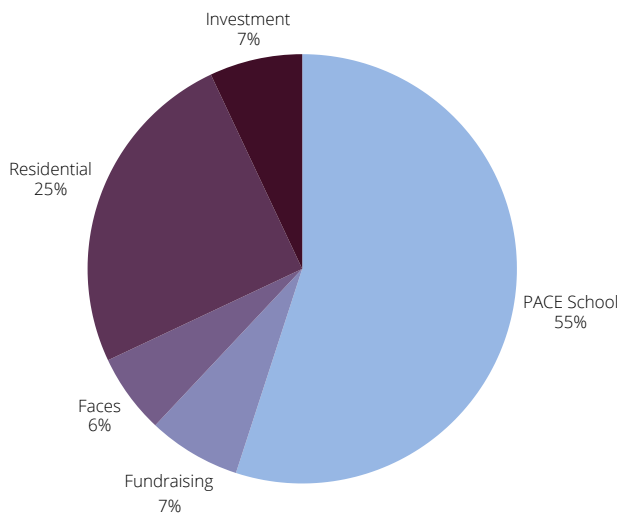
177	TEACHERS, THERAPISTS, RESIDENTIAL AND SUPPORT AIDES	67	STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE PACE SCHOOL
50+	VOLUNTEERS	26	CLIENTS IN OUR GROUP HOMES
16	ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	28	ENROLLED IN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

# Financial Summary

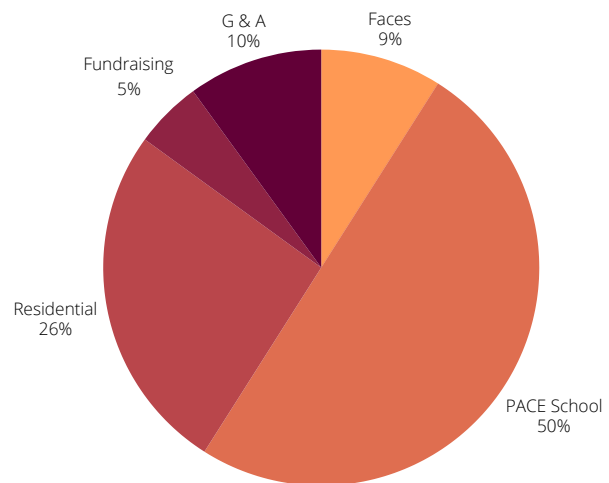
## FY 2023-2024 Revenue and Expense

PACE is supported by the California Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services. Additional grants and donations from community-based organizations, businesses, and individuals make it possible for PACE to provide exceptional care for clients in our school, children's services, and residential homes.

### FY 23-24 Revenue \$14.0M



### FY 23-24 Expense \$12.6M



## Agency Highlights July 2023 - June 2024



Student and staff enjoy a vocational outing.

PACE successfully opened its **San Aleso Campus** in September 2023. The new facility is located in Sunnyvale, CA and serves the PACE School upper-age students, while the Santa Clara campus serves elementary-age students. The expansion of our school program marks a significant milestone that reflects the dedication, commitment, and excellence of the entire PACE community.

Thanks to our donors, families, PACE staff, volunteers, and community partners, our 2024 Autism Acceptance Month fundraising events were a success. To start the month, PACE held its first PACE Art and Community Exhibition, where every student worked to create art to sell for the community. PACE also partnered with the San Jose Sharks for their inaugural Autism Acceptance Night, which featured a special sensory room for families, and the PACE Youth Leadership Committee held its first movie night. In total, we raised **\$14,476** for the PACE Annual Fund.

The 2024 **Bay Area Real Estate Round Table** was held at the Half Moon Bay Ritz Carlton. The annual event brought over 200 attendees from the Bay Area and across the U.S. to support PACE and bring awareness of autism to the real estate world. Thanks to sponsors and donors, the event raised over **\$600,000** for PACE.

The **15th Annual PACE Golf Classic** returned at Cinnabar Hills Golf Club on September 22, 2023. With 122 golfers, the event was one of the most successful golf classics in PACE's history, raising over **\$103,000** for the agency.

**Community and vocational outings** are a vital part of the school curriculum and learning experience. Volunteering opportunities with local organizations such as Sunnyvale Community Services and Ciceros Pizza provide opportunities for our students to develop important independent living skills.

# The PACE School: Expansion to Sunnyvale



*San Aleso Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Pictured (left to right): Sunnyvale Councilmember Richard Melhinger; Sunnyvale SNAIL Neighborhood Community Chair, Valérie Suarès; PACE Executive Director, Kurt Ohlfs; PACE School Director, Lori Strickland; Sunnyvale Mayor Larry Klein.*

PACE celebrated the grand opening of its new San Aleso campus in Sunnyvale with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by staff, students, families, and members of the Sunnyvale City Council, including Mayor Larry Klein and Councilmember Richard Melhinger. This event marked a significant milestone for the organization, as the new campus officially opened its doors in fall 2023, reflecting the continued growth and dedication of the PACE community. The expansion of the school program demonstrates PACE's ongoing commitment to provide high-quality educational opportunities for individuals impacted by autism, allowing the organization to serve even more families in need.

The San Aleso campus serves our high school-aged students and can accommodate up to ten classrooms. Additionally, it features our innovative occupational therapy gym, dedicated vocational training rooms, and multiple spaces to fit the sensory needs of our students.

***“We are very grateful for the support of the PACE community for making the opening of the PACE San Aleso campus possible and look forward to continuing our work together.”***

*Kurt Ohlfs*

The PACE Pruneridge campus in Santa Clara continues to support our elementary grade levels, offering high-quality learning and therapy services. Our Sunny Days Preschool campus continues to serve our early intervention programs, including the Sunny Days Preschool and Faces Behavioral Services.

At our Sunny Days Preschool and Faces clinic, we added resource rooms including a sensory gym, complete with swings, crash pads, rock-climbing walls, and a zipline, as well as a dedicated room for the Faces ABA clinic. Additional enhancements included a new BCBA office/workspace and an expanded staff lounge area. As these programs continue to grow, we are able to better serve our student population and provide expert care.



*Sunny Days Preschool Occupational Therapy Gym.*

# PACE Residential: New Renovations

Several PACE group homes received substantial upgrades this year, including a kitchen remodel, flooring, fences, and HVAC systems. Home maintenance is a critical part of ensuring the homes provide a safe and comfortable environment that also accommodates the unique and individual needs of the residents. The PACE Golf Classic, initiated by PACE board member and founding family member Joe Dermer in 2008, has brought together our PACE community to promote autism awareness and raise vital funds for PACE programs. Over the years, this event has become one of the primary fundraisers for the PACE residential program. In September 2023, attendees at the 15th Annual PACE Golf Classic raised \$43,500 to support PACE residential home projects. PACE is deeply grateful for the support from the PACE Golf Classic community.



Photos from the residential program and the 15th Annual PACE Golf Classic.

## Staff Spotlight: Jocelyn Malkenhorst

Our team is dedicated to providing students with valuable real-world opportunities, and School Resource Engagement Coordinator Jocelyn Malkenhorst plays a key role in this goal. Jocelyn joined PACE in 2023 as an instructional aide and quickly embraced the opportunity to create practical applications for students. In her new role as School Resource Engagement Coordinator, she focuses on helping students generate core skills for independent living, expanding vocational opportunities, and connecting students with community resources. Additionally, she acts as a liaison for parents, assisting with accessing day programs and supporting teachers with next-step planning.

In the past year, Jocelyn has been instrumental in growing PACE's vocational program and expanding its scope to include essential life skills and job-related training. Students engage in activities, which include laundry, washing dishes, and pizza box making. They also engage in community-based experiences such as volunteering at Cicero's Pizza and shopping trips to local stores. Through partnerships with Sunnyvale Community Services and libraries, students practice independent tasks in real-world settings. Jocelyn coordinates events such as Movie Day, fostering social engagement and recreational learning. We all appreciate Jocelyn's hard work!



School Resource Engagement Coordinator, Jocelyn Malkenhorst.

# Our Supporters

Thank you to our donors for Fiscal Year July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024. For a full list of supporters, please visit our website at [www.pacificautism.org](http://www.pacificautism.org). Our best effort was made to include all donors of \$100+ and corporate donors of \$500+ (auction and ticket purchases not included). We apologize if inadvertently donors were omitted.

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ARNOLD HOUSEHOLD  
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# Corporate and Community Partners

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AQUATIC AV  
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BENEVITY- AMERICAN ONLINE GIVING FOUNDATION  
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