



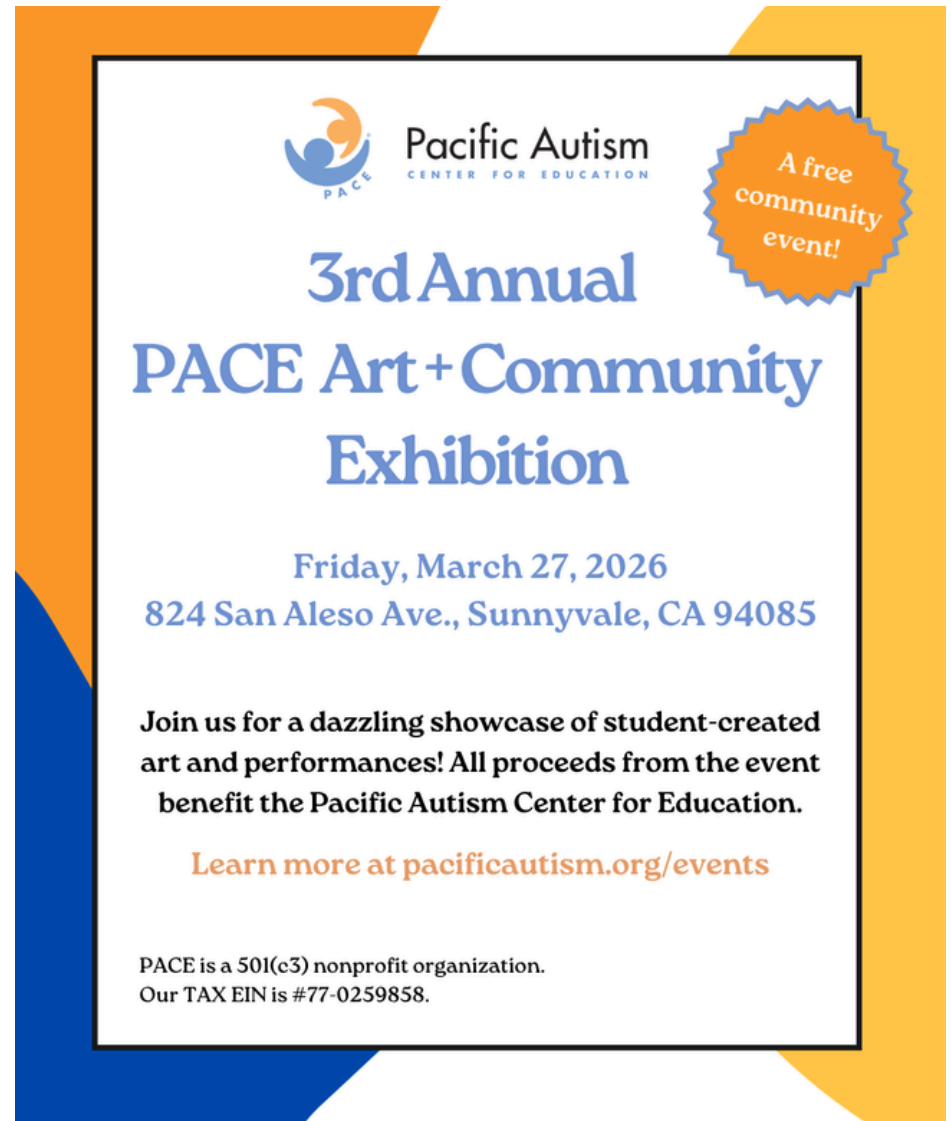
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KURT OHLFS

As we approach the end of another year, I would like to take a moment to thank and recognize our generous PACE community and celebrate the accomplishments we have achieved over the last few months. In May, we were the beneficiaries of the Bay Area Real Estate Roundtable's fundraising event, held at the Ritz-Carlton Half Moon Bay. The event raised over \$600,000 to provide crucial support to PACE's school and residential programs. In June, we held a heartwarming graduation ceremony at our San Aleso campus, celebrating this important milestone for six PACE students.

As summer rolled on, we gathered for a staff BBQ picnic, welcomed several new staff, and dove into planning for the new school year. In September, we held our 17th annual PACE Golf Classic. The event welcomed 124 golfers and 20 volunteers for a shotgun tournament, banquet dinner, and auction. A special thanks to PACE board member Joe Dermer and his family, who have proudly led this event year after year.

The end of the year is a great time to celebrate the season of giving and gratitude. We are immensely grateful for the generosity of our community of donors, staff, families, and volunteers who help sustain PACE's mission. We remain steadfast and dedicated to our mission of providing exceptional care, education, and support to those we serve. The need for specialized compassionate care remains as vital as ever.

In 2026, we look forward to expanding opportunities, forging new partnerships, and embracing innovative approaches to autism services. We invite you to stay engaged with our community throughout the year. You can visit www.pacificautism.com/events to stay informed about upcoming events at PACE and in the community. You can also subscribe to our newsletters by emailing marketing@pacificautism.org.



Pacific Autism
CENTER FOR EDUCATION

3rd Annual
PACE Art + Community
Exhibition

Friday, March 27, 2026
824 San Aleso Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94085

Join us for a dazzling showcase of student-created art and performances! All proceeds from the event benefit the Pacific Autism Center for Education.

Learn more at pacificautism.org/events

PACE is a 501(c3) nonprofit organization.
Our TAX EIN is #77-0259858.

A free community event!



WE ARE HIRING!

Are you looking for a rewarding career?
Our current openings include:

- Behavior Therapist
- Special Education Teacher
- Occupational Therapist
- Speech Language Pathologist
- Speech Language Pathologist CFY
- BCBA - School Behavior Analyst

Apply today!

WWW.PACIFICAUTISM.ORG/PACECAREERS

PACE offers meaningful and rewarding careers in Special Education that make a difference in the lives of individuals with autism. At PACE, our employees work together to help our students, clients, and residents reach their full potential. If you are passionate about promoting a culture of continuous improvement and committed to serving those who benefit from our services, we'd love to welcome you on board! Whether you are starting your career or taking a new path, PACE offers rewarding job opportunities that focus on your professional development and skills training.

WELCOME NEW STAFF!

- Adriana Hernandez-Preston
- Aly Ostachuk Baillargeon
- Amanda Marquez
- Amanda Villarreal
- Andrea Garcia
- Anna Black
- Ariel Vaccarezza
- Carolyn Lindstrom
- Cheryl Wang
- Chi Okoro
- Daniela Stuchinsky
- Debbie Ponce
- Eartha May Arandia
- Esmeralda Del Rio
- Fatima Flores
- Genavie Banuelos
- Greta Nesbit
- Isabel Vera
- Javier Castaneda
- Jayzelle Rubio
- Jose Aldama
- Juliana Martinez
- Leslie Robles
- Lily Doan
- Mariano Caudle
- Melinda Garcia
- Michelle Nguyen
- Morgan Shuster
- Robert Gomoll
- Stephanie Du-Wang
- Steven Du
- TeDajia Davenport
- Zaid Pimentel

Vocational Program Enhancements

Jocelyn Malkenhorst, School Resource Coordinator

Our Vocational Program continues to grow and thrive, providing students with meaningful opportunities to build real-world skills and gain valuable work experience. With support from our recent Wishbook grant funding, we've made several exciting enhancements to both our on-campus offerings and community partnerships.

This year, we have introduced new on-campus jobs that allow students to learn the fundamentals of employment, including clocking in and out for their shifts and adhering to dress codes. Students now wear uniforms for their roles at Cicero's Pizza and volunteer vests for community service assignments, helping them understand the importance of professional presentation. They also practice changing in and out of work clothes and are responsible for washing, drying, and properly hanging their uniforms; building independence and accountability.

Our vocational skills room has been updated to simulate real work environments such as restaurants, retail spaces, and mailrooms. It also serves as a setting for practicing essential life skills like making the bed, doing laundry, and meal preparation. A recently purchased induction stovetop has enhanced our cooking curriculum, making it safer and more hands-on.

Grant funds have allowed us to invest in a variety of tools and materials, including uniforms, assembly tasks, and job-specific tools that support on-campus employment. Students now take part in bike maintenance, van cleaning and detailing, and restocking essential supplies, all of which reinforce responsibility and attention to detail.

One of our most exciting upcoming projects is the expansion of our School Store. Currently, students are actively learning to greet customers, operate as cashiers, and manage stock and inventory. We're now preparing to introduce a functioning cash register, barcode system, and an expanded inventory to further simulate a retail environment and build technical skills.

Beyond campus, we've broadened our community engagement by partnering with Grassroots Ecology. Students will be volunteering in community gardens at Baylands Park and McClellan Ranch Preserve in Cupertino, contributing to environmental stewardship while gaining hands-on experience.

Looking ahead, we are planning monthly field trips focused on job site tours and mini-internships. These opportunities will allow students to explore a range of industries, develop their interests, and continue building the confidence and competence they need for future employment.

Thanks to the support of our grant, we've been able to turn vision into action; creating an inclusive vocational program where students are not only learning job skills but also building a foundation for independence, purpose, and pride in their work.



PACE Events

PACE is proud to celebrate the success of two of its largest annual fundraising events - the Bay Area Real Estate Roundtable (BARER) and the 17th Annual PACE Golf Classic.

On May 27, 2025, PACE held its annual Bay Area Real Estate Roundtable at the Ritz-Carlton in Half Moon Bay. More than 250 leaders and guests gathered for an engaging panel featuring top voices in the real estate industry, followed by a dinner and lively auction. The following day, attendees enjoyed a round of golf at the Half Moon Bay Golf Links. Thanks to the generosity of sponsors and participants, BARER raised an incredible \$665,000 to benefit PACE's programs.



On September 25, 2025, PACE hosted its 17th Annual Golf Classic at Cinnabar Hills Golf Club. The event welcomed 124 golfers and 20 volunteers for a shotgun tournament, banquet dinner, and live auction. With strong support from attendees, especially during the fund-a-need, the Golf Classic raised over \$144,000. We are especially grateful to PACE Board Member Joe Dermer and his family, who have proudly led this event year after year.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all attendees, sponsors, vendors, volunteers, committee members, and venue staff who helped make these events a success. The funds raised through BARER and the Golf Classic ensure that PACE can continue creating meaningful impact in the lives of the children, adults, and families we serve. To learn more about past and upcoming events, please visit:

www.pacificautism.org/events.



Meet Carolyn Lindstrom

PACE is excited to welcome Carolyn Lindstrom as our new Education Coordinator! With more than 35 years of experience in education, Carolyn brings a wealth of knowledge, leadership, and passion for student success to our community.

Carolyn's career began after earning her degree from St. Mary's College in Moraga. She started as a general education teacher in Ripon, California, before moving to San Diego, where she spent 12 years as a private school administrator. Her leadership in school operations during this time deepened her commitment to supporting both teachers and students.

Drawn back to the classroom, Carolyn dedicated the next 15 years to teaching special education for students with moderate to severe disabilities. During this time, she also earned her doctorate in Leadership and taught as an adjunct instructor, helping prepare the next generation of special educators. After returning to the Bay Area, Carolyn served as a Program Specialist with San Jose

Unified School District, where she expanded her expertise at the district level.

Ultimately, it was PACE's strong reputation in the Special Education community - and its deep commitment to students, families, and staff - that drew her here. "In my role at PACE, I am honored to support both educators and students, advancing high-quality teaching practices and fostering environments where every learner can thrive," Carolyn shared.

As Education Coordinator, Carolyn plays a vital role in strengthening both teaching and learning at PACE. She supports and coaches teachers in implementing effective instructional practices, while also guiding curriculum development and lesson planning to ensure consistency and quality across classrooms.

Additionally, she designs and leads professional development



opportunities that empower educators to continue growing in their practice.

Looking ahead, Carolyn is most excited about developing a PACE instructional model that establishes consistent, research-based teaching practices to ensure the delivery of high-quality education for all students and families.

When Carolyn isn't at PACE, she loves to travel. At home, she enjoys game nights, discovering binge-worthy shows, staying active with pickleball, and monthly Bunco nights with friends.

AAC During the Holidays

Jessica Mattox, Lead Behavioral Therapist

Make mealtimes more social and language-rich.

The holidays mean yummy food, laughter, and lots of chances to chat with family - perfect for weaving your child's AAC (Augmentative & Alternative Communication) into routines. Think **model** as you talk: **modeling** means the partner (e.g., caregiver, grandparents, friends) **speak and tap** the same words on the AAC during activities or routines. Kids learn faster when they see and hear words used naturally. AAC is a **language**, and learning any language takes time! Meaningful, consistent modeling is the secret sauce that helps communication click. As you chat and eat, casually model short core words such as **more, different, like, not, help, drink, eat, all done, stop, thank you**. Keep it conversational and chatty; if there is no response (that's okay), pause and then model (e.g., smile, "I like this chicken," tap **like**, "it's so **yummy**", tap **yummy**). Celebrate any attempt (speech, sign, pointing, a single tap) and honor refusals ("**all done**," "**not**," "**stop**") with a break or a food swap.



Try this quick routine during the holidays:

Before you sit: place the AAC within reach and model "go eat", "sit here", "need help?"

While eating: model 1-2 taps as you talk - "I like green beans," "Want different?", "drink please," "more chicken?"

Finish: offer a choice, "all done or more?" If "all done," model "thank you" and "go."

Language grows with consistent, gentle modeling in small daily routines. Even if your child doesn't tap yet, they're learning every time you model.

The holidays are a wonderful time to connect, share, and build language together - one joyful, interaction at a time.



Welcome the 2025-2026 YLC

Sydney Zitzer, Marketing and Community Engagement Coordinator

PACE is thrilled to announce that the 2025-2026 Youth Leadership Committee (YLC) officially launched in September, welcoming a record-breaking **35 students** from more than 20 high schools across the Bay Area. Of these, 18 are returning members from last year's cohort, eager to build on their initiatives and mentor new participants.

At the forefront this year are co-presidents Audrey Zhu and Thu Bui. Audrey, now in her fourth year with the YLC, and Thu, entering her third year with the YLC, bring both deep experience and unwavering dedication to PACE's mission. In addition to their leadership roles, Audrey will chair the Fundraising Committee and Thu will chair the Marketing Committee, ensuring the team is well-positioned to plan meaningful events and impactful community projects. The duo is excited to take on more leadership initiatives this season.

The YLC will play a vital role in planning, coordinating, and ensuring the success of various fundraising efforts. The committee is already preparing for its first major activity of the season: the San Andreas Regional Center Craft Fair on November 15, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 6203 San Ignacio Ave, Suite 200, San Jose, CA 95119. Members will showcase and sell homemade crafts and baked goods, with all proceeds supporting PACE programs. This event is a wonderful chance to connect with the YLC, support their initiatives, and contribute to PACE's broader mission.

We are deeply grateful for the energy, creativity, and commitment each YLC member brings to the committee. With this remarkable group of young leaders, we look forward to another inspiring and successful year ahead!



Make an Impact on #GivingTuesday by donating to PACE!

www.pacificautism.org/donate

Double your donation! Ask your employer about matching gifts



Celebrate the Year End!

As 2025 comes to a close, we pause to celebrate the season of gratitude and generosity. At PACE, we are deeply thankful for our community of donors, families, staff, and volunteers whose support sustains our mission. Because of you, children and adults impacted with autism receive not only essential services, but also opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive.

This holiday season, we invite you to join us in supporting the PACE Annual Fund. Our goal of **\$70,000** will help bridge the gap between state-funded autism services and the excellent, individualized programs PACE provides.

By making a tax-deductible gift to our Annual Fund, you help advance our mission by providing sustaining funds for our programs, critical staff training and enrichment, and education opportunities.

Join Us on #GivingTuesday

Mark your calendars for December 2, 2025, when PACE will participate in #GivingTuesday, the global day of philanthropy. Every gift, large or small, makes a meaningful difference in the lives of the individuals we serve.

Ways to Give

- Donate securely online at pacificautism.org/donate
- Mail a check with the enclosed remittance envelope
- Recommend a grant through your Donor Advised Fund (DAF)

And don't forget - many employers will match your donation by 100% or more! Matching gifts are one of the easiest ways to double your impact. Check your company's employee giving portal or ask your HR department if PACE is included. (PACE Tax EIN: 77-0259858.)

Your generosity ensures that PACE can continue to provide high-quality education, compassionate care, and life-changing resources for families throughout the Bay Area. Together, we can make this #GivingTuesday our most impactful yet because when we give together, we grow together.

To learn more about how you can support PACE this holiday season, please contact our Development Team at development@pacificautism.org.



Introducing Morgan Shuster

PACE is excited to welcome Morgan to our team as a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP). With seven years of experience in the field, Morgan brings both professional expertise and a passion for helping students find their voices and reach their full potential.

Morgan earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Northern Arizona University before beginning her career as an SLP on the Navajo reservation. There, she worked with students of all ages and abilities in school settings, gaining valuable experience and a deep appreciation for supporting diverse learners. Over the years, she has explored a variety of settings - including home health, clinics, telehealth, and nursing homes, but her heart has always been in schools.

Morgan was drawn to PACE because of its unique environment that allows for more individualized support. "My greatest goal with my work is to provide exceptional, individualized care for each of my students to help drive their progress forward," she explained. "PACE provides an incredible opportunity to work closely with a smaller group of students and devote more time to each one."



In her role, Morgan is especially looking forward to collaborating with both staff and parents to help students succeed. Her wide-ranging background across different settings has given her the skills and adaptability to meet each student where they are and tailor her approach to their needs.

Whether she is helping a student find their words, build confidence in social interactions, or develop strategies to communicate more effectively, Morgan sees every success as a meaningful step forward. She values the chance to celebrate progress, big or small, with her students and their families.

Please join us in welcoming Morgan to the PACE community!

Sunny Days Preschool

Karen Kennan, Assistant Executive Director

Our Mission and Vision

At the Pacific Autism Center for Education (PACE), our mission is to enhance the lives of individuals impacted by autism through innovation, exceptional education, and compassionate care. We envision a world where people of all abilities can live meaningful, fulfilled lives.

Who We Are

PACE is dedicated to providing high-quality programs and services that enrich the lives of individuals with autism and related developmental disabilities. Guided by our core values: Connect, Support, Educate, we offer individualized attention, specialized instruction, and compassionate care that foster independence, lifelong learning, and community inclusion. Sunny Days Preschool provides a safe, fun and caring learning environment where young children can explore and grow. Our progressive, inclusive program for 2.5 – 6 year olds, supports children on the autism spectrum, neuro-typical children and those needing a little extra support in a responsive and nurturing environment. Studies show that early participation in a preschool setting is the key to enabling children to thrive.

Our Philosophy

At Sunny Days, we believe every child is unique, with their own way of learning, growing, and connecting. Our play-based curriculum offers a safe first step into the social environment and encourages individual growth and development. Under the guidance of certified special education teachers, our programs are designed to meet each child where they are, supporting development through three essential steps: Regulate, Communicate, and Relate.

- **Regulate:** Before a child can effectively communicate, they must first learn to process and filter sensory information from their environment.
- **Communicate:** Developing the ability to share both verbal and non-verbal messages helps children express their wants and needs and builds the foundation for social interaction.
- **Relate:** Once a child can regulate and communicate, they are better able to engage in meaningful relationships and participate successfully in a variety of social settings.

At Sunny Days, we celebrate every milestone and strive to empower individuals with autism to reach their full potential - one connection at a time.

Learn More

Do you know a child who would be a good fit for our preschool program? Families interested in learning more about our preschool program can contact us at: <https://www.pacificautism.org/programs/sunny-days-preschool/> or by calling 408-625-6198



PACE Setter

PACIFIC AUTISM CENTER FOR EDUCATION



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Mission: To enhance the lives of people impacted by autism, through innovation, exceptional education, and compassionate care.
Vision: A world in which people of all abilities live fulfilled lives.



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SUPPORT OUR MISSION

Donate: by mail at 1880 Pruneridge Avenue, Santa Clara, CA 95050, online at www.pacificautism.org/donate, or by phone 408.625.6174. Double your gift! Make a matching gift contribution at your workplace. Please contact development@pacificautism.org for giving options. PACE is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Our TAX EIN# is 77-0259858. Contributions made to PACE are tax-deductible as specified by the current tax law.

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE GROUP NIGHT

SHARKS VS DUCKS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2026
7:00pm, SAP CENTER

Tickets include access to a sensory room located on the Club Level. A portion of ticket sales will be donated to PACE!

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Great Givers

At PACE, we are fortunate to have organizations who have stood beside us for many years, giving not only through financial support but also by sharing their time, expertise, and knowledge. This season, we proudly highlight Scharf Investments and Gilfix & La Poll Associates LLC, both long-time sponsors of PACE events and active members of our community. Their continued generosity strengthens our mission.

Scharf Investments, represented by PACE Board President Debbie McCarroll, recently hosted a webinar led by Brian Krawez, CFA, president and lead portfolio manager, focused on maximizing charitable giving through tax-advantaged strategies. The session offered members of the PACE community tools to align their philanthropy with financial goals while increasing their impact.

Similarly, attorney and PACE board member, Mark Gilfix, of **Gilfix & La Poll Associates LLP** led an in-person seminar on special needs and estate planning. Families received essential guidance on creating Special Needs Trusts, safeguarding benefits, and planning for lifelong security and quality of life for loved ones with disabilities.

For many years, both Scharf Investments and Gilfix & La Poll Associates have played a vital role as supporters of PACE. Their long-standing commitment demonstrates the power of generosity in all its forms—financial support, professional expertise, and community engagement.

We are deeply grateful for their partnership and dedication to building brighter futures for the individuals and families PACE serves.

