



Annual Report

2021-2022

From the Executive Director

As we reflect back on the past year, we are reminded of the strength and resiliency of the greater PACE community. So much of our collective success is captured in the relationships we forge with friends, families, staff, and businesses. It is only fitting that we dedicate this message and our immense gratitude to the network of individuals who continue to ensure that people of all abilities are able to live fulfilled lives.

While many programs were just beginning to emerge from Zoom hibernation in 2021, PACE schools and behavior programs reopened quickly following a brief hiatus, and our residential programs remained open through it all. In fact, the immense outpouring of community support through the pandemic enabled PACE to better fortify its residential program for a long future ahead with 4 solar roof installations, new fences at all the properties, several drought-tolerant landscapes and numerous remodels. This was all made possible through the support from the Cupertino Rotary, several PACE families, a full tournament of golfers, and a few very generous donors.

As we look forward, we recognize that future opportunities to maintain, expand and strengthen our impact will only come with continued investment in people. With a heavily constrained workforce, PACE is actively involved in developing increased interest and career opportunities in the field. Leveraging our Porchlight University online platform, we strive to equip paraprofessionals, care staff, and teachers with opportunities to grow in the field and find connected support. Even our high school Youth Leadership Committee (YLC) is a starting place to cultivate the seeds for future leadership. Over half of PACE teachers today have emerged from a path that once began as a classroom aide.

Do you know someone whose work has made a positive difference in the lives of others? I ask that you take a moment to share with someone a meaningful story about service in the community of those with disabilities. Hopefully, that might start your own impact path to help build interest in supporting this field. Thank you for being a part of our community as we continue to find ways to connect, support and educate individuals impacted by autism.



Sincerely,



Kurt Ohlfs, Executive Director

Our Leadership Team



Karen Kennan,
Assistant
Executive
Director



Karyn Caradonna,
Director of
Human Resources



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About Us

Founded in 1989, Pacific Autism Center for Education provides high-quality programs for children and adults with autism. PACE's vision is a world in which people of all abilities live fulfilled lives. 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, Porchlight Autism Education Series, our free online eLearning resource, and Porchlight University, our eLearning program for teachers and paraeducators.

At PACE, we strive to connect, support, and educate individuals with autism. PACE focuses on social and communication skills in order for our clients to experience the satisfaction and fulfillment that accompany learning, self-expression, self-care, productive work, and community experiences.

The heart of the PACE model is for every person to have the ability to: *Communicate, Regulate, and Relate.*

Our Impact (July 2021 - June 2022)

182 TEACHERS, THERAPISTS, RESIDENTIAL AND SUPPORT AIDES	63 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE PACE SCHOOL
45 OR MORE VOLUNTEERS	32 CLIENTS IN OUR GROUP HOMES
14 ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	32 ENROLLED IN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

A world where people of all abilities live fulfilled lives.

OUR VISION

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

OUR MISSION

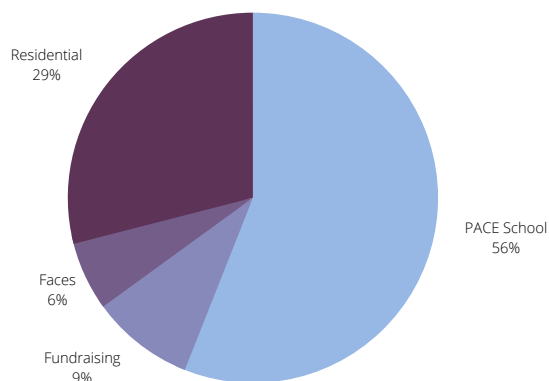


Financial Summary

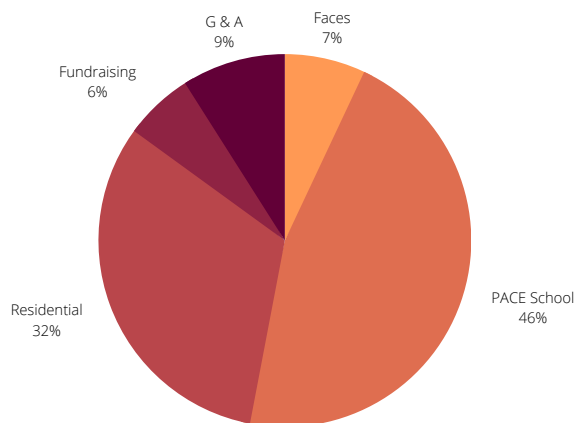
2021-2022 Revenue and Expenses

PACE is supported by the San Andreas Regional Center (SARC) and the California Department of Education. 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 21-22 Revenue \$10.8M



FY 21-22 Expense \$10.3M



Program Highlights July 2021 - June 2022



Residential Client enjoying the sunshine

The return of the **BARER 2022** event at the **Half Moon Bay Ritz Carlton** venue was a flashback to times past. The event was packed to capacity with the same level of energy and enthusiasm which led to a very successful fundraising event surpassing our budget's goal and raising **\$741K for PACE programs**.

The 13th Annual PACE Golf Classic returned at Cinnabar Hills Golf Club on September 24, 2021. With 132 enthusiastic attendees, the annual event came back into full swing raising \$89K.

Thank you to our donors, families, PACE staff, volunteers, and community partners for celebrating **Autism Awareness Month** with us by participating in our #KindnessMatters campaign and the virtual **"Voices for Autism" Benefit Concert** helping us raise over **\$17,000 in the month of April**.

In August 2021, PACE received a generous grant of \$35,000 from the **Radomir Crkvenjakov Charitable Foundation** that was used for facility upgrades to Matranga Residential Home, and the purchase and installation of an accessible swing set at PACE School.

With the generous support of the Crkvenjakov Charitable foundation and other smaller grants the **residential properties underwent extensive refurbishment** over the past year. This included replacing four fence lines and three rooftops, installing solar panels at three homes, replacing two water heaters pumps, remodeling one kitchen, landscaping projects at multiple homes, and upgrades of furniture and appliances throughout.

The PACE School: Roy's Fundraising Adventures



PACE School student, Roy, proudly stands with food drive donations for the houseless community

A very special fundraising event was organized by Roy, one of our students. Roy is passionate about helping others in his community. His wish for the holidays was to help individuals in need of food and other essential items during the colder winter months. **With support from school staff, Roy's wish came true.** Roy led all aspects of the holiday drive, from creating flyers and distributing them around campus to sorting the donations daily. He also made a PowerPoint presentation to highlight the needs of people in the Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties.

As you can see in the photo, Roy is beaming with happiness over the donations that came in. **We are beyond proud of his efforts and inspired by his kind heart and compassion.** Thank you again to those who supported Roy's Holiday Drive and for spreading kindness in our community.

We appreciate everyone who dedicated their time and funds to help Roy's dream come true. Special thanks to Cynthia Meza, PACE SLP, for her help organizing this project, and to PACE school parents for their contributions. Roy can say he successfully organized a fundraiser and gave back to his community. If you are interested in supporting or making a contribution to our PACE School program, visit www.pacificautism.org/donate or email us at info@pacificautism.org.

PACE Residential: Green Project

Local high school student Fauzaan Waqas first learned about PACE through the **Cupertino Rotary** and was inspired to dedicate his capstone Eagle Scout project to support our mission by upgrading the landscaping in one of our residential homes. He outlined his project ahead of time, identified a team of friends to help with the labor, and raised more than \$2,000 on GoFundMe to support his efforts. Along with his team of peers, **Fauzaan removed overgrown roots and prepared and leveled the soil in the backyard of Morehouse.** The team then **installed artificial turf** throughout the yard, creating a safe, low-maintenance welcoming space for our residential clients to use throughout the year. **As an additional project, the Scouts also installed leaf gutters to the home.** We are pleased to report that the results are truly spectacular.

Thank you to community members like Fauzaan and his peers for giving their time and their talent, and putting their hearts into creating a special place our residential clients can enjoy.

If you are interested in supporting our residential program, visit www.pacificautism.org/donate or email us at development@pacificautism.org



Eagle Scout Fauzaan and his peers stand in the backyard of Morehouse Residential Home

Music Therapy Brings Sunshine to Our Students

Walk into any PACE school or preschool classroom on a music morning and you may hear the cheerful strumming of a guitar as **Music Therapist, Christian Paglia leads the students through a “Hello” tune and encourages them to greet each other in song.** Or you may see children happily drumming on individual drums and other percussion instruments as they practice paying attention and listening to different rhythms. This is music therapy, the “skillful use of music and musical elements by an accredited music therapist to promote, maintain, and restore mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health.” (MTAO)

At PACE, Music Therapy is one of the tools in our therapeutic tool bag along with Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Applied Behavior Analysis, and a variety of other therapeutic modalities. Chris uses musical techniques with our students to **enhance a wide variety of skills including speech, cognition, emotional expression, attention and focus, and social and communication skills.** For children on the autism spectrum struggling with communication challenges, music becomes a bridge for supporting and shaping their communication efforts. Studies show that music actually helps build and strengthen neurological connections.

Since his arrival at PACE Chris has experienced some “break-through” moments with students. Although those moments are hard to quantify, recently, during group drumming sessions, Chris has observed improved cooperation and attention to classmates, greater eye contact, and increased patience when taking turns. **These seemingly small achievements add up to larger successes as our students develop their ability to regulate, communicate, and relate to the world around them.**



Music Therapist, Christian Paglia, practices drumming with our Sunny Days Preschool students

Staff Highlight: Hilary Roy



Hilary Roy, Administrative Assistant, at the PACE school

Hilary Roy rarely sits still! As the PACE school receptionist it is Hilary’s job to greet and direct all visitors to the PACE campus, but “receptionist” hardly begins to describe the myriad of services that Hilary provides. Not only does she answer phone calls and direct you to where you need to go, but she also oversees facility maintenance, materials and supplies, student attendance, transportation and lunch delivery, AND she helps out in the classrooms when needed. At the end of the school day, Hilary makes sure all students are safely on their way home, but her day does not end there. She continues her work at PACE on administrative projects, assisting the residential team and making herself available for whatever comes up.

Hilary joined PACE in November 2019 as an Instructional Aide. Recognizing her organizational talents, she was moved into the role of Administrative Assistant the following year, and has continued to grow as a valuable resource for the entire agency.

When asked to describe her favorite thing about working at PACE she said: **“I like the people who work at PACE. It takes a special heart to work at PACE and our staff are kind and generous.”** In addition she said: “Seeing the students come to school happy is special...watching the staff and students laugh and play in the water and on the big slide during “Summer Water Days” is very fun!”

As she reflects on her role at PACE Hilary says: “Providing care and support to our school community has been rewarding for me. I believe the impact the students and families have had on my life far surpasses any impact I have had.”

Thank you, Hilary for the energy and enthusiasm you bring to the job every day.

Our Supporters

Thank you to our donors for Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022. For a full list of supporters, please visit our website at 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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Community Means Togetherness

"PACE is where my son is seen for his abilities and feels loved. For 7 years, PACE has given us a **sense of comfort and support**. Knowing he is excited to go to school and that they are **helping him to be the best he can be** makes me thankful. The talented staff is dedicated to each student's goals.

What if the whole world was **inclusive** and as **accepting** as PACE? "

- KARYN HOWL, PACE PARENT



Pacific Autism
CENTER FOR EDUCATION

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