

BEST BUDDIES®



# BESTBUDDIES®

Friendship, Jobs & Leadership Development

# BEST BUDDIES®

Best Buddies International is the world's largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).



# Mission

Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and development disabilities (IDD).

# Who We Serve

The IDD community that Best Buddies serves includes, but is not limited to, people with Down syndrome, autism, fragile X syndrome, Williams syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury and other undiagnosed disabilities.

# Programs

Best Buddies programs sit on the three key mission pillars below:

One-To-One Friendships, Integrated Employment and Leadership Development.



# One-To-One Friendships

Builds friendships between people with and without IDD, offering social mentoring while improving the quality of life and level of inclusion for a population that is often isolated and excluded.

**BESTBUDDIES.** Middle Schools,  
High Schools and Colleges

Creates an inclusive school environment for students with IDD during times of social and emotional development.

**BESTBUDDIES.** Citizens

Helps adults with and without IDD develop meaningful friendships and become more involved in their local communities.

**e-BUDDIES.**

Offers an e-mail program, in which a participant with IDD communicates online with a friend without IDD.





# Integrated Employment

Secures jobs for people with IDD, allowing them to earn an income, pay taxes, and continuously and independently support themselves.

## BEST BUDDIES® Jobs

An estimated 84% of adults (18+) with developmental disabilities do not have a paid job in the community. The Best Buddies Jobs program matches skilled, qualified individuals with IDD with businesses seeking enthusiastic and dedicated employees. Through the Jobs program, Best Buddies develops partnerships with employers, assists with the hiring process and provides ongoing support to the employee and employer.



# Leadership Development

Educates and empowers people with and without IDD, to become leaders, public speakers and advocates.

## **BESTBUDDIES**. Ambassadors

Offers people with IDD the opportunity to gain the public speaking skills, self-esteem and confidence needed to successfully advocate for themselves, their peers and Best Buddies in communities, workplaces and government.

## **BESTBUDDIES**. Promoters

Empowers youth to become advocates for people with IDD and help open new Best Buddies chapters and programs by organizing special events that promote awareness to the disability rights movement.



**WHO ARE Best Buddies  
in Michigan?**

## School Friendship Chapters:

Central Michigan University

Eastern Michigan University

Grand Valley State University

University of Michigan

Wayne State University

Western Michigan University



## Chapters In Progress:

Oakland University

Michigan State University

Saginaw Valley State University

Northern Michigan University

Community (A2) High School

Plymouth-Canton High School

Rochester Adams High School

Grandville High School

# Expansion Goal:

## Funding for a Best Buddies State office in Michigan



## Result of a State Office:

- Open more school friendship programs
- Establish jobs and career placements for our participants with IDD
- Create the Citizens program to match adults with and without IDD in one-to-one friendships
- Develop leadership, advocacy skills and opportunities for participants with and without IDD

# Michigan Best Buddies Expansion Committee

## Committee Chair

Richard Carlisle, President, Carlisle Wortman Associates

## Members

Martha Bloom, Vice-President (retired), Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation

James Cameron, Principal, The Cameron Law Firm

Rick Cohen, President, Echo Valley Home and Garden Products

Nan Couyoumjian, Art Educator (retired), Community Supporter and Volunteer

Judy Dobson, Community Supporter and Volunteer

Dave Gregorka, Venture Partner, Baird Capital

Walter Kwik, Transition Coordinator (retired), Washtenaw Intermediate School District

Bill Wood, CEO (retired), various technology companies



## Fundraising Events

- May 17<sup>th</sup> - Bloomfield Reception
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> - Downtown Home and Garden / Momento Gelato
- Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> - Friendship Walk





**BEST BUDDIES®**



**Michigan Expansion**

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MAKE A FRIEND | DONATE | JOIN THE JOBS PROGRAM

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