

2020-2021

Annual Report





Pacific Autism
CENTER FOR EDUCATION

From the Executive Director



As I reflect on another year impacted by the pandemic, I'm inspired by what we've been able to achieve together and our work toward a promising future. PACE adapted to an unprecedented global crisis, establishing strategies and collaborating with our community of staff, families, and donors to strengthen our impact and carry on our mission.

When we needed to pivot quickly, our staff remained committed to delivering unparalleled care and support to those we serve. All six PACE Residential Group Homes remained fully operational. The PACE School, Sunny Days Preschool, and Faces Behavioral Services adopted various alternative service delivery models to provide consistent, high-quality education and support to our clients and families. We cultivated strong collaborative relationships with our families to ensure that both on-campus and distance learning met their child's individual learning goals and needs. We carried out various fundraisers, both in-person and online, that brought our community together to help us reach our goals. And online, we continued to mobilize our collective expertise to share resources and educational materials to mitigate the profound challenges many families experienced during the pandemic.

As we look ahead, we strive to carry out our initiatives in safe and creative ways, expand our impact, and strengthen the delivery of education and direct support services in our community. Thank you for being a part of our effort and supporting our mission: *to enhance the lives of people impacted by autism through innovation, exceptional education, and compassionate care.*

Sincerely,

Kurt Ohlfs, Executive Director

Our Leadership Team



Karen Kennan,
Assistant
Executive
Director



Sadie Randle,
School Director



Karyn Caradonna,
Director of
Human Resources



Nancy Elghiani,
Finance Manager



Melissa Watkins,
Marketing and
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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.*

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

OUR MISSION

Our Impact (July 2020 - June 2021)

182 TEACHERS, THERAPISTS, SUPPORT AIDS

53 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE PACE SCHOOL

50 OR MORE VOLUNTEERS

36 CLIENTS IN OUR GROUP HOMES

10 ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

20 ENROLLED IN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS



A world where people of all abilities live fulfilled lives.

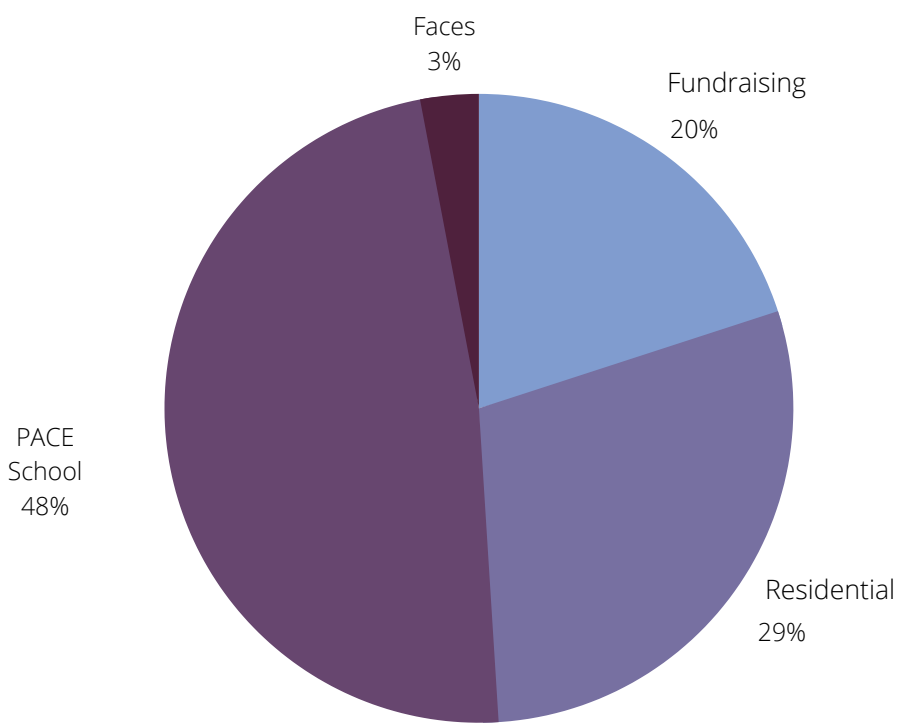
OUR VISION

Financial Summary

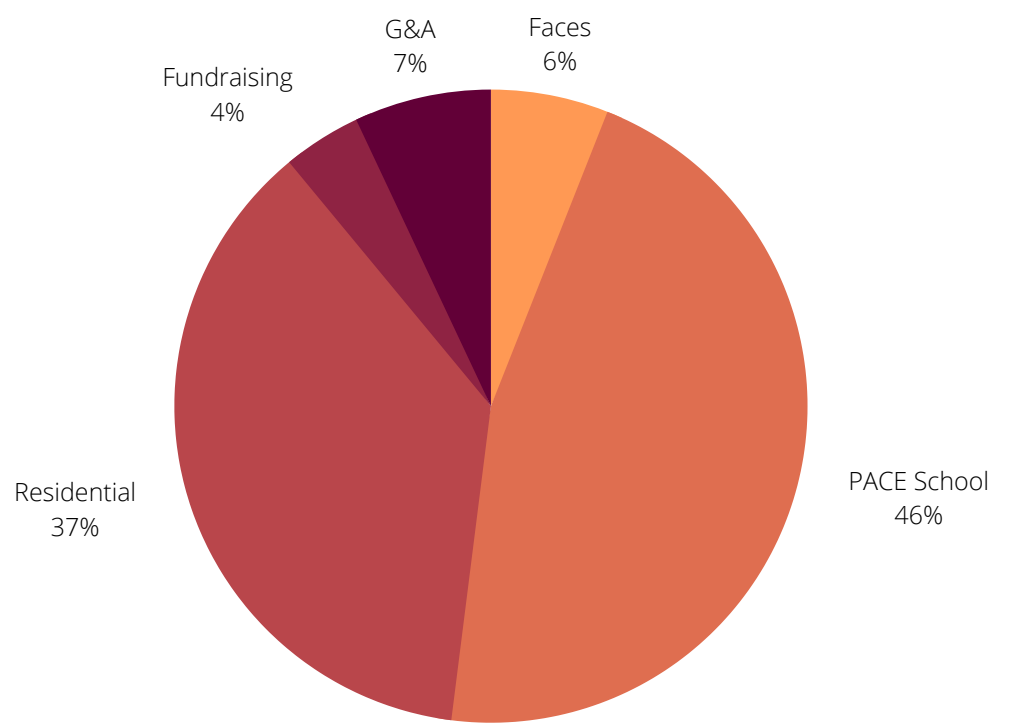
2020-2021 Revenue and Expenses

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. During the FY 20-21, PACE received one-time COVID-19 relief grants.

FY 20-21 Revenue \$13.2M



FY 20-21 Expense \$9.0M



For more information, visit us at www.pacificautism.org/donate

Program Highlights July 2020 - June 2021



Attendees of the 12th Annual PACE Golf Classic

- By the Spring of 2021, the **PACE School** successfully transitioned over 80% of its student enrollment back to campus learning. PACE's staffing of teachers, therapists, and instructional aides remained strong through the pandemic.
- Despite limitations due to COVID-19, PACE hosted its **12th Annual PACE Golf Classic** at Cinnabar Hills Golf Club on September 24, 2020. With 80 attendees, the annual event raised over \$50,000 for PACE programs.
- **Sunny Days Preschool** and **Faces Behavioral Therapy** programs pivoted to online learning and telehealth services, successfully keeping both programs operational and continuing to provide services and a lifeline to resources. Faces developed a successful clinic model for

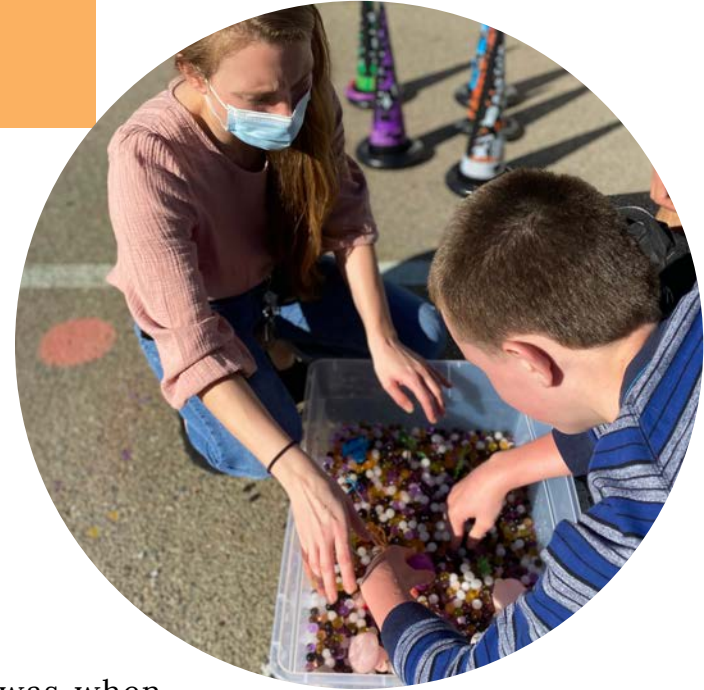
service delivery utilizing the Sunny Days campus for all in-person therapy sessions.

- In April of 2021, the **PACE Youth Leadership Committee** hosted its first-ever **Virtual Voices for Autism Benefit Concert**. The event included a special message from Santa Clara Mayor, Lisa Gillmor. The YLC raised over \$7,000 and helped PACE raise over \$20,000 during its Autism Awareness Month campaign.
- In June 2021, the Cupertino Rotary, along with Water Efficient Gardens, and volunteers from Girl BSA Group 492, Boy Scouts of America, and Foothill College, came together to relandscape the front yard with drought-tolerant plants and a rain garden at one of our children's **Residential Group Home**.

The PACE School: Teaching with Care

At the PACE School, one of our most important assets is our highly-trained staff of teachers, therapists, and instructional aides whose passion and commitment empower our students in the classroom and beyond. In each classroom, you will see a highly collaborative team focused on supporting each student's individualized goals. Rebekkah Easterling started her role as a Lead Teacher at PACE in 2018. In her four years with PACE, Rebekkah feels a strong connection with the agency's mission in her work each day: "What makes PACE's mission powerful and meaningful to me is that we not only provide an exceptional education to our students, but we also provide compassionate care. Every day I come to work with an open heart, ready to help each student with their individual and daily needs. A highlight for me was when one of my students interviewed for a job for our student library. He worked so hard to fill out the application questions and did not seem nervous during the interview. It was amazing to see the student navigate through a new opportunity with so much willingness to learn!" says Rebekkah.

The PACE School provides a skills-based, multidisciplinary approach to learning, focused on developing independent living skills and communication skills for students ages 6-22. At the heart of the PACE educational model is our vision for every student to develop the ability to *self-regulate, to relate, and to communicate.*



PACE Residential: A Work of Heart

For more than a decade, the Cupertino Rotary has supported PACE's Residential Group Homes, from landscaping to painting to installing new appliances. The community organization has made a tremendous impact on our group homes and the clients we serve. In June 2021, the Cupertino Rotary in partnership with Rotary member and owner of Water Efficient Gardens, Shelkie Tao, designed and planted a drought-tolerant garden in the front yard at one of our children's homes. The work was done pro-bono by Ms. Tao, who designed the garden with all non-toxic California native plants and a rain garden to capture runoff for watering purposes. The work was completed with help from Boy Scouts of America and Boy Scouts of America Girl Group 492, and Foothill College's horticultural program. Over 20 volunteers gathered on a sunny Saturday to dig, plant, and install the rain garden. The final result was a beautiful landscape, thoughtfully designed to be sensory-friendly for our residents and to support the environment.

To learn more about PACE's residential program, visit us at www.pacificautism.org.
Photo C/O: Cupertino Rotary



Children's Services: A Place to Thrive

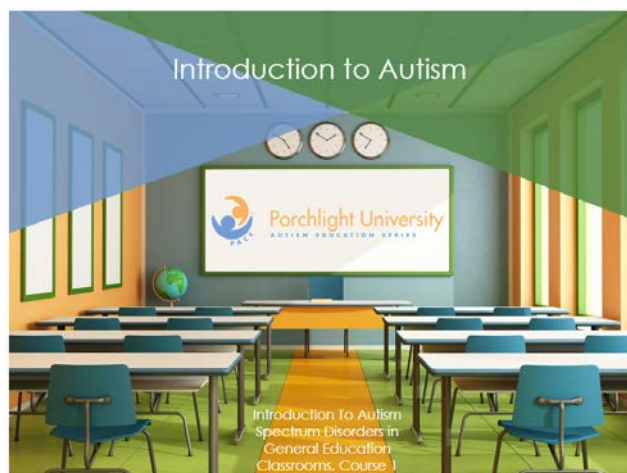


Amelia Lalley and Faces Client

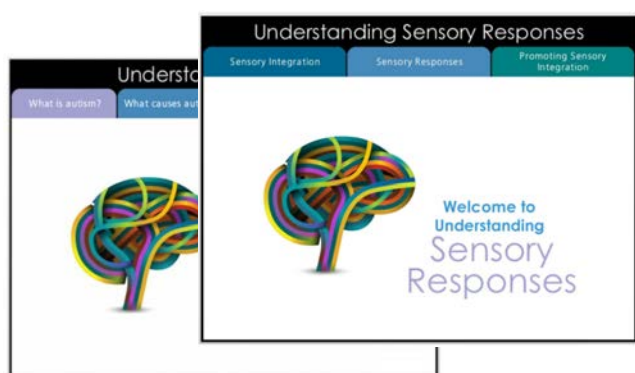
Our children's services include Sunny Days Preschool, an inclusive preschool for children ages 3-6, and Faces Behavioral Services, a 1:1 Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) program for children ages 18 months to 14 years. In both programs, families are provided a collaborative team dedicated to their child's growth in a responsive and nurturing environment. Both programs have also supported the professional development of many highly-trained, qualified therapists, including Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA), Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT), and instructional aides. Clinical Supervisor and BCBA on the Faces team, Amelia Lalley, joined PACE in 2016 as she was completing graduate school work and finalizing her fieldwork hours. With the support of the Faces program, she earned her BCBA credential in 2018. "PACE's supportive work environment makes this a place to thrive individually and as a team. I feel that my success is due to challenges we face and conquer together, which makes me more equipped to face future obstacles." During a year that required the team to remain flexible and adaptable to challenges from the pandemic, Amelia describes many highlights and successes she witnessed with clients. "Language development is one of the most rewarding aspects of working with clients. A highlight from the last year is multiple clients learning to speak in all different forms. Some clients learned to communicate with American Sign Language, some with the Picture Exchange Communication System, and some with vocal words! Language development is so exciting and once it starts to grow exponentially, the client has more autonomy and independence in their world!"



Porchlight Education: Illuminating Learning



The **Porchlight Autism Education Series** continues to be a strategic focus for Pacific Autism Center for Education to serve a global audience. Porchlight Autism Education is a free eLearning program developed for parents and caregivers of individuals with autism. The program offers over 50 modules designed to offer behavioral solutions to common daily challenges. Porchlight developments are funded with private contributions that support our global outreach.



Our extension of Porchlight Autism Education, **Porchlight University**, offers an eLearning series designed for general education teachers and paraeducators who work with elementary- and middle-school-age students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Recognizing the limited training many general education teachers and paraeducators receive on ASD, Porchlight University supports general education teachers and paraeducators with the knowledge and tools necessary to ensure that students of all abilities are successful in the classroom. The information and strategies are applicable to both in-person and distance learning environments. Porchlight University currently offers four one-hour long courses: *Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders, Individualized Education Programs and the Law, Creating Effective Classrooms, and Building Positive Behavior Culture*. To learn more visit us at www.porchlighteducation.org.

Our Supporters

Thank you to our donors for Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021. For a full list of supporters, please visit our website at www.pacificaautism.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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Stronger Together, Together Stronger

"PACE's mission is powerful to so many families that are affected by autism. By offering education and residential programs, families have an amazing resource that is often very challenging to find. I am very thankful for PACE."

- PACE PARENT



Pacific Autism
CENTER FOR EDUCATION

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www.pacificautism.org
www.porchlighteducation.org

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