

# Partners for Youth with Disabilities



**FOUNDED:** 1985  
**CURRENT ANNUAL BUDGET:** \$1,727,852  
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## Investment Opportunity

An investment of \$3.7M over the next two years will support PYD in its efforts to increase the number of participants in their core programs by 15% each year. To facilitate this growth, PYD will continue to expand the use of its online platform to train and support teachers, mentors, and employers to engage young people with disabilities.

In Massachusetts, 17% (171,000) of students, and in Boston, almost 20% (11,000) of students, are enrolled in special education. Students in special education include those with physical disabilities as well as those with hidden disabilities, including autism, ADHD, and mental illness. It is undeniable that people with disabilities face a particularly challenging situation with respect to their economic and educational well-being:

- In 2017, the four-year graduation rate for special education students was 72.8% versus 88.3% for students without disabilities.
- Labor force participation for Americans with disabilities was 21.2% compared to 68.7% for individuals without disabilities.
- Workers with disabilities on average earn 37% less than their peers without disabilities for the same work.
- For over 30 years, Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD) has been a pioneer in building programs that result in greater opportunities for young people with disabilities to succeed as adults. PYD's mentoring, social programs, family supports, career development, and inclusion trainings work to level the playing field and expand horizons for people with disabilities.

## Two-Year Goals

- Increase the number of students served from 500 to 600
- Increase the number of volunteers from 600 to 800
- Increase the number of teachers who are supported to work with disabled students to develop job readiness skills from 150 to 200
- Diversify PYD funding streams and reduce dependence on public dollars

## Ways to Invest

### FINANCIAL

- \$160,000 will provide an afterschool and summer intensive theater arts program for 60 teens
- \$60,000 will support a job specialist position to place 40-50 students in jobs
- \$30,000 will provide resources to train and support 10 one-to-one mentor matches

### IN-KIND

- Volunteer to be a one-on-one mentor to a young person
- Provide an internship or job shadow opportunity for high school students
- Help with PYD group events and fundraisers
- Learn how to address barriers in your workplace by participating in a disability inclusion training

## Leadership & Governance

Executive Director Regina Snowden has an MSW from Boston University and founded PYD in response to the needs she saw in her early work with adolescent girls. As a long-time advocate for disability rights, she has been recognized with multiple honors, including the 2001 Clara Barton Award from the American Red Cross. Regina works closely with the PYD Board of Directors who come from diverse professions and life experiences to shape programs and fundraising efforts.

## PARTNERS FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES' MODEL



“

Rather than focus on limitations, PYD is always empowering and encouraging my son to pursue his dreams.

”

PARENT OF PYD PARTICIPANT



## BUILDING A BRIDGE TO INDEPENDENCE AND SUCCESS

PYD empowers youth age 6 to 24 with disabilities to reach their full potential through:

**Mentoring:** The **Mentor Match** program pairs a young person with a disability with a caring adult, many of whom also have a disability. For many young people, this is the first relationship outside of their family with an adult with whom they have an ongoing connection. Mentors and mentees commit to work for at least one year – meeting in person monthly and staying in touch weekly by phone or email.

**Community:** PYD offers teens and young adults with disabilities an opportunity to meet other peers and adults and to participate in group activities, including theater arts, skills trainings, discussion groups, role-playing, guest speaker presentations, and recreational activities. Through this socialization, participants make friends and develop a network that supports them to lead active and healthy lives. Parents of children with disabilities also participate in regular support groups.

**Careers:** The **Youth Employment Preparation (YEP)** program works directly with students, teachers, and employers to address barriers to employment for young people with disabilities. Classroom learning is supplemented with guest speakers, job shadow days, field trips, trade shows, and internships. Volunteers serve as employment coaches, providing guidance on various aspects of getting and being successful in a job. A PYD employment specialist works closely with the youth to provide individualized assessments and job coaching to place them in an opportunity that fits their needs and interests. YEP also develops partnerships with employers and colleges to create opportunities for students.

“

My mentor has shown me that having a learning disability doesn't mean you can't do things. We have built a train village, repaired my bike, gone on canoe trips and so much more.

”

PYD YOUTH PARTICIPANT



### Key Investors

- THE BOSTON FOUNDATION
- LIBERTY MUTUAL FOUNDATION
- MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC AMERICA FOUNDATION (MEAF)
- U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE/OJJDP

### Partners

- BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- THE CITY OF BOSTON
- CVS HEALTH CORPORATION
- TJX COMPANIES
- WORK WITHOUT LIMITS, AN INITIATIVE OF UMASS MEDICAL SCHOOL

## LEVERAGING TRAINING AND TECHNOLOGY FOR RESULTS

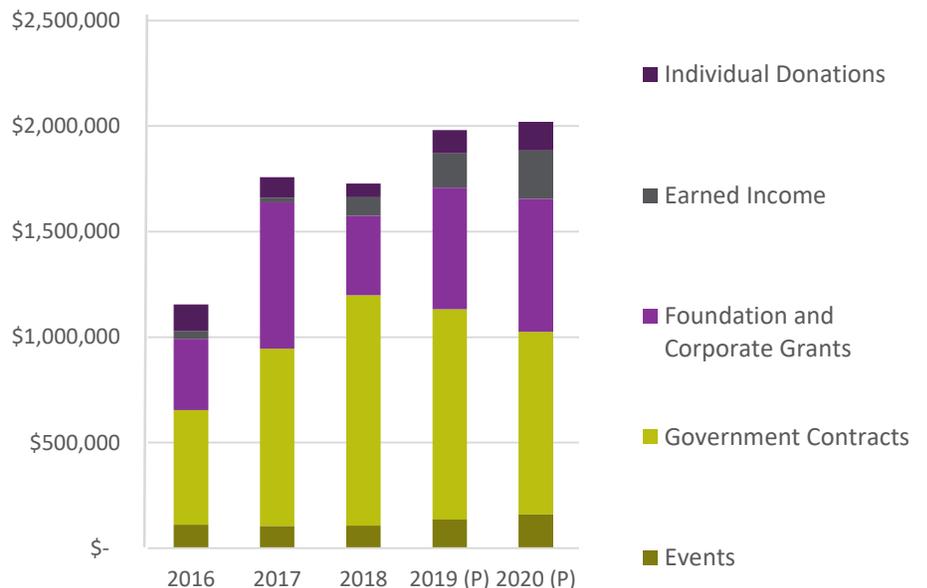
**Technology:** PYD leverages technology for online mentoring (youth and mentors) and for organizational disability inclusion (professional development). In both cases, PYD takes its experience and curriculum (intellectual property) to reach a broader audience and to enhance and deepen the ability of individuals with disabilities to communicate with the world.

**Inclusion Training:** PYD's unique disability inclusion training provides employees from the public and private sectors with concrete ways they can implement Universal Design for Learning, which includes flexible goals, methods, materials, assessments, and accommodations for learning differences. PYD also offers live coaching, webinars, and resource guides. In 2017, over 1,200 participants from almost 500 organizations participated in inclusion trainings. Through training staff from other organizations, PYD is impacting hundreds of young people in addition to those already being served by the core PYD direct service programs.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Over the years, PYD has relied on grants and public contracts, which have been unpredictable and thus led to challenges in planning for sustained growth. In 2015, PYD launched "Operation Forward Motion" that raised funds to build the technology and human resources infrastructure to develop and promote revenue-generating initiatives. PYD has expanded its fee-for-service trainings and technical assistance nationally to businesses, nonprofits, and colleges. Through expanding these unrestricted funds and focusing on increasing foundation and individual donor revenue, PYD is developing the capacity to grow.

### Revenue by Source



## Success Story:

### Gregory and Austin

Gregory, 28 years-old, and Austin, 13 years-old, sit facing each other in their wheelchairs, saying nothing.

Outwardly, they don't look like they can communicate. However, the two have a special relationship: Gregory is Austin's PYD mentor and role model.

Through his own example, Gregory teaches Austin how to live day-to-day with the challenges posed by their shared disability, cerebral palsy.

Gregory, who cannot speak or use his hands, communicates by moving his eyes from one letter to another on a letter board to spell out words.

"When we see what Gregory has accomplished, it gives us a lot of hope," said Austin's mother.

These two are always on the go; their favorite activity is bowling. And through the PYD online platform, they play chess and have regular conversations. Austin talks to Gregory about things that he can't discuss with his parents, such as how to navigate the world of dating and romance. Gregory knows first hand the positive effect of his relationship. He too had a PYD mentor when he was younger and now feels the rewards of giving back.



## PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures that PYD will track to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, incorporate lessons learned, and adjust strategy as necessary.

	FY 2018	FY 2019 (P)	FY 2020 (P)
<b>PROGRAM PERFORMANCE</b>			
Number of young people directly engaged by PYD	480	525	600
Number of volunteers in PYD programs	320	620	800
Number of teachers trained in PYD curriculum	110	150	200
Number of nonprofits and businesses engaged	400	600	800
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING</b>			
Number of full-time equivalent employees	17.5	20.5	23
Number of fundraising events	1	2	3
Development of a 5-year strategic plan	Completed	Implement	Implement
Funds generated from PYD publications, training, and speaking engagements	\$87,000	\$163,000	\$228,000
Total Revenue	\$1,727,852	\$1,980,620	\$2,062,766

## SOCIAL IMPACT: IMPROVING SELF PERCEPTION

The U.S. Department of Labor has recognized mentoring as one of the most important strategies for assisting youth in making a positive transition to adulthood. According to MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, "...[for] every dollar invested in effective mentoring programs, there is a return of \$2.72, including projected increases in lifetime earnings gained by leading a young person down the path to become productive adult citizens, as well as dollars saved through improved school attendance, higher high school graduation rates, and lowered risk behaviors."

In addition to real life role models to emulate, PYD provides a social network and career development opportunities that improve a young person's self perception and leads to greater independence and success as an adult.

INDICATOR	2018
Participants in Mentor Match who experience an increase in confidence and communication skills	85%
Participants in YEP who have improved job readiness skills	80%
PYD participants who undergo career assessments and coaching to gain employment	80%
Participants in PYD Access to Theater who have increased ability to advocate for their needs	97%
Participants in PYD inclusion training who are better able to engage disabled people in their programs and workplace	97%