

2018



Yearbook

Celebrating a collection of stories honoring
those who make a difference for children
and their families.

What is Nevada also known as?

Nevada is also called the “Battle Born State” because it became a state in 1864, during the Civil War.



NEVADA

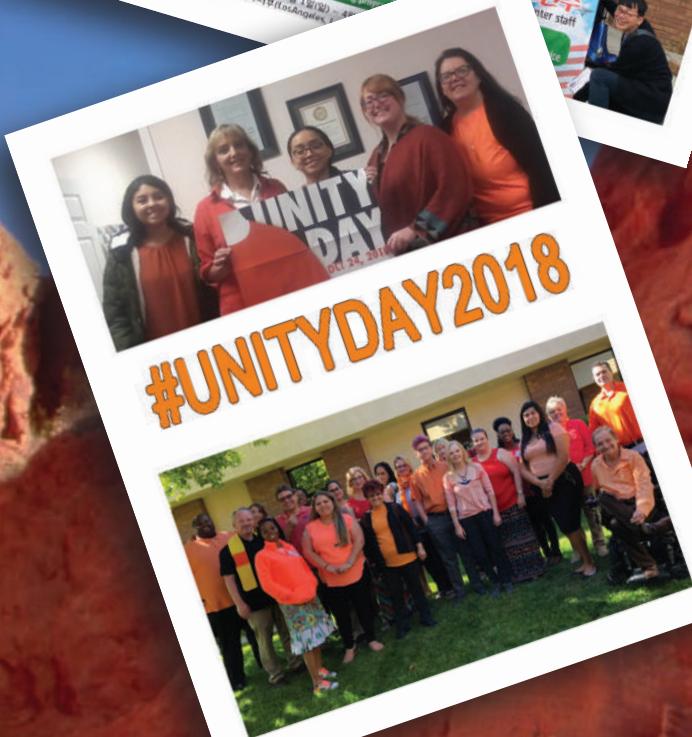
edition



nvpep.org

"I am overwhelmed with PEP's willingness to help, and I feel like I am not in this alone."

~Parent



Nevada PEP Central Office
7211 W. Charleston Blvd.
Las Vegas, Nevada 89117
Phone: 702.388.8899
Fax: 702.388.2966

Nevada PEP Satellite Office
4600 Kietzke Lane, Ste. I-202
Reno, Nevada 89502
Phone: 775.448.9950
Fax: 775.448.9603

Email: pepinfo@nvpep.org
Statewide: 800.216.5188
www.nvpep.org

Did you know?
Nevada is the seventh largest state with 110,540 square miles.

GOVERNING BOARD



Bryce Loveland
Chairperson



Terri Peltier
Vice Chair



Sam Lieberman
Treasurer



Rita Varney
Secretary



Retta Dermody
Board Member



Trish Leavitt
Board Member



Kate Lowenhar-Fisher
Board Member



Nilza Shellhamer
Board Member



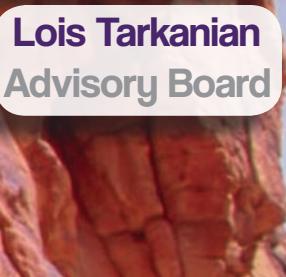
Allison Stephens
Board Member



Doug Whitener
Board Member



**Juanita Matz
Nancy Radford
Alexia Conquer
Jason Sadow**
Alumni Board



Lois Tarkanian
Advisory Board

When did Nevada became a state?
Nevada became a state in 1864.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement / What Is Nevada PEP?	1	Celebrity Spin Zone - Findlay Automotive	20
Fundamental Goals / Guiding Principles	2	Congratulations from	21
Letter from the Executive Director	3	- Governor Steve Sisolak	
Letter from Chairperson of Governing Board	4	Congratulations from	22
Annual Report	5	- Tyler Corder CFO Findlay Automotive	
Funding Sources	11	8 th Annual Run Walk Roll Against Bullying	23
Get to Know the PEP Leadership	13	Volunteer Connection	25
Get to Know the PEP Staff	15	History of Hand in Hand Program	26
Include Me! Disability Awareness Program	19	Hand in Hand Stories	27
National Federation Conference	20	Hand in Hand Sponsors	37

OUR MISSION

To increase the opportunities for home, community and school success for children with disabilities, including those who are at risk or who have serious emotional disturbances, their families and their service providers, through education, encouragement and empowerment activities.

WHAT IS NEVADA PEP?

PEP is Nevada's Statewide Parent Training and Information Center for families who have children with disabilities and the professionals who support them. Nevada PEP is also the Statewide Family Network for families who have children with emotional and behavioral health needs. Nevada PEP believes that the family is the fundamental unit in society. Our philosophy is that children with disabilities, without regard for the nature and severity of the disability, have inherent value, that all life has purpose, that communities benefit from providing appropriate interventions and that individuals with disabilities make valuable contributions to society.

WHO SHOULD CALL?

- Parents of children with special needs, illness, and disabilities
- Parents of children with mental health needs
- Parents needing encouragement and support from other parents
- Family members, friends and persons with disabilities
- Professionals in the medical, educational, and human service fields
- Community Leaders who make decisions about programs of support for children with disabilities and their families



WHAT SERVICES DOES PEP OFFER?

- Information and Referral
- Statewide Lending Library
- Biannual Newsletters
- Conflict Resolution Support
- Individual Assistance
- Training Workshops
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Family Support Services
- Monthly E-Newsletters
- Webinars

FUNDAMENTAL GOALS

ONE

Nevada PEP will be a long-term reliable statewide resource to families and the individuals who support them by providing information, support, and training programs to empower them to better advocate for the needs of their children, adolescents, and young adults.

TWO

Nevada PEP will assist families and the individuals who support them to better understand the nature and needs of disabilities. Adolescents and young adults will understand their strengths and weakness and how to advocate themselves.

THREE

Nevada PEP will conduct community outreach and public awareness activities to families, professionals, organizations, and traditionally underserved populations that directly or indirectly work with children with disabilities and their families to raise awareness of available support, link families with other families in similar circumstance, encourage community acceptance and enhance the family centered community-based service delivery.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We believe that children, adolescents, and young adults have a right to access appropriate intervention as well as participate in all opportunities accompanied with membership in their own community.
- We believe that children, adolescents, and young adults reach their full potential when families and professionals build a partnership based on trust and respect.
- We believe that children, adolescents, young adults and their families deserve the opportunity to live, learn, and participate fully in their communities.
- We believe that the family is the child's first and best teacher, that professionals must be sought after as experts in their fields to enhance the family.
- We believe that the family's strengths, weakness, and cultures must be respected to meet the true needs of the family.
- We believe that information, support, and training enrich and empower families and professionals.
- We believe that every person has an unrealized potential for growth and that services should be designed to maximize that potential.
- We believe that a diverse culture is essential in an interdependent world, and we believe in acknowledging, embracing, and respecting diversity.
- We believe that it is crucial that families participate in policy-making decisions at the local, state, and national levels to guide the development of meaningful services that are family-driven.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEVADA PEP

It is with pleasure that I congratulate the 2018 Hand in Hand Together We Can honorees. This appreciation program continues to honor Nevadans who generously give of their time and talents to make a positive difference in the lives of children and their families. It is so important to publically acknowledge the appreciation families have for individuals who make a positive difference in their lives; and Nevada PEP is proud to support this program for more than 16 years.



Families send in the most heartwarming stories about magnificent individuals who go above and beyond to help. Reading the 2018 submissions, you can't help but know how fortunate we are to live in communities that care.

Nevada PEP believes that families are the foundation of the community; and that supporting families is the way to a stronger more healthy community. The nominees are real life examples in how to strengthen our community.

Generous donors make the Hand in Hand Together We Can appreciation program possible each year, their support is essential to continue honoring these deserving individuals throughout the year. I would like to thank the families, their nominees, and the sponsors who all make this essential appreciation program a reality. Together, we can and do make a difference.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Taycher".

Karen Taycher
Executive Director

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF NEVADA PEP'S GOVERNING BOARD

Welcome to the 2018 Hand in Hand Together We Can yearbook. The Hand in Hand Together We Can program began in 2002 as a way to recognize and honor the people who have made a positive difference in the lives of children with special needs. I am so proud to be involved in an organization that recognizes the people who have made a positive difference in the lives of children.

As Chair of the Nevada PEP Governing Board, I would like to celebrate a few of our many achievements this past year. One of our accomplishments is partnering with the Nevada Department of Education and being on the planning committee for the 3rd Annual Parent Engaged Conference, Connecting the Dots, where Nevada PEP presented two workshops with parents, professional and students in attendance. Another accomplishment is partnering with Clark County School District Family Community Engagement Services where parents have the opportunity to attend trainings by Nevada PEP at their child's school.

Another milestone achievement of 2018 was the 8th Annual Run Walk Roll Against Bullying. With the generosity of our "Trailblazer" sponsors, we were able to invite forty sponsored schools to attend the event free of charge. We are also proud to have AIS as our Champion Sponsor sponsoring five schools. The event took place at Sammy Davis Junior Festival Plaza/Lorenzi Park with over 1,800 attendees. I would like to personally thank Councilwoman Lois Tarkanian and Councilman Cedric Crear for co-sponsoring this event, and supporting bullying prevention.

Our goal is to educate, encourage and empower families to become their child's best advocate; Nevada PEP believes that parents know their child better than anyone else. When parents have the tools they need, they can help their child reach their full potential and become successful adults living their life and being a contributing member in their community. Nevada PEP remains committed to supporting families and we will continue to strengthen families through education, encouragement, and empowerment activities.

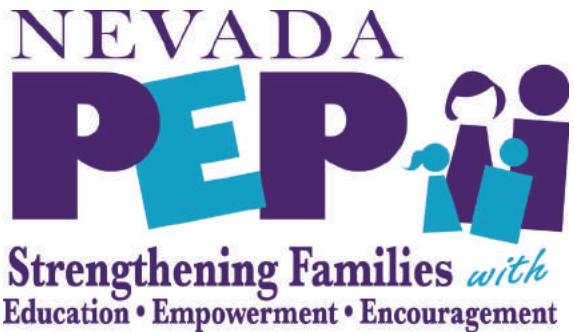
As we move into 2019, we are looking forward to celebrating our 24th year of providing support and information to families who have children with special needs. Nevada PEP continues to see the rising need for our services. Your support is more vital now than ever. On behalf of Nevada PEP, we are grateful to all of our community partners, volunteers, and generous donors who continue to support and believe in our mission. Working together, we are building a stronger community for our children.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryce Loveland".

Bryce Loveland
Nevada PEP Governing Board Chair

Annual Report 2018



16,518 Individuals Served



“Nevada PEP continues to be our real life miracle. My family appreciates your efforts and your integrity. You make a difference in so many ways. You deserve our thanks and heartfelt praise.”

~Parent



COMMUNITY TRAININGS

Nevada PEP offers training opportunities for parents, students, and professionals throughout Nevada. Core training topics include Understanding ADHD, IEP Clinics, Positive Behavioral Interventions, Bullying Prevention, and Literacy workshops. In collaboration with our community partners, we provide trainings to educate the community and to reach more families who have children with disabilities. The information offered in the trainings helps families learn about best practices and how to advocate for services for their children. Trainings are presented in both English and Spanish, and include live and archived webinars.

Was any of the information presented useful to you?

...Yes, 97%

Have you been more effective or involved in your child's educational program with the information you received at the workshop?

...Yes, 93%

Because of the information you received at the workshop, do you feel you are more knowledgeable about how to work with schools?

...Yes, 93%

277

Training
Workshops
Conducted

2,607

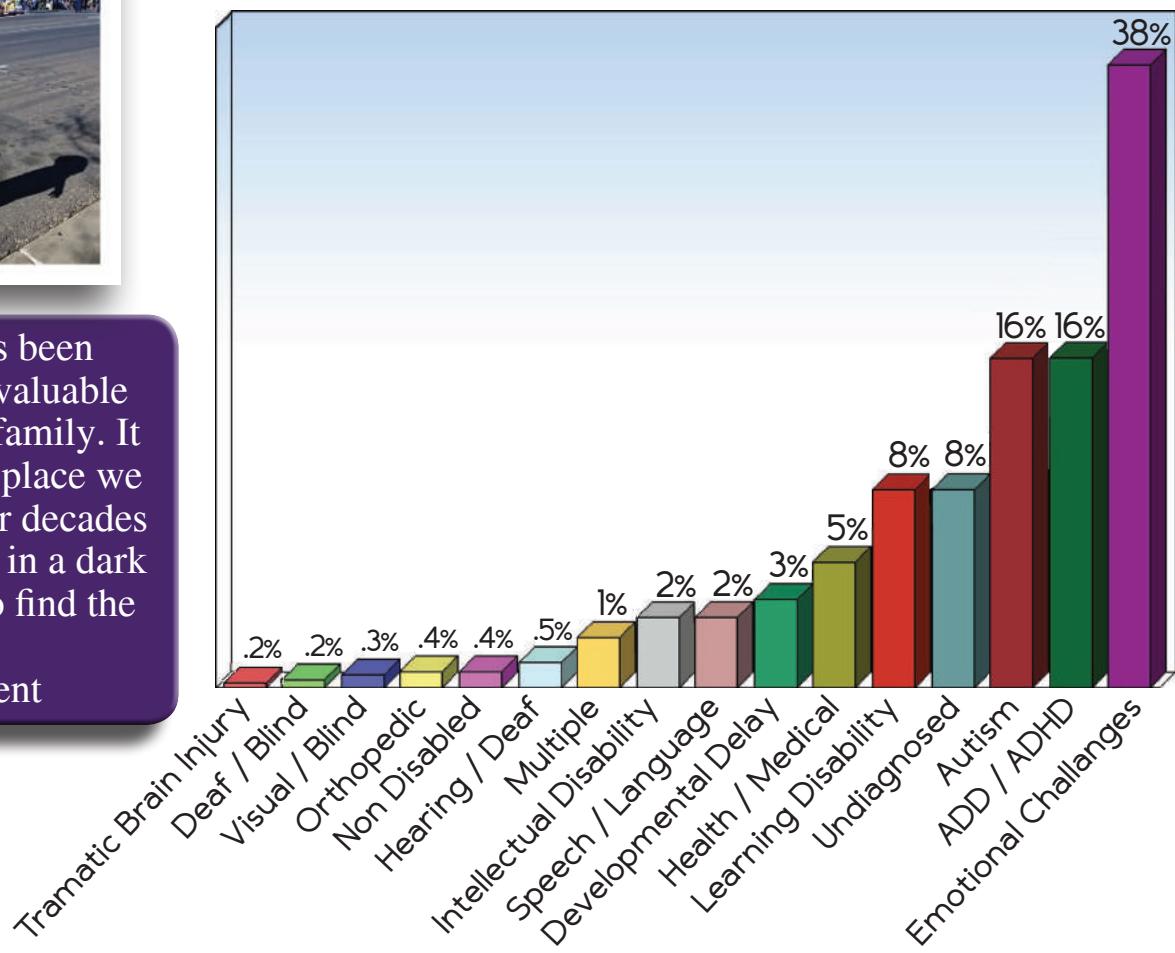
Individuals
participated
in the training
workshops



DISABILITY CATEGORIES



Disabilities of all Children Served



"Nevada PEP has been more than just a valuable resource for our family. It has been the one place we have turned to for decades whenever we are in a dark place and need to find the light."

~Parent

Volunteer Hours:
6,192

VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTIONS

Nevada PEP encourages volunteers, board members, and family members to be involved in their communities. Students, parents, professionals, and the general public have donated 5,971 hours of valuable service to Nevada PEP. Volunteers provide office assistance by helping with general office tasks: answering telephones, copying, faxing, assisting with bulk mail, filing office forms, and assembling training packets. Volunteers assist with community fairs, special events, outreach, public awareness, trainings, and support groups. Nevada PEP encourages family and student involvement on task forces, focus groups, and at committee meetings. Thank you to all of the valuable volunteers who contributed to Nevada PEP!

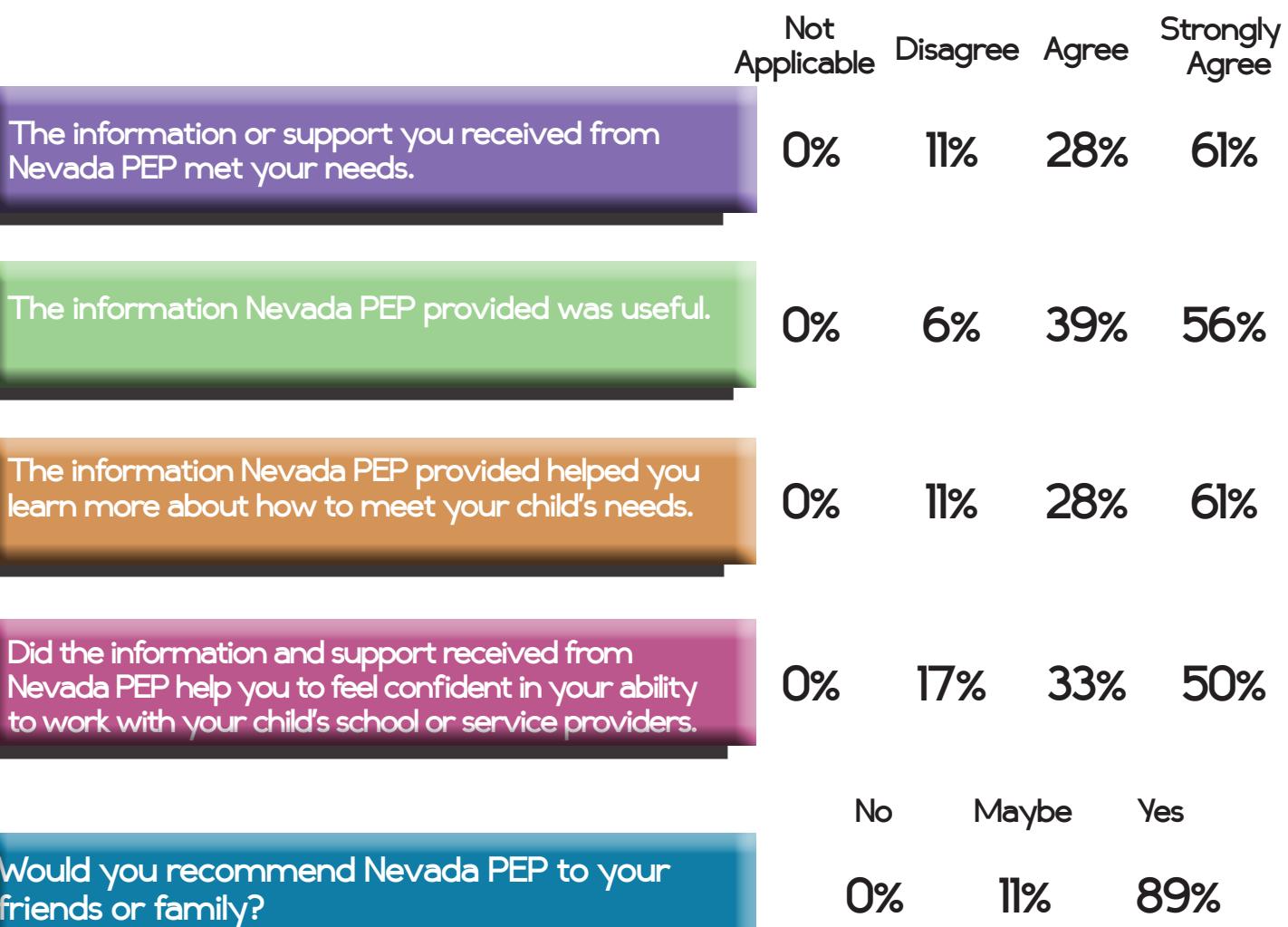


SUPPORT SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS



Home Visits	29
Child Family Team Meetings	216
School-related Meetings	785
New "Intakes" Families	1,973
New Individuals Contacting PEP	2,814
New Individual Assistance Contacts	11,879
Individual Assistance Contacts	23,673

Nevada PEP provides support services by first providing Information & Referral Services and helping parents find their way through the maze of services. Another important support service is Individual Assistance, which targets the specific needs of the individual or family. If a family requires additional support, Nevada PEP attends Education, Wraparound, or Child & Family Team meetings.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH & PUBLIC AWARENESS

Nevada PEP provides outreach presentations for service providers, professional organizations and parent groups throughout Nevada. By educating community members, Nevada PEP continually enhances understanding of the needs of children with disabilities and their families.

173

Number of public forums, information fairs, & community outreach events

451

Number of meetings attended to enhance the support systems for children with special needs and their families

785

Number of school meetings visited across Nevada

3,159

Facebook Likes

82

Number of committees to which Nevada PEP representatives provided the parent perspective

133,088

Number of yearly Website hits at nvpep.org

329,730

Number of E-Newsletters sent

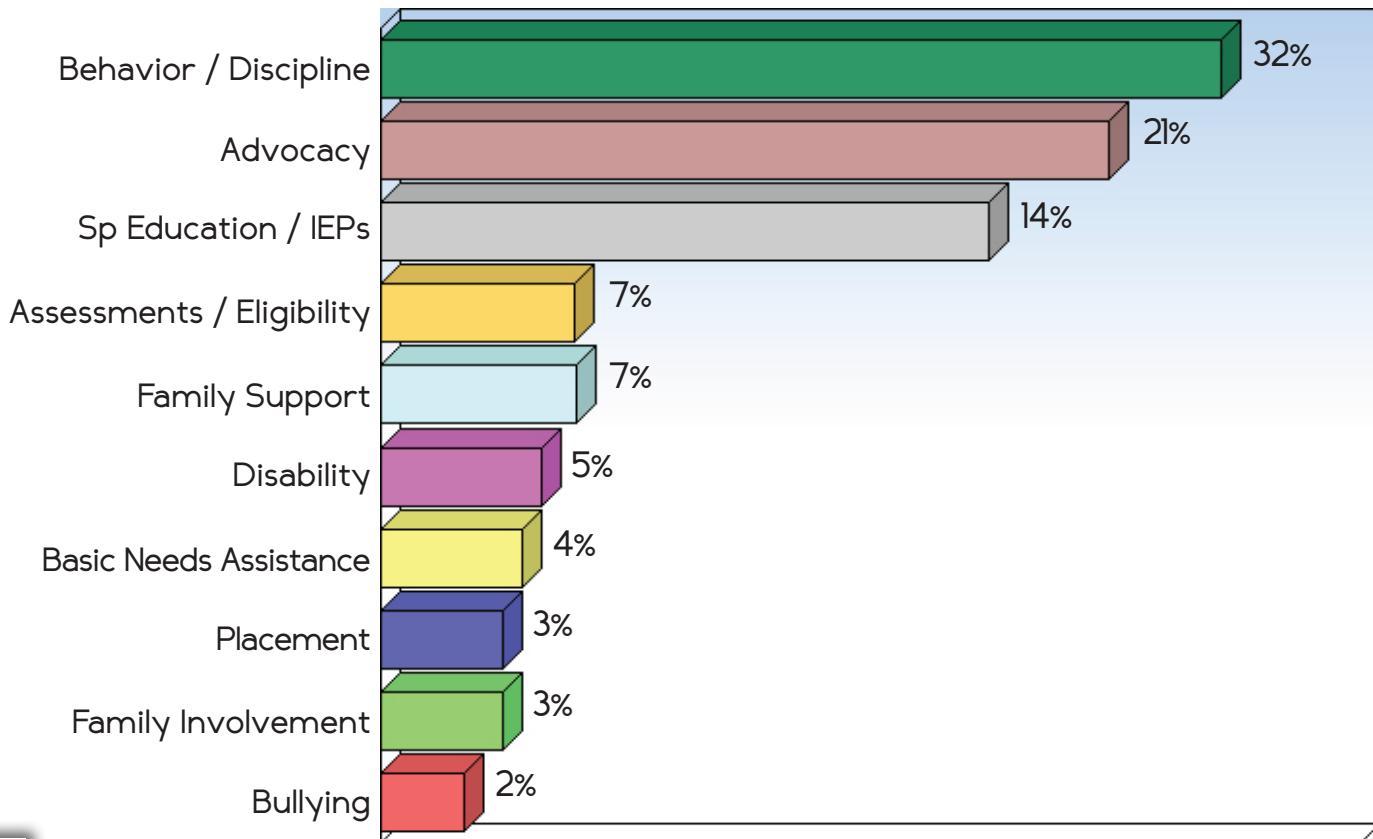
672

Instagram Followers

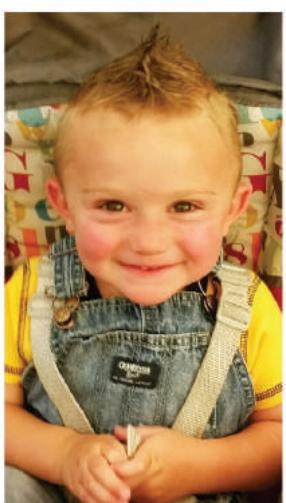
4,512

YouTube Subscribers

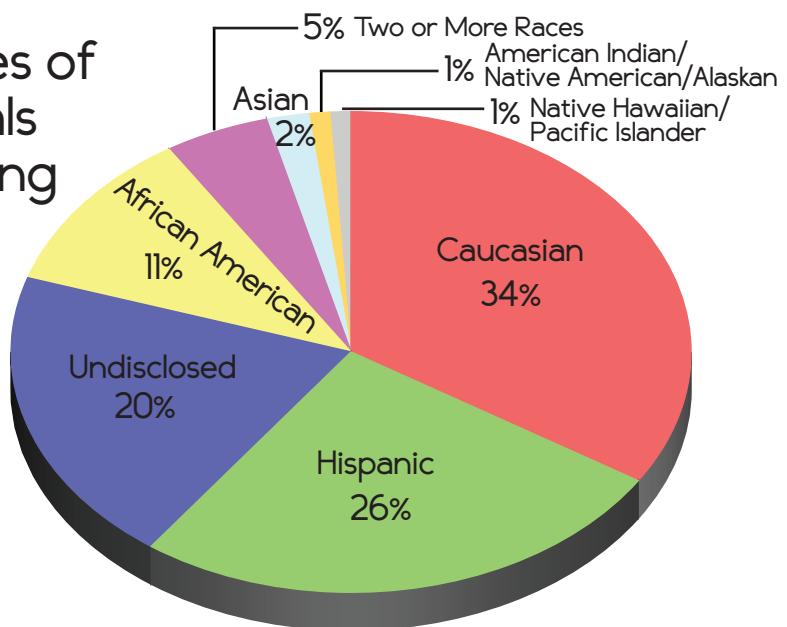
Top 10 Reasons People Contact Nevada PEP



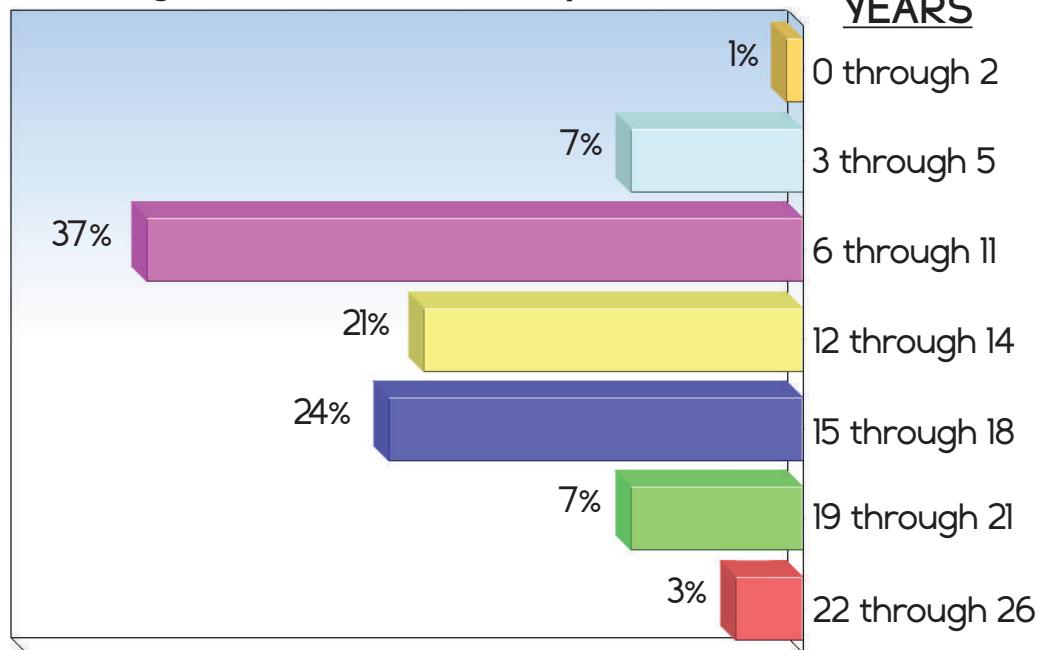
CONSUMER DEMOGRAPHICS



Ethnicities of Individuals Contacting PEP



Ages of Children Helped



YEARS

0 through 2

3 through 5

6 through 11

12 through 14

15 through 18

19 through 21

22 through 26

Gender of Children Helped

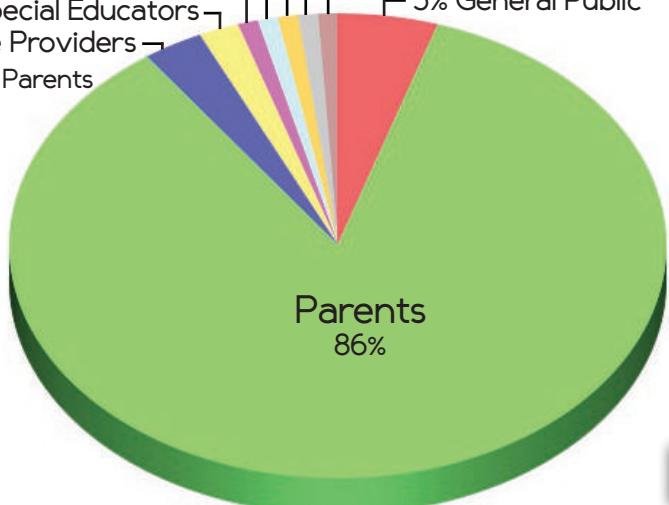
Male - 65%

Female - 35%

Consumer Relationships



1% Other Educators
1% Students
1% Advocates
2% Special Educators
3% Service Providers
0% Surrogate Parents



FUNDING SOURCES

Nevada PEP has formed strong relationships throughout the community with corporations, professional organizations, and individuals. It is only through the ongoing support of our community partners that we continue to grow.

Our greatest need is for corporate sponsors. In giving to Nevada PEP, you will be rewarded with a lifetime of achievement and partnership.

“Thank you for teaching me how to cope one day at a time with my family challenges. Nevada PEP is like a best kept secret and by far this state’s greatest jack pot!”

~Parent

To Donate securely over the Internet

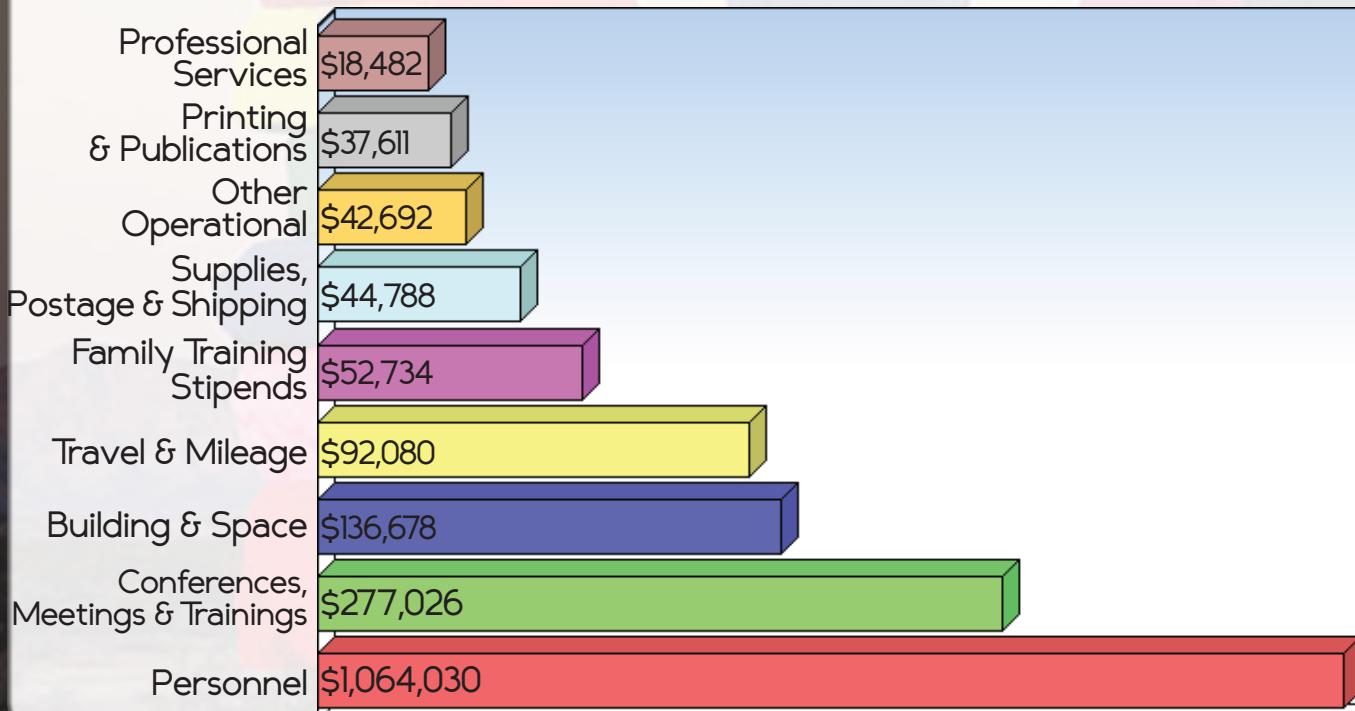
Visit our website @ www.nvpep.org



EXPENDITURES

Total: \$1,766,121.00

Income Total: \$2,106,695.00



MAJOR FUNDERS

MGM Resorts Foundation
National Institute of Mental Health
Nevada Department of Education
Nevada Department of Health and Human Services

Nevada Division of Child and Family Services
Fred T. Leonard Trust
U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration

INDIVIDUAL FUNDERS

Ashley Schuster	Cass Avona	Gwynne Partos	Lisa Leviton	Robert Purdy
Allison Stephens	Carolyn Ellis	Helena and Ben Jamison	Suzy and Harley Nichols	Sara Ganong
Alexia Brett-Bacon	Chonie and Robert	Helen Jo and Seaynoah	Melissa Hawkes	Senator Yvanna Cancela
Alisha Martin	Marshall	Mayfield	Michelle Keiser	Shean Walker
Amy Sween	Chris Shepherd	Heather Sullivan	Misty Shore	Stephanie Ford
Angela Crouch	Councilman Cedric Crear	Jacqueline Harris	Nilza Shellhamer	Ty and Elisa Kirkpatrick
April Mishler	Mayor Pro Tem Lois Tarkanian	Jenna Miller	Natalie Filipic	Schuster/Crossland Family
Ann Alexander	Craig and Robin Kincaid	Jennifer Rolls	Patricia Lesavoy	Stephanie Vrsnik
Ashley Joye	David Schmitt	Joanne Mize	Rebecca Aguon	Suzan Dibella
Assemblyman Richard	Donna Smith	John Klai	Rebecca Marsh	Trish and Andy Leavitt
Carrillo	Doug Whitener	Karen Chandler	Regent Sam Lieberman	Terri Peltier
Assemblyman Ozzie Fumo	Erika and Bryce Loveland	Karen Taycher	Retta Dermody	The Fugazzi Family
Barb and James H. Eagan	Jim and Sue Barber	Kate Lowenhar-Fisher	Richard Lorson	Vanessa McCallson
Bonnie & Frank Martin	Garrett Winslow	Katie Plyler	Ruby Agabas	William Falkner
Brenda Anthony	Gloria Sturman	Latosha Brooks	Rita Varney	

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

AIS	Distinctive Homes Magazine	Lexus of Las Vegas	Sea Quest
Abbott Custom Printing	Dragon Castle Books	Limestone Realty	Scales N Tails
A Dog's Best Friend	Fast Lap Indoor Kart	Live to Give	Sletten Companies
Aloha Pacific Federal Credit Union	Findlay Acura	Lowe's	Smith's Community Rewards Program
Amazon Smile	Findlay Automotive Group	Macayo's Mexican Restaurant	Smith's Food and Drug #334
American Legion Youth Auxiliary #14 Juniors	Findlay Cadillac/Saab	Maximum Audio Video	Sparkletts Water
Bahama Breeze Island Grille	Findlay Chevrolet	Medic West Ambulance	Spring Mountain Treatment Center
Bonnie Springs Ranch	Findlay Honda Henderson	Merryhill School	Sprouts Grocery
BOYD Gaming	Findlay Honda Northwest	MGM Resorts Foundation	Sunrise Casablanca
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck	Subaru of Las Vegas	Montevista Hospital	Super Hero Foundry
Cal Ranch Store	Findlay Toyota	My Vegas Magazine	The Adventure Dome at Circus Circus
Carrabba's Italian Grill Restaurant	Findlay North Volkswagen	Nature's Bakery	The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas
Carson Hot Springs	Findlay Volkswagen in Henderson	Natural Dry Carpet	The Lions Club
Chefs for Kids	Grand Canyon University	Nevada System of Care	The Lovaas Center
Cheesecake Factory	Grimaldi's Pizzaria	Network for Good	Target
Children's Discovery Museum	Health Plan of Nevada	Nevada State Bank	Trader Joe's #86
Chipotle Mexican Grill	Imperial Wine Wholesalers	Our Little World Treatment Center	Trader Joe's #98
City of Las Vegas	Jamba Juice	Outback Steakhouse	Valley Health Systems-Summerlin Hospital
Chipotle Mexican Grill	Kara Foundation	Paradise Ranch	Vegas Golden Knights
Chuck E. Cheese	Lake Mead Cruises	Raider Foundation	vCORE
Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf	Land Rover Las Vegas	Raising Canes	V-Theatre Group, LLC
Colorful Creations	Las Vegas 51's	Red Lobster Restaurant	Wing Stop
Congregation P'Nai Tikvah	Las Vegas Cause Players	Reddy Ice	Young Men's Service League
Department of Juvenile Justice Probation Officers Association	Las Vegas Party Rental	REI	Zia Records
Dickinson Wright Law Group	Las Vegas Lites	RSG Consulting	
Disneyland Resort	Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department	Run Vegas Run	
	Law Office of Andrew M. Leavitt	Sassafras Eclectic Food Joint	
	Lev Restaurant Group	Shredco	
		Shoe Tree Brewing Company	

Thank you to our Anonymous Donors. We are truly grateful for your continued support.

LEADERSHIP

Natalie Filipic is the mother of two and grandmother of six. As the Director of Operations, Natalie is generally responsible for the business and information management of Nevada PEP, ensuring the smooth operation of the organization's infrastructure. Natalie enjoys the day to day routine of office management, knowing that what she does makes a difference in the lives of others.



Charlene Frost is the Statewide Family Network Director for Nevada PEP and is a Certified Parent Support Provider (CPSP). The Statewide Family Network focuses on systems change and helping families who are involved with more than one child service system, specializing in children with serious emotional disturbance and behavior disorders. As the parent of two children with emotional and behavioral disorders, Charlene has had personal experience advocating for children with special needs. Charlene has called Nevada home for over 20 years and has been an active part of the Las Vegas community working on behalf of children.



Robin Kincaid is the Director of Educational Services. Robin has over twenty years of experience educating parents and professionals on special education law, advocacy, best practice, parent/professional collaboration, and positive behavior supports. Other responsibilities include outreach activities and individual assistance to families. Robin has served on the Interagency Coordinating Council for the past twelve years, representing the parent perspective in early intervention services. As co-chair for the Families First Statewide Conference in 2007, Robin provided leadership and coordination for the conference program.



LEADERSHIP



Lyn Morales is the Statewide Family Network Coordinator in the Satellite office. She is a mother of seven, three of which struggle with mental health. Lyn has life experiences navigating mental health systems which makes her a great fit at Nevada PEP. She has been her children's best advocate and has the passion for helping families and creating systems change. Lyn likes hiking and going to the movies with her friends and family in her spare time.



Magdalena Ruiz is a bilingual Family Support Manager. She is a proud mother of three boys; her oldest and her youngest son have disabilities. Before she became part of the Nevada PEP family, she was lost and overwhelmed with stress. Thanks to the help she received from PEP, she was able to keep going. "I now feel confident and capable to do the same for all my families. My goal is to make a difference in a child's life and to help families become better advocates for their loved ones."



Stephanie Vrsnik is the Community Development Director. Stephanie is the mother of two and a very proud grandmother. Having a son with disability brought her to Nevada PEP. Her passion and expertise is focused on bringing public awareness and community support to Nevada PEP. "It is vital that the community supports our children to be successful contributing members of our community." Stephanie is a member of the American Fundraising Professionals and the Alliance of Nevada Non-profits. She oversees the Annual Run Walk Roll Against Bullying event, raising awareness in the community about bullying prevention. Building a stronger community for all children is her primary goal.



PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Havander Davis is the Communications Specialist at Nevada PEP. As the Communication Specialist, he enjoys talking to families who call or come into PEP looking for help, support, and resources. "I am proud to serve an organization that enhances opportunities for those with disabilities. I am honored to be a member of the PEP family and look forward to continue to help families who have children with disabilities."



Kendra Gipson joined Nevada PEP as a Family Specialist. Receiving assistance from PEP in the past with understanding IEP's, effective advocacy, and parents' rights it ignited a passion to help others. She is enthusiastic about supporting families that have children with special needs so they can reach their full potential in school and in their community.

Joanna Gonzalez is a family specialist. She has two daughters who are her pride, joy and the main reason she came to Nevada PEP. Before she found PEP, she struggled to get services and help for her children. One of the reasons she came to PEP was to learn more about advocacy. Joanna liked that PEP helps families get services within their community and also makes a difference in collaboration with schools and agencies. Her passion is to help families to have higher expectations and know what services they could receive to be successful in school and in their communities.



Ryley Harris is the Youth Mentor at Nevada PEP in the Las Vegas office. Ryley is a native Nevadan and enjoys engaging youth through shared lived experience and is passionate about reducing stigma around mental health. He is committed to sharing the youth voice to and helping other youth develop advocacy skills to make positive changes in the systems that serve youth.

Michele Jennings is the Information and Training Specialist; she was born in San Francisco, and is a proud US Army Veteran who has made Las Vegas her home. Michele is a parent and has received PEP's services for her daughter in the past. Her goal is to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a Free Appropriate Public Education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.



PROFESSIONAL STAFF



Elisa Kline is a Family Specialist. Elisa is the mother to a son with a disability. When she needed an advocate to support her at a meeting, she was referred to NV PEP. Elisa was in awe of the passion and knowledge her advocate had while helping her, and she wanted to be able to help others in the same way.



Diane Lombardo is fulfilling her lifelong dream of helping families through Nevada PEP. She moved to Las Vegas in 1986 for a better opportunity for herself and family. After seeking help for her own two boys, she began volunteering to give something back. She has been helping families at PEP for over ten years. She has a dream of one day staging a huge fundraiser and ultimately helping children with disabilities through her musical talent and PEP.



Kathryn McKay is an Information and Training Specialist. She is a proud Mom of three children; two of whom are attending college, and the youngest in high school. She started her journey with Nevada PEP as a volunteer, and quickly fell in love with the organization and the amazing work that PEP does for families and their children. Kathryn is passionate about helping others and is excited to be working at Nevada PEP helping families like hers.



Zelinna Palma is the Program Accountability Specialist here at Nevada PEP. She just became a mother of a beautiful baby girl. Zelinna is also going to college in pursuit of her business degree and has a passion in helping others. What brought her to Nevada PEP was all the amazing work that PEP does for families and their children. Zelinna makes sure that the office is always running smoothly, process memberships, donations, and many other administrative duties.



Dr. Christa Peterson is a licensed psychologist with over 30 years of experience developing, administering, and delivering services to youths who have developmental disabilities and behavioral health disorders. In the last fifteen years, Christa has served as principal investigator for several grant initiatives, such as the Neighborhood Care Center Project. Christa has co-authored many research and other publications in professional psychology, including studies of the wraparound process. She is also the parent of a child with behavior health problems. Christa enjoys being a part of the Nevada PEP Family.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Robin Renshaw is a native of Las Vegas. "I've been with Nevada PEP for eighteen years as a Transition Specialist, and I'm looking forward to eighteen more! There is nothing I would rather do, not only for youth with disabilities, but for myself. In the coming year, I want to show young adults how to advocate for others in our community." Robin found that advocating for yourself is powerful, but it's even more exciting to help others advocate for themselves!



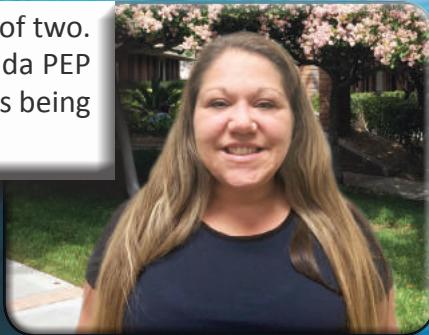
Liliana Resendez is the Family Support Specialist. She is a proud mother of two wonderful boys; her youngest son's behavior concerns brought her to Nevada PEP. Before being aware of what Nevada PEP is and what the organization is about, she believed her parenting skills was the problem to her child's behavior. She was feeling lost and overwhelmed trying to figure out how she could help her child. Liliana attended a few trainings at PEP and soon learned she was not alone, that there were other parents having the same thoughts as her. After joining the PEP family, she has gained knowledge and learned how to advocate for her children.

Gwendolyn Robledo is the Outreach and Training Specialist. She is proud to be the sister of her sibling with a disability. Growing up with her sister has given her the passion to want to help other's and pursue a career in medicine. Gwendolyn is currently attended the University of Nevada Reno and majoring in Psychology. She is bilingual and loves helping all families out in the community.



Theresa Rodriguez is a Family Specialist, wife, and mother of two energetic boys. Having a son and nephew with a disability has taught her a lot about the struggles that are often presented to individuals with disabilities and their families. She is passionate about providing families with comfort knowing they are not walking their path alone and empowering them with knowledge to ensure their children have maximum opportunities to become successful adults.

Nicole Rush is the Agency Administration Specialist and a proud mommy of two. After being a stay at home mom, Nicole is excited to be working at Nevada PEP helping families like hers. Nicole is proud to say she is a Pepper and enjoys being a part of the PEP family.



PROFESSIONAL STAFF



Dan Sapp is a Family Specialist and a proud father of 6 children, two with disabilities. Dan is passionate about educating families and helping them to work through different systems. As a parent, he understands how important it is for families to have support and resources. He is privileged to be able to support families as they advocate for their children.

Kenneth Taycher is a Special Project Mentor at Nevada PEP. He enjoys being a part of the PEP team and PEP's commitment to helping people with disabilities and their families. He is truly passionate about helping young adults to be a part of their community. Kenny has been involved in the Challenger baseball program as a coach for the last fourteen years. Kenny's goal is to Educate, Empower, and Encourage people to be their best advocate.



Roslyn Timmerman is the Youth Facilitator at Nevada PEP. She is a Graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno and has been an advocate for individuals with disabilities, substance abuse, and co-occurring mental health since 2012. Roslyn found her passion for supporting individuals with disabilities while growing up with her sibling with ADHD and a learning disability who also happens to be one of her best friends! In her free time Roslyn enjoys spending time with her family and exploring the Nevada Wilderness with her two pups Sterling and Rue!

Chad Uhl is the proud father of a fantastic fourteen-year-old girl and the Social Media & Internet Marketing Specialist for Nevada PEP. Chad maintains PEP's website and online social media networks. He also designs PEP's e-newsletters and publications for families. Chad is passionate about spreading awareness of the effects of bullying in our schools. "Bullying prevention is important because it allows us to build stronger relationships within our community."



Include Me



Our goal is positive inclusion for all children, with and without disabilities.



FRED T. LEONARD TRUST

Glenda and Rich Failla

Nevada PEP has developed a great partnership with the Las Vegas Clark County Library District educating preschoolers, their families and staff on inclusion and bullying prevention. Nevada PEP's Include Me Puppet Program enjoyed a successful year performing for over 1,900 preschool children and their caregivers.

Our dedicated puppeteers have volunteered many hours to perfecting the scripts and bringing the puppets to life. The children are excited as they interact with the puppets by asking questions about different disabilities and bullying prevention. Educating younger generations with parents and professionals is an encouraging step towards building friendships and positive outcomes. The

Include Me Sponsorship

\$100 - \$300 - Puppet Partner

- Receive a unique PEP Puppet Partner Certificate
- Individual recognition in the PEP POST newsletter and Hand in Hand Yearbook

\$301 - \$699 - Exceptional Partner

- Attain a personalized Exceptional Partner Certificate
- A photo of you and the puppets as a keepsake
- Individual recognition in the PEP POST newsletter and Hand in Hand Yearbook

\$700 plus - Proud Parent

- Honored with the prestigious PEP Proud Parent Certificate
- A photo of you and the puppets as a keepsake
- Individual recognition in the PEP POST newsletter and Hand in Hand Yearbook
- Recognition on Include Me Puppet Program materials

response we have received in our community has been extremely positive. Professionals, educators and parents all commented and said the program is very educational for children and they would like to see it expand to all children throughout the community. Our multicultural, child-size, hand-and-rod puppets represent Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Learning Disability, Spina Bifida, Visual Impairment, and Hearing Impairment.

Our goal is positive inclusion for all children, with and without disabilities. This program teaches all children good things happen by learning together and building friendships. The Include Me Program was established by Walter and Jackie Jagodzinski in honor of their daughter Andrea.

*By educating our community on disabilities,
we are building a brighter future for all children.*

For more information contact:

Nevada PEP 702-388-8899

National Federation Conference By: Magdalena Ruiz

In October 2018, I attended to the annual National Federation conference in Houston, Texas. This conference is the premier event for children and youth with mental health challenges and their families. The conference featured many great workshops and speakers, joining hundreds of mental health advocates and professionals from across the nation. It offers professionals and families the opportunity to improve policy and enhance practices for children and youth who have or are at risk of experiencing behavioral health challenges.

Liza Long and Dr. Victor Rios were the conference key note speakers. I was delighted to hearing their inspirational stories. They inspired me to continue advocating for children and youth who have behavioral health challenges.

Magdalena Ruiz who is the Support services manager at Nevada PEP was honored to be asked

by Jane Adams to assist her in presenting the Jane Adams Peer Support award. Jane Adams has been a pioneer in the field of family peer support. She is a national expert with years of experience in the provision of exemplary support to families, in the training of parent peers, and in researching the outcomes of family peer support. The award was presented to Melva Pavelka the Director of Development at Families CARE in Nebraska.



What does Nevada mean in Spanish?

In Spanish, “Nevada” means “snow-capped.”

Celebrity Spin Zone

Findlay Automotive has been supporting charities in Las Vegas since 1961, highlighting a different non-profit organization each month to showcase the great things being done in Nevada. In August, Nevada PEP was the organization picked to be the recipient for the Celebrity Spin Zone on the FOX5 MORE show. Nevada PEP is honored to be recognized by Findlay Automotive.



The Celebrity Spin Zone raised over \$6,000 for Nevada PEP. Thank you Findlay Automotive for your continued support.



ONE HUNDRED ONE NORTH CARSON STREET
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701
OFFICE: (775) 684-5670
FAX NO.: (775) 684-5683



555 EAST WASHINGTON AVENUE, SUITE 5100
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89101
OFFICE: (702) 486-2500
FAX NO.: (702) 486-2505

Office of the Governor

February 7, 2019

Nevada PEP
7211 W. Charleston Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89117



Dear Friends,

As Governor of the great State of Nevada, I commend Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents, Inc. (PEP) for your unwavering commitment to empower families to be life-long advocates for their children. Through education, support, and training programs, Nevada PEP has increased public awareness of the nature and needs of children with disabilities.

I am honored to join you in this year's Hand in Hand Together We Can Yearbook as we celebrate the 2018 Hand in Hand honorees and recognize the positive impact they have made in the lives of children in Nevada.

I am grateful for all the work and dedication you have put into such an important cause and I look forward to working with Nevada PEP to improve the lives of our children.

Sincere regards,

Governor Steve Sisolak



310 N. GIBSON RD. HENDERSON, NV 89014 702-558-8822

February 8, 2019

Re: Nevada PEP



Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I congratulate that wonderful recipients honored with this year's "Hand in Hand Together We Can" awards. Nevada PEP has served many families statewide, and as a result parents have been supported and encouraged. Families are able to use tools that PEP provides to help their children be more successful in school, work and in the community.

Nevada PEP is truly a valued organization in our community and it gives me great pleasure to extend my support to their ongoing endeavors. Findlay Automotive Group is proud to have supported Nevada PEP in a number of their past initiatives. I look forward to maintaining our support in an effort to ensure that organizations like Nevada PEP are able to continue to provide invaluable services to our community.

Again, I congratulate Nevada PEP on thier many achievements and off my best wishes for many years of continued success.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "T. Corder".

Tyler Corder
Chief Financial Officer

Run Walk Roll AGAINST BULLYING

Nevada PEP is proud to partner with the National Bullying Prevention Center in recognizing October as National Bullying Prevention month. The 8th annual Run Walk Roll against bullying was a phenomenal, Vegas Strong, success.

The event welcomed over 1,800 individuals ready to take a STEP with PEP to STOP Bullying. Guests enjoyed an ideal autumn day complete with blue skies, calm winds and cool, crisp air at Sammy Davis Festival Plaza at beautiful Lorenzi Park.

Families came out together with the early morning sun to volunteer their precious time and energy to support this magnificent event. It was so heartwarming to see so many parents and children, aunts, uncle, nieces and nephews, cousins and new found friends united together to support this event. Dedicated volunteers exceeded expectations with more than ninety showing up to help. Volunteers of every age scrambled together to handle the whirl wind of activity at onsite registration and pre-registration check-in which was in full swing. Sponsored schools were arriving and meeting up.

Chet Buchanan, a local radio personality, took to the stage to emcee the event. The crowd welcomed him with applause as he was joined by Executive Director of Nevada PEP, Karen Taycher and Governing Board Chair, Mr. Bryce Loveland for opening announcements. This year's Front Runners for Children, Councilwoman Lois Tarkanian and Councilman, Cedric Crear were presented with their well-deserved awards. It is with great appreciation that we thank them both for graciously co-sponsoring the event.

Ricardo Laguna, professional BMX Champion, made his thrilling appearance as Grand Marshall greeting the crowd with his signature smile and playfully performing antics on his favorite bike as he prepared to lead the charge.

Stephanie Sanchez stepped up to the microphone and delivered her rousing rendition of the national anthem to the delight of the crowd.

Runners were set to go with walkers and rollers to follow. One featured highlight were the eleven area mascots who



volunteered to roam the crowd pausing for pictures, hugs handshakes and high fives. Smokey the Bear was on hand as well as Chuck E. Cheese, Mc Gruff the Crime Dog and Cosmo of the 51's. Special thanks to the Las Vegas Cause Players and Super Hero Foundry for their tremendous character visits.

Face painters and balloon artists cheerfully donated their skills and talents, managing a seemingly endless line of eager onlookers as they patiently awaited their turn. Volunteers set up an onsite workshop to provide some painting while Colorful Creations by Martha expertly crafted balloon hats, bracelets, animals and more.

Volunteers took great pride in providing their handmade anti-bully buttons, signs and banners to 40 sponsored schools as they joined enthusiastic participants in the 5K run and 1.5 fun walk and roll in a marvelous procession that was like a grand parade.

Thirsty onlookers formed a long line at the Coffee Bean and Tea truck as many were eager to sip their favorite beverage while snow cones were enjoyed in and provided at no cost to all who purchased a raffle ticket. Anticipation was growing and excitement was in the air as Chet began announcing the sponsored schools, recognizing each and every one to a cheering sea of spectators. Sponsors were being recognized and presented with a gift of appreciation. The first place runner was welcomed to the finish line and presented an award. Honorary event chairperson, Trish Leavitt was on hand assisting with the event raffle among all other things and adding her exclusive brand of panache to the occasion.

During closing remarks, everyone agreed that they observed positive change in attitudes and even mind sets throughout the day. Unity was abundant. Inclusion was encapsulated. A significant step with PEP against bullying was made.

Nevada PEP is proud to be part of the movement. This event is so important to our organization because it raises awareness about bullying. Children with disabilities are twice as likely to be bullied. Having this event on an annual basis strengthens our community. We are looking forward to the 9th annual RUN WALK ROLL against bullying event in 2019.

Remember the END of Bullying begins with YOU!



CHAMPION SPONSORS



HELEN JO &
SEAYNOAH MAYFIELD

HERO SPONSORS



BONNIE
MARTIN

TRAILBLAZER SPONSORS



Cosponsored by Councilwoman Tarkanian and Councilman Crear

A heartfelt gratitude to our Community Businesses who have shown their dedication to Bullying Prevention by donating goods to our raffle.

RAFFLE SPONSORS

A DOG'S BEST FRIEND
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
BAHAMA BREEZE
BONNIE SPRINGS RANCH
CAL-RANCH STORE
CARRABBA'S ITALIAN GRILL
CHEESECAKE FACTORY
CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY MUSEUM
CIRCUS CIRCUS ADVENTURE DOME
COFFEE BEAN AND TEA
GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY
GRIMALDI'S PIZZA
IMPERIAL WINE WHOLESALERS

LAKE MEAD CRUISE
LAS VEGAS CAUSE PLAYERS
LAS VEGAS LIGHTS
LAS VEGAS PARTY RENTAL
MACAYO'S MEXICAN
RESTAURANT
MEDI-WEST
NATURES BAKERY
OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE
PARADISE RANCH
RAIDER FOUNDATION
RED LOBSTER
REDDY ICE

REI
SCALES N TAILS
SEA QUEST
SMITH'S #334
SPARKLETT'S WATER
SUPER HERO FOUNDRY
TARGET
TRADER JOE'S #86
TRADER JOE'S #98
V- THEATRE GROUP, LLC
WING STOP
YOUNG MEN'S SERVICE LEAGUE



Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers
for their time, dedication and support.
We couldn't have done it without you!

Limestone Realty
Trish & Andy Leavitt
Sheriff Joe Lombardo
Rick & Afroditi Green
Senator Yvanna Cancela
Erika & Bryce Loveland
Assemblyman Ozzie Fumo



LAS VEGAS • JLRLV.COM





VIP PROGRAM!

Nevada PEP has provided our Very Important Partners with volunteer experiences in our Central and Satellite PEP offices. Parents, students and community partners, including our school groups, have volunteered their time in business related activities, community-based activities and back to school fairs. Not only does Nevada PEP benefit from their assistance, the VIP volunteer learns new skills and experiences that will contribute to their success in future opportunities.

By: Lisa Gomez - VIP Volunteer

I enjoy volunteering at Nevada PEP. Since being added to the weekly schedule, I have been able to see firsthand how those with any disability learn skill building that inspire lifelong learning. Children as well as adults are empowered both by other volunteers and the community of caring, thoughtful individuals that make up the staff here at Nevada PEP. My daughter is now away at college. However, at one time she struggled a great deal with anxiety and depression. I am honored to be part of the PEP Volunteer team. Members of the staff as well as other volunteers have been impacted by disability in some way and they all make a concerted effort to make sure families know that there is help and they are not alone.

VOLUNTEER CONNECTION

The gift of time is priceless and Nevada PEP sincerely appreciates every one of our VIP volunteers. PEP volunteers are simply the BEST and their continued loyalty to PEP's mission is admirable. Likewise, our volunteers consistently let us know that they value the rewarding feeling they gain from contributing time and effort to an organization that truly cares about others. Nevada PEP provides opportunities for families, youth, school groups, and other community members to give back by volunteering. Volunteers are always needed statewide at Nevada PEP! Apply online or visit one of our offices for details.

VOLUNTEER HOURS:

6,192

History of the Hand in Hand Program

The “Hand In Hand, Together We Can” appreciation program was designed to proudly recognize and honor special people who have made a positive difference in the lives of children with special needs. The program began in October 2002, when Hand In Hand forms were mailed to thousands of parents and professionals across the state. With each special story sent to us, Nevada PEP recognized the Hand in Hand recipient with a beautiful certificate and an original Hand in Hand lapel pin to display as a proud supporter of Nevada’s community of people with disabilities.

These inspiring and uplifting stories are celebrations of wonderful teachers, doctors, therapists, family members, and many others who have worked with children with disabilities who have gone above and beyond to make a positive difference in a child’s life. Touching and original, these stories have shown the true commitment that many people have for our children in Nevada.

At the end of each year the stories are recognized in our annual Hand in Hand Together We Can yearbook. Each nominee and honoree receives a yearbook that includes their special story. The stories are also recognized in our bi-annual PEP Post newsletter.

Nevada PEP is proud to be the only organization in the state to recognize and honor these very special Hand In Hand recipients and will continue to do so throughout the years to come.

Nevada PEP always welcomes new individuals or businesses to be a part of this amazing program by becoming a

Hand in Hand Sponsor.
For additional information contact Nevada PEP Hand in Hand Together We Can!



Hand in Hand Together We Can Stories



VICENTA ANDRADE

Teacher Aide

Vicenta Andrade is one of the most dedicated Teacher's Aide we have ever met. Her passion for helping children with special needs is unmeasurable. My boys have learned so much from her. She loves going the extra mile to meet their goals. Recently their teacher had to take a mandatory medical leave, and Ms. A was there to step up to the plate. I would like to thank her for all that she does with not only my children, but the children that depend on her teachings. You are exceptional Ms. A!

AIDA OBANDO

Mother

DEBRA BARROWS

Teacher

My son did well in his self-contained pre-k program and his Kindergarten class with the help of his teachers and aides. So we were very confused when he began struggling in first grade. His academics were at grade level but while he had begun developing socially, he suddenly stopped speaking at school and was coming home emotionally exhausted. He did not want to go to school and he had meltdowns at the mention of homework. When Mrs. Barrows started, we were both worried but it was the best thing



that could have happened. Her patience and experience were invaluable. Her efforts to make her classroom inclusive were heartwarming. The biggest impact was that she showed genuine pleasure at his presence. It is heartbreaking and soul crushing to constantly feel like a source of frustration to your teacher and Mrs. Barrows showed my son that he was valued and appreciated at school which meant the world to him.



KATIE KRIKORIAN

Mother

LESA BRAZELL

Paraprofessional Aide

Our daughter started Early Childhood Education this year with a four word vocabulary. Lesa is a paraprofessional aide in her classroom, and has made a huge difference in our lives all around. Now, with three weeks left of school, our daughter is speaking in full sentences, and almost able to maintain a conversation with little prompting. She is one of the most caring people I have met. Thank you for all that you do!

JENNIFER HOPKINS

Mother



DIANNE BURRELL

Teacher

Mrs. Burrell has been one of the best teachers our son could have. She has gone above and beyond, not only for our son, but her entire class. Giving the children the responsibility of their actions, from decision making to consequences to outcomes, are steps towards independence. She teaches them not only self-respect but to respect others. She trusts her students enough to take them out into the community to teach them self-confidence and give them that reassurance that they can do it! Since our son has been in her class, we have seen tremendous changes. He loves being her student and the admiration and respect he has for her is unmeasurable. We are so fortunate to have her as our son's teacher. She has definitely made an impact in OUR lives.

Thank you, Mrs. D!



throughout the various programs in the community and attends most of the support groups here in Nevada. She has something special about her attitude and her way of accepting things that we all would like to have. Her son has made tremendous changes since I've met her; I truly believe it's because of her skills and knowledge that she has developed. Great job MOM!

AIDA OBANDO

Mother

COACH KELLY

Gymnastics

Instructor

Mr. Kelly is the best gymnastics instructor we could have asked for! He welcomed my daughter into his class with open arms around six months ago. Each week, he greets the children with



boundless energy and enthusiasm. He manages to meld goofiness and silliness with high expectations for success- a tone that the kids really resonate with! My daughter sometimes has a hard time managing her frustrations, but working through challenging gymnastics moves with Mr. Kelly's support has helped her quite a bit! My daughter's confidence in herself has increased tremendously with Mr. Kelly's kind-hearted nature, youthful spirit, and words of encouragement.

Thank you, Coach Kelly!

STEPHANIE HOULE

Mother



AIDA OBANDO

Mother

ALEIDA CASTRO

Mother

Aleida is a mother of a very handsome boy with Autism. Since I've known her (about 2 years now) I have seen nothing but patience and pure love for her son. Her dedication is remarkable. She educates herself

DENBER CRUZ

Teacher

My son has had Mr. Cruz as a teacher for 2 years and he's a person who really cares about his students. He also looks out for them and is always finding ways to help them. He gives suggestions for the children to have a better performance. My son suffers from food allergies and as a mother; Mr. Cruz has supported me so that the school will provide my son with his special meals. This is the first time I have ever gotten support from a teacher before. For

which I am very grateful.

I'm also grateful for him being so patient with my son, for him caring for his education, and for nominating my son for an award as a child who is very educated and respectful.



Infinite thanks for all that you do!

ELVIA SUSANA MELGOZA-MATA

Mother

ANDREA AND MARIA LUCIA DEFREITAS

Mother and Grandmother

My mother and grandmother took care of me when I was going through my bone marrow transplant and chemo; I was just two years old. They provided a good home for me and were amazing advocates. They even home schooled me and had a teacher come to my house.

Because of them I start volunteering at PEP. I just want to give a big thanks to both of them for taking such good care of me and loving me the way they do.

TAMYRA DUPREE

Daughter/Granddaughter



WOODY FOWLER

Challenger Little League Coach

Coach Woody Fowler has dedicated over twenty years to Challenger Little League Baseball. He coached previously with the Crashers and most recently with the Senior Division, Legends Team. He takes to the mound to pitch, he mentors, organizes, and inspires each player with praise; building their confidence and self-esteem. He really "hit one outta the park" at the 2018 awards ceremony when he thanked each and every player for their participation while presenting team medals. This kind of acknowledgement makes these special youth feel as if they could achieve all of their most precious dreams. Way to go Coach, see you next Season!

DIANE LOMBARDO

Mother

CHAR FROST

Statewide Family Network Director

I would like to say how much I cherish her wealth of knowledge and her support. When

I was going through a difficult time with my daughter, Char listened to me and empowered me to look at things in a positive way. I cannot thank her enough for reminding me that things will get better, not only does she listen and let me vent but reassures me that I'm not alone. I wanted to thank her for empowering me to ask questions to support my daughter. She always lets me know that there is no manual for being a parent and that I'm doing the very best as one. When things are difficult there is always a positive outcome.

JOANNA GONZALEZ
Family Specialist/Parent



JOANNA GONZALEZ
Family Specialist

I, Concepcion Escalante Estrada would like to nominate Joanna Gonzalez for being a very professional and outstanding worker. When my son was getting bullied at school I felt frustrated. She took the time to listen to me as I expressed my concerns. She was able to help me fill out the correct paperwork to fix the bullying issue. Because of her, I now know my rights. She deeply cares about her families. Thank you Joanna for being helpful and friendly, overall thank you for all that you do.

CONCEPCION ESCALANTE
Mother

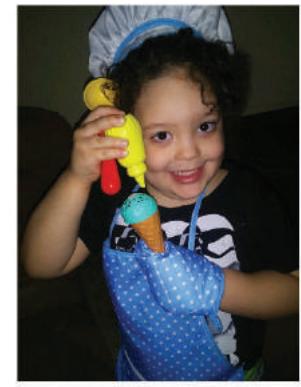
JENNA GRANT

Therapist

Ms. Jenna has been a wonderful support to our family over the last year. We first met Ms. Jenna when my daughter was having a difficult time at school and at home almost a year ago. Since then, my daughter has made tremendous strides, largely due to Ms. Jenna's help. Ms. Jenna is an incredibly creative, knowledgeable, and patient therapist and we are so fortunate to have crossed paths with her.

Thank you for all that you do!

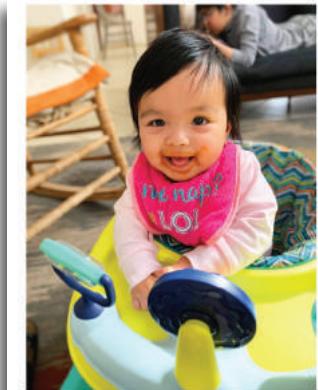
STEPHANIE HOULE
Mother



KARIMA GRANT
Teacher

Ms. Karima was an excellent teacher to my daughter during her 2 years of preschool and summer camp. She helped my daughter work on improving her behavior daily. Because of her, my daughter enjoyed going to school.

She was great with her on a daily basis. She even gave me pointers on how to redirect my daughter's attention and a lot of positive outcomes came from it. I couldn't thank her enough for what she does; we need more teachers like her.



JENNIFER ROLLS
Mother

CRISTINA GUTIERREZ

Teacher's Assistant

Miss Cristina has been my son's angel. Since the first day he met her, she won him over with the way she treated him, the attention she gave, and the love she showed. Cristina meant the world to my son. The day she was not there, he cried because he missed her so much. She's a great person. She would always inform me of everything that was going on with my son, from what was going on in the classroom to the way he was behaving. Only a few people enjoy, love, and dedicate their entire lives to their job, just like Cristina.

La señorita Cristina ha sido el angel de mi hijo. Ella era la asistente de la clase de mi hijo y desde el primer dia se lo gano con su atencion, amor, y la forma en como lo trataba. Para el, la señorita Cristina lo era todo, el dia que ella no estaba lloraba porque la extrañaba mucho.



Ella es una excelente persona. Siempre me mantenía informada de todo lo que pasaba en la clase y el comportamiento de mi hijo. Pocas personas disfrutan, aman, y se entregan a su trabajo como Cristina.

GISELA COLMENARES

Mother

PATRICIA HAY

Teacher

Ms. Hay is a dedicated and warm professional who takes the time daily to work with her class as individuals. Ms. Hay goes above and beyond to identify strengths and weaknesses with which to work on with her students. As an educator working with pre-K special



needs children, her patience and kindness are unrelenting. Ms. Hay demonstrates effective and regular communication with the parents of her students, providing insight into the progress of our child, which is much appreciated.

MARK LAMPHIER

Parent

CHRISTY JENSON

Teacher

Mrs. Jenson is my son's special education teacher. She has helped us get services that my son needs. Even though he has been denied several times over the years for different reasons, Mrs. Jenson is an amazing teacher and cares greatly for each child she teaches and deserves to be recognized for all her efforts against any odds. Thank you for all that you do, we appreciate you.

AMANDA TADDEI

Mother

ELISA KLINE

Family Specialist/Parent

I admire her as parent, I seen her many times maintain a busy life and take care of her son. Elisa, I wanted to thank you for helping me when I had mixed emotions with my daughter. I found it hard to stay positive in so many ways, but you reminded me to look at things in a positive outlook because there are always options. I cannot thank you enough for reminding me things will be better and when I need another parent to listen to me you were always there. You're such a great example of resiliency and strength.

JOANNA GONZALEZ

Family Specialist/Parent

NANCY KUHLES

Speech Pathologist

Nancy Kuhles served Washoe County students as a speech pathologist for over 30 years. Even though she has been retired for 5 years, she continues to be a champion for children with disabilities, demanding highly qualified personnel for children with disabilities. Her



tireless efforts include mentoring university students, encouraging inter-professional practice with all service providers, including parents, and establishing a statewide coalition committed to the recruitment and recruitment of related service personnel in Nevada, known as Nevada Speech Language Hearing Association (NSHA) Coalition to

Address Related Service Personnel Shortages.

Since 1990, Nevada has had a related service personnel shortage, including but not limited to special education teachers, speech language pathologists, and occupational therapists. These positions left unfilled, create gaps in our children's educational programs. Nancy knew the impact on our children's educational outcomes. She collaborated with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) and the state's school districts to address the challenge together, demonstrating an annual decrease in the number of unfulfilled positions throughout the state. By supporting those who work directly with our children, Nancy Kuhles is making a difference in our community.

KIMBERLY SMERKERS-BASS

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

COLIN KVASNICKA

Teacher

Mr. K has given my son one of the best years he has had since he started school. His 5th grade was full of positive classroom support and encouragement. No matter what my sons needs were, Mr. K was more than willing to implement new tools, encourage suggestions and ideas on how to further help my son. My son has had great teachers in the past, but this year he made a connection that made him feel important and I could see that his stress level was far less throughout the entire year than in the past. It is the end of the year and my son still WANTS to go to school and complains when I pick him up early for therapy appointments. He says Mr. K is the best teacher he has ever had and he loves to spend points he earns on having lunch with Mr. K.



TONYA LEDEZMA

Mother

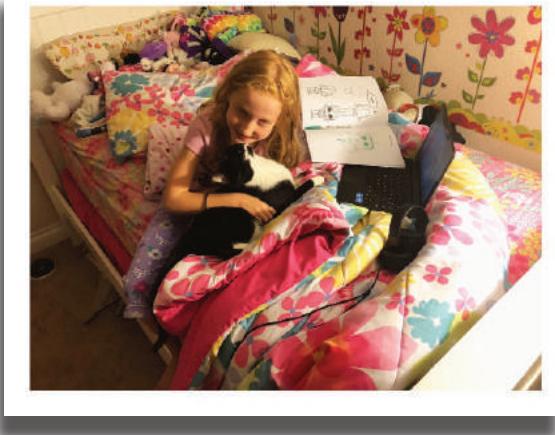
JULIE LEAVITT

Teacher

Mrs. Leavitt, we recognized that God listened to our prayers when we met you at American Heritage. Our 9th grade son with dyslexia was in your class and struggling. You listened to our cry for help and immediately knew what we were going through. With just a few minor adjustments, he was back on track, learning and maintaining the pace with the other students. Please accept our heartfelt appreciation for your support in making his learning possible. Thank you so much!

SONIA ARMFIELD

Mother



DIANE LOMBARDO

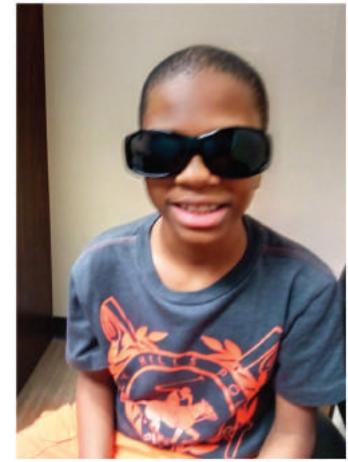
Nevada PEP Community Education Specialist

We volunteer at Nevada PEP every week and there is always so much to do. We are learning to do work that we've never done before. The volunteer coordinator is so good to us. She has made our lives good by giving us the chance to help out in so many ways. We are a mother and daughter team and requested to work on separate projects to gain some individual independence. PEP projects are provided to help meet this goal. We work on everything from assembling information packets, to helping prepare mail by folding and labeling training flyers. We appreciate the opportunity to interact with other volunteers as well as staff members from Nevada PEP. We would like to

thank Diane from the bottom of our hearts. We are so glad we met her. She is always there for us.

PHYLLIS AND CHRISTINA TAYLOR

Volunteers



WENDY

LOPEZ

Hippy Case Manager

Wendy has been there to help us and has gone above and beyond when it comes to helping my son. She encourages me, gives me advice, and information when I need it. She gives my son extra little goodies and books as incentives. She helps me problem solve with any and all issues I have. She gives advice that has worked for her or others. We thank her for everything she has done for us as a family. We appreciate the help Wendy has given my son in his quest for learning.

SONIA ZARYCZRY

Mother

WENDY LOPEZ

Hippy Case Manager

Wendy came into our lives due to some concerns I was having. Not only connecting with my daughter emotionally, but education wise as well. She has helped me in so many ways. She's been a listening ear when I most need it. She is just an all-around amazing person. Wendy, thank you for all that you do!

SAMANTHA AGUILAR

Mother

LINDSAY PARSONS

Teacher

Lindsay has always made sure that her students are getting everything they need. From supplies to what seems like just the simplest things; she always goes above and beyond. She is so wonderful with our three year old daughter. The difficulty that must come with teaching a class of 3 year olds is beyond my knowledge, but Lindsay truly has our respect and confidence. Thank you for all that you do!

STEVEN HOPKINS

Father

SHANNON PAYEUR

Dance Instructor

I have never seen a more patient dance instructor as Shannon Payeur. My daughter has been in her program since she was just 2 years old and Shannon has always been patient with her. She always manages to reel her back into the class and my daughter is always able to put on a great performance at the recital; knowing every move and dance step. Shannon, I just want to thank you for all the patience and time you have dedicated to my daughter. You're truly amazing!



JENNIFER ROLLS

Mother

WILLIAM PETERSON

Counselor

I would like to nominate William Peterson. Mr. Peterson is not only an amazing high school counselor but a wonderful and caring person. He was my daughter's biggest advocate at

Arbor View High School. He facilitated parent/teacher meetings, made certain that her 504 plan was followed. He provided emotional support and ensured that she received all of the resources that she needed to be successful. We really don't know what we would have done without him. The world is a better place because of him.

ROBYN BOWLES

Mother

JUSTINE REYES

*Take 2 Performers
Studio Owner*

Justine Reyes has been a long time champion of children, specifically children with disabilities. For the past 10 years, she and her acting studio: Take 2 studios and her talent agency have planned, sponsored, and facilitate an annual fundraiser to create awareness and funds for our community known as Idols and Icons. In 2017, the Idols and Icons event raised over \$10,000 for the Northern Nevada Down Syndrome Network. Justine provides opportunities for local talent to work towards a common goal, highlighting our diverse talent and raise awareness that high expectations and opportunities allow all individuals to demonstrate their gifts. Justine calls on volunteers, local businesses, and talent to work collaboratively for the annual event. She truly deserves the Nevada PEP Hand in Hand award. She has touched so many lives and continues to promote the need for inclusive opportunities for Northern Nevada to celebrate all of our children!



KIMBERLY SMERKERS-BASS

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

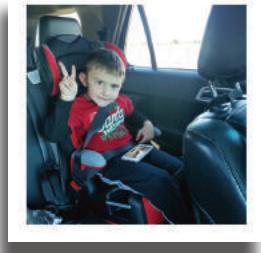
ANDREA RHODES

Teacher

Ms. Andrea was my daughter's teacher for 2 years in preschool. She always knew how to properly care and encourage my daughter, even when she had some difficult moments. She always amazed me in how she could redirect my daughter's attention back to her lesson plan within seconds. Thank you Ms. Andrea for the help and patience you had for my daughter. You're truly an amazing teacher!

JENNIFER ROLLS

Mother



DAN SAPP

Family Specialist

Dan Sapp is the best thing that has ever happened to my 6 year old son. Frustrated with a failing IEP in a regular ED 1st grade placement, Dan stepped in, heard my concerns, and helped us get my son's rights and needs met. We were able to get additional resource time, specialists, and an IEP revision that met his needs after months of being treated like a discipline problem at school. Dan is kind, caring, and patient. He attends meetings with us and continues to check in and make sure that my son's IEP is being followed. He has helped us obtain resources and is Godsend!

TRACIE ANN WHEATON

Mother



CHRIS STEFFENS

Mother

My mother has helped me raise my four and two year old daughters who both have a disability. She has always been there to support and guide me when I need her. She gives me advice and lets me live and learn on my own. She has taken care of me when I needed her, due to my own limitations. To know that I don't have to do it alone has taught me to be a better advocate for my girls.

My mother is the most special person in

both my daughters and my life. We all love you Chris Steffens!

SARA TOGNARELLI

Daughter



ROSLYN TIMMERMAN

Youth M.O.V.E Facilitator

Roslyn Timmerman is a very special person beyond words. As the Nevada PEP Youth Move Facilitator, she has created a special safe place so our youth and future community leaders are empowered to find their voice, share their voice, and speak their voice. Roslyn's facilitative style has provided the foundation needed for our local youth to advocate for systems change. Her ability to listen to their words without judgement or giving advice sets the tone of acceptance and respect. Our son, like many teens who are part of Youth MOVE, is actively working to change attitudes and the stigma regarding mental health. As he continues to attend the Youth MOVE monthly activities, he creates relationships with other local youths and gains more confidence in his ability to find his own voice. We are forever grateful for Roslyn Timmerman and all she has done for Youth MOVE Nevada.

KIMBERLY SMERKERS-BASS

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

MELISSA WELLS

Teacher

Our daughter attends Rainbow Dreams Academy. She is very intelligent but has a hard time focusing in school. Her teacher, Mrs. Wells, has been a huge support for our daughter. She gives us updates and checks up on her during school breaks. Last year, Mrs. Wells had our daughter's older sister in her classroom and had always been supportive of her as well. We were not sure how successful our daughter would be, but with Mrs. Wells's guidance, patience and understanding, she is doing very well in her class. We are so very grateful that our daughter has an understanding and flexible educator like Mrs.

Wells. Mrs. Wells is the epitome of what an outstanding educator does!

ALGIE AND STUART ELZY

Parents



RACHEL WILDE

Physical Therapist

My person that I would like to recognize is Rachel Wilde, she is my son's physical therapist. Rachel is one of the most caring, kind, and good hearted person you will ever meet. She understands our children's wants and needs. She is knowledgeable about all of the newest techniques to help our children live as comfortable as possible, yet trying to strengthen and teach our children. Rachel genuinely cares about my son and all of her other children and is always willing to help parents no matter how big or how small. She is a good role model for our children.

PAM PHILLIPS

Mom

INEZ WILLIAMS AND PETER GREEN

Aunt and Uncle/Caregivers

Inez and Peter provided us with a nice home. They do so much for both of us every single day. They have taught us so much and continue to. We help with the meals and hang the clothes out to dry. They're always making sure our clothes match before taking us out into the community. They give us rides to our doctor's appointments and make sure we take our medication on time. They treat us to concerts, movies, and buffets. They even brought us to volunteer at Nevada PEP. We want to thank them for all that they do. We appreciate them for always being there for us.

PHYLLIS AND CHRISTINA TAYLOR

Mother and Daughter

GREGG WYATT

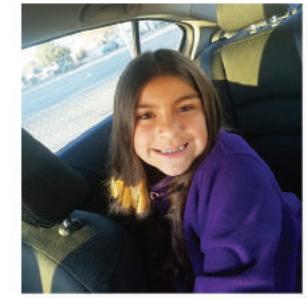
Smith's Grocery Store Manager

I would like to nominate Gregg Wyatt for Nevada PEP's "Hand in Hand Award". I was

introduced to Gregg by a Challenger Little League Task Force Member, Dottie Gordon. In the early 2000 season of Challenger Little League Dottie requested a donation of sodas for our banquet from Gregg, who at the time worked with Dottie at a local Vons grocery store. Gregg currently works for the Smiths Grocery Store chain as a Manager. Since my introduction to Mr. Wyatt he has graciously continued giving back to the community by donating water or soda to Challenger Little League. The day before the 2018 Run, Walk & Roll against Bullying, Nevada PEP was in need of oranges for the participants of the event. It was too short of notice to follow most stores protocol in regards to a requested donation. I made a phone call to Gregg; he donated the oranges to the Run Walk & Roll event. Gregg Wyatt deserves to be recognized with the Hand in Hand Award because of his willingness to help nonprofits in Southern Nevada. Thank you Gregg for your continued support.

TOM TAYCHER

Volunteer



ALETHEA ZAVITZ

Mother

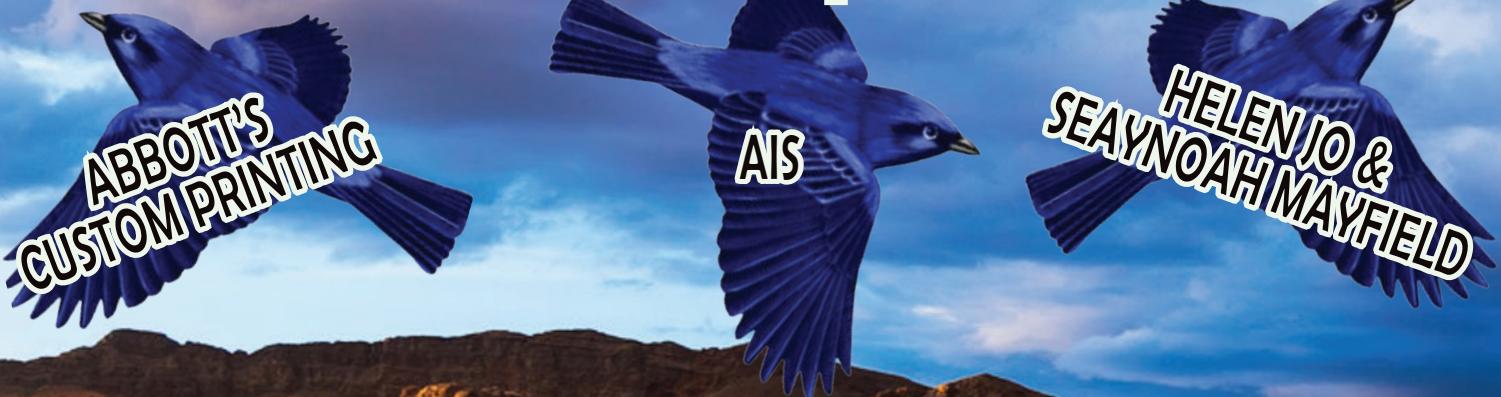
Alethea deserves to be honored for her many years of commitment and dedication to her son, who is undoubtedly her pride and joy. Also for his teammates, friends, players, buddies, families, and all of whom she has so brilliantly inspired. They all know her name, though some find it rather hard to pronounce, they all know her well at Challenger Little League. They look for her and when they find her they smile, knowing she is always willing to help. She's not in it for the glory, the trophies, or the fame, but simply does whatever needs to be done for the love of the children and the game. She gets up early and stays till late. From gathering bats, gloves, and helping size the helmets to grilling hot dogs and slicing water melon from opening day to end of season banquet. She is there for us all at Challenger Baseball. Her efforts and support continue to change lives and our hats are forever tipped in gratitude.

DIANE LOMBARDO

Mother

Hand in Hand Appreciation Program Sponsors

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



ANNUAL SPONSORSHIP

HAND IN HAND APPRECIATION PROGRAM

Show your support for the remarkable people across the state who make the lives of children with special needs better by becoming a sponsor of the Hand in Hand Appreciation Program. Help us to recognize, honor, and publicly applaud those who partner with parents and make a difference for these special children.

SILVER SPONSORSHIP \$100 UP TO \$1,000

- Recognized in the Yearbook
- Receive Yearbook
- Receive the PEP Post Newsletter
- Recognized on the Website
- Receive a Lapel Pin

GOLD SPONSORSHIP \$1,000 UP TO \$3,000

- Recognized in the Yearbook
- Receive Yearbook
- Receive the PEP Post Newsletter
- Recognized on the Website
- Receive a Lapel Pin
- Hand in Hand Sponsorship Plaque

PLATINUM SPONSORSHIP \$3,000 & UP

- Recognized in the Yearbook
- Receive Yearbook
- Receive the PEP Post Newsletter
- Recognized on the Website
- Receive a Lapel Pin
- Hand in Hand Sponsorship Plaque
- Honorable Mention in "Hand in Hand" Literature

Nevada recognizes children with special needs.
In honor of this annual recognition, Nevada PEP will produce
the "Hand in Hand" yearbook.
Honorees will also be highlighted in the bi-annual
PEP Post throughout the year.

