

# Inspire

## The Power of Inclusion

Our rebranding to AbilityPath, spearheaded and funded by Graybird Foundation, has culminated in a magnificent “Power of Inclusion” awareness campaign. Launched in November 2020, the campaign tells the stories of five remarkable individuals and some of the partner organizations that successfully employ adults served by AbilityPath.

Over the past several months, the “Power of Inclusion” campaign has featured employment placements at Electronic Arts, Nob Hill Foods, Bon Appétit, Mazzetti’s Bakery, and The Magnolia of Millbrae using spectacular portraits by Michael Collopy Photography and videos by Inner World Films. These compelling stories tell the power and value of inclusion for our entire community, especially those with developmental disabilities. For the past year, so many of those we support have worked throughout the pandemic, bagging your groceries, refilling your coffee, or keeping your workplace clean and orderly. We are grateful for their dedication, commitment, and hard work.



One of our most heartfelt features is about Mark, a corporate café services worker at Bon Appétit. Mark previously faced challenges in the job market. As he described it, “Before I found AbilityPath [and Bon Appétit], it was rough.”



That all changed when Mark started working with an AbilityPath job coach who could see that he thrived when helping others. According to Bon Appétit Chef Jon Hall, “Mark is great. As a team member, he helps his co-workers stay on task. AbilityPath brings the type of diversity and inclusiveness for people of all abilities that has been great for us on many levels. Our AbilityPath employees are really indispensable now.”

Mark explained, “When people with disabilities are given a chance, they exceed expectations.” He added “I feel grateful for having this job at Bon Appétit. They treat me like a normal human being. I feel like I don’t have a disability.”

And a great job isn’t the only thing Mark found through AbilityPath. He also met his wife Marcie. “It was love at first sight. In my wildest dreams, I never thought I’d meet someone as special as Marcie!” professed Mark.

You can watch Mark’s story and more “Power of Inclusion” videos at [abilitypath.org/powerofinclusion](http://abilitypath.org/powerofinclusion).



# CEO Corner

The pandemic has affected people's lives in so many ways. Yet throughout the past year our team has persevered and they have done so much to maintain critical services for the children and adults we serve. I am extremely proud of their dedication and commitment to our community. They have gone above and beyond to deliver high-quality programs by implementing new tools and converting almost everything to online learning, from teletherapy to life skills classes.

Our team has also been reflecting on the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion of everyone in our community - values that are at the core of our vision of a world where people of all abilities are fully accepted, respected, and included.

We formed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee made up of a dedicated group of staff. After much heartfelt reflection, thought, and consideration, we released a DEI Statement, which embodies our shared organizational values. You can learn more and watch a video of our team reading the statement at [abilitypath.org/DEI](http://abilitypath.org/DEI).

I am extremely grateful for our team's commitment to furthering and making the definition of our mission more inclusive. We owe a debt of gratitude to the DEI Committee and Sub-Committees for their work. Their dedication brought our DEI Statement to life. Our DEI Statement marks the start of a process that will be ongoing and evolving, as we continually seek opportunities to grow together as a community.

Be well,

Bryan Neider  
CEO



## Inspiring Inclusion

# Middlefield Campus Reopening in Palo Alto

AbilityPath is excited to announce that we have completed the major renovations at our Palo Alto Middlefield Road location, and we're putting on the finishing touches with furnishings and landscaping. Before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the location housed an inclusive preschool with two classrooms, adult day programs, and children's therapy services. Thanks to the extremely generous support of an anonymous donor, we were able to utilize the shelter-in-place time when programs have been offered virtually to complete the work without disrupting services.

We are thrilled with the outcomes and the beautiful program-specific spaces we were able to create. The main building is now a dedicated inclusive preschool, renamed Learning Links Palo Alto, where children with and without special needs learn and grow together. With four classrooms, we doubled the previous enrollment capacity. The site also features a large indoor play space, which can be utilized as a multipurpose room when school is not in session. The finishes and furniture were improved to make the building feel more welcoming. The outdoor playground was also modernized with a new play structure and yard. Learning Links Palo Alto re-opened and welcomed children back in early February, and they couldn't be happier!

The Children's Therapy Services space has three upgraded therapy rooms and a larger therapy space for group sessions. The second building is being converted into a dedicated area for adult services to include a teaching kitchen, various classrooms, and breakout spaces. There is a large courtyard shared by all three programs that is undergoing improvements and can be used for future community events.

We'll be hosting a virtual grand re-opening soon and hope you can join us!



**Better together. Better with you.**



### Partners of Inclusion

We are grateful to our partners who provided significant financial support during our 100th anniversary in 2020.

- AbilityPath Auxiliary
- Bailard and the Bailard Foundation
- Nasrallah and Ekbal Behbehani
- Janice Berthold, Heffernan Insurance Brokers
- Megan and Mike Bohnert
- Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy
- Philip Egan Living Trust
- Sharon and Joel Friedman
- Graybird Foundation
- Jill Grossman Family Charitable Fund
- Hearthill Family Foundation
- Hurlbut-Johnson Fund
- Laurie Jarrett
- Sara and James Jungroth
- Koret Foundation
- Linda and Richard Leao
- May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust
- Carole Middleton
- Katie and Bryan Neider
- The O'Donnell Foundation
- City of Palo Alto
- Peninsula Health Care District
- Mieko and Nick Poppin
- Rachel and Simon Segars
- Sequoia Healthcare District
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Estate of Freddie and Arthur Stromberg
- Sutter Health, Mills-Peninsula Medical Center
- Jennifer Wagstaff-Hinton and John Hinton
- Wells Fargo Foundation



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# POWER OF POSSIBILITIES

You won't want to miss this extraordinary evening full of inspirational stories celebrating the accomplishments of those we serve.

For the latest event updates, visit:

[abilitypath.org/POP](http://abilitypath.org/POP)

Stay Connected:



## BAY AREA GIVING DAY March 23, 2021

We invite you to join us in Inspiring Inclusion this Bay Area Giving Day! **Donations will be matched dollar-for-dollar, up to \$32,000, thanks to Linda and Richard Leao, Janice Uccelli, and the AbilityPath Auxiliary.** Double your impact and help create a world where people of all abilities are accepted, respected, and included.

**Learn more or donate at: [abilitypath.org/inclusion](http://abilitypath.org/inclusion)**

*If you prefer to donate by check, please use the enclosed envelope. Thank you for your support!*