

LEADING the WAY

WINTER 2022



easterseals
Pyott Center

**The Pyott Family's
Generous Gift
Opens the Doors
of ESSC's Newest
Center**

Holiday Wish List

- ✓ EQUITY
- ✓ INCLUSION
- ✓ ACCESS



A Special Holiday Message from our Chief Advancement Officer

Nancy Weintraub

I really love this time of year. The weather is changing, families are planning get togethers, and we often take the time to reflect on milestone achievements made throughout the year. I appreciate having the chance to reflect both personally and professionally. Personally, I watched my only son graduate from college and start his professional career. Professionally, I witnessed the immense generosity of our donor community help Easterseals achieve so many goals in support of our participants and their families.

With your unwavering support, Easterseals achieved its own important milestones this past year:

- Opened the state-of-the-art Pyott Center that will provide adult day services to close to 200 individuals in Orange County
- Started offering autism diagnostic services to under-represented communities to reduce waiting list times
- Began renovating a new building in North San Diego County to provide expanded and enhanced early childhood education services

In this era of a New Now post-Covid, our associates continue to innovate everyday—making profound positive differences in the lives of our participants. In the months and year ahead, we are looking forward to increasing the quality and quantity of digital content we can create, begin the build-out of a West Coast Severe Behavior Services Center of Excellence, enhance our ability to help our participants access self-determination programs and services and expand the capacity of our child development services.

Your support remains pivotal in helping us achieve our annual milestones. I welcome your partnership once again this holiday season, the resulting smiles on the faces of the individuals we serve remains immeasurable.

I want to wish you and your families all the best in health and happiness for the new year ahead.

With continued appreciation,

Nancy

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 Your Year-End Holiday Gift Empowers Us All
- 4 Century 21 Award Celebrates International Day of Giving At Easterseals Southern California
- 5 The Pyott Family's Generous Gift Opens the Doors of ESSC's Newest Center
- 6/7 Working Toward 100% Equity, Inclusion and Access in Our Communities
- 8 Student Follows in Her Teacher's Footsteps
- 9 What's It Like Raising A Child on the Autism Spectrum? For Claire Khodara, it's Unexpectedly Beautiful!
- 10 In Honor of National Veterans and Military Families Month
- 11 Making Your List, Checking it Twice for ESSC

ESSC Named Nonprofit of the Year!



Congratulations to us—Easterseals Southern California—for being named the 2022 Non-Profit of the Year through the Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce. This prestigious recognition is awarded to organizations and individuals that have demonstrated the principles of community service, volunteerism and best traditions of good corporate citizenship.

EMPOWERMENT

— Your Year-End Gift Empowered —

During the holiday season, we are always humbled by those in our community who value the importance of giving and creating meaningful impact in the lives of others. Your gift to Easterseals Southern California supports one of the largest disability service providers in California, providing thousands of people in our shared community with essential programs and services. As we grow to serve more, your local dollars mean more than ever!



You are helping the world truly become a better place as we **lead the way to FULL equity, inclusion and access** for people with disabilities, their families and our communities. **Creating a world** where we are all **100% EMPOWERED AND 100% INCLUDED!**

Spread holiday cheer through the New Year

Begin a sustained gift and join the special allies that have pledged to help our communities thrive. Let us count the ways you can bridge the gap between intention and action, supporting initiatives that enrich education, advance health and expand employment—elevating our communities!

Becoming a Thrive Ally starts at just \$7/month. Mark the “monthly” box on the included remit or make your secure gift online at socal.easterseals.com/donate on the remit envelope or the online form.



Mark your gift as monthly and spread holiday joy throughout the New Year! Your sustained gift enables us to plan ahead and make long-term strategic advancements that help our participants and their families thrive!



Century 21 Award Celebrates International Day of Giving At Easterseals Southern California

For over a decade, Century 21 offices in Southern California have been generously supporting ESSC's programs and services through several fundraising initiatives, whether it be their Closing for Kids program or participating in our Strides for Disability community event.

This year, the team from CENTURY 21 Award Real Estate, joined the worldwide celebration of Century 21's first annual **International Day of Giving** on July 28th, a live-feed event from our Autism Therapy Services office in Irvine! During their program segment, gifts were presented for Easterseals Camp and Children's Services. Representatives DJ Doss and CEO David Romero generously presented a check for \$1,000 to our Autism Therapy Services Research Division Assistant, Hans the Robot, in support of ESSC programs and services.



THANK YOU CENTURY 21 for raising more than \$132 million for Easterseals nationwide since 1979. Your support has helped people with disabilities in communities nationwide!

Easterseals Southern California is truly grateful for the support of all our corporate partners.

To learn more about you can be a partner in our purpose, contact Courtney Mistofsky, Manager of Corporate Partnerships at Courtney.Mistofsky@essc.org

The Pyott Family's Generous Gift Opens the Doors of ESSC's Newest Center



L-R: **Matthew Ingraham**, son of Molly Pyott; **David Pyott** and ESSC board member **Molly Pyott**, chairs of the David and Molly Pyott Foundation; **Kathleen Kolenda**, VP of Adult Day Services, ESSC; and **Mark Whitley**, president and CEO, ESSC.

The ESSC community celebrated the opening of the new Pyott Center in Santa Ana in June. The newly renovated center is located on the former site of the non-profit's corporate headquarters and was funded by a generous \$1.75 million gift from the David and Molly Pyott Foundation. Molly Pyott, an ESSC Board Member, and her husband, philanthropist and former CEO of Allergan, Inc. David Pyott, are long-time supporters of ESSC.

This state-of-the-art center will serve up to 200 individuals through on-site and community-based programs. The Pyott Center will provide their participants with the opportunity to become active members of the community by learning work-related skills and engaging in regularly scheduled volunteer work,

community service projects and other activities.

Nancy Weintraub, ESSC Chief Advancement Officer, said in appreciation, "Molly and David's extraordinary generosity of both time and financial support are unprecedented in the history of Easterseals Southern California and will make an enormous difference to the adults with developmental disabilities who will be served at this new site. We are incredibly thankful to them for helping us to expand our ability to serve more people at a new location in Orange County and Molly's continuing guidance as a member of our board."

"The original Santa Ana corporate office location holds a special place in the hearts of the staff and

board members of Easterseals Southern California," said Molly Pyott, "Transforming the property into a state-of-the-art, adult day services center has elicited tremendous feelings of pride for us all. The expansion of important, life-changing services will create profoundly positive differences for people with disabilities in our community."

ESSC Adult Day Services offer supports so individuals with developmental, physical, cognitive or multiple disabilities can live independently, gain social and daily living skills, becoming active members of their neighborhoods.



◀ Kung Fu Panda Party

Partnering with Dreamworks Animation, Easterseals hosted a screening of the new Netflix special “Kung Fu Panda: The Dragon Knight” at the Irvine Autism Therapy & Disability Services Center. ESSC’s Autism therapy robots, Hans and Franz, were on site to interact with guests, while families enjoyed lawn games, crafts and a raffle all before the show began. Even the Kung Fu Panda himself, “Po,” made an appearance to delight the crowd! When the sun went down, everyone enjoyed snack boxes donated by Edwards Lifesciences and the first three episodes of the new show. Besides enjoying a fun-filled summer evening, guests also raised over \$7,000 for Easterseals autism services. **Thank you to everyone that attended!**

▶ Easterseals Night at Angel Stadium

was held Saturday, August 13th ESSC clients, employees, supporters and corporate partners from CVS Health and Tegeria enjoyed an evening at the ballpark thanks to a generous donation of 500 tickets from the Los Angeles Angels. The evening featured the Easterseals PSA before and during the game, outfield digital signage, and a midgame interview with Chief Advancement Officer, Nancy Weintraub. ESSC also hosted a table on the front plaza with giveaways and information on services and programs. The night ended with an exciting win for the Angels, and a great celebration of Easterseals!



◀ #ProudToBeMe

To celebrate this year’s Disability Pride Month, alongside the 31st anniversary of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we created a campaign launched the first week of July called #ProudToBeMe. The campaign encourages people with disabilities, along with their families, allies, advocates, community members and our Easterseals associates, to share why they are proud to be a member of the disability community. Our goal is to create further discussion about visibility, representation and education. Although July has passed, #ProudToBeMe is here to stay!

Share your photo and story with us at development@essc.org!

Inclusion and Access in our Communities



◀ **ESSC Lending Library** launched this summer, addressing the need for people with disabilities to have access to technology, a deficiency brought to light during the Covid-19 pandemic. The new program lends laptops, iPads, JayPads, including traditional adaptive and assistive technologies, along with training to those in Los Angeles County, bridging the digital divide our communities.

▼ **Easterseals Camp is Back!**

A week-long fully accessible camp experience was held again at Camp Oakes in the San Bernardino Mountains where campers enjoyed outdoor activities like canoeing, held talent shows, created crafts and so much more!



ESSC Partners with MATTEL

Mattel, Inc. just announced the introduction of Bruno, the first autistic character in the iconic Thomas & Friends franchise. Mattel Television developed Bruno in collaboration with Easterseals Southern California and the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, as well as writers and spokespeople with autism. Voiced by Chuck Smith, an autistic actor, this new series regular made his debut on the Season 26 premiere of Thomas & Friends: All Engines Go on September 12th on Cartoonito on Cartoon Network.

“Our commitment and contributions alongside Mattel have ensured that an honest version of Bruno is what kids and families across the world will experience,” said Dr. Paula Pompa Craven, Chief Clinical Officer at Easterseals Southern California. “Audiences will be able to see the real-life experiences of an autistic child through Bruno, including opportunities to learn and grow alongside him as he demonstrates his ability to give and receive support from his friends.”

Former Student Follows in Her Teacher's Footsteps

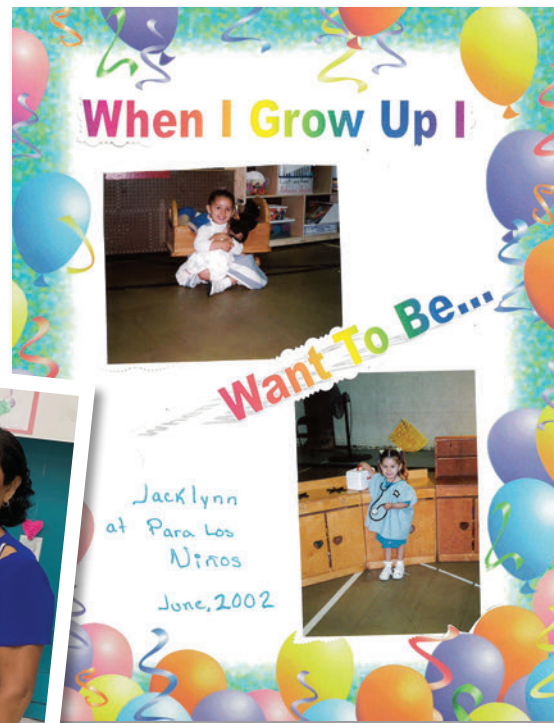
It's not every student who follows in their preschool teacher's footsteps, but that was the case for Child Development Services (CDS) Family Support Assistant Jacklynn Pacheco-Anaya .

When she was three-years-old, Jacklynn attended Para Los Niños, where Elena Flores was her preschool teacher.

"I don't have a clear recollection of her at that time, all the adults looked the same to me," explains Jacklynn, "but my parents said I was very shy and Elena soon got me dancing with the other kids."

Jacklynn and her family kept in contact with Elena over the years. When Elena joined the child development services staff at Easterseals Valley View Infant Center 10 years ago, Elena continued to visit.

Jacklynn says, "We had foster children with our family, and I would visit the school when we would drop them off. I enjoyed seeing Elena and all the teachers interact with the kids, and how all the staff were excited when the kids showed up for school. It brought back memories of how that made me feel comfortable when I went to preschool and made school a place I wanted to be every day."



When it came time to find a job, Jacklynn reached out to Elena for opportunities at Easterseals.

"I saw the impact adults could have on kids in the community and wanted to have a chance to have that same impact."

As a Family Support Assistant, Jacklynn now is one of the first adults the kids see at school. "In addition to seeing Elena every day, I get to greet the kids and make school a happy place where they feel welcome."



BRIGHT BEGINNINGS

The campaign that gives all children and families a positive start

We are excited to announce the acquisition and ongoing renovation of the newest addition to the Easterseals Southern California family, a new Child Development Center serving the communities of North San Diego County.

This new, state-of-the-art facility will provide a quality and affordable pre-school education to under-served children, ages birth to 5 years.

Please join us by generously supporting Bright Beginnings and make a difference today—and for future generations!

For a tour or further information, contact (714) 834-1111 ext. 5027

What's it Like Raising a Child on the Autism Spectrum? For Claire Khodara, it's

unexpectedly beautiful.

Excerpts from Clair Khodara's essay originally posted on Babe Hatch

Life is a path of self-discovery—at least that's what mine has been so far. Having children opened my eyes and heart to a world I didn't know existed, a world of endless opportunities for self-growth. Motherhood isn't easy, but it's worth it.

Six months into being pregnant with my second child, I was told by a pediatrician that my firstborn, who was then 2 years old, had autism and my second would likely as well. My whole world froze and my heart sank deeper than I ever knew it could. The isolation and depression was like nothing I had ever felt. I didn't know anyone who had autism, much less a parent who had advocated for their autistic child.



PHOTO BY MARILOU DAUBE

In addition to Winston, I am mother to Constantin (2) and Olympia (1), I am a singer and use song to communicate throughout the day and to wind down during bedtime. My children are all exposed to different genres: pop, jazz, classical, lullabies, hymns, chants and more. I have seen incredible transformation in Winston through the music therapy we do at home and outside of the home with other musicians. Music stimulates him like nothing else.

Lullabies bring me back to a place of safety, protection, and love, where I can go each night with my children. That's why I created a lullaby album titled *Modern Lullaby* for parents and children to enjoy music together. The album includes covers from my favorite musicians, and an original track entitled "There You Are," which I wrote for Winston at birth. Winston also has a singing debut on the album, and his voice takes my breath away.



Follow Claire Khodara on Spotify. Her most recent album, *Modern Lullaby*, was released June 3, 2022, with proceeds benefiting ESSC.

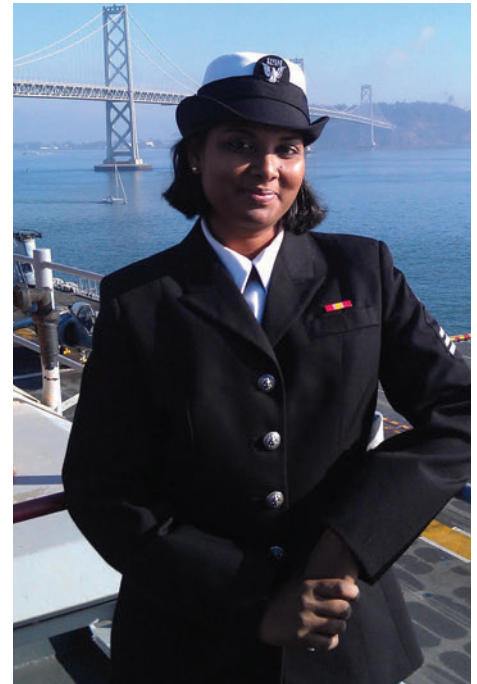
November is National Veterans and Military Families Month

This month we honor our Veterans. Individuals like Sanjeeta.....

Sanjeeta Thomas, an Operational Specialist in the U.S. Navy and single-mother, had to leave active-duty service in early 2020 amid the pandemic. As the primary provider for her household of five, she needed assistance in finding employment to support her family. The Easterseals Bob Hope Veterans Support Program (BHVSP) team helped her create a solid resume, provided referrals to additional community resources, and opportunity! Sanjeeta is now working as a Community Engagement Support Manager with the Us4Warriors Foundation, supporting other Veterans. She also is completing the Registered Dental Assistant Program at PIMA Medical Institute and is expected to graduate later this year.

"It was a difficult and challenging time for me, dealing with my involuntary medical separation from the Navy and then facing unemployment as a single mother and primary provider for my family during a pandemic was terrifying," she said.

"With the assistance and support from the Easterseals Bob Hope Veterans Support Program (BHVSP) my family made it through the first year of the pandemic and we are now in a good place."



Established with a generous seed grant from **The Bob & Dolores Hope Foundation's Bob Hope Legacy division, Easterseals Bob Hope Veterans Support Program** has been providing one-on-one employment and support resources to our US Veterans since 2014. To date, the program has helped support over 1,200 veterans and their families transition into civilian life feeling healthy and productive.



Leading the Way: **Debbie Ball**

Vice President, Employment Services, ESSC

Debbie is a nationally recognized subject matter expert and thought leader with organizations including the U.S. Dept. of Labor Office on Disability Employment Policy and sits on the board for San Diego-Imperial Counties Developmental Services Foundation. Her work in customized employment matches individuals' unique skillsets, talents and interests with employment positions of businesses, creating a win-win situation. A former officer of both Cal APSE and National APSE, she is passionate about helping our community businesses learn more about how individuals find meaningful employment.

Making your List

Checking it Twice for ESSC

Let Us Count the Ways You Can Create Impact with Your Holiday Giving Spirit

With Thanksgiving just around the corner, the giving season is again upon us, and there are so many ways to include Easterseals Southern California in your philanthropy. Ring in the season and reap the benefits of year-end giving *while changing the way the world defines and views disability*.

- 1 MAKE A ONE-TIME GIFT.** You are always able to make a gift using the remit envelope attached, or visiting socal.easterseals.com/donate
- 2 BECOME A THRIVE ALLY!** Mark the “monthly” box when making your gift and sustain the impact you create in the lives of many.
- 3 DO YOU USE A DAF (DONOR ADVISED FUND) FOR YOUR PHILANTHROPY?** Making a gift to ESSC through your DAF is easy and convenient, while making an impact in the lives of our participants. Speak with your DAF representative or financial advisor to direct your DAF distribution with your name and address to ESSC here:

Easterseals Southern California

ATTN: Advancement , 1063 McGaw Ave, Suite 100, Irvine, CA 92614

TAX ID: #94-3068149

* Be sure to ask your DAF to include your name and address so you may receive an acknowledgment letter as soon as the distribution is received.

- 4 EMPLOYER GIFT-MATCHING** – Maximize your giving efforts by utilizing your employer’s gift-matching programs. Companies that offer gift-matching can double your giving impact. Make sure to check with your employer whether an Employee Giving Program is offered.
- 5 CHARITABLE BEQUEST** – The uncertainty around income tax reform includes estate taxes. Be pro-active, review your estate plans this holiday season and consider including a gift to ESSC.
- 6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF APPRECIATED STOCK.** To make your charitable gifts in the most efficient way possible, a donation of appreciated stock is a smart move. Donors receive a charitable income tax deduction and avoid capital gains tax. Please visit <https://donatestock.com/easter-seals-southern-california-inc>
- 7 SHOP AMAZONSMILE** – Through Amazon Smile, you can create meaningful impact during the holiday season that lasts through the new year!! Go to <https://smile.amazon.com> or turn on and select Easterseals Southern California in Amazon Smile found under the Setting tab of the app! All future donations will be automatic!

HOLIDAY SPECIAL

ESSC is so grateful to partner with The Peninsula Beverly Hills to support individuals with disabilities in our Southern California community. This holiday season indulge in a visit for Afternoon Tea at the Peninsula! A portion of the proceeds throughout the month of December will go directly to fund our programs and services for children with autism, supporting The Peninsula Hotels’ ethos of helping those within our community in need and preparing our youth for the future. For reservations please call (310) 975-2736.





1063 McGaw Avenue, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92614
(714) 834-1111 ext. 7950
www.easterseals.com/southernca

GIVING TUESDAY

A Generous \$10,000 Match for All
#GIVINGTUESDAY
Donations



Save the Date
NOVEMBER 29, 2022

