



# Annual Report

## 2021

Individualized. Interactive. Inspired.

## **PALS Board of Directors:**

Allison Arai, Treasurer  
Tina Chiao  
Katy Harandi, Board Chair  
Tammy Kalla  
Sahar Kanani  
Cindy Maltman, Board Secretary  
Robert Standerwick, Q.C.  
John Stewart

## **PALS Administrator:**

### **Head of School/Senior Development Director**

Andrea Kasunic

## **PALS Finance Committee:**

Allison Arai  
Hesha Phillips  
Vincent Tong

## **Parent Support Group Executive Members:**

Nasim Khan, Chair  
Madhu Kanwar, Treasurer  
Ahsan Alam, Secretary

## **PALS School Advisory Council:**

Sharon Baxter  
Dr. Vikram Dua  
Diane Gerrard  
Anna Matchneva  
Shannon Muir



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

KATY HARANDI

At the entrance of the UN building in Manhattan, there is a poem written by Persian Poet Saadi.

*"Human Beings are members of a whole,  
in creation in one essence and soul,  
If one member is afflicted with pain,  
other members uneasy will remain.  
If you've no sympathy for human pain,  
The name of a human you cannot retain."*

The pandemic taught all of us the true meaning of humanity. We need to all work together for the greater good. We also need to adapt to change and be ready to innovate by accepting the challenges of our times. The resilience of all of us at PALS was put to a test last year. I can confirm that staff and families worked together to ensure another successful year for all.

We are grateful for the dedication of the staff at PALS, for all their hard work in ensuring our students remain safe and their ongoing commitment to educate and support the students through all the challenges of the pandemic. We appreciate all the volunteers who dedicate timeless hours to help grow our society in operations and in all areas of fundraising. A million thanks to Gala Sponsors, Foundations, Corporations and Private Donors who have shared our belief and supported us in changing the lives of our students and their families. We continue to look to the future to support as many individuals on the spectrum as possible.

Living with autism is extremely challenging for the individuals struggling with the condition and for families trying to provide the best possible life they can for their children. We are doing our part, thank you for doing yours.



President and Chair

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PALS AUTISM SOCIETY

## A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL ANDREA KASUNIC

I am proud to share that PALS students and staff were able to safely attend full-time, on-site programming, from the first day of the 2020-2021 school year to the last. If someone was required to self-isolate, we were able to quickly organize and offer “PALS at Home”, a remote participation option, so there was no lapse in learning or pause in work when appropriate. I commend the families and staff for protecting each other by diligently following the ever-evolving health and safety guidelines. And I give many thanks to the AMS of FISA-BC for hosting a much appreciated weekly support group for independent school administrators, giving smaller independent schools an avenue to learn from each other on how to continue leading and educating during the ongoing pandemic.

Although we still weren't able to welcome visitors and volunteers into the building last year, we discovered new ways of sharing the program with others, such as virtual student performances ([watch here](#)), an in-depth virtual school tour ([watch here](#)), virtual school consultations with psychiatrist Dr. Vikram Dua, and also meeting outside on the front lawn with many understanding supporters!

During winter enrolment, we were able to welcome two new, young students who brought a bright energy into the classroom as they quickly settled into PALS student life. With easing restrictions in the spring, and the comfort brought on by vaccinations, we were able to re-introduce Occupational Therapy consultation again and accept a full-day volunteer work experience for some transition-age students at Farmers on 57<sup>th</sup> as well as another volunteer job with the New Westminster Farmers Market. In the summer, we were able to go on several field trips to favourite places such as the movie theatre, Granville Island, Watermania, Stanley Park, and of course, Playland! We celebrated the graduation of four long-term students who all grew up together at PALS. At the ceremony, staff shared heartfelt messages of how much we've learned from them just as much as they have from us ([watch here](#)). Despite seeing only half of their teachers faces all year, students still made excellent progress towards their individualized education goals in the areas of communication, academics, social skills, life skills, and self-regulation.

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PALS AUTISM SOCIETY

## A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL (CONTINUED)

Unfortunately, we said goodbye to several students who experienced increased challenges correlated to the ongoing pandemic and some extreme features of autism. Having limited degrees of cognitive capacity and executive functioning skills needed to cope with long-lasting changes to routines meant these particular students displayed more dangerous behaviours than expected, such as severe self-harm and severe aggression, at levels beyond what could be safely maintained in a school setting. This is an important reminder of why it's so vital that students with autism have access to the life-changing education at PALS. Even when the outcome is not graduation, our students and their families are fully supported until all teaching strategies have been tried.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all of our donors, supporters, families, staff, therapists, volunteers, and board members for helping to see PALS through yet another unique year.



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PALS AUTISM SOCIETY

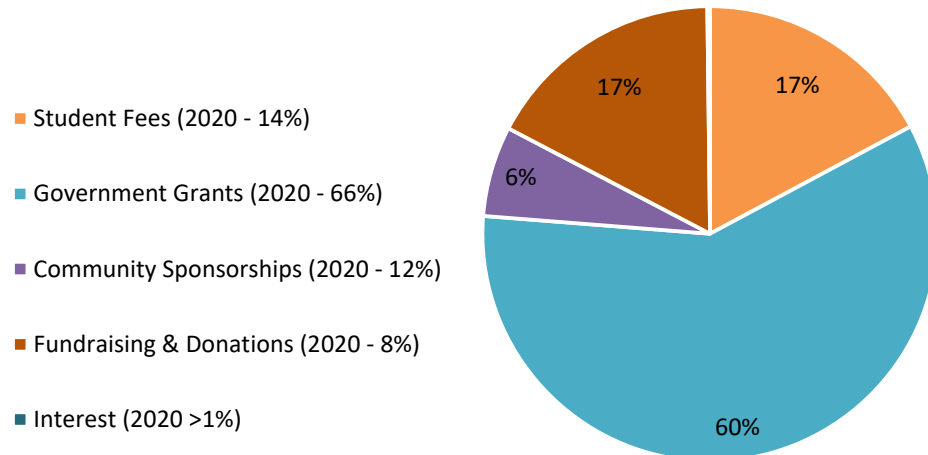
## A MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

### ALLISON ARAI

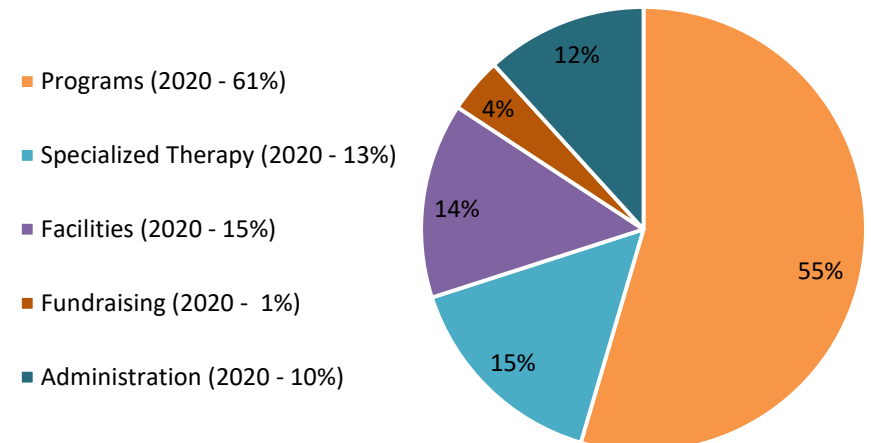
Gratitude is the word to describe the Society's year. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the adult program was able to move into its new home and transition to PALS Adult Services Society effective September 1, 2020. The School program continued to operate full onsite instruction to the students throughout the year under the thoughtful guidance of our Head of School and our dedicated, highly skilled team of staff. During the year, our Head of School took on the role of Senior Development Director to expand opportunities for Community Support and Donor Fundraising. The Society is so grateful to all the supporters whose generosity enables the continued operation of the School and Before/After School Care Program.

The financial results for the year ended June 30, 2021 reflect the adult program operations for 2 months and the full year of operations for the School Programs as follows:

#### SOURCES OF REVENUE



#### WHERE WE SPEND



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PALS AUTISM SOCIETY

## A MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER (CONTINUED)

To highlight, as a total of Society revenues, there was a 3% increase in Student Fees received and a 6% decrease in Government Funding. The School Programs have higher student fees and receive less government funding than the adult program despite continuing to receive the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. Community Sponsorships decreased to 6% from 12% which reflects the loss of third party fundraising events due to the pandemic. Fundraising and Donations increased 9% to 17% due to the success of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Virtual Gala fundraiser held in April 2021.

In terms of total Society expenditures, Program Expenditures decreased 6% to 55% of total expenditures as Specialized Therapy (Speech, Occupational and Behavioural) increased slightly by 2% to 15% to address the individualized needs of each student. Facility expenditures decreased to 14% and this year a new category, Fundraising, was created. Fundraising expenditures increased slightly with the creation of PALS first virtual gala program successfully chaired by the Senior Development Director. The one hour exciting virtual gala program was watched by over 260 supporters who generously bid and donated. Lastly, Administration expenses increased 2% to 12% reflecting the support required to oversee the safe operation of the School Programs during the pandemic.



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PALS AUTISM SOCIETY

## A MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS FROM SENIOR DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ANDREA KASUNIC

This year has been a testament to the commitment of the PALS community. Determined to overcome the continued challenges brought on by the pandemic, we worked together to ensure all our students had access to our exceptional education programs. Over the year, we safely resumed our programs, recommitted to finding new community-based experiences, rekindled relationships with supporters, and built amazing connections with new ones. We were grateful to have you with us as we celebrated student achievements via the virtual graduation ceremony and the virtual holiday variety show, as well during the oh-so entertaining virtual Armchair Gala. You have always been right alongside us — providing your unending support and dedication to our mission and our students.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Foundations, Organizations and Private Donors listed below who have contributed \$5,000 or more to the Society for the period from November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021.

Thanks to the generosity of the **Mary and Gordon Christopher Foundation** (speech and language therapy and social communication skills training) and **Ames Family Foundation** (occupational therapy), our students continue to benefit from critical developmental therapies. These foundations have supported PALS therapeutic programs for many years, and we could not offer these programs without their support and belief in our mission.

Families often struggle with the financial burden of raising a child with autism. PALS School fees can become prohibitive for students from single income homes or lower income families. Again this year the pandemic increased the financial stress felt by our families as one or more parents suffered job loss, job reduction or the inability to work due to the need to self-isolate or care for a child at home who was required to self-isolate. PALS would like to extend our sincerest appreciation to the **CCSF Autism Foundation** for providing significant donations to the PALS School Tuition Bursary Fund.





# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

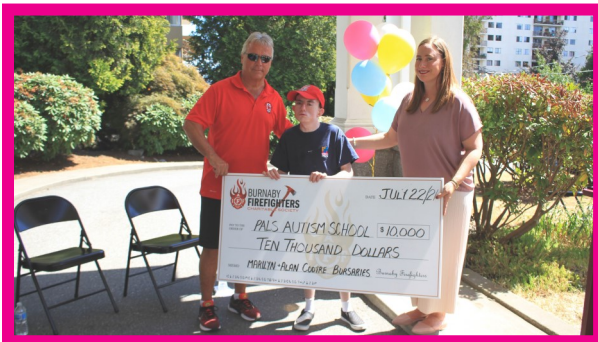
PALS AUTISM SOCIETY

## A MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS (CONTINUED)

PALS is committed to making every reasonable effort to enable students to remain in school while working through regressive, self-injurious or other challenging behaviours. Thanks to **Grosvenor Americas**, which has endowed PALS Behaviour Support Bursary Fund for a 3 year commitment, families are eligible to receive financial assistance to pay the cost of additional one-to-one support for children experiencing temporary periods of challenging behaviours.

The PALS Before and After School Care Program is a critical lifeline for our families who require out of school care to continue their child's enrollment in the school program. PALS Autism Society would like to extend our sincerest appreciation to **The Wolrige Foundation** for making this program affordable and accessible to all our students.

PALS Autism Society would like to recognize and thank our newest benefactor, **Save a Child International Foundation** for their very generous donation to the speech and language therapy program. It was a joy to welcome them onsite this fall for a tour and cheque presentation –our first visitors inside the school since the start of the pandemic.



In addition to the foundations listed above, PALS Autism Society would like to recognize and thank the **Burnaby Firefighters Charitable Society In Memory of Alan and Marilyn Codyre**, for their annual pledge, which is part of a 20-year commitment for PALS School Tuition Bursary and the Post-Secondary Scholarship Fund. These scholarships are designated for PALS School Students who would benefit from an additional year of schooling and life skills training upon completion of their Grade 12 year.

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PALS AUTISM SOCIETY

## A MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS (CONTINUED)

PALS Autism Society also wishes to express our gratefulness to **Townline** for so generously helping us make necessary safety repairs to our weathered school building so we can safely continue teaching students with autism in a warm, welcoming, and specialized teaching facility. The heritage home which houses PALS is very significant to us as it provides the foundation for our essential work.

PALS Autism Society's 14<sup>th</sup> Annual *Imagine...* Gala was turned digital for another year, and the armchair event was a resounding success thanks to the help of our sponsors and supporters. We had over 260 households tune in to view the 1-hour live show with hosts Fred Lee and Global BC's Sophie Lui ([watch it here](#)), and guests were star-struck upon hearing a message of support from Vancouver's own Seth Rogen ([watch here](#)). With a prosperous online 50/50 raffle, extravagant silent auction, and generous Fund-A-Therapy pledges, we successfully met our fundraising goal.

**PALS** AUTISM SOCIETY  
PALS ARMCHAIR GALA 2021  
Total Raised: \$146,965

Sponsors:

Comments:

- Kenneth Leung: Charcuterie box is gross! :/
- Kenneth Leung: Love the background music.
- Carolyn Taylor: I agree with Kenneth!
- Jayne Allen: yes, Charcuterie is fabulous!
- Karin Terado: Thanks for your support everyone-enjoy the Gala!
- Spritz PALS & PASS: Shout out to PASS Head of Program, Karin!
- Kenneth Leung: WOOOOHOOOOO Karin!
- cindy laresser: Leo's Gramma has tuned in from Kelowna!
- Spritz PALS & PASS: Hi Denise! Thank you Air Canada Foundation!!!
- Kenneth Leung: Hello Leo's Gramma
- Spritz PALS & PASS: Hi Leo's Gramma!!!
- Spritz PALS & PASS: We love Port Moody!
- Sandy Tanaka: Hi Everyone
- Spritz PALS & PASS: Welcome Sandy!
- Dianne Leach: Hello everyone, Dianne and Derek
- Stew Maltman: Hello from my back deck in new west!
- Amir Alagheband: Hello hello, tuning in from Vancouver
- Linda Gibbs: Hello Vanessa. Hope you are sipping a glass of something. :)

BID FUND A THERAPY BUY 50/50

Need Some Help? Send a message

Bid Lorne Folick \$400 Donation Lynn O'Leary \$100 Bid John McCulloch \$275 Bid John McCulloch \$275 Bid John McCulloch \$275 Bid Aziz Poudrad \$220 Donation Sharon Grams \$100 Bid Dan Scarrow \$250 Bid Susie Wong \$130

PALS  
Armchair Gala

**THANK YOU!**  
We could not have raised  
**\$360,000**  
without you all.

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PALS AUTISM SOCIETY

## A MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS (CONTINUED)

<b>Platinum Sponsor</b>	Wesco Industries Ltd.
<b>Gold Sponsor</b>	Arte House & Visas Consulting Group Grosvenor Pure Integrative Pharmacy Reliance Insurance Agencies Ltd.
<b>Bronze Sponsor</b>	Alexander Holburn LLP Buntain Insurance Group David Davies, Vice President at CIBC Private Wealth Management McMillan LLP Pourdad Capital Partners Scotiabank Value on Liquor Store
<b>Supporting Sponsors</b>	980 CKNW and Global BC Karim Kamrani, Real Estate Advisor The Sutton Place Hotel

**2021 Sponsors**

Thank you to all our sponsors for their generous support of PALS Armchair Gala.

**PLATINUM**

**wesco**  
INDUSTRIES LTD.

**GOLD**

ARTE HOUSE & 匯加北美  
Your Consulting Group

GROSVENOR Pure PHARMACY reliance

**BRONZE**

ALEXANDER HOLBURN B BOUNTAIN PRIVATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT  
David Davies, Vice President

mcmillan pourdad capital

Scotiabank VALUE ON LIQUOR STORE

**MEDIA**

980 CKNW Global BC

**AUCTIONEER SPONSOR** **EVENT LOCATION**

Karim Kamrani Real Estate Advisor 604-785-6461 rennie The Sutton Place Hotel

As I round out my first year as Senior Development Director, I want to extend my thanks to you — our families, staff, and supporters. Together, we continue to provide the highest quality education to our students and comprehensive care to PALS families and the greater community. Please enjoy this video highlighting what PALS means for the families of the students who attend, and why it is such an important organization ([watch here](#)).



# DONOR RECOGNITION

Individualized.  
Interactive.  
Inspired.

*As of October 31st, 2021*

We wish to thank everyone who has generously contributed to the creation and fostering of the PALS Autism Society. Since opening in 2007, these donors have helped provide specialized education, adaptive programming, therapeutic training, and innovative technology for all PALS student and families.

*This wall honors those whose cumulative contributions have exceeded \$5,000. We would like to thank all our donors including those who wish to remain Anonymous.*



## Partner: \$100,000+

Ames Family Foundation  
Anonymous  
The Arai-Wong Family  
Canucks for Kids Fund  
Els for Autism Canada  
The Harandi Family

Mary and Gordon Christopher Foundation  
Methanex  
The Raffii Family  
The Sutton Place Hotel Vancouver  
The Wolrige Foundation

## Advocate: \$50,000

The Aquilini Family  
Burnaby Firefighters Charitable Society  
CCSF Autism Foundation  
CKNW Kids' Fund  
Corix Water Products-Golf For Kids

Face the World Foundation  
Iranian-Canadian Benevolent Foundation  
Hal and Anna Kettleson  
The Morris and Helen Belkin Foundation  
Variety-The Children's Charity

## Loyal: \$25,000+

Bill Alexander and Linda Deluca  
Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans Unit 100  
Autism Speaks Canada  
Peter Chan and Candy Lim  
The Christopher Family  
Diamond Foundation  
The Esfahani Family  
The Grams-Jekubik Family  
Grosvenor Americas

James and Kelly Kerr  
The Maghsoud Family  
Music Heals Charitable Foundation  
Arjang and Golrokh Nowtash  
Devi Sangara and Matt Queree  
TELUS  
Vancouver Foundation  
Y.P. Heung Foundation

## Supporter: \$15,000+

Ladan Assemi  
Ace Architectural Millwork  
Peter and Leslie Blake  
Oliver and Shirin Bock  
Carolyn Anderson and Kevin Chester  
Philip and Cynthia Cook  
Philip Louis and Julie Fu  
David and Jennifer Gunasekera  
Michael Nauss and Leslie Jones

David Jang and Susie Wong  
Takao Ozawa and Elizabeth Wai  
President's Choice Children's Charity  
Ronald McDonald House Charities  
Save A Child Foundation  
Brian and Tamara Standerwick  
Garth and Anne Stoll  
David and Stephanie Williams  
Jimmy and Alice Wong





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## Friends of PALS: \$5,000+

100 Men Who Give A Damn  
Fahimeh Abghari  
Hamidreza Ahmedian  
Bruce Aitken  
Hossein Amanat  
Farshid Assemi  
Nicholas and Stania Bedford  
Eric Carlson  
Carriere Foundation  
Robert and Ann Carson  
Richard and Gwen Chan  
Graham Coutts and Helen Wong  
The Edith Lando Charitable Foundation  
Lorne Folick and Shannon Taylor  
Foundation for Youth  
Linda Gibbs  
Grosvenor Americas  
The Hamber Foundation  
John and Virginia Hou  
Margarete Jekubik  
John Hardie Mitchell Family Foundation  
Julie and Bill Ruehle Foundation  
Timothy and Tammy Kalla  
Al Kanji  
Karim Kassam  
Irv and Naomi Laskin  
Doug and Brenda Lau  
Jeff Lee and Amanda Goodman Lee  
Rainold Lee and Catherine Kriekenbeek-Lee  
Kenneth and Aida Leung  
Allan and Kim Low  
Bill and Vivian Macdonald  
Dr. William and Joanne McDonald  
Hossein and Golnaz Malek  
Shahrokh Malek

Stewart and Cindy Maltman  
Muskoka Capital Corporation  
Mulgrave School Students—Cap Program  
M.Y. Capital Management Corp.  
Marjan Navabi  
Kevin Ng and Caroline Kriekenbeek  
Naz Panahi  
Pezzente Holdings  
The Please Mum Foundation  
Greg and Michelle Polok  
Mark and Monica Porter  
Maryam Pournasrollah  
Queen Alexandra Foundation  
Foad and Lida Rafii  
Raymond James Canada Foundation  
RBC Foundation  
Robert L. Conconi Foundation  
Royal Canadian Properties  
The Sahiholnasab Family  
Senft Family Foundation  
Amirreza and Sudy Sherkat  
Robert and Christine Shields  
Sinneave Family Foundation  
Courtland Smith  
Craig and Donna Smith  
Leo Smyth and Jane Loftus  
Shaune and Lee Stoddard  
John and Verna Stewart  
T&T Supermarket  
Vincent and Marie Zelig Tan  
Jun and Karin Terado  
Michele and Graham Thom  
Murray and Shirley Thomson  
Vincent and Lillian Tong  
Tricor Pacific Capital Inc.

*As of October 31st, 2021*

Harvey and April Twidal  
Dave and Denise Ure  
Vanguard Pipe & Fittings and CB Supplies  
Versatech Holdings  
Visas Consulting Group Inc.  
Michael Watt and Monique Badun  
The Windsor Family  
The Yeganegi Family  
Abbas Yousefian



[www.palsautismschool.ca](http://www.palsautismschool.ca)

PALS School - 101 Third Street, New Westminster, BC V3L 2P9  
Phone: 604.251.7257 Fax: 604.251.1627

Charitable Registration #: 84393 9760 RR0001

Email: [info@palsautismschool.ca](mailto:info@palsautismschool.ca)

Twitter: @PALSAutismBC

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