

# Unlimited Potential



(above) K. Leigh as a young girl, and her now as a beautiful adult who loves her family, her independence, and playing the clarinet.



(above) Marissa as a baby, and now a vibrant young women attending Fresno State where she is fully included and enjoying the friendships she is making.



(right) Jackson is a bright, independent young man working at the California Academy of Science. Jackson enjoys his job and in 2011 he was named Employee of the Year.



**Down Syndrome  
Connection of  
the Bay Area**

## ANNUAL REPORT 2014

# 2014

was another amazing year at the Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area (DSCBA). As we reflect on all that we have accomplished we are reminded of the large impact we are making on the lives of our very capable and inspirational members who happen to have Down syndrome, their loving families, and the community at large. Our goal continues to be helping children and adults with Down syndrome to reach their highest potential as integrated citizens in their communities. We accomplish this through direct services, educating the public, and fostering inclusive involvement with the Down syndrome community.

For the DSCBA to be successful it takes dedicated members, donors, volunteers, staff, board of directors and the community to keep us strong. Thank you for all that you do to contribute to our success in so many ways.

**More than one person has described my son as a different child between the end of school in the spring and this fall. He is much more confident in his verbal abilities and (probably as a result) more confident socially as well, interacting more with other children and initiating play.**

-Parent of a child in the Communication Readiness Program

**Katie understands what a bike is - says it, signs it, rides on her dad's bike. But getting to try one on her own was a different and great experience! ... The Strider definitely accommodated Katie's height range and its small size made it less daunting for Katie to handle.**

-Parents and DSCBA members



Cover art: Original painting by a Step participant. Above: A family at the Step Up for Down Syndrome walk; For the first time, a child is empowered to make snack choices by using technology; Left: Learning to ride a Strider Bike on loan from DSCBA.

# Highlights

## Down Syndrome Education Alliance

- 36 training classes delivered. Topics included DS101, Inclusion, Peer Support, Speech Intelligibility, Successful AAC Using Common Core Standards, Visual Supports for Communication. Averaged 90% “excellent” rating on participant surveys.
- 628 educators reached.
- 402 typically enabled students who have a student with DS in their class were reached through Ability Awareness presentations, focusing on breaking down barriers, building friendships, and dispelling myths.
- 24 school districts being provided with ongoing support, counsel, and curriculum assistance.
- **Communication Readiness Program:** Organized and conducted our second successful 7-week intensive summer program for 10 children, their families, and educational teams. We continue to work with these families and educators.
- **Expression Connection** (communication technology) consultations, school visits, lending library, and training provided.
  - 128 parents/guardians trained in AAC teaching tools and strategies,
  - Collaboration with 24 Bay Area school districts where 628 educators were introduced to “AAC in the Classroom” training.
  - 6 devices procured, 5 clients obtained services through their schools, and 4 clients provided with loaner devices while waiting for device procurement.



Through the Down Syndrome Education Alliance and our lending library, children are communicating their needs, making choices, and learning at home and school using an iPad.

**“We are using the device to help her tell knock-knock jokes—what a great way to connect with her peers! Every day she surprises us with all she has to say. As parents of a child who cannot speak, this is a GIGANTIC step for her. We can’t begin to express how thankful we are to ‘hear’ her voice.”**

*-Parent of a child in Expression Connection*

**Without the valuable insight and support provided by the DSCBA our journey through education would be a nightmare. Today’s lay parent is ill prepared to interface with the school districts let alone fight for the unknown rights of a child with a learning disability. KUDOS to DSCBA!**

*-Parents and DSCBA members*

# Highlights

## Parent Support

- IEP/education consultation provided to 45 families, including attending meetings, and providing advice and counsel.
- General family consultation to 210 people (topics such as medical, behavioral, siblings, adoption, adult services, location, mental health, legal, etc.).
- Support provided to 10 new parents (with children under age two) and 6 expecting parents.

## The Step Program

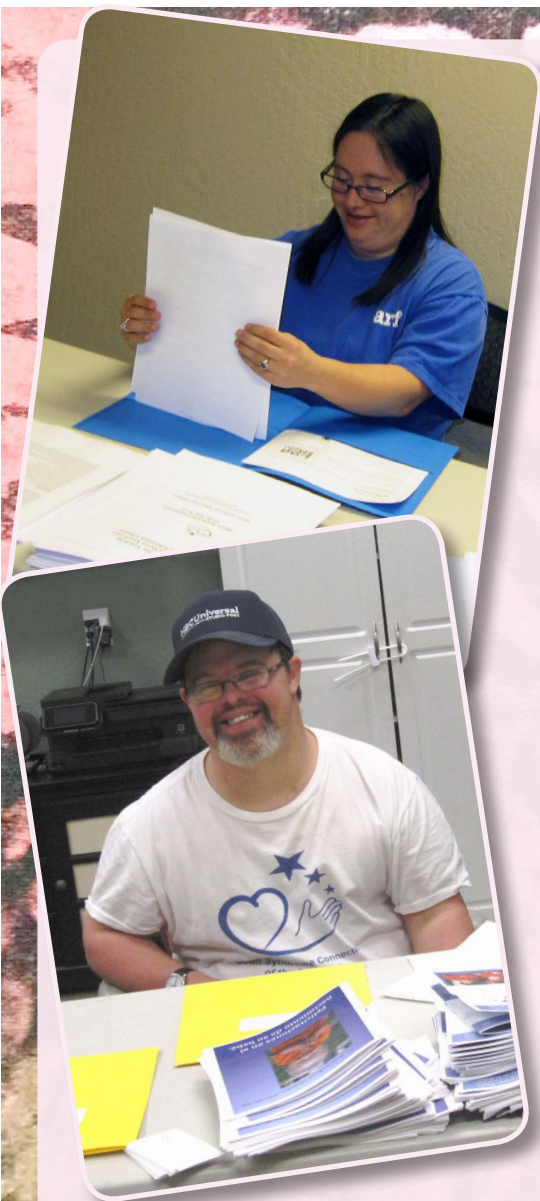
- Weekly developmental Step classes for 66 children and adults with Down syndrome.
- 4 locations: Danville, Oakland, San Francisco, and Benicia.
- \$3,975 in scholarship funding directly to families.

**Support Groups:** Total of 27 sessions provided, including Baby and Me; Grandparents Group; Parent Group for School-Age Children; and Parents with Teens and Adults.

**Employing people with Down syndrome is important to us at the DSCBA. Above Keri Klass (top) and Joseph Vaughn are working in the DSCBA office as Administrative Assistants.**

*During the sharing portion of class she now looks around at her friends. This is quite an improvement from when she first attended a year and half ago (and would look down with her eyes closed when she talked).*

*-From a Step Teacher  
Regarding one of her  
Students*



**Girls just wanna have fun!**

# Highlights

## Workshops and Special Enrichment Classes

- Music Therapy provided to 15 families through 12 sessions.
- Summer and fall Art Classes to 27 participants.

## New Parents & Medical Outreach

- Consultation to 10 new parents with a child with DS under age 2.
- Consultation to 6 expecting parents.
- Medical outreach to 10 hospitals. Topics included "how to deliver the news," up-to-date information about Down syndrome, and available support and informational resources.
- 100s of hours of general consultation with families on medical, behavioral, siblings, adoption, adult services, location, mental health, legal, and other topics.

**One of my bffs recently gave birth to a perfect little angel who just happens to have an extra chromosome and we learned of the Down Syndrome Connection at the hospital. This amazing organization provided her and her family with tons of literature as well as classes where she can learn techniques to assist with the baby's development.**

**- Friend of a family served by DSCBA**



**It was a great meeting and Martha had some excellent information to share with us. I love our group of grandparents, it lifts my spirits and I learn so much from the rest of you.**

**-From one grandparent after our monthly meeting in February 2014**



# Highlights

## On-Site Therapies & Education

- Oral motor therapy provided to 75 families.
- 170 hours of reading tutoring provided.

## Special Events

- Gala for Giving at the Diablo Country Club raised \$109,130, exceeding its goal! Nearly 300 people attended.
- Step Up for Down Syndrome raised \$145,000 through 92 family fundraising pages, Macy's sponsorship, and other generous business sponsors – THANK YOU! Approximately 800 people attended.
- Other Events: World Down Syndrome Day, Holiday Party, Movie Night, and more.

**DSCBA's doors are open five days a week, all year long!**



Through "Bird watching" and describing what they see, kids gain skills in observation, following instructions, verbalization, and language use.

**It's very scary for a new parent to receive a diagnosis of Down syndrome. The DSCBA provides loving support for the whole family, which is an incredible gift during a time that can be confusing and overwhelming. The services and opportunities they provide allow for participants to become more active in their own communities, which is an excellent model for other charitable organizations.**

-Parent and DSCBA member



Each month, music therapy brings families together to make and enjoy music.

Our Step In class for adults in Danville enjoying a Nia dancing class with a guest instructor.

**"He has grown immensely in his capacity for compassion and understanding of others during his time in class."**

-A Step teacher's comments on one of her students.



## WHAT EDUCATORS ARE SAYING:

**"Fantastic course! Huge learning curve with this population and I am so appreciative of the support and collaboration."**

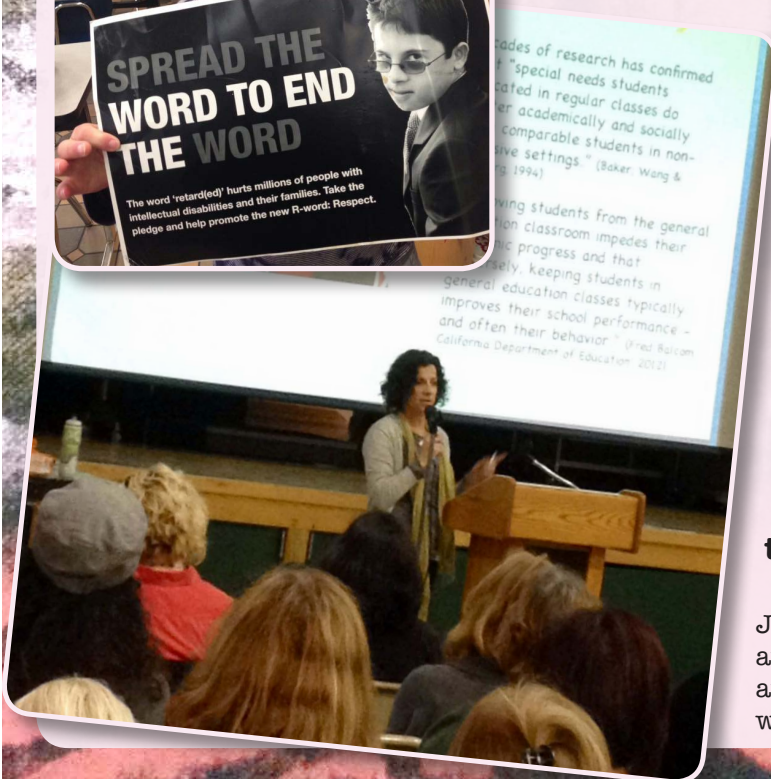
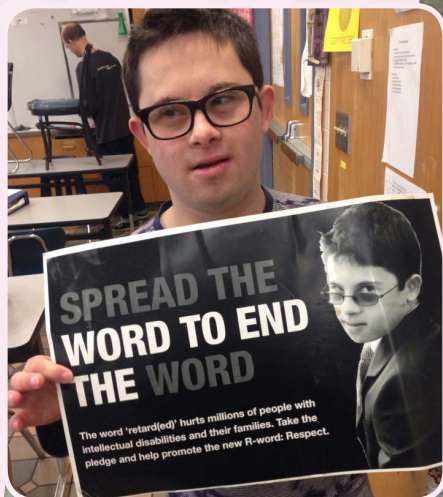
**"Thank you for offering information and techniques that I can apply in my every day interactions with my student who has Down syndrome."**

**"Anyone who works with a student with Down syndrome should be required to attend."**

**"Thank you for this very informative workshop...what an inspiration."**

**"I am overwhelmed and I can't wait to try out some of these tools."**

Jennifer Cooper conducts an "Inclusive Practices and Ability Awareness" training for educators and Eli Cooper continues his quest to spread the word!



## 2014 Board of Directors

Mike Zolnier, President  
Judith Clark, Secretary  
Paul Crawford, Treasurer  
Isaiah Aguilar  
Ileana Arganda

Marty Barillas  
Mary Brody  
Andreas Dereschuk  
Tammy Garcia

## 2014 Staff & Consultants

**DSCBA Staff:** Peggy Alreck-Anthony, Office Manager  
Laura Briggs, Teacher • Harold Burns, Teacher • Jennifer Cooper, Director, Parent Support & Education  
Nancy Ferguson, DSEA Program Manager • Kathy Harkins, Event Administrator • Martha Hogan, Director of Parent Advocacy & Support • Marianne Iversen, Director of Programs • Keri Klass, Administrative Assistant • Nancy LaBelle, Executive Director • Christina Lewis, Teacher • Tamara Reed, Teacher • Joseph Vaughn, Admin. Assistant

**Consultants:** Karen Baca, Education & Technology Specialist • Tempra Board, Grants Manager • Kathy Miles, Reading Teacher • Nicole Patton, Music Therapist • Heather Vukelich, SLP/OPT • Kati Skulski, SLP/AAC Specialist



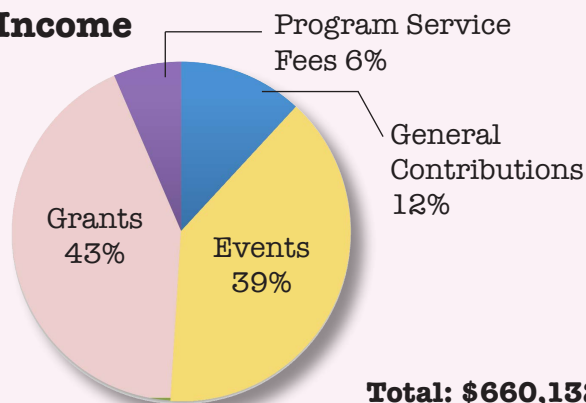
Our Annual Step Up for Down Syndrome walk brings families together and recognizes the superhero in all of us.

## Gratitude

**Foundation & Corporate Supporters:** Anonymous Family Foundation • Barr Family Foundation • Alice Beckman Fund of the East Bay Community Foundation • Lowell Berry Foundation • Calhoun Family Foundation • California Communications Access Foundation • Charis Family Foundation • Chevron • Diablo Country Club Foundation • Fremont Bank Foundation • Carl Gellert & Celia Berta Gellert Foundation • Robert Half • Jam Handy Character Building Foundation • San Ramon Valley Kiwanis Club • Lencioni Fund • Thomas J. Long Foundation • Macy's • Marino Family Foundation • NAILBA Foundation • Noll Foundation • Nordstrom • Quest Foundation • Sidney Stern Memorial Trust • Swinerton Foundation • TWANDA Foundation • Wayne and Gladys Valley Foundation • Wells Fargo Foundation

## Financial Statement

### Income



### Expenses

