



PaRa los niños  
for the children

People, Progress, and Purpose:

# Power of Connections

ANNUAL REPORT  
2023-2024





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## Dear Para Los Niños Supporters,

It is with great joy that we share our 2024 annual report with you!

In this year's report, you will read about exciting updates to our work highlighted by stories of impact and data from last year. In addition, we are thrilled to share our new three-year strategic plan. It is rooted in our opportunity to deepen our work and in our ability to **connect** people to an array of essential services that offer holistic support.

As you will read on page 16, we have three main areas of focus. The first is to build stronger support for our communities with **more integrated services**. The story of Natasha on page 5 shows that when we take the time to really get to know one family member, we have the resources and capacity to support everyone in the family.

A second area will focus on **impacting systemic changes through advocacy, thought leadership, and partnership**. One policy example that Para Los Niños (PLN) has been drawn into is support for unhoused families on Skid Row. Currently, many services are set up to serve adults and are not inclusive of children and families—a major gap in the system. Another example is the digital equity work in which our youth advocacy council has been involved. Read about the genesis of the program on page 11.

A third area we will focus on is being a **desired employer in education, youth development, and comprehensive family support services**. We will provide more growth opportunities for employees and ensure equitable compensation. Each goal in our strategic plan is anchored in principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and belonging; it is what drives our work in this last goal to develop and nurture a healthy work environment for all staff at PLN.

This year's report is just a glimpse of what is possible when the PLN team—teachers, therapists, advisors, administrators, support staff, and volunteers—helps connect people to life-changing services. We are truly grateful to our supporters who make it possible for PLN to continue partnering with families, today and into the future.

We hope you will join us at our 45th anniversary benefit dinner on May 8, 2025, as we celebrate the work that has been accomplished and look forward to continued success!

Drew and Marge



**Drew Furedi**  
President & CEO



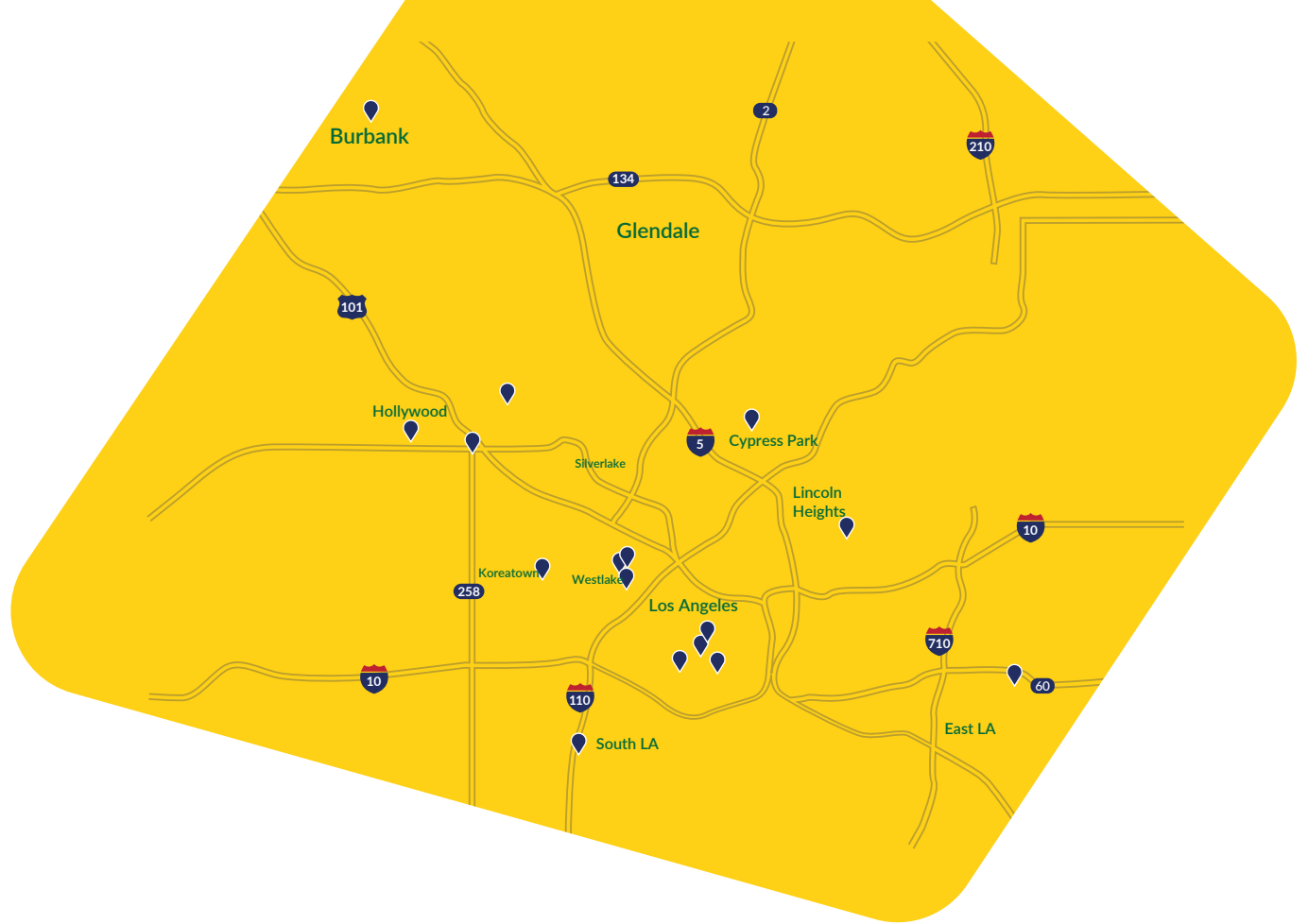
**Marjorie Ehrich Lewis**  
Board of Directors, Chair

# Who We Serve



Para Los Niños is proud to establish partnerships in communities that have been systematically neglected for generations. Through our programs and support, a child can receive support from birth through adulthood.

At PLN, we believe that every child deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential, and every family should have the resources to equip their child to succeed. Through education, partnerships and advocacy, Para Los Niños provides an array of life-changing services.



16 locations  
across Los Angeles  
offering education,  
empowerment, and  
strength for local  
communities

**10,000+**

children, youth and family members benefit from PLN services across LA County

**97%**

of those served by the student and community services department identify as people of color

**0-86 years**

the age range of those receiving services through our programs

**93%**

of families served by PLN live in areas with the highest levels of food insecurity and homelessness\*

**100%**

of youth in our YouthSource program who enrolled in higher education are first-generation students

**900+**

children are enrolled in our schools and early childhood education programs

**64%**

of students are multi-lingual learners in our elementary school grades 3-5

**20%**

of students in our charter middle school are unhoused and receive extra support upon enrollment

\*Service Planning Areas 4 and 6: Communities, including Downtown LA/Skid Row, West Lake/Pico-Union, Boyle Heights, Hollywood, and South Los Angeles, have the highest levels of food insecurity and homelessness in LA County.



# Family Spotlight



Natasha\* shines with a warmth that draws people in, creating a space where vulnerability and joy coexist. Her journey with Para Los Niños began as many do—through a family member. Her daughter, Lea, found her footing in PLN’s teen advocacy group after moving to a new neighborhood. With encouragement from Eva Lizardo, a *promotora* with PLN, Lea blossomed, building connections that eased her homesickness and shyness.

At a PLN event, Natasha crossed paths with Erika Morales, a therapist on the PLN Family Services team, where the two engaged in an organic conversation about community, impact, and their individual journeys of service. This encounter led to Natasha learning about a *promotora* role, which felt like a natural extension of Natasha’s twenty years of community service. As a devoted mother of six young adults, Natasha has always prioritized family and community, often involving her children in her various endeavors.

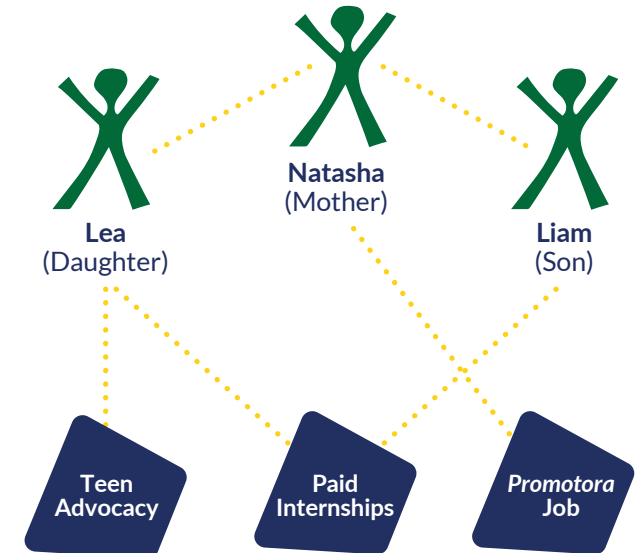
However, there was hesitation when making her decision. Recent trauma had deeply affected her family, and Natasha wanted to ensure they were all okay before stepping into a new commitment. After much reflection, she took a leap of faith and embraced the *promotora* position. Though community work can trigger past wounds, Natasha now relies on the strong support network of her PLN colleagues and supervisors. “In twenty years of community service, I have never been part of a work culture that allowed, much less encouraged, me to make space for my healing at work,” she shared.

Inspired by his sister and mother’s involvement, Natasha’s son, Liam, enrolled in PLN’s Youth Workforce Services (YWS) program, through which he was able to secure a paid internship. Now in his second year of college, he feels a sense of stability and financial security as he contributes to his education.

Lea now has a second connection with PLN and has joined Liam in YWS and has secured her own paid internship. Natasha is delighted to see her children grow with confidence and resilience.

Recently, Natasha expressed her gratitude, saying, “I’m not sure if I’m able to convey the magnitude of the impact PLN support has made on our family, but please know that lately, my prayers have included tears of gratitude for manifested blessings.” Her journey is a testament to the transformative power of community.

\*Names have been changed in this story to protect their identity



# Our Programs



## Education

### Early Childhood and TK–8th Grade Education

We provide high-quality academic instruction that keeps babies and students intellectually enriched. Our wraparound social-emotional education builds character and confidence.

## Community Support

### Youth Workforce Services and Mental Health and Family Services

We provide workshops, mentorship, internships and case management to children, caregivers and youth to provide opportunities for success in school, work, and life.

## Community Transformation

### Building Partnerships and Leadership

We bring together community residents, local organizations, city and county departments, elected officials and businesses, to create equitable systemic conditions for all.



## Early Education

- Early Head Start and Head Start classes
- High quality academic curriculum
- Integrated social-emotional education
- Disability services
- Developmental monitoring
- Behavioral support planning
- Nutritional screenings
- Dental assessments
- Parental leadership opportunities

## Charter Schools and Expanded Learning

- Project-based learning
- Arts and athletics enrichment
- Integrated social-emotional education
- After-school program
- English as a Second Language classes
- Family learning workshops





## Mental Health and Family Services

- Clinical services
- Parenting workshops
- Support groups
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Child abuse prevention and intervention
- Home visitation
- Case management
- Integration services

## Youth Workforce Services

- Tutoring
- Internships
- Mentorship
- Case management
- Counseling
- Financial literacy training
- Academic and career focused workshops
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Financial aid assistance
- Paid work experiences



## Advocacy and Community Support

- Neighborhood leaderships groups
- Digital equity advocacy
- Coalition building
- Non-profit partnerships
- Unhoused support



# Our Impact



Para Los Niños connects with children, youth, and their families through integrated education, wellness, support, and advocacy to address individual and systemic barriers and create pathways to success.



Nearly

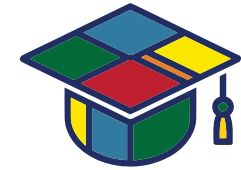
**50%**

of children and youth first enrolled in our early childhood education and/or our schools continued to receive other PLN services



**15,673**

hours of mental health support



**100%**

of youth in our college success program who enrolled in post-secondary education successfully completed their first year



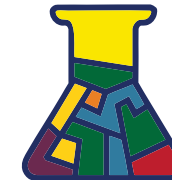
**93,603**

paid internship hours



**94%**

of high school seniors in Youth Workforce Services obtained a high school diploma or equivalent



**18.5%**

average growth in charter school students meeting or exceeding state science standards over the last two years



**\$160,300**

given in the form of gift cards to address food insecurity



**24%**

increase in number of clients served through mental health services







Last year brought the difficult decision to close Gratts Primary Center. Due to demographic and economic changes, Gratts was one of many schools across the state that had to close.

Although this was a painful decision for our community, we feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the love and care our Gratts team brought to our families. Our commitment to the Pico-Union/Westlake community continues through our early education center, youth workforce center, case management support, mental health services and community transformation through Best Start Region 1.

76%

of our community transformation team are former best start community resident members

# Best Start Region 1: 15th Anniversary



Best Start Region 1 (BSR1) is a community-building movement made up of over 1,000 community residents and organizational partners who work together to affect change in East Los Angeles, Metro Los Angeles, Pico-Union/Westlake, South El Monte/El Monte, and Southeast Los Angeles.

BSR1 is driven by the Community Transformation Collective (CTC) within Para Los Niños. The CTC supports community members to transform systemic conditions so that children, families, and neighborhoods can thrive.

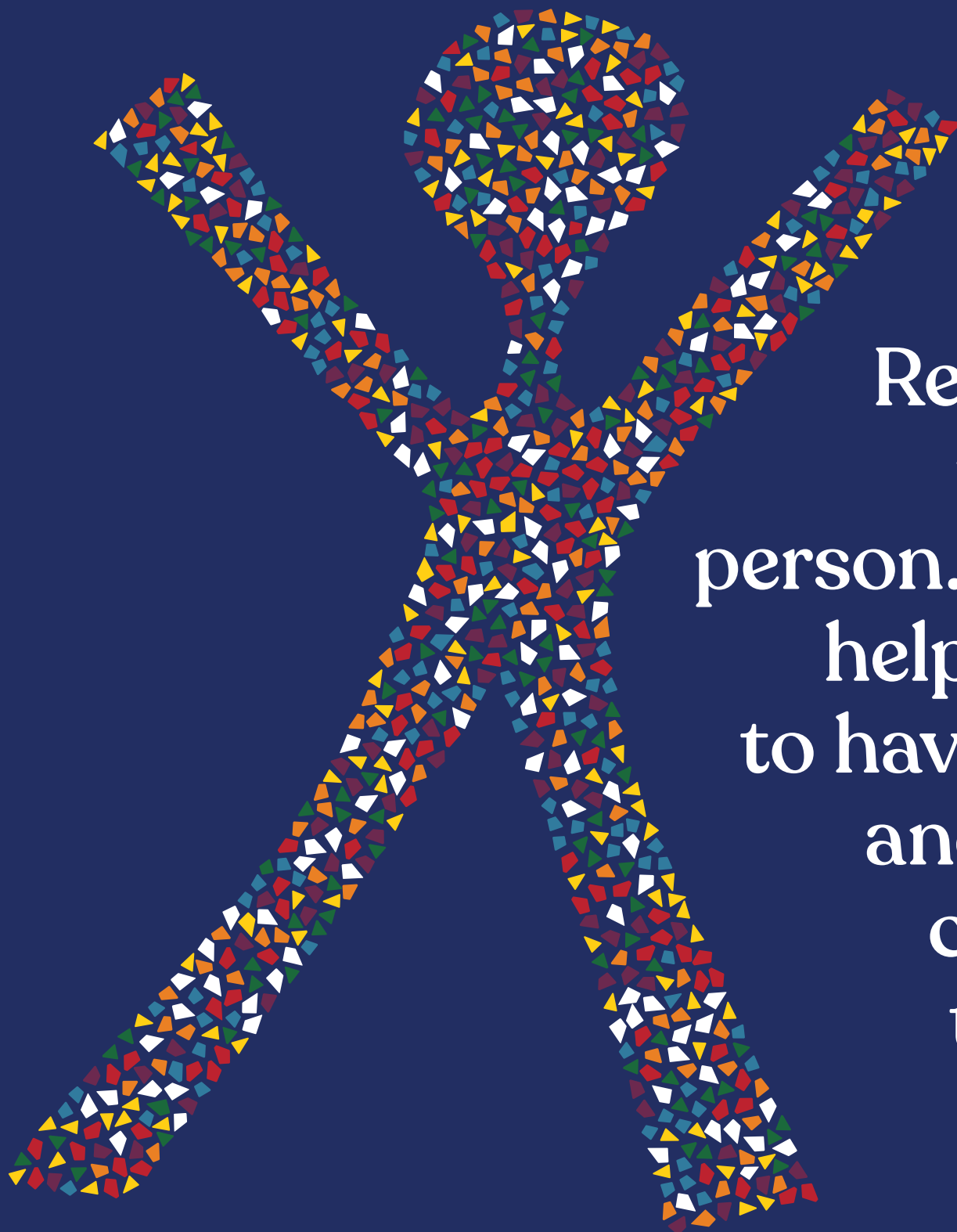
BSR1 began 15 years ago with an initial investment from First 5 LA. Looking to partner with an organization that was successful in providing vital services to families, First 5 LA identified PLN. A natural fit for its success and readiness to address the roots of the issue and not just the symptoms, PLN began this vital work.

For fifteen years, CTC has been mobilizing, maintaining, and expanding grassroots activism. A key piece to this success has been to make activism more accessible and to find the super connectors within the community to lead as *promotoras*. *Promotoras* are individuals from the communities we serve. They gain trust with their inside knowledge and language of community norms and are specially trained to engage and strengthen relationships with parents, residents and agency representatives around health, education, and leadership development.

## BSR1 Timeline

- **2009–2011 Project of Concept Phase**
  - Development of partnership and charter - sharing power with community residents most impacted by systemic barriers
- **2011 Full Scale Implementation Phase**
  - Equitable evaluation—uplifting community priorities to inform all partnership strategies
  - Leadership development—curriculum for leadership skills to increase power sharing
- **2018–2020 Expansion Phase**
  - Build capacity to implement our model
  - Pandemic shift to address urgent needs including food distribution
  - Shift to virtual movement building
- **2020 Formalization Phase**
  - Build capacity and assess alignment
  - Influence public health field through the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles Community Advisory Council
- **2020–2024 Focusing on shifting policies in these four areas:**
  - Health systems
  - Workforce development
  - Housing
  - Transportation





“Best Start  
Region 1 helped  
me grow as a  
person. It helped me  
help my children  
to have aspirations  
and dreams. If I  
can achieve it,  
they can too.”

- Adriana Silva  
BSR1 MEMBER





# Our Voice

**Para Los Niños not only connects people to needed services but also uses advocacy to create systemic change with long-lasting solutions.**

The pandemic shined a light on the darkest corners of inequities, one of which is, the technological challenges our families face due to gross digital inequity. The most glaring impact was that experienced by youth that struggled in virtual settings.

Many of our families do not have discretionary income to afford basic internet, let alone high-quality internet with enough bandwidth to make virtual learning a possibility.

PLN staff immediately saw the issue as the Covid shutdown began in March 2020. Where possible, we helped youth and families by distributing internet hot spots and Chromebooks, but realized we needed to be more involved at a policy level, in addition to helping on the ground. In November 2021, PLN became part of a solution with the 'Digital Equity Los Angeles Coalition'—a collective impact approach to closing the divide. This coalition has about 100 partners that are working to give everyone high quality internet access that is affordable across the state.

Our Director of Government and Community Relations, Dr. Carla Lopez-Valdes, has traveled with other members of the external affairs team to Sacramento to meet members of the assembly and senate.

Although the efforts to pass AB 2239, a bill to fight digital discrimination authored by Assembly member Mia Bonta (D-Oakland), were not met with an immediate victory, key players are finally paying attention. More state senators and assembly members are able to understand how solving digital equity in their community benefits everyone and connects mental health, unhoused solutions, income equity, and more.

Advocacy requires a multi-pronged approach in which organizations with connections and people in the community come together to speak truth to power. PLN's advocacy muscle is also being flexed by the newly initiated youth advocacy council. The council started in the summer of 2024 and is composed of youth groups at different organizations, with diverse backgrounds from across LA County, fighting for digital equity. Through workshops and training, led by our government and community relations team, we will engage new advocates that will keep our communities centered.



# Highlights from 2023-2024



SEPTEMBER 2023

## LA2050 Winner

In partnership with Los Angeles Unified School District and the City of Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department, Para Los Niños won a LA2050 grant to ensure that youth in PLN's Youth Workforce Services program are on a path to economic independence and sustainability. The grant helped connect youth to comprehensive academic and occupational support, focusing on drop-out recovery and prevention, college access, and vocational training.



AUGUST 2023

## Para Los Niños Charter School Family Days

The caring staff across our charter schools connected with hundreds of families to kick off the year. Students received a backpack full of school supplies, and attendees had the opportunity to learn about the many ways PLN can support a family. For many families, this is a continuation of services that includes education, mental health services, parent workshops, and beyond.



NOVEMBER 2023

## Little Amal Visits Charter Elementary School

'Walk with Amal' is the journey of a 12-foot puppet representing a ten-year-old Syrian refugee on an international search for her mother. On November 2, 2023, Little Amal came to Los Angeles and visited PLN students who received her with hand-made signs and a gift. Children learned about the rights of refugees, migrants, immigrants, the unhoused, and all who need a home.



DECEMBER 2023

## My Cause My Cleats

As part of the NFL's My Cause My Cleats program, LA Chargers starting quarterback Justin Herbert chose PLN as his charity and wore custom PLN branded cleats during the game versus the Denver Broncos in support of our commitment to provide education and support for children, youth, and families.

\*Photo credit: Los Angeles Chargers / Mike Nowak.



JUNE 2024

## LA Times Highlights PLN's Commitment to Address Family Homelessness

Para Los Niños has been a part of the Skid Row community for nearly 45 years. The number of families experiencing homelessness has been increasing significantly. In the past few months alone, there were 900 new families in LA County totaling about 3,500 families, an exponential trend that is heartbreaking. Many current resources that the city and county provide for the unhoused are not inclusive of children and are primarily set up to serve adults.

Para Los Niños has been noticing this trend and has connected with leaders in philanthropy, government, and the media to raise awareness and advocate for solutions that are inclusive of families and children. In addition, Para Los Niños is a leader in the Skid Row Collaborative, a committed group of agencies and providers working to better support unhoused and housing insecure families with the resources they need.

Para Los Niños has been providing direct services and support for families that include mental health services, support in enrolling students in school, and tangible support like grocery store gift cards. We are tackling the problem with holistic and comprehensive support that connects families with life changing services. Whether it's an after-school program, a parenting program, even things like potty training. "If that is a barrier for children to enter a preschool, then let's just address that barrier," Sam Joo, Vice President of Student and Community Services.



\*Photo credit: LA Times / Genaro Molina.

# Partner Highlight: Disney



## The *WALT DISNEY* Company

The Walt Disney Company continues to share their giving spirit with our PLN community through book drives, holiday wish lists, grants, and other generous support!

Our annual book drive program with Disney began when their corporate social responsibility team was looking for an organization to collaborate with during Hispanic and Latin American Heritage Month. Every year since, Disney employees across various departments donate new books from a wish list. These books are primarily for school-age children at our elementary and middle schools. We are thankful for the donation of nearly 500 books, which help our literacy program flourish and keep our young readers engaged.

Our 'Adopt A Family' program has been an annual collaboration with Disney in which employees fulfill the wish lists of PLN families in need during the holiday season. Families typically request items such as clothing, toys, and household essentials. Every year, Disney VoluntEARS go above and beyond spreading holiday cheer and delivering moments of happiness for nearly 100 local families.

"Our employees look forward to the Adopt A Family volunteer project each year," said Mark Pulley, Disney VoluntEARS & ESR Programs Manager. "The PLN team identifies families in need of holiday cheer and because their team is so organized, it's easy for Disney VoluntEARS to help spread joy and create moments of happiness when families need it most."

In addition to their support during Hispanic and Latin American Heritage Month and the holiday season, Disney employees have made direct donations to PLN through the Disney VoluntEARS Grants program (where employees convert their hours volunteering into grants) and many personal contributions have also been matched by the company through Disney's employee matching gifts program. Disney's corporate social responsibility team has also supported PLN's Youth Workforce Services (YWS) program with charitable contributions for several years. YWS helps young adults ages 18-24 pursue higher education and vocational training, and enter the workforce with the skills they need to thrive.

PLN is grateful for this long-standing collaboration, and we are "all EARS" to what the future holds with The Walt Disney Company.





# Board of Directors

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**Cindy Winebaum**

Co-Chair Grant Screening Committee  
Women Helping Youth

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Director  
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# Leadership Team

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President & Chief Executive Officer

**Yug Fon Chiquito\*\*\***

Chief Financial Officer

**Sarah Figueroa-Freeman, Ed.D.**

Executive Vice President &  
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**Camille Gonzalez\*\***

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**Sam Joo**

Vice President of Student and Community  
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Director of Community Transformation

**Stanley Anjan**

Managing Director, Charter Schools

**Claudio Arias**

Managing Director, Finance

**Sharon Berg, Ph.D.**

Director of Clinical Development

**Casey Eiseman**

Managing Director, Human Resources

**Cecilia Hernandez**

Managing Director, Extended Learning

**Christina Mariscal Pasten**

Managing Director, External Affairs

**Blanca Medrano**

Managing Director, Operations

**Marisol Naranjo**

Managing Director of Diversity, Equity,  
Inclusion, Justice and Belonging

**Jorge Orozco**

Director of Youth Workforce Services

**Lorena Rodriguez**

Managing Director, Early Education

**Judi Stadler**

Director of Clinical Services

**Jimmy Urizar**

Director of Family Services

\*Joined June 2024

\*\*Transitioned last fiscal year

\*\*\*Joined September 2024

# New Strategic Plan for 2024-2027



**Our world is constantly changing; and so we, too, must stay responsive to the evolving needs of our children, youth, and families.**

Most recently, the rise in family homelessness, due in part to post-pandemic stressors such as rising rents and job flight to other areas, has increased the need for more comprehensive services for our families. Additionally, we fully recognize the need to work alongside the children, youth and families of Para Los Niños to advocate for system change to allow all to thrive.

The increased need has prompted us to update our mission statement to be more reflective of our direction:

**Para Los Niños partners with children, youth, and their families through integrated education, wellness, support, and advocacy to address individual and systemic barriers and create pathways to success.**







## The needs of our communities have shaped our strategic plan to center three goals.

### 01 Provide better support for our communities through increased integration of services.

- We will address gaps and redundancies and ensure individuals are aware of the different services available to them and their family members.
- No matter their entry point or how long they are with us, a family should have a consistent experience that is full of opportunity and choice centered around family needs.

### 02 Impact systemic and broad changes on policy and program locally, regionally, and nationally.

- This will be done through a clear policy agenda and building relationships with policy makers, partners and coalitions.
- PLN will advocate and elevate issues impacting children, youth, and families to government agencies and elected officials.

### 03 Become a desired employer by prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and belonging (DEIJB), providing ample growth opportunities for employees and ensuring fair compensation.

- There will be a refocus on specialized development along with a comprehensive employee engagement and experience program.
- All staff—regardless of level or program—should feel supported, well-compensated, and see a long-term future at PLN.

# Trusted Stewards: Government Grants



Para Los Niños was awarded several significant government grants this past year. These multi-year grants will enable us to provide more extensive services and have a greater impact for children, youth, and families.



## California Department of Health Care Services:

### The UCLA-UCSF ACE's Awareness Resilient Network

This grant will help advance equity and improve the health of youth and their caregivers by connecting adverse childhood experiences with prevention, education, screening, and greater access to enhanced care management and community health worker services.

## California Department of Public Health:

### All Children Thrive

This grant will help empower youth to become catalysts for change in their communities by engaging their family members, community members, and elected officials in a campaign to allocate a portion of cannabis tax revenue to youth development activities.

## California Department of Education:

### California Community Schools Partnership Program Implementation Grant



# Community Schools



Para Los Niños was awarded a five-year California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP) Implementation Grant from the state. We recognize the potential of community schools to catalyze school transformation by leveraging the collective power of schools, families, and communities toward safe, inclusive learning environments where all students reach their full potential. Our charter schools will utilize the grant to provide distinct opportunities to improve integration of community schools' services, augment the range of services for students and families, and expand parent leadership and family engagement.

## New roles from the grant include:

- Community schools director
- Family & community engagement coordinator
- Community schools coordinators



# Our Team



Every year, we commit to improving the lives of our families by connecting them to multiple services that will address their specific needs. In this spirit, we commit to improving our experience for staff, who make all this comprehensive care for our communities possible.



In alignment with goal 3 of our new strategic plan, these are a few tangible ways we plan to invest in our people:



A comprehensive employee engagement and experience program that centers DEIJB and allows staff to bring their authentic selves to work



Differentiated professional and leadership development, with opportunities for employees to deepen their craft and grow in their positions



A long-term plan for PLN to remain equitably competitive with salaries and benefits

Over the next three years, we will make investments to become a desired employer in education, youth development, and comprehensive family support services.



# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Belonging



DEIJB has been part of our work since 1980. However the more recent wave of racial unrest has spurred a deep introspection to assess our policies and culture. The aim was to pinpoint areas for improvement in order to foster a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization.

To properly assess the current state, PLN hired consultants to gather feedback from staff about the staff's understanding of bias, privilege, allyship, and awareness.

Leadership drew on insights and feedback to foster deeper, lasting change by establishing a new internal role. In August 2023, Marisol Naranjo was hired as Managing Director of DEIJB. Marisol was hired to build alignment across PLN programs and set the foundation for each staff member to be part of the solution.

An important part of setting the foundation is creating a common understanding of why this is so relevant to our services. We have thus started with training, facilitations, and workshops with leaders, seniors leaders, and board members to align on shared language and individual awareness.

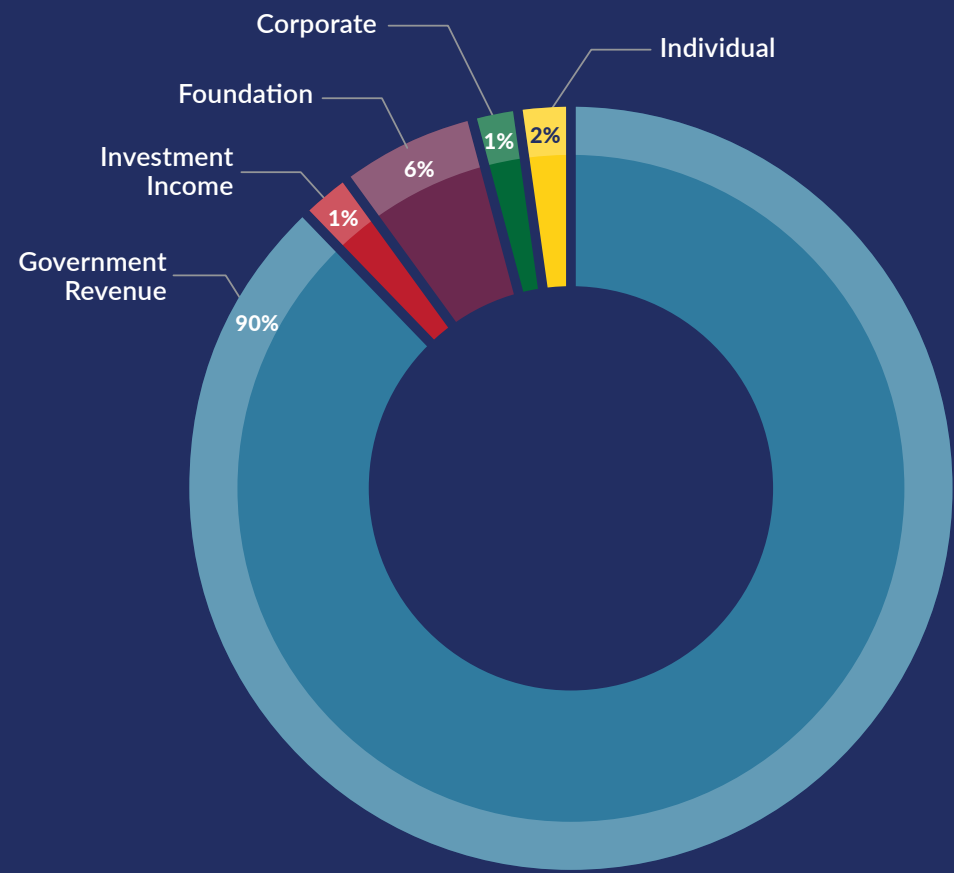
In order to move towards true diversity, equity, and inclusion, there can not be one leader, one team, or one department carrying the load. In that spirit, the PLN DEI Committee (pictured below) was created to build momentum and shared commitment within each department. The committee was intentionally created with people from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences. They are a key partner to produce an organization-wide equity agenda, support its implementation, and hold PLN accountable for the outcomes.



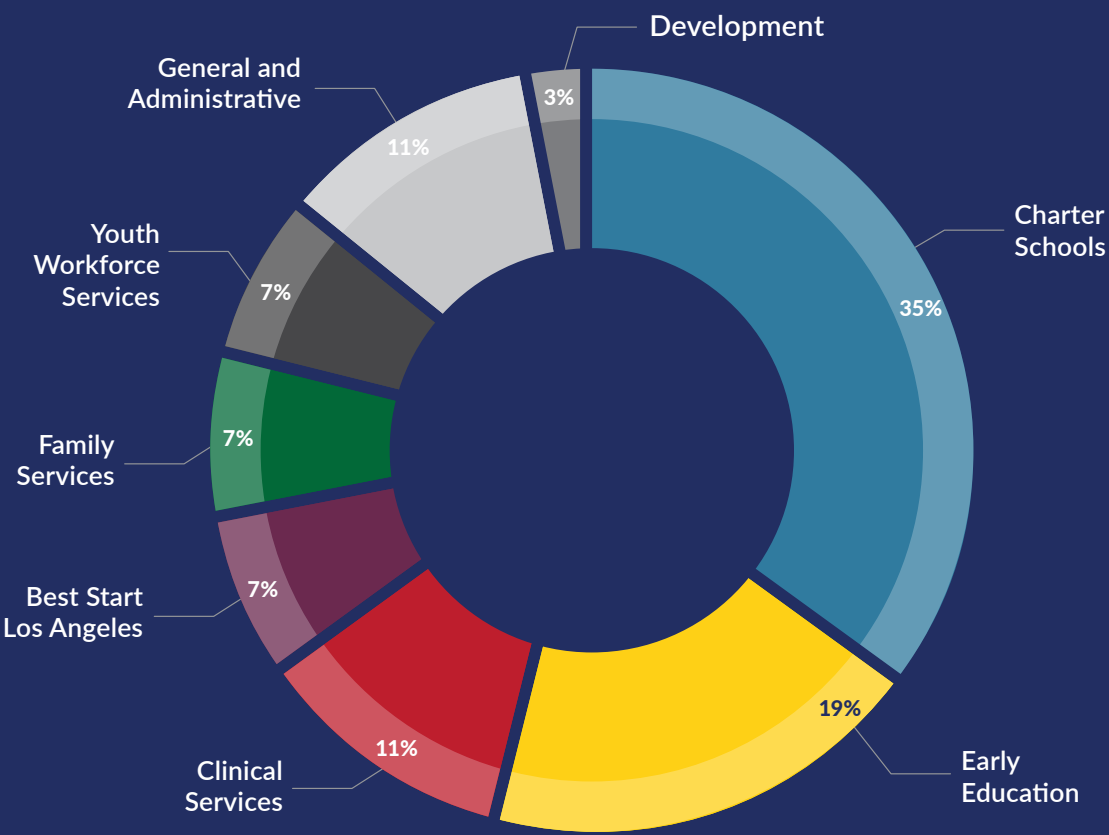
# Financials



Revenue and Support



Operating Expenses





# Financials



Income		(In Whole Numbers)
Government Revenue		\$50,625,490
Contributions		\$5,024,694
Program Fees		\$691
Other Income		\$684,321
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$56,335,195</b>
Expenses		
Salaries		\$30,828,367
Payroll Taxes and Benefits		\$7,156,573
Occupancy		\$4,726,138
Interest Expense		\$124,059
Subcontractors		\$1,208,175
Office Supplies		\$283,105
Program Supplies		\$1,115,073
Furniture & Equipment/Vehicles		\$371,133
Consultants/Professional Services		\$2,347,887
Participant Wages		\$1,656,747
Insurance		\$242,520
Food/Kitchen Supplies		\$1,401,838
Family Support Funds		\$600,352
Professional Development		\$866,545
Information Technology		\$696,244
Payroll Processing		\$296,104
Depreciation		\$245,878
Miscellaneous Expense		\$1,786,341
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$55,994,787</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>		<b>\$340,409</b>

UNAUDITED NUMBERS

# Thank You to All Our Donors



**JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024**

**We are grateful for the generous support of each foundation, corporation, and individual that makes our work possible.**

## **\$250,000+**

Anonymous  
The Ballmer Group Philanthropy  
Caruso Family Foundation

## **\$100,000 - \$249,999**

California Community Foundation  
Casey Family Programs  
The Carl & Roberta Deutsch Foundation  
The Dr. Ruth Milman and Dr. Frederick Schiff Foundation  
Robert Ronus Foundation  
Tikun Olam Foundation  
WHH Foundation

## **\$50,000 - \$99,999**

The Atlas Family Foundation  
Baptist Service Corporation  
Andrea and Blake Brown  
Cedars-Sinai  
Goldhirsh Foundation  
J. B. & Emily Van Nuys Charities  
The Kaplan Family Fund  
Koreatown Youth and Community Center  
Steinmetz Foundation  
S. Mark Taper Foundation  
United Way of Greater Los Angeles

## **\$25,000 - \$49,999**

Anonymous  
The Bank of America Charitable Foundation  
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In 1980, we started with one converted warehouse and 50 children enrolled.  
Now, we are a network that serves thousands of children, youth and families in 16 locations across LA County.

**CELEBRATING 45 YEARS OF PARTNERING WITH CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES, BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES.**

**Join us for our 45th anniversary gala**

May 8, 2025 at the Beverly Hilton

**For more information about sponsoring the event or tickets, reach out to:**

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# Get Involved



Besides saving the date for our Gala, you can join a team of caring individuals who are making a huge difference throughout LA County.



## Donate

Invest in the lives of 10,000+ children, youth, and families.

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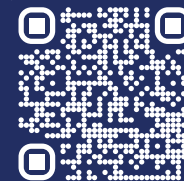
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