



# WHERE ABILITY KNOWS NO BOUNDS

**ANNUAL REPORT** FISCAL YEAR 2022 • JULY 1, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2022



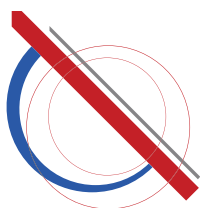




# Letter From Our CEO



**Against the backdrop of the pandemic, we have faced unforeseeable challenges, from statewide labor shortages in special education to a growing demand for therapy for young children recently diagnosed with a disability.**



**But as we transformed each obstacle into opportunity, SLDC has emerged stronger and more inspired than ever.**

Powered by our commitment to creating futures without limits, we worked tirelessly in 2022 to expand access to special education, quality therapy and resources that help meet each student where they're at. A huge leap forward came with the commencement of a large-scale campus improvement project in Buena Park that will diversify our programs and amplify impact for individuals with all types of abilities. An initiative years in the making, our goal is to create even more safe, inclusive spaces where students can learn to play, work and connect, then generalize these skills to their lives off-campus.

We also launched exciting partnerships with more than 40 leading companies and community organizations across Orange County. Thanks to their support, we've introduced new amenities, technologies, and curriculum that allow individuals of nearly all ages to thrive in an interdisciplinary environment. This year we enhanced our campus by installing a new street hockey rink, thanks to the Anaheim Ducks Foundation's Power PLAY! initiative. With the support of our generous donors, we have upgraded our classrooms with new generation SmartBoards and maintained our 1:1 iPad program, replacing older generation tablets with brand-new devices and software used to

promote customized communication systems for each of our students with this need.

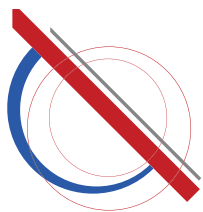
With thought and intention, we invested in key areas that advanced our mission, from facility improvements to cultivating the talents of a high-performing staff. By having a state-of-the-art campus, highly trained teachers and paraprofessionals, and a culture of excellence, we have a strong foundation that empowers us to build boundless futures for the two hundred children and adults we serve in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside counties.

That we could aim higher than ever before and continue reaching new levels of impact is a testament to the commitment and compassion of all our donors and partners who believe so strongly in giving every student the opportunity to thrive. Together, we can nurture growth, inspire achievement and maximize potential for every individual who walks through our doors, and become a model for other special education organizations across the state. 2022 was an incredible year — and the best is yet to come.

**With Gratitude,**

**ADRIENNE KESSLER, ED.D., BCBA**  
Chief Executive Officer





# Key Achievements

## INVESTING IN STRATEGIC GROWTH



After years of sound financial planning, SLDC embarked on a series of exciting large-scale projects in 2022 that will help establish us as leading special education and therapy provider Southern California. We expanded the unique amenities offered at our Buena Park campus, creating even more opportunities for inclusion, from a new playground and a dedicated art studio to a roller hockey rink in partnership with the Anaheim Ducks Foundation's S.C.O.R.E. Program. Recognizing the impact of inflation and the importance of retaining top talent, we also invested in our exceptional professional staff of certified credentialed teachers and therapists by providing two salary increases within six months.

## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to being the first non-public special education school selected by the Anaheim Ducks Foundation's Hockey is for Everyone program, SLDC received two significant grants from prominent corporations investing in community development. With the help of a longtime partner, the Rite Aid Foundation, we leveraged our Empowering Possibilities giving day donations with a generous matching gift through its KidCents grant. We were also proud to be a first-time Cox Community Grant Recipient in 2022, which will fund a sustainable STEM module focused on digital media editing and recording. Students will be able to produce their own daily podcast segments streamed campus-wide while improving their ability to communicate and work with peers in a studio setting.







*Temecula Therapy Center*

## ACHIEVING OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

In the face of challenges that ranged from the winter surge of COVID-19 to the Great Resignation, our staff demonstrated great adaptability and resilience as they accommodated each student's needs with optimism, energy and flexibility. We not only kept our doors open, but continued to expand after the late 2021 opening of our Temecula therapy center. We have since doubled our clinical services for early intervention, following through on our commitment that no family should have to wait to access quality therapy for their child with special needs.

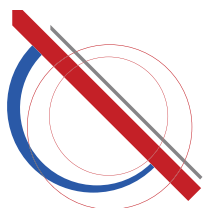


*Dinko Bozanich with SLDC  
Co-Founder Dr. Aleen Agranowitz*

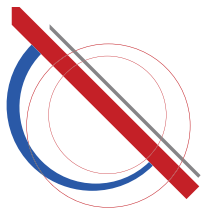
## CELEBRATING A BOARD MILESTONE

Making an indelible impact over the span of four decades, former Los Angeles County Deputy District Attorney Dinko Bozanich reached a milestone anniversary with SLDC in 2022. We are proud to celebrate his 40 years of service, making him the longest-tenured board member in our organization's history. In addition to holding every office, including president, Dinko has brought unique insight and experience to the board as the parent of a former SLDC student. His leadership also includes serving on the finance committee for the duration of his tenure, where he has played a key role in ensuring equity among all school district partners.

**SLDC also funded innovative original research by our own resident Speech Pathologist Marissa Caccavale, which looked at the effects that aided language stimulation would have on joint attention commenting in Nonverbal Autistic Adolescents. It was presented to 15,000 leading industry professionals at the national ASHA Conference, the most comprehensive education event in the world for speech, language, and hearing professionals.**







# Celebrating Decades of Service

## ELDEN PETERSON

More than 20 years ago, a young boy with an autism diagnosis wasn't receiving the services he needed to thrive. After struggling in public school, his father, the general manager of Peterson Brothers Construction, made a life-changing discovery when he finally learned about SLDC.

Meanwhile, the owner of Peterson Brothers Construction witnessed the family's long journey and was inspired to take action of his own. He arranged a meeting with SLDC's founders, Dr. Aleen Agranowitz and Gladys Gleason, and felt an instant connection to their mission of empowering children with special needs. Two decades later, Elden Peterson's commitment to our organization has only become stronger.

Elden has long been a champion of the annual Dick Gorrie Memorial Golf Tournament, taking a leadership role in organizing and securing participants year over year. In addition to serving on the board of directors for nearly a decade, he has been influential in rallying the construction industry to get involved — including recruiting his company's CEO Jon Borenstein to the board and referring a senior manager's son to SLDC, where he is now making great strides. His two adult sons are following in his footsteps and, eventually, Elden hopes they will become board members as they see firsthand the growth and impact the organization has on preparing children for their brightest possible futures.

Over the years, Elden's time, talent and treasure have helped SLDC become more innovative than ever in educating, enriching and teaching important life skills to children with special needs. He continues to give in spades, citing how transformative our programs and services are for students and families.



**"I really believe miracles happen at SLDC," Elden says. "It's a very unique place."**



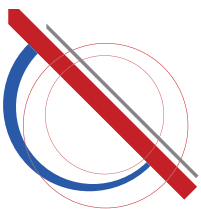
## DINKO BOZANICH

In the 1970s, Dinko Bozanich was an up-and-coming prosecutor living in San Pedro. He was also the father of an almost 4-year-old named Michael, who was recently diagnosed with autism. At the time, specialists at his UCLA pilot program believed that while Michael had the potential to become verbal, it would be a long shot.

SLDC helped this long shot become a reality. After receiving a referral to enroll at SLDC, the Bozanichs accepted, and Michael began riding the SLDC bus from San Pedro to Orange County each day. Though Michael graduated from the program at age 22, making remarkable progress in speech and socialization beyond the family's greatest expectations, Dinko's support of SLDC would continue for decades.

He has served on the Board for 40 years, and, early on, became known as the outspoken advocate who fiercely negotiated on behalf of SLDC with school districts to ensure that the interests of the students were being served. Having held every Board officer position during his long tenure, Dinko's institutional knowledge has proven invaluable during SLDC's periods of organizational growth and evolution.

His passion for the cause has not wavered over the years, with his foresight, drive and initiative helping to advance our mission and create transformative results for children and adults with disabilities. During Dinko's Board tenure, he is proud of SLDC's achievements that range from campus improvements to investing in the highest-quality professional staff who put an emphasis on working in collaboration with parents to help students accomplish all of their goals. But perhaps most of all, he celebrates SLDC's longevity and ability to adapt to the times as we help students build bright futures.



**"The school has endured — changed and evolved as students' needs evolve," Dinko shares. "That says something."**



# YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK



## **12 FREE MONTHLY SPEECH SCREENINGS**

at our new office  
in Temecula



## **16 NEXT-GENERATION SPEECH THERAPISTS/ PATHOLOGISTS**

trained through the AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) SLDC student camp partnership with Chapman University, benefitting the future of speech pathology/therapy and also helping more than 65 percent SLDC students to find their voices. This program was free for college interns and SLDC students.



## **3,000 HOURS**

of paid professional development for SLDC teachers and staff to ensure that the school remains on the leading edge of education, enrichment, therapies and skills development so that students can build the foundation for their best, most rewarding lives.



## **100 NEW IPADS AND 5 SMART BOARDS**

that will support students at SLDC as they learn important skills in technology and computing.



# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the Fiscal Year Ended **June 30, 2022**

## ASSETS

Current Assets	\$7,260,807
Investments, Property & Equipment	\$4,212,700

**Total Assets** **\$11,473,507**

## LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities	\$1,223,185
Total Net Assets	\$10,225,479

**Total Liabilities & Net Assets** **\$11,473,507**

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Program Fees	\$10,412,465
Contributions	\$190,941
Net Special Events	\$143,961
Interest	\$3,970

**Total Support, Revenue & Gains** **\$10,751,157**

Total Program Expenses	\$9,350,286
Management & General	\$1,464,848
Fundraising	\$211,498

**Total Operating Expenses** **\$11,026,632**

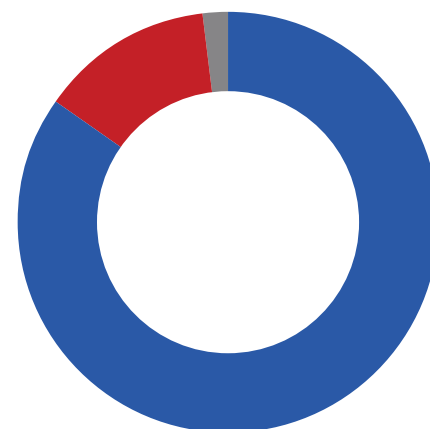
Loss Gain on Investments	(\$185,579)
Grant Income	\$1,937,058

**Change in Net Assets** **\$1,477,098**

## CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

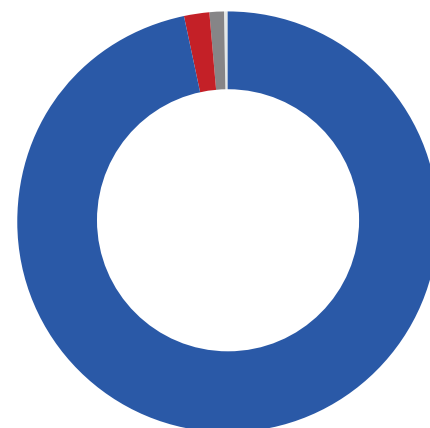
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$8,748,381
<b>Net Assets at End of Year</b>	<b>\$10,225,479</b>

## EXPENSES



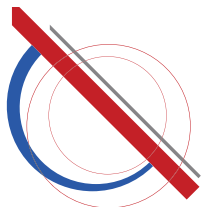
Programs & Services	84.84%
General Campus	13.28%
Fundraising	1.92%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$11,026,632</b>

## REVENUE



Program Fees	96.85%
Contributions	1.78%
Net Special Events	1.34%
Interest	0.03%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$10,751,157</b>





# Special Events

## GRAND OPENING FOR THE NEW STREET HOCKEY RINK

Among the many enhancements to SLDC's Buena Park campus is a brand-new outdoor street hockey rink, generously donated by the Anaheim Ducks as part of its Power PLAY! initiative. We were one of only 20 schools selected by the foundation in 2022 and the only nonprofit in the program's history to ever be awarded this generous gift. On August 31, we unveiled the new rink at a dedication event with the help of Anaheim Ducks staff and volunteers, who were on-site to show their support of making hockey accessible to all members of the community. During a ceremonial "first skate," nearly a dozen SLDC students were joined by a very special guest, the Ducks' mascot Wild Wing. This exciting addition to our campus will help us create more opportunities for inclusive play, a commitment that will keep "rolling" into 2023 and beyond!



## 44<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DICK GORRIE MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

SLDC raised a record-breaking \$290,000 at our sold-out golf invitational, held September 26 at the oceanfront Monarch Beach Golf Links. Thanks to the support of nearly 40 sponsors, 160 golfers, and numerous volunteers and staff making the day a success, it was the highest-grossing tournament in the event's 44-year history. Before teeing off, VIPs joined us for a blufftop breakfast on the course, as well as a cocktail reception the evening prior where we honored longtime SLDC supporter and renowned Orange County coach Dick Gorrie. With putting contests, on-course games and spectacular views from each hole, it was a memorable two days of festivities that concluded with a happy hour toast to celebrate funds raised for SLDC's comprehensive services and continued growth.



# Mission

Provide education and therapy to children and adults with special needs in an environment that nurtures growth, inspires achievement and maximizes their potential.



# Values



The individuality and potential of our students and clients



The integrity, skill and commitment of our employees



The empowering of all members of our SLDC community to realize their highest potential



The provision of optimal services to our students, clients, families, agencies, employees and volunteers as customers to whom we are responsive and accountable



# Vision

We envision a Center which: lives its values, is acknowledged as a leader in special education and is a model for other organizations.



**Visit us online at [www.sldc.net](http://www.sldc.net)**

8699 Holder Street  
Buena Park, CA 90620  
714-821-3620

43385 Business Park Dr, #140  
Temecula, CA 92590  
951-383-8505

Speech and Language Development Center is a  
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