

Survey respondents provide insightful feedback for the year ahead!



Tierra associates and families participate in the Keep the Promise Rally.

Our organization’s mission is to champion inclusion and value for all people with disabilities through creative pathways to employment, education, and the arts. Throughout this edition, you will find powerful stories of success as we work to achieve this goal by developing a broad array of Workforce Development Programs, including competitively paid employment and professional volunteerism opportunities, College-to-Career Programs, Careers in the Arts Programs, and Individualized Support Services.

We are deeply committed to our values of person-centeredness, honesty, passion, respect, and full engagement. Our associates, families, and funders unanimously agree that they see these values in action throughout all we do. Take a look at the 2023 Satisfaction Survey Report on pages 4-5. We’re doing the work, but there is still so much more on the horizon.

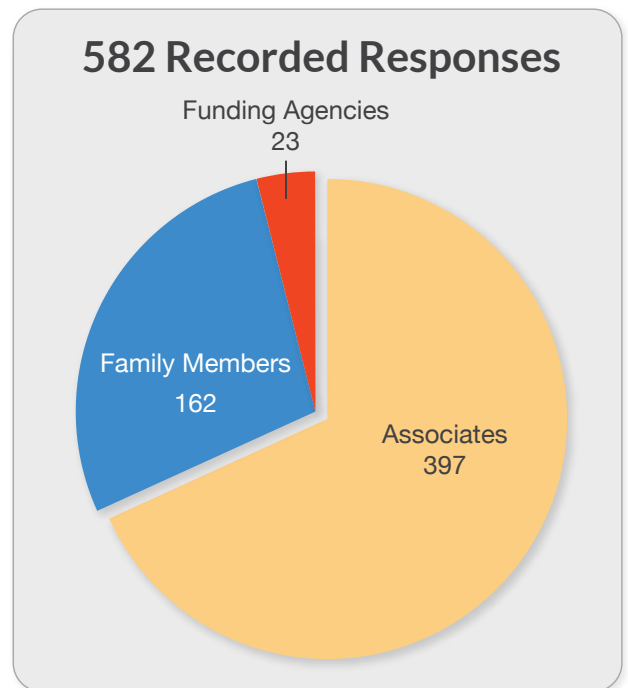
these shortages do not translate to cuts in our services. We must continuously act to ensure that delays in funding, or even potential cuts, remain far from those we support and their direct support workers. Second, it is important to continue forging new pathways to employment by expanding paid internships and direct hire opportunities. Tierra must lead the way to become an organization that can tout an 80% employment rate for all. Finally, we must continue to innovate new ideas, practices, and services to meet the diverse needs of our associates and their remarkable dreams while driving safety throughout all we do.

First, we must continue to advocate for our services at the State level. California is expected to face ongoing revenue shortages over the next several years. We must stand together so that



As always, thank you for your support. I hope you will continue to stand with us as we work to ensure that all people live productive and personally meaningful lives.

Rebecca Lienhard, EdD
Chief Executive Officer



Tierra's 17th Annual Golf Tournament A Hole-In-One!



It was a spectacular day at Moorpark Country Club on Monday, April 29th, for Tierra's 17th Annual Golf Tournament, Awards Dinner, and Auction. Golfers enjoyed temps in the mid-70s, playing Canyon Crest and Ridgeline Courses, and a moving dinner program. Shaina Barnett, Tierra Artist, gave an inspiring speech and Matt Chase, Tierra Golf Chair and Board Member, was presented with the first annual Bud Brown Memorial Leadership & Volunteer Award.

"I am honored to be a recipient of the Bud Brown Award. This is for my aunt, Anna Cannella, who is the reason why I'm here. She was one of the first clients at Tierra, 40 years ago, in a time where there weren't a lot of options. My grandfather, who was an immigrant from Sicily, barely knew the language, let alone finding a place that could give my aunt the support she needed. He was a big advocate of Tierra, so was my mother, Grace, who is here with me tonight. I am humbled to receive this award, but it is also for Anna." — Matt Chase



On behalf of everyone Tierra serves, thank you to our sponsors, golfers, donors, dinner guests, volunteers, and golf committee for making this year's tournament a huge success.



SAVE THE DATE

Tierra's 18th Annual
Golf Tournament and Dinner



Monday
May 5, 2025
Moorpark
Country Club

Special Thanks to
Our 2024 Major Sponsors



HOCHMAN • SALKIN
TOSCHER • PEREZ P.C.
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DAILY NEWS
Local. News. Matters.

Taking a Chance - Tierra and Pasadena Humane

Did you know that every partnership that Tierra has established was created by someone in the Tierra community? From family members to our mentors, each connection is made by taking a chance and saying hello.

For Rosa Bravo, a longtime Tierra staff member in our Workforce Development Program, that moment came when her volunteer group was running low on opportunities. After months of declining volunteer hours, Rosa knew that the only way to establish a new opportunity for her associates was to go out and get it.



"One day, I decided to think outside the box and look for a different site for my crew. I went online and googled different places and came across Pasadena Humane (PH). I emailed and called them to see if we could have an opportunity, and Jose, the Secretary, was very helpful. He sent me the link to fill out the applications for each one of my associates. I took a chance and it paid off!"

Connor Martin, Jessica Sears, and Megan Bingham have learned so much volunteering at PH. From starting out in the Fluff and Fold program where volunteers folded towels and blankets for the dogs and cats, to being in charge. They also help out in the Education room, where they have learned to make snuffle mats for the dog and cat blankets.

Connor has built a good relationship with the staff and they enjoy seeing him. Everyone at PH is so welcoming and always willing to help. Jessica and Megan struggled at first, but they have learned to do all tasks with minimal support.

We have been going strong at PH for six months now and couldn't be happier. Raul, the person we report to every morning, is very supportive, and we have built a strong relationship."

Bravo Rosa, Connor, Jessica, and Megan! This is what we mean when we say: **We are Tierra and we can do anything!**



Connor Martin and Jessica Sears



Megan Bingham

The Unstoppable RACHEL NIZINSKI



We're sitting down with Rachel Nizinski, who, this Spring, officially became the first master's degree recipient to be supported by Tierra's College to Career program! From teaching e-Learning classes to earning a Masters degree in Applied Behavior Analysis, Rachel is knocking down barriers and proving people with disabilities are more than capable of succeeding academically.

Tell us a little about yourself, Rachel.

Hello! I am the first master's degree recipient from Tierra del Sol's College to Career Program. I guess I'm kinda famous now, lol!

You really are and we are so proud of you! Walk us through your journey, and take us back to how it all began.

When I started Tierra I had just graduated from high school and was having difficulty navigating college. I'm the first person in my immediate family to go to college during the time of the internet and although both my parents went to college, they didn't know how to navigate the college system online. Tierra was really helpful with that process.

Where did you start your academic journey?

Los Angeles Valley College. Also known as "Valley."



Did you know right off the bat what you wanted to study?

Not really. I had a lot of ideas. I generally wanted to go into the arts, like media or social sciences, and now I have knowledge in both areas.

That's incredible! What did you major in?

I went to Arizona State and majored in Applied Behavior Analysis, which is a form of psychology and covers all kinds of behaviors. My Bachelor's is in Journalism, and I graduated from CSUN (California State University Northridge).

Amazing! What was that experience like? How did Tierra's College to Career Program help you?

The program was great. Together, we mapped out the classes I wanted to take and they helped me enroll. I also learned how to use transportation. I didn't know much about public transportation. My mother is a homebody and doesn't travel much, so learning how to get around the city was helpful.

What was the best thing about being at Tierra?

The mentors. They understood me and knew where I was coming from. They were firm with me too, when they needed to be, and I appreciated that because I have a hard time with structure. The fact that they checked in consistently, took the time to work with me, while also giving me my space...it made a big difference in my journey.

What would you tell potential students who might be interested in the program?

I would say, GO FOR IT! It was super helpful for me, and even if it's not for you, just give it a try. You never know until you try. Go after your dreams and just take it one step at a time. You can do it.

2023 Key Accomplishments

2023 was a busy year for the organization and these achievements were consistent with our 2023 goals. Additionally, we focused on diversifying our Board of Directors. We now have 23 Board members representing key services, demographics, and business networks.

Workforce Development



- 34 Associates in Paid Internships
- 18 Internship Partner Sites
- 65 Associates in Paid Employment
10% increase over 2022
- 37 Paid Employment Partner Sites
12% increase over 2022
- 414 Associates in Professional Volunteer Positions
41% increase over 2022
- 108 Volunteer Partner Sites
44% increase over 2022
- Launched Tierra's Treasures—
Employment Stats - 100 hours of volunteerism and 35 hours of paid employment per week

Careers in the Arts



- 50 Artist-Led Community Workshops
- Opening of the New West Hollywood Art Gallery
- \$124,000 in Art Sales
- 12 Art Exhibitions and Gallery Shows
- Published Third Poetry Book
- Hosted Open Studios at Sunland Studio Arts and Upland Studio Arts
- Gallery and Studio Social Media has Reached 15,000 Followers

College to Career



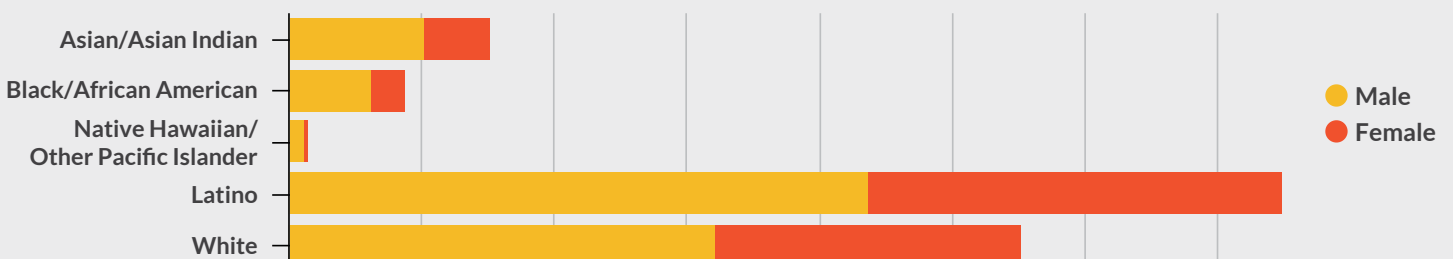
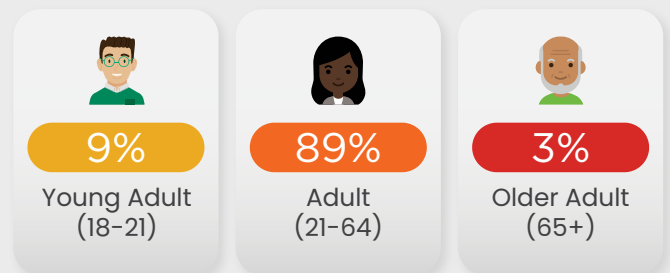
- 177 Students served
 - Nine Colleges/Universities
10% increase over 2022
Added Arizona State University
- Completed:**
- 5 Certificates of Achievement and/or Skills Certificate
 - 10 Associate of Arts Degrees
 - 8 Bachelors Degrees
 - 1 acceptance in Master's Program



“Tierra del Sol helps me to be independent and find employment.”

Key Demographics

782 Unduplicated Active Associates
470 Men and 312 Women



*Anonymous quotes appearing in this section are extracted from Tierra's satisfaction survey results.

How likely are you to refer a friend or colleague to Tierra?

This is a powerful indicator of loyalty to quality services

73%

Promoter

Score of 9 or 10

18%

Passive

Score of 7 or 8

9%

Detractor

Score of 6 or under

How satisfied are you with your ongoing experience with Tierra del Sol?

Of the 402 comments or recommendations for change or improvement, 114 were used to create a frequency analysis using common words, such as art, college, communication, employment, hybrid service, or transportation. The top themes for improvement in the coming year were: Increase/Improve the quality of the Adult Learning Calendar (22 instances), Increase employment opportunities (both paid and volunteer) (19 instances), Increase more personalized services (13), and Improve communication with families and funders (11 instances). Tierra commits its time and resources to improving these areas in the coming year.



397

extremely satisfied



92

somewhat satisfied



12

neither satisfied or dissatisfied



4

somewhat dissatisfied



4

extremely dissatisfied

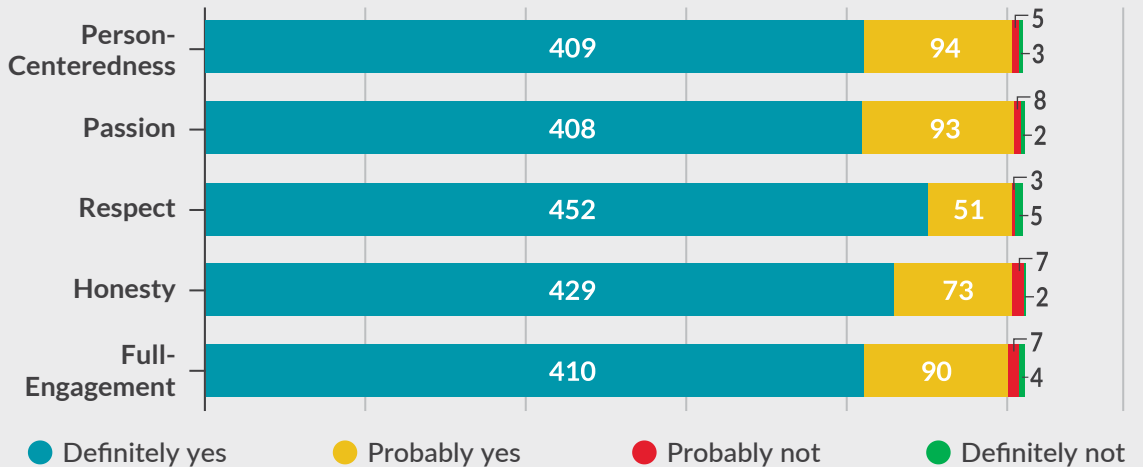


“Tierra is one the best programs I've worked at and observed in the industry. The inclusiveness, person-centeredness, and respect of our associates goes above and beyond.”



Tierra del Sol leads with its values - do you agree?

In 2020, Tierra adopted revised values, mission, and vision statements; since then, we have been intentionally leading to these values throughout our teams, from hiring practices to training curriculum to performance management and everything in between. Our associates and their families must see these values in action with each delivery of services. So, how did we do in 2023?



“I would definitely recommend Tierra del Sol to a friend because of the high-quality support that the coaches provide to their associates.”

“It is a great program where all are accepted and encouraged in the pursuit of art along with a wonderful encouraging environment for social interaction.”



Leave a Legacy That Transforms Lives

There are many simple yet meaningful ways to help your loved one with a disability, and others, while making an impact on the future.

A Special Needs Trust is just one example of providing financial support to benefit your loved one with a disability. It ensures that they remain eligible for government benefits that cover basic needs while retaining access to funds that enhance their quality of life.

By naming Tierra as a remainder beneficiary, you can support our mission through funds that remain in the trust, following the period after the trust ends.

Other ways to give:

- A gift from your IRA or Donor Advised Fund (DAF)
- Name Tierra as a primary or contingent beneficiary of your retirement plan, a life insurance policy, financial accounts, personal property, or other assets.

“By including Tierra del Sol in my estate plan, I’m not just leaving a legacy—I’m investing in a future where adults with disabilities, like my brother Phillip, can continue to thrive, grow, and shine. Tierra del Sol has been exceptional, serving as a beacon of hope and opportunity, nurturing my brother’s potential, and bringing joy to his life.” — Lena Rivkin

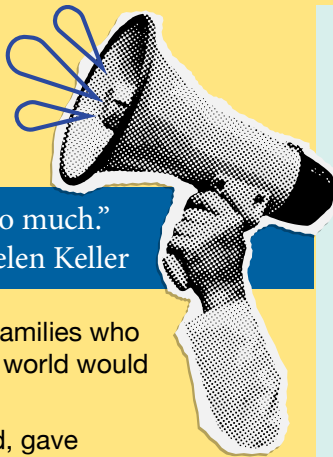


Legacy of Love Society Members

The Bartus Family Bud & Althea Brown	Raul Huerta Jan & Stephen Maseda
The Bryant Family Karen Dermer Sarah Eisner	Joseph Nicoletta Estate of Armand Ouellette
The Esparza Family Fortman Trust Estate of Lois Hansen	Lena Rivkin Larry & Marlys Sack Patricia and Steven Smith
Estate of Patrick Harris Estate of Mary Ellen Hughes	The Stanton Family Elisabeth & Milt Stimson Larry Wong

If you’ve named Tierra in your estate plan, please let us know so we can thank you and others who have invested in Tierra’s future as members of our Legacy of Love Society.

Calling ALL Tierra Families



*“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”
—Helen Keller*

Tierra del Sol was founded 53 years ago by eight families who wanted more for their adult children than what the world would allow.

These trailblazing families, and many who followed, gave generously of their time, talents, and treasure for decades, because they had the foresight and trust to know that momentous change can only happen when *everyone* pulls together.

Today, the dedication and commitment of our parents and families is needed more than ever.

Cuts in government funding and rising costs continue to take their toll on many aspects of Tierra’s programs and services; and, we can’t afford to lose ground when it comes to progress.

How can you help?

Invest in our work to propel your loved one into a life of inclusion and value and DONATE today.

Whether it’s through our Circle of Inspiration Campaign, a one-time or recurring monthly gift (of \$10, \$20, or more), or a matching gift from your company, your donation makes a difference!

Transportation to a job, a backpack for college books, graphite pencils for artworks.... all contribute to giving Tierra’s associates, students, and artists the tools needed to achieve success.

When everyone contributes, the impact is truly remarkable.

Make a difference and give today: tierradelsol.org

Don’t Miss Tierra’s Family Forums

Have you planned ahead for your loved one with a disability? Not sure where to start or who to ask? Join other Tierra family members at our upcoming Family Forums.

Sessions are led by Tierra’s Life Planning Navigator, Julie Snyder; and provide a safe and secure environment to ask questions, share information, and, gain valuable insight into numerous issues facing others who have a family member with a disability.

Topics include letters of intent, late-life planning, caregiver support, early aging and dementia, advocacy, financial and professional resources, among other timely topics.

Don’t miss our next session on Tuesday, July 30 on CalABLE Accounts. Learn



how to set up a CalABLE account for your family member with a disability while protecting your benefits and saving on taxes.

Watch your email for registration information and learn more at: tierradelsol.org/life-planning-resources/



Catalina

Tierra del Sol Gallery opened a lively new show on May 4th, *Catalina*, a documentary short film and solo exhibition starring Tierra artist Catalina Ortega. Guest-curated by Los Angeles creative Darren Romanelli, *Catalina* celebrates the popular subculture of cosplay, the practice of dressing up as a character from a movie, book, or video game. "I grew up with these characters; it's like my twin, and one day, I wanted to be a part of the story," explains Ortega. The film features interviews with the artist, a comprehensive overview of her fine art practice, and cosplay performance footage shot by Ortega herself. Her solo exhibition offers a glimpse of Ortega's richly imaginative world through paintings, works on paper, ceramics, punch-rug wall-hanging textiles, and costumes. The short film and artworks can be viewed on the gallery website www.tierradelsolgallery.org

Save the date for our next exhibition, *Hugo Rocha: Grids, Colors, Worlds*, which runs from July 20th - August 31st! Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11am-6pm.



dream world at k kidspace children's museum

"Dream World" is a group art exhibition for the Kidspace Museum and offices, curated by Jill Moniz, who's worked with The Getty, California African American Museum, and Craft Contemporary Museum.

The show celebrated with an opening reception on May 11th and featured an extraordinary lineup of artists: Aracely Ellis, Dru McKenzie, Jackie Marsh, Kyle Johnson, Leul Asfaw, Manuel Guerrero, Mary Lou Dimsdale, Matthew Garrido, John Maull, and Sarit Halo.

This exhibition not only showcases incredible art but also celebrates Tierra del Sol's fruitful partnership with Kidspace, enhancing both the arts and our workforce initiatives.

A highlight of the evening was the spellbinding dance performance by SUPA (Straight up Abilities), a Los Angeles-based nonprofit that provides inclusive dance opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Two artists from Tierra's studios, Aracely Ellis and Leul Asfaw, are teaching dream drawing workshops at the museum on Saturday, August 10. Join us if you can; it's free with a museum ticket!





9919 Sunland Boulevard, Sunland, California 91040
www.tierradelsol.org



Celebrates One Year!

Tierra's Treasures has officially turned one! Many thanks to those who have donated and shopped at our thrift shop this past year. Your support has kept us open and thriving.

We would also like to give a big round of applause to the incredible Tierra's Treasures volunteers and staff who make our thrift shop such a special place. From keeping the store orderly and chic, to making customers feel incredibly welcomed, bravo!

Tierra's Treasures is located at 3315 W Burbank Blvd. Our store hours are Thursday – Friday: 11 am – 5 pm, Saturday & Sunday: 10 am – 4 pm. For questions, give us a call at (747) 283-1725. Make sure to follow our shop on Instagram @tierrastreasures. See you soon!

