2017 proved to be a very busy year at the Up Side of Downs (USOD) as we continued to utilize the facilities at our Independence location for expanded programming for families, educators, medical professionals, and others. We also provided programs out in the community, including our parent support groups, social outings for individuals and their families, and outreach to schools and medical professionals in the 16-county area we serve. Much of our expanded programming focused on providing resources and support for adults with Down syndrome. Our work continues in this area in 2018 with plans for an independent living retreat, and continuing work on solutions to address employment issues.

As a small nonprofit, we know the value of strategically partnering with other organizations to support our families. In 2017, our work with the Cleveland Bridge Builders, Transition Boosters, and the Employment Collaborative of Cuyahoga County helped us to continue to build a solid network and strengthen our ability to provide programming for the community. Partnerships with area foundations, such as the Cleveland Foundation, the Fowler Family Foundation and the William J. & Dorothy K. O’Neill Foundation have allowed us to expand our education offerings and Artful 21 store.

We recognize the importance of using available resources for the benefit of our families. In 2017, Dr. Brian Skotko spent a day in Cleveland on our behalf, providing valuable information to the medical community and our families. You can read more about his visit in this report.

As our work continues, we thank our staff, board, donors, volunteers, and the community for supporting our efforts. We look forward to continuing to work with our families to determine how best to meet their needs.

Deirdre Roselli
Board Chair

Toni Mullee
Executive Director
### Programs & Services

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<td>The Learning Program reading and math enrichment for parents and students Pre-K–5 w/ Ds</td>
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<td>Sibshop program for siblings ages 7-12</td>
<td>Cleveland Down Syndrome Day</td>
<td>School outreach with IEP teams to facilitate education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospital and home visits to new families</td>
<td>World Down Syndrome Day activities yearly on March 21 (3/21)</td>
<td>Host Educational Conferences for parents and professionals</td>
<td>Provide up-to-date info on the USOD website with relevant medical information</td>
<td>Tee It Up Golf clinics</td>
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<td>Growing with 21 Adult Sibling group</td>
<td>Celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month each October</td>
<td>IEP support for families</td>
<td>Present to grand rounds, panels and students in health care fields</td>
<td>Adult gatherings such as monthly karaoke and seasonal dances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Host Northeast Ohio Baby &amp; Toddler Play Groups</td>
<td>Contact local and state legislators to promote Ds initiatives</td>
<td>Down Syndrome 101 training for professionals</td>
<td>Provide medical professional referrals to USOD members upon request</td>
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<td>Host monthly Parent’s Night Out gatherings</td>
<td>Spread the Word to End the Word Pledge</td>
<td>Peer Presentations to support friendship and understanding within the classroom</td>
<td>Host medical seminars for families</td>
<td>Mind Body Soul social outings for individuals with Ds, 18+</td>
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<td>Family Grants Program offered to USOD families 2x per year</td>
<td>Preferred Language Guide for Ds</td>
<td>Mind Body Soul life skills programs for individuals with Ds, 18+</td>
<td>Review and promote Ds research studies</td>
<td>USOD Holiday Party</td>
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<td>Support group for Parents of Teens &amp; Adults with Ds</td>
<td>Work with media partners to encourage positive and accurate depictions of individuals with Ds</td>
<td>Strider Bike Camp</td>
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<td>USOD supported fitness programs such as Adaptive Jazzercise &amp; Buddy Up Tennis</td>
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<td>Steps to Independence Retreat for individuals w/ Ds, 18+</td>
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</table>
USOD offered the SEAL program for the first time in summer 2017. Summer Enrichment Adventures in Learning (SEAL) is offered for children in Pre-K to grade 5. Summer enrichment helps our students who may need additional time to master academic content & maintain their skills in reading, math, and other academic content areas. For some of our Pre-K attendees in 2017, the summer program was their first opportunity to be in a classroom environment, giving them a chance to learn critical skills & behavior prior to their entry into preschool. Faith Jansen was one of those students. Faith participated in our preschool program. Her mom, Laura Lemire-Janson says, “Thanks to the Up Side of Downs Summer Enrichment program, Faith was ready to begin preschool the following fall. She recently had turned three and had never learned in a classroom without her mom by her side. The Summer Enrichment program was her first classroom experience and the independence skills she gained prepared her well to begin a five-day-a-week preschool program when school began.” The program meets weekly over a 5-week period. Classes are divided into the following levels: Pre-K, Kindergarten, and School Age. Sessions are focused on literacy, math, social skills, art, and music and are play-based. SEAL will continue to fill a critical need in 2018.

Jake Rose - Retail Associate & Artisan

Jake started working at the Artful 21 store in January 2017. He works three days a week, helping customers, checking in products, and making his signature magnets, Jake’s Gems. Jake’s magnets are packaged in sets of 3 & 6 and are also sold individually. Jake has also done several large special orders! Jake has been a real asset at Artful 21, and a smiling face as customers new and old enter the store. There are a few customers who come in just to see him!

Jake’s mom, Chris, shares her thoughts on his work at USOD. “Meaningful employment for Jake has increased his independence and has given a boost to his self-esteem. He takes pride in his work and enjoys being part of the team at the office. The Up Side of Downs has been a supportive and welcoming environment for him to thrive.”
A Visit from Dr. Brian Skotko

We were fortunate in October 2017 to have Dr. Brian Skotko come to Northeast Ohio on behalf of USOD. Debbie Picker, USOD Medical Outreach Coordinator, worked with Brian and contacts at the two largest hospital systems in Cleveland to arrange the visit. Dr. Skotko spoke at Pediatric Grand Rounds at the Cleveland Clinic on the subject of Keeping Children & Adolescents with Down Syndrome Healthy: Medical Updates for Physicians.

He reviewed the latest advances in healthcare for children and young adults with Down syndrome and identified resources to maximize the health and well-being of people with Ds. He also spoke at University Hospitals Genetic Counseling Grand Rounds and met with genetic counseling students on Prenatal Diagnoses of Down Syndrome: Delivering Results in Our New Age of Genetic Testing. And somehow he managed to find time to speak with our families at the USOD office. Said one professor from University Hospitals, “My students (me included) thoroughly enjoyed meeting with Dr. Skotko and you yesterday. They all remarked about how willing you were to share your expertise with them and that they felt you were genuinely interested in their thoughts and opinions.”

Dr. Skotko is a world renowned Board-certified medical geneticist and Co-Director of the Down Syndrome Program at Massachusetts General Hospital. He has dedicated his professional energies toward children with cognitive and development disabilities.

Tee It Up Golf

Recognizing the importance of physical activity, USOD has been hosting a golf program for the last several years. It starts each year with a golf clinic at Signature of Solon, which includes instruction and lunch for participants. In 2015 the Up Side of Downs began a partnership with Golf Improvements of Medina, and they have been hosting the Tee It Up Golf Program for us ever since. Once a week golfers of all ages meet at the driving range to learn the game. Volunteers from Golf Improvements are on hand to provide instruction and afterwards, our golfers enjoy a snack. The program was so successful in 2017 that we added a fall session. Our goal in 2018 is for each of our golfers to play 9 holes! Says Julie Seagren, one of our golfers last summer, “Super awesome!” We couldn’t agree more, Julie!
We are grateful for the hundreds of generous donors, friends and sponsors that support our mission.

**FOUNDATION SUPPORT**

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Invacare  
Melaleuca  
North Ohio Truck Meets  
Sigma Nu Fraternity at Kent State University  
Ten Point O Gymnastics  
Twisted Burgers & Sushi  
Valley View Boys Leadership Academy
We are hosting our first-ever Steps to Independence independent living retreat at Cleveland State University in conjunction with the Occupational Therapy Department at CSU

We have launched our Growing with 21 support group for adult siblings of self-advocates 21 and over.

We will be starting our Teen Enrichment Program in the Fall, which will focus on academic support & life skills training for individuals with Down syndrome ages 13 and up.

We are partnering with the Alzheimer’s Association Cleveland Chapter to provide support to families dealing with a dementia diagnosis of their loved one with Ds.

We are creating an Artful 21 online store funded by a grant from the Cleveland Foundation.
Mission: To provide support, education and advocacy for people with Down syndrome, their families and communities.

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Discover beautiful, handcrafted artwork, jewelry, stationery and more at Artful21—a unique gift shop filled with treasures created by individuals with Down syndrome. Your purchase supports these artisans and their small business ventures.

Visit us at 6533-B Brecksville Road, Independence, OH 44131

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18th Annual Northeast Ohio BUDDY WALK®
Supporting & Celebrating Down Syndrome

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 2018
CLEVELAND METROPARKS ZOO

Rain or Shine
Registration 7:30am
BUDDY WALK® 9am

Registration includes all-day admission to the Zoo & Rainforest!

Register online at usod.org

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