Dear Friends,

2019 was a year of continued growth at USOD as we worked to address the needs of the people we support - individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and communities. We introduced several programs and critical family support resources. Education programs for toddlers (Little Achievers) and teens (Teen Educational Enrichment Network) round out our programs focused on learning and we are now supporting students with Down syndrome through high school. We also began our Book Bundles program to provide free resources to the schools where our kids learn to provide additional educational tools for success to teachers. We added a staff member to our family support team. Rich Tamulewicz joined USOD as our New Parent Support Coordinator to expand our ability to support parents & other family members. We are glad to have Rich on board! We also began offering our Entrepreneur Bootcamp, hosting young adults with Down syndrome and their family partners to explore entrepreneurship as an avenue for self-employment. As of the end of 2019 we now have the work of 29 artisans with Down syndrome for sale in the Artful 21 store.

The cover of this report is titled “We Are Family” for a reason. We know that we cannot be successful without our family of staff, board, volunteers, foundations, sponsors, donors, and most importantly, the families we strive to serve each and every day. Thank you!

Note: It would be impossible to share our thoughts about 2019 with you without noting the extraordinary times we find ourselves in with the COVID-19 crisis currently affecting everyone globally. We cannot predict what the coming months will look like for everyone. What we do know is this - we will continue to provide a high level of programming created to meet the needs of the individuals with Down syndrome that we serve. We are grateful for your support!

Deirdre Roselli
Board Chair

Toni Mullee
Executive Director

OUR MISSION To provide support, education and advocacy for people with Down syndrome, their families, and communities.

OUR VISION The Up Side of Downs is the primary resource for families & communities regarding Down syndrome, where all people with Down syndrome are accepted, included and empowered. USOD envisions a community where people with Down syndrome have limitless opportunities and the ability to pursue their dreams.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Family Support</strong></th>
<th><strong>Advocacy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Education</strong></th>
<th><strong>Medical Outreach</strong></th>
<th><strong>Social Programs</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Packets &amp; follow up contact for new and expectant parents</td>
<td>Northeast Ohio Buddy Walk</td>
<td>The Learning Program reading and math enrichment for parents and students Pre-K–5 w/ Ds</td>
<td>Medical Advisory Board which provides medical expertise to USOD and those we serve</td>
<td>Bowling Buddies</td>
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<td>Transition Boosters partner agency - programming for families of transition-age youth</td>
<td>Cleveland Down Syndrome Day</td>
<td>School outreach with IEP teams to facilitate education &amp; support for families</td>
<td>Deliver packets of information to Northeast Ohio hospitals and medical offices</td>
<td>USOD Family Days at area theaters and sporting events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospital and home visits to new families</td>
<td>World Down Syndrome Day activities annually 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>Entrepreneur Bootcamp</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>
<td>USOD Fall Fun Fests</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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<tr>
<td>Family Grants Program offered to USOD families 2x per year</td>
<td>Preferred Language Guide for Ds</td>
<td>Teen Educational Enrichment Network for individuals w/Ds, 13 - 18</td>
<td>Review and promote Ds research studies</td>
<td>USOD Holiday Party</td>
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<td>Circle of Support – for families dealing with diagnosis of Ds &amp; Alzheimer’s disease</td>
<td>Work with media partners to encourage positive and accurate depictions of individuals with Ds</td>
<td>Summer Enrichment Adventures in Learning Pre-K and up</td>
<td>Serve on advisory boards for research studies</td>
<td>USOD supported fitness programs such as Adaptive Jazzercise &amp; Buddy Up Tennis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly Grandparent support group</td>
<td>Leverage social media to advocate on behalf of individuals with Ds</td>
<td>Book Bundles – free resources for area schools</td>
<td>Steps to Independence Retreat for individuals w/ Ds, 18+</td>
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<td>Parent to Parent Network Support on Facebook</td>
<td>Sunburst Gala where the achievements of individuals with Ds are celebrated</td>
<td>Little Achievers education program for toddlers</td>
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<td>Strider Bike Camp</td>
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In March 2020, we all began dealing with the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. USOD staff began offering virtual programming focused on education enrichment, life skills, social activities for connectivity, and family support. This programming will continue as long as we are unable to gather together in-person.

- Expanded education programming, allowing us to serve toddlers through high school age
- More programs in outlying counties
- Webinars that will be available to everyone in our 16-county service area covering topics critical to our families
- New classes and social opportunities for adults with Down syndrome
- And more!

**TOP TEAMS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Number</th>
<th>Team Name</th>
<th>Money Raised</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Michael Kooser</td>
<td>$30,327.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Kayla's Kingdom</td>
<td>$17,988.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Cooper's Crew</td>
<td>$12,185.00</td>
</tr>
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**USOD BY THE NUMBERS**

- **57%** Individual Contributions
- **26%** Fundraisers
- **10%** Corporate Contributions
- **7%** Grants
- **4%** Administration
- **71%** Programming

2019 USOD Income - $862,689.96

2019 USOD Operating Expenses - $625,572.52
Teen Educational Enrichment Network (T.E.E.N.)

The Teen Educational Enrichment Network began in 2019 after parents of teenagers were surveyed about the needs of their high school students. T.E.E.N. focuses on functional skills and daily living skills. T.E.E.N. is conducted in 6-week sessions scheduled throughout the year. Each session addresses a different topic. Depending on subject matter, sessions can be divided by younger teenagers and older teenagers, in order to most appropriately address topics with participants. All of our education programs provide families with the information and tools they need as they and their children navigate through their school systems, helping to ensure success for their students in school, in the workplace, and in the community.

Entrepreneur Bootcamp

Many barriers to employment exist for individuals with Down syndrome and currently only 17% of adults with Down syndrome are employed. Individuals with Down syndrome can and do make valuable employees and are ready to work, but often lack the opportunity. Entrepreneurship is a path and potential game changer for individuals with Down syndrome. When USOD opened Artful 21 in 2016 with the work of 7 entrepreneurs with Down syndrome, we never imagined that by the end of 2019, we would have 29 artisans represented in the store. As part of our programming to support entrepreneurs with Down syndrome we began offering a 6-week Entrepreneur Bootcamp in 2019. USOD partnered with the Ohio Small Business Development Center at Cleveland State University to create & conduct the class. Topics included product development, evaluating the market, advertising, and producing and selling a product. Experts in accounting, law, marketing & graphic design came in and worked with entrepreneurs and their partners.

Upon completion of the Entrepreneur Bootcamp, participants become part of the Artful 21 community, connecting with other small business owners with Down syndrome, learning best practices and selling their products at the Artful 21 store.

One of the attendees at our first Entrepreneur Bootcamp was Jeff Dudziak. “My business is called Gifts of God’s Creations and I create pottery. I love making crosses and driftwood ceramic bowls that remind me of my grandma. The bootcamp was helpful to create more items and I learned how to create a business card to give to customers. Artful21 has been good and has been a great way to show my art.”
A cornerstone of the services USOD provides is our parent & family support groups. Parents have connected with one another since the organization began and the groups have grown over time. USOD provides dads, moms, grandparents, and siblings the opportunity to connect with each other. As needs have arisen, groups have been added. For example, in 2018 we created Circle of Support, which supports families dealing with a dual diagnosis of Alzheimer’s and Down syndrome. In 2019 we were able to expand our family support by adding a Lorain County Young Friends Group, which meets monthly in Amherst, Ohio.

“Shane and I so enjoy meeting other parents to talk and share life with them. Sometimes the things we are struggling with or confused about or milestones to celebrate, are not understood by our friends with typical kiddos. Having a network is a beautiful thing! And having space for our children to play and make friends with other children like their brother as well as other siblings is precious”

–Kara Paxson, mom of Isaiah, age 2

“My experience with the USOD Dads Group has been a literal life changing experience personally. When my daughter, Moira, was born 6 years ago I was lost after we received her DS diagnosis. Several months into our journey my wife suggested I try connecting with Dads Group. I was skeptical, but I gave it a shot. Rich was one of my first contacts with the group and getting to know him has been a great experience in itself. What this group did for me as not just a father, but as a husband in my eyes makes the Dads Group one of the most important tools in the USOD arsenal. There is no replacement for the support this group offers to fathers like me who struggled to find peace with their new life in the world of DS.”

–Michael Kreutzer, Jr, dad of Moira, age 6
Book Bundles

Book Bundles provide free resources to the schools where our kids learn to enhance that experience and give educators additional tools for success.

The program began in September 2019, when parents were asked to nominate schools in our 16-county service area to receive book bundles. Over 30 schools were nominated and each received a book bundle during October, Down Syndrome Awareness Month. Each package included age-appropriate books for the school’s student library, teacher resources, and awareness materials. The book bundles were labeled recognizing the student that nominated their school.

DID YOU KNOW?

Many but not all people with Down syndrome share common features. For example, many but not all people with Down syndrome have almond-shaped eyes and a short stature. However, like typical people who share similar features, they look more like their families than each other. Individuals with Down syndrome are both affected by and protected against many of the conditions that afflict the general population. An increasing number of adults with Down syndrome in the U.S. are living independently with limited assistance from family members or the state. A small percentage are able to live entirely independently. In the U.S., some students who have Down syndrome graduate from high school, and some go on to attend post-secondary education.
Mission: To provide support, education and advocacy for people with Down syndrome, their families and communities.

Supporting and Celebrating Down Syndrome in Northeast Ohio

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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.

Shop Online at www.artful21.com
Visit us at 6533-B Brecksville Road, Independence, OH 44131

Follow Us On: facebook | twitter | linkedin | instagram | snap | pinterest

Register at usod.org
Even from a distance, we can make a difference.
#BW20VirtuallyUnited

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 2020
Join us LIVE on Facebook
9am-12pm
NORTHEAST OHIO BUDDY WALK®
EDUCATE | ADVOCATE | CELEBRATE

#BW20VirtuallyUnited