



## Best Buddies International Partners With Office Depot to Employ Individuals With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

December 6, 2021

*Statewide Support Will Generate a Culture of Inclusion, Employ People With Disabilities and Allow for Employee Engagement in Both Florida and California*

MIAMI--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 6, 2021-- [Best Buddies International](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), is excited to announce that it is partnering with [Office Depot](#), a leading provider of business services, products and digital workplace technology solutions through an integrated B2B distribution platform with an online presence and approximately 1,100 Office Depot and OfficeMax stores, in an effort to hire participants from Best Buddies jobs programs throughout the states of Florida and California.

"Best Buddies is incredibly honored and grateful to partner with Office Depot in support of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities," said **Andi Allen**, State Director of Best Buddies in Florida. "Their dedication to the Best Buddies mission of inclusion and integrated employment will help bring an even greater awareness to the infinite abilities people with IDD possess."

The [Best Buddies Jobs program](#) secures integrated employment for people with IDD, allowing them to earn an income, pay taxes, and continuously and independently support themselves. Through the Jobs program, Best Buddies develops partnerships with employers, assists with the hiring process and provides ongoing support to the employee and employer. Many businesses have seen the benefits of hiring individuals with IDD, such as gaining dependable, motivated employees; promoting an inclusive and diverse workforce; and improving customer satisfaction.

"At Office Depot, we are committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace, where all individuals are treated equally, fairly and respectfully," said Ellen Bishop, vice president of retail strategy & operations for Office Depot. "We are proud to team up with Best Buddies to expand our hiring in Florida and California, which will help provide opportunities for people with IDD to grow and succeed."

Office Depot has a robust Associate Resource Group (ARG) program, including the STAND (See Talent, Ability, Not Disability) ARG, which was created to foster a caring culture for associates who have seen and unseen disabilities, caregivers for people with seen and unseen disabilities, and people who are passionate in being allies for people with seen and unseen disabilities. One of the STAND ARG's goals is to be an advocate for change by promoting recruitment, employment and retention for people with disabilities.

### **ABOUT BEST BUDDIES INTERNATIONAL:**

Best Buddies® is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Founded in 1989 by Anthony K. Shriver, Best Buddies is a vibrant organization that has grown from one original chapter to nearly 2,900 middle school, high school, and college chapters worldwide. Today, Best Buddies' nine formal programs — *Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges, Citizens, e-Buddies®, Jobs, Ambassadors, Promoters and Inclusive Living* — engage participants in each of the 50 states and in 56 countries, positively impacting the lives of nearly 700,000 people with and without disabilities around the world. In many cases, as a result of their involvement with Best Buddies, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities secure rewarding jobs, live on their own, become inspirational leaders, and make lifelong friendships. For more information, please visit [www.bestbuddies.org](http://www.bestbuddies.org), [www.facebook.com/bestbuddies](https://www.facebook.com/bestbuddies) or [www.twitter.com/bestbuddies](https://www.twitter.com/bestbuddies).

### **ABOUT OFFICE DEPOT:**

Office Depot, LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of The ODP Corporation (NASDAQ:ODP), a leading provider of business services and supplies, products and digital workplace technology solutions to small, medium and enterprise businesses, through an integrated business-to-business (B2B) distribution platform, which includes world-class supply chain and distribution operations, dedicated sales professionals and technicians, online presence, and approximately 1,100 stores. Through its banner brands Office Depot® and OfficeMax®, as well as others, the company offers its customers the tools and resources they need to focus on their passion of starting, growing and running their business. For more information, visit [news.theodpcorp.com](http://news.theodpcorp.com) and follow @officedepot on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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