PROXY PARENT FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2025 ISSUE 34

Who Will Care When You're Not There?



Pepperdine Students Partner with Proxy Parent Foundation to Build a Comprehensive Marketing Plan

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Proxy Parent Foundation is honored to have been selected to participate in Pepperdine University's Nonprofit Leadership Service Project, part of the university's Service Leadership course. This unique program connects local nonprofit organizations with teams of undergraduate business students who apply their academic knowledge and leadership skills to address real-world challenges—all gratis, as part of their commitment to community engagement and service.

Our assigned student consulting team—Pacific Consulting, comprised of Alicia, Kyle, Hana, Chloe, and Tanner—has been working closely with us throughout the semester. Guided by their professor, Dr. Ruth, and supported by auxiliary faculty members, the students have researched, analyzed, and developed a comprehensive marketing plan tailored specifically for Proxy Parent Foundation.

We've had the pleasure of meeting with the students both virtually and in person, discussing our mission, goals, and opportunities for growth. Their insight, fresh ideas, and innovative perspectives have been invaluable as we look toward strengthening our impact and planning for the future.

The final presentation of their project will take place at Pepperdine University's Malibu campus on December 2, 2025, where the students will unveil their recommendations.

We are deeply grateful for this opportunity and excited to see the creative strategies and thoughtful solutions the Pepperdine team has developed to help us continue serving our community for decades to come.

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Message from the Executive Director...



Time truly flies! It's hard to believe that I began this wonderful journey with Proxy Parent Foundation on April 14, 2025. In just these few months, we've accomplished so much together, and I am incredibly proud of our **fantastic team of four** who make miracles happen every day.

I'm delighted to share that we've welcomed **17 new families** to our Special Needs Trust program. We currently manage trusts for **over 120 active beneficiaries,** with another **100+** beneficiaries **ready to activate** when it is time to fund their Special Needs Trust. These numbers reflect not only our growth but also the continued need for the vital services we provide.

A heartfelt **thank you** to everyone who has supported us through your **donations and gifts.** Your generosity keeps us going and helps us expand our reach to families who may not yet know about Proxy Parent Foundation—but would truly benefit from our support. As we approach the end of the year, I invite you to consider including Proxy Parent Foundation among your charitable contributions. Every gift makes a difference.

It has been such a joy meeting many of our families and getting to know your stories. To those I've connected with—thank you for your trust and partnership. I look forward to meeting even more of you in the months ahead.

This year has also given me the opportunity to connect with our wonderful **Board Members**. Carol, Lisa, and I were honored to meet board member **Sheree Lowe** during the NAMI Conference in Sacramento. It was a pleasure to hear her insights and vision for Proxy's future. We also had the privilege of working with **John Buck**, a long-standing board member whose wisdom and experience are invaluable. Thank you, John, for joining us at the conference and helping to represent Proxy at our table—it was an honor to collaborate with you.

We are also excited to share that **Proxy Parent Foundation is now on Instagram!** Although many of our families have not fully embraced digital communication, we warmly invite everyone to give it a try. Social media is one of the most effective and affordable ways for us to share updates, resources, and stories. **Please follow us, like, share, and invite your friends and family to join our online community** and help us spread the word about the important work we do.

As 2025 winds down, we're already looking ahead to 2026—with new ideas, new partnerships, and continued growth on the horizon. We're especially eager to see the creative solutions our **Pepperdine University students** bring to the table as we collaborate on future initiatives.

Proxy Parent Foundation is on an incredible path, and together, we will continue to impact families in powerful ways. Please keep spreading the word about our work—especially about our **Personal Support Services and Special Needs Trust** which safeguard benefits and provide essential guidance for loved ones.

Let's close out 2025 on a high note and step boldly into 2026—ready for new endeavors, new growth, and new opportunities to serve.

Left to Right: Sheree, Lisa, Carmen, & Carol.



What's Happening in the Proxy World

Santa Clarita Valley 3rd Annual Senior Fair

Sponsored by Assemblywoman Pilar Schiavo, Carmen Bowen volunteered at this festive event attended by over 300 seniors. On a warm day, the fans provided by Proxy Parent Foundation were a big hit! Pictured: Carmen with Assemblywoman Schiavo



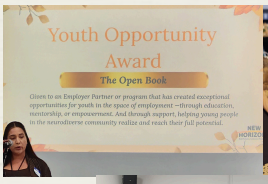






New Horizons Employer Appreciation Breakfast

In recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, New Horizons hosted an Employer Appreciation Breakfast to honor the businesses that partner with them to train and employ adults with disabilities. It was inspiring to see organizations such as Rescue Mission Alliance, The Open Book, and DNA Prep Academy celebrated for their commitment to inclusion and for making a meaningful impact in the community.






TACA Annual Conference – Costa Mesa, CA

Our Director of Client Relations exhibited at The Autism Community in Action's annual three-day conference, connecting with families, caregivers, and professionals. She shared information on Special Needs Trusts and our Personal Support Services while also learning about the latest resources and research. A special highlight was a visit from our favorite little "intern," who brought extra smiles to the day!





NAMI South Bay – Japanese-Speaking Support Group (JSSG)

Proxy Parent Foundation was honored to partner with NAMI South Bay to present to their Japanese-Speaking Support Group. With the support of UC Berkeley's CALVHIO volunteer interpreters, we delivered a fully bilingual presentation in English and Japanese, ensuring clear communication and meaningful engagement. We are grateful for this collaboration and for the warm hospitality—including the wonderful Japanese snacks shared by JSSG members.



John Henry Foundation Open House Fundraiser – Santa Ana

Carmen Bowen and Lisa Lam had the honor of attending this special event showcasing plans for the Foundation's new facility addition. Several residents are also Special Needs Trust beneficiaries with Proxy Parent Foundation. Many thanks to the Krasnov family for the invitation. It was a lovely Saturday filled with food, fundraising, music, and meaningful connections with wonderful families, residents, and staff.

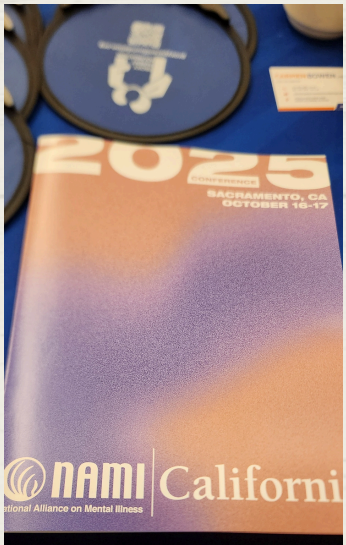







NAMI Conference 2025 – Sacramento

John Buck (Board Member),Carol Larkin, Carmen Bowen, and Lisa Lam (not pictured) hosted our table at this well-attended and informative event with over 300 participants.







Our Clients...

A Beneficiary's Story

We recently received a heartfelt testimonial from one of our beneficiaries, who wished to remain anonymous but wanted to share his experience with the Proxy Parent Foundation community. His words reflect the impact of our mission and the trust families place in us.

Thank you for taking the time to share your story — we are honored to have you as part of the Proxy Parent Foundation family.

I lived with my parents for 66 years and I needed to live on my own. Proxy Parent Foundation helped me find a place to live. My PSS (Personal Support Specialist) helped me to advocate for myself. I was quiet before and now, I can express myself more freely. This has helped my personal growth. I talk to my PSS about my progress- psychological and personal. I had difficulty hearing and my PSS convinced me to get immediate help. I now have hearing aids and can hear better. This has improved my life. My PSS takes me to the drugstore to buy my toiletries. I used to spend extra time at CVS looking for items I needed to buy but I, now, ask staff for help. My PSS helped me pick out clothes for the summer and winter. She also visited me bedside when I had #10 pain in my back and I couldn't get out of bed. She contacted my PCP and I'm currently being seen by a pain specialist. Proxy Parent Foundation has helped me reach this place of fulfillment and happiness that I've never had in my lifetime. I was at my parents' home experiencing paranoid schizophrenic symptoms. I was not open enough to talk about things when I lived at home. Now, I am beyond that loneliness and I'm living in my own place. My PSS has helped me communicate more effectively and more methodically and in finding solutions. I only have my brother and my PSS. I'm thankful to Proxy Parent Foundation for the complete job they've done for me. I have attained happiness at my age. I am 75 years old. This is a miracle.



In Memory of Beneficiary Louis "Lou" Levine



We are saddened to share that Beneficiary Lou Levine passed away in August. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his devoted family, Ozzie and Sharon Levine, and Nina and Eddie Paul who graciously invited me to attend his memorial service at ETTA in North Hollywood, and granted me permission to share this.

ETTA's mission—to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in living full, enriched, and engaged lives—was beautifully reflected in the love and support shown that day. Lou's family, who volunteer their time with ETTA, welcomed everyone who came to honor him and shared touching stories about the joyful impact he had on so many.

We are grateful to have been included in this celebration of Lou's life. The gathering was a powerful reminder that every person, regardless of ability, has the capacity to touch hearts and leave a lasting legacy. Lou truly was loved.

— Carmen Bowen, Executive Director







Emeritus Board Member Spotlight

Carla Jacobs



Interview With Carla Jacobs: A Legacy of Advocacy, Vision, and Heart

Personal Stories, Heritage, and the Roots of Advocacy

Carla began the conversation the same way she began her life's work: with family.
"My advocacy began with my family," she said, reflecting on her mother's struggles and her brother's battle with schizophrenia. "Losing my brother to schizophrenia changed the direction of my life and made me determined to fix the gaps I saw in the system."

Carla shared that her family's resilience was deeply influenced by her Icelandic heritage. Growing up with stories of her ancestors, she learned early the importance of community, perseverance, and caring for one another—values that echo throughout her work today. She described the Icelandic cultural belief that "everyone belongs to everyone," a philosophy that shaped her unwavering commitment to ensuring no family facing disability or mental illness feels isolated.

"Every step I've taken in this work comes from lived experience," she said. "You don't forget the families, the pain, or the fear of not knowing what comes next."

Carmen shared her own connection—raising a child with mental health challenges—which created an instant bond between them. Their conversation became a reflection of why this work matters: real people, real families, real impact.

Building an Organization With Purpose

As Carla recounted the origins of Proxy Parent Foundation, she emphasized the determination needed in its early years.

"In the early days, we had no paid staff," she recalled. "Every board member volunteered because we believed every family deserved support—not someday, but right now."

A turning point came when a business committee was formed, led by fellow board member Tom, which ultimately resulted in the creation of the pooled trust model.

"We built Proxy Parent Foundation because families like mine needed safety, answers, and peace of mind."

Her passion for systemic change—rooted in family experience and strengthened by cultural values—became the cornerstone of the organization's mission.

Board Spotlight Interview Continued...



Challenges, Growth, and the Vision Ahead

When Carmen asked about the challenges in shaping the organization, Carla focused less on obstacles and more on future potential.

"If Proxy is going to thrive for the next generation, we must embrace the tools that make our work seamless, accessible, and reliable."

Her long-term vision is anchored in expanding reach while preserving the heart of the organization:
"I want Proxy Parent Foundation to reach every family who needs us. No one should ever feel alone in this journey."

Expanding Presence and Strengthening Collaboration

Carla expressed the importance of increasing Proxy's visibility in Northern California—an area rich with opportunities for connection and collaboration. She appreciated Carmen's recent efforts to meet with board members in the region and to represent Proxy at statewide conferences.

"Advocacy isn't about titles," she said. "It's about who will show up, roll up their sleeves, and stand with families living with disability."

Together, they agreed that rebuilding in-person engagement after years of limited interaction will be essential to restoring the relational fabric that once defined the organization.

Carrying the Mission Forward

Carmen shared her moving experience attending a beneficiary's memorial service, a gesture that exemplified her commitment to strengthening ties with families. Carla praised her dedication and emphasized that relationships must remain at the center of Proxy's work.

"What matters most is that families trust us," Carla said. "That trust is our legacy, and we have to protect it."

Looking Ahead: Legacy, Leadership, and Hope

When asked what legacy she hopes to leave, Carla offered a vision shaped by decades of advocacy and a lifetime of cultural values:

"My hope is for Proxy to remain strong, modern, and mission-driven—an organization that always puts families first."

Her Icelandic roots, her family's challenges, and her enduring belief in collective responsibility continue to guide her leadership—even as she steps into emeritus status. She remains a steady presence, a trusted voice, and a living link to the foundation's origins.

As the interview closed, Carmen thanked Carla for the indelible mark she has left on Proxy Parent Foundation. The organization today stands firmly on the foundation she helped build—one rooted in compassion, resilience, and the belief that every person deserves dignity, belonging, and peace of mind.

New Resources and Coming Soon!

NEW!

Finding Legal Help for Your Special Needs Trust

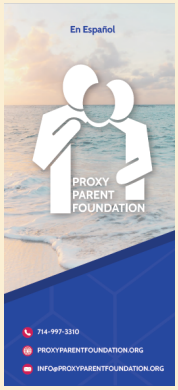
During our in-person presentations and booth hosting, many asked us “how to find legal representation that is familiar with Special Needs Trusts?” We created a handy document that provides guidance to locate needed assistance.

Click here or scan the QR code to view:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LHVxChNp065Urig3h5jauHgJqrzfMIYh/view?usp=sharing

NEW · NEW · NEW · NEW · NEW · NEW · NEW · NEW

We now have a brochure in **Spanish!**



Click here or scan the QR code to view:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zxLeqGsg07JeRvUGra8f2GBBzWvIxiOO/view?usp=sharing

Coming in 2026:

Website Update:

- Adding resources, documents and links

Thank You for Reading This Newsletter!

Look for our next edition in Spring 2026

Need Information more frequently?

Follow & Like Us On Our Social Media

Make a Year-End Gift That Impacts Lives

As 2025 comes to a close, we're grateful for supporters who make our work possible. **Your tax-deductible gift** to **Proxy Parent Foundation** impacts individuals and families in the mental health and special needs community.

Your Support Sustains Our Mission

Proxy Parent Foundation's Mission is to serve the disabled community and their families by acting as a Trustee of the PLAN of CA Master Pooled Trust open to beneficiaries of all disabilities and providing Personal Support Services to our trust beneficiaries who are mentally disabled. Our operations rely on trust fees and the generosity of donors like you. Your donation directly supports our ability to provide these essential services to those who need them most.



✓ 501(c)(3) Tax-Deductible Donation
Proxy Parent Foundation is a registered nonprofit organization

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PROXY PARENT FOUNDATION

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If you have ideas, stories to share, or just want to say "hello." feel free to email me at

cbowen@proxyparentfoundation.org

The Proxy Parent Foundation Board of Directors Wants to Thank You for Your Support!

PROXY PARENT FOUNDATION

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