

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FRIENDSHIP FOUNDATION TO DEVELOP 3.25-ACRE, ALL-INCLUSIVE CAMPUS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL**

With complete community integration in mind, Friendship Campus will have programs in creative, technical and culinary arts, job training, life skills, social-emotional wellness, mentoring and more

Redondo Beach, Calif., December 16, 2020 – [Friendship Foundation](#), dedicated to elevating the lives of those with special needs for 15 years, announced today its plan to develop a [3.25-acre state-of-the-art education Friendship Campus](#) in Redondo Beach to better serve special needs students and the broader community beyond high school. Almost 200,000 students are enrolled in special education in Los Angeles County alone and 8 in 10 Americans with disabilities are unemployed. Friendship Foundation’s new community-integrated, inclusive Campus will provide vocational training and job placement, giving special needs students the tools to transform the workforce and find a lifelong passion and purpose.

The new Campus, developed in cooperation with Redondo Beach Unified School District, will include a 55,000 square ft. facility to develop an engaging and inviting environment for the entire community. Friendship Foundation will focus on serving the whole individual with talent and skill building; personal growth and development programs; social and emotional wellness; healthy lifestyle habits and physical fitness; job training and exploration programs. Vocational and job training programs will include technology, media, hospitality, retail, culinary, office, education, trades, and landscaping.

Highlights include:

Creative Center: Creativity promotes career opportunities as well as life skills like problem solving, adaptability, stress reduction and confidence building. The state-of-the-art studio will include training on Digital Media such as graphic design, coding, game design; Visual Arts such as painting, photography, filmmaking; craftwork such as woodworking and jewelry making; and Music such as songwriting, audio production and music mixing.



Rendering of Friendship Foundation’s new Campus. PC: Gensler

Culinary Arts Center: The Friendship Café and Teaching Kitchen will give culinary students hands-on learning experience to train for careers in the hospitality and culinary industries. The Center will teach the basics of reading recipes, cooking skills, and techniques. It will also feature menu design, safety & sanitation, plating, serving, hosting, and more.

Recreation Center: Friendship Foundation believes physical fitness helps promote mental fitness and overall well-being. The new Recreation Center will offer a place for the whole community to come together to train, play, socialize and get fit with an adaptive curriculum and equipment. Basketball, volleyball, rock climbing, pickleball, dance, yoga, meditation, martial arts, social programming are just some of the things that will be offered here.

Multigenerational Mentoring: In keeping with the goal of integrating the entire community, the Campus will work with area older adults to mentor younger students, encouraging them to use the services offered themselves while providing professional expertise and life experiences. Connecting the ideas, perspectives and experiences of multiple generations benefits everyone with improved problem solving, creativity, confidence and stress reduction for all involved.



Rendering of outdoor space at Friendship Foundation's new Campus. PC: Gensler

"We've learned a tremendous amount serving our special needs community since 2005, working with 10 school districts, numerous partners and hundreds of participants to create integrated programs," said Rabbi Yossi Mintz. "The children who started with us 15 years ago have become young adults and are now asking for help finding gainful employment. Each and every one of us wants a purpose in life and a way to contribute to society. That's what our new Campus is all about."

"We hope to create a gold standard program serving teens and young adults to find their passion beyond high school," Mintz added. "Our dream would be to educate, innovate and inspire students, teachers and the broader community worldwide to serve the entire person. Michael Greenberg, President of Skechers and Co-founder of Friendship Foundation, helped us start more than a decade ago to get started and together with their generosity, as well as many other donors, we are making this 'big idea' a reality today."

The new Friendship Campus is estimated to be completed fall 2022 and cost \$36 million. \$27 million of the budget (75%) has already been committed from private funding including Founding Donor Greenberg Family/Skechers; Legacy Donor Harris & Linda Toibb; Founders Circle Donors Ted & Claudette Schwartz and Josef & Chana Malka Gorowitz; and Visionary Donors: Jon & Nicole Hirschberg, Mike & Rose Kaplan; Jarrod & Celi Dogan; Dr. Miriam & Dr. Ben Landau; Paul & Georgia Solomon; and Margaret Hauelsen. This project has had generous professional support from two world-renowned companies. [Gensler](#) has partnered with the Friendship Foundation to design this innovative campus and [Saatchi & Saatchi](#) has provided a pro bono strategic marketing plan and materials. To see a full list of donors or participate, please visit www.friendshipfoundation.com.

[About Friendship Foundation](#)

The Friendship Foundation is dedicated to building an integrated, accepting and unified community for our children and young adults. It was founded 15 years ago by Rabbi Yossi Mintz and the Jewish Community Center Chabad of the South Bay with the goal of providing children with special needs the same advantages of their peers to enjoy and experience life. The organization has developed programs that allow children with and without special needs to play, grow, develop and thrive together. The success and growing demand from the Foundation's existing programs have expanded the vision to include an innovative new campus centered around turning special needs into special contributions to society. Follow Friendship Foundation at <https://www.instagram.com/thefriendshipfoundation/> and <https://www.facebook.com/FFsouthbay/>.

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