



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friendship Campus Appoints Kelly Stroman as Managing Director

\$40 million Friendship Campus for students with physical and intellectual diversities is expected to be completed in 2024

Redondo Beach, Calif., November 11, 2021 - The [Friendship Foundation](#), dedicated to elevating the lives of those with varying abilities for 15 years, announced it has appointed Kelly Stroman as managing director of its [Friendship Campus](#), a new 3.25-acre, state-of-the-art education Campus in development to serve postsecondary students who are intellectually and physically diverse. Stroman will also oversee Friendship Foundation operations and partner relations.

As managing director, Kelly will spearhead current and new partnerships for the campus, which will provide academic coursework and job training to prepare young adults, who are intellectually and physically diverse, for employment. She will help to build the soul of the campus and to carry out the vision of the Friendship Campus to educate, innovate, and inspire students, teachers, researchers, and the community to create a better place for everyone. We are exploring a relationship

“We’re thrilled to welcome Kelly as our new leader of the Friendship Foundation and Friendship Campus,” said Yossi Mintz, founder of the Friendship Foundation. “She brings a unique blend of business and education acumen with extensive non-profit experience to help develop the Campus and lead our award-winning programs for children and young adults with special needs. Her passion for inspiring and educating the whole person will help the Foundation and Campus reach new heights.”

Most recently, Stroman served as president/CEO of the Manhattan Beach (MB) Chamber of Commerce where she received the Unsung Hero award for guiding thousands of businesses through the economically challenging pandemic and was recognized for Acts of Kindness by the MB City Council for creating the first Chamber Inclusion Committee in the South Bay, among many other accomplishments. Exceptionally active in the community, Kelly was an executive committee member for the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce, the MB Rotary Club, the City of MB Long-Term Business Solutions Committee, and the Homeless Action Committee. She was also a founding member of Amigos Unidos, a philanthropic organization that encourages young men to make a difference in their communities, and has held numerous volunteer positions with the MB Education Foundation and PTA.

“On a personal level, my two sons and I have been tremendous supporters of the Friendship Foundation’s programs and students when at Mira Costa High School,” Stroman said. She was also instrumental in the Special Olympics World Games Manhattan Beach Host Town activities with athletes from Hungary and Nepal. She continued on with the World Games and volunteered as a media coordinator at the USC campus during the two weeks of games. She described her interaction with athletes and their coaches as personally transformative and one that she will continue to draw upon in her new role at the Friendship Campus. “I’m honored to be chosen for this role and look forward to making an impact on this community. I’m ready to develop partnerships, raise funds and recruit the best talent to build this Friendship Campus into one of the country’s leading professional development centers for diverse students.”

About the Friendship Campus

The innovative 3.25-acre Friendship Campus will include a 64,000 square foot facility to develop an engaging and inviting environment for the entire community. The Friendship Foundation will focus on serving the whole



individual for postsecondary training 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. Technology, media, hospitality, retail, culinary, office, education, trades, and landscaping are some of the initial vocational programs planned. A 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. Culinary arts will feature a Friendship Café and Teaching Kitchen to give students hands-on learning experience for training in hospitality and culinary industry careers.

A \$5 million grant was recently announced with the Bhatia Family Foundation to create the Bhatia College for Professional Development, which will collaborate with Vanderbilt University's Frist Center for Autism and Innovation, local and national universities, and major corporations to help build a bridge for college-bound students and guide a path to successful employment and careers. The new Friendship Campus is expected to be completed in 2024 and cost \$40 million, with \$36 million pledged to date. To see a full list of donors, participate or learn more, please visit [Friendship Campus \(friendshipfoundation.com\)](https://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 Yossi Mintz with the goal of providing neurodiverse children with those with varying abilities the same advantages as their peers to enjoy and experience life. The organization has developed programs that allow all children 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/>.



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

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