

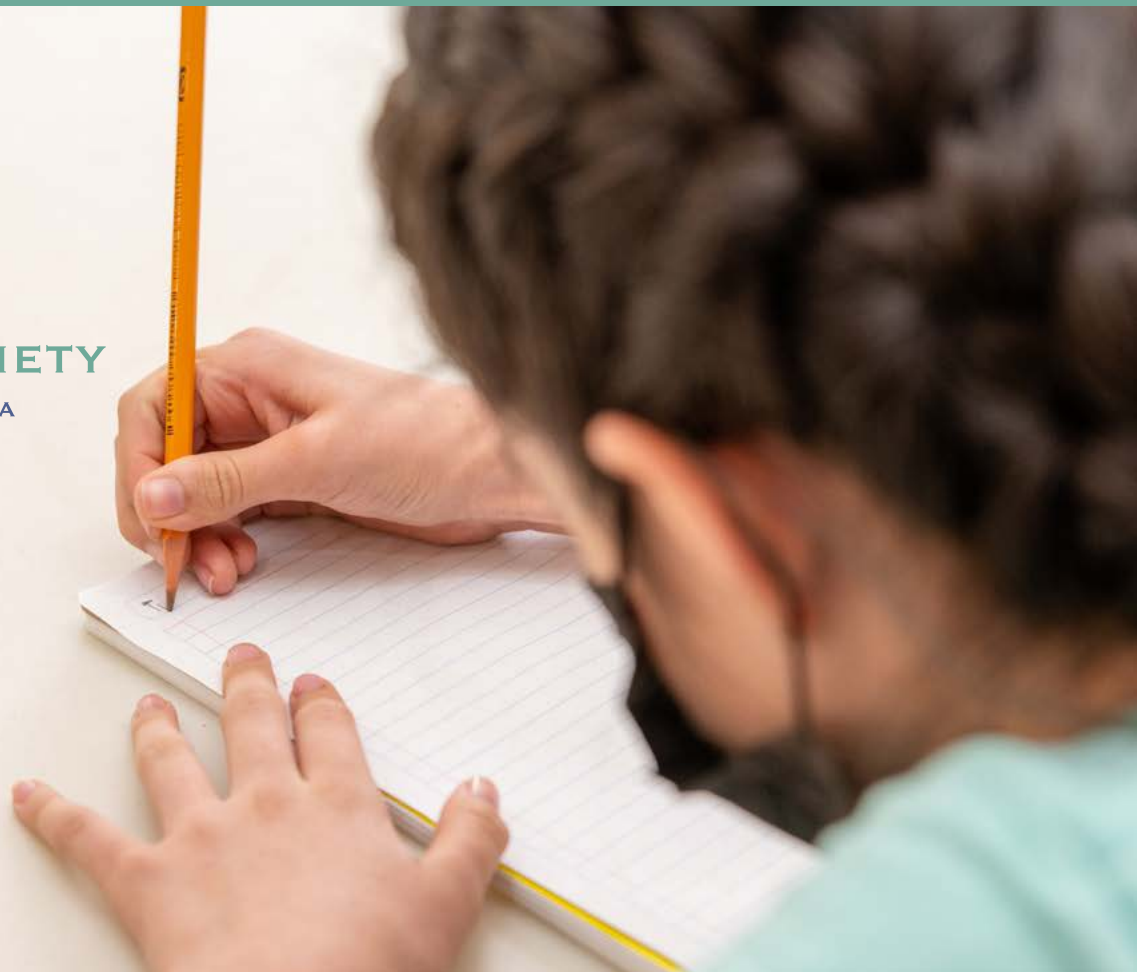


FY 2022 Annual Report (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022)



THE PALAPA SOCIETY

LA SOCIEDAD DE LA PALAPA
DE TODOS SANTOS, A.C.



Our Mission

The Palapa Society of Todos Santos, A.C. exists to make a positive difference in people's lives.

This is accomplished through quality education and community support.

**BIBLIOTECA
A PONIATOWSKA**



Our Past Year at a Glance

LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

When we look back on The Palapa Society's FY 2021-22 year, we are humbled by the work of so many extraordinary individuals who kept The Palapa Society's mission and vision moving forward every day.

The ongoing pandemic continued to impact our educational programs in a variety of unexpected ways, which gave our Board of Directors and Committee members new opportunities to flex our collective experience and grow our areas of expertise.

Over the last few years, the Mexican federal government tightened rules and regulations for non-profit associations like ours. Labor and Immigration laws now require organizations rely less heavily on volunteers, so as not to take employment opportunities from Mexican citizens. In addition, more detailed data and financial reporting is required from all programs on a monthly basis.

Since these changes have stretched us beyond what we can ask of our volunteers, we have chosen to hire all Program Directors as paid Palapa Society employees. While this increased our fundraising goals exponentially this year, it was a necessary move in order to comply with all fiscal and legal obligations to maintain our official, non-profit status.

The pandemic has also been a time for personal reflection, which drove career changes for Jayna Schweitzer, our Executive Director of Programs and Juan Diego González, our first Palapa School Director.

Finally, it is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of Hal Butler, at the age of 91 years young. Hal served as the Board of Directors Treasurer, as the head of the Education and Palapa School Committees, and as our driving force for over a decade. Hal's passion, leadership, optimism, and dedication is our North Star, motivating all of us to continue fulfilling the promise of The Palapa Society.

In this year's Annual Report, we honor the work of Hal Butler and our Palapa team members who have left, as we welcome new leaders whose fresh ideas are serving the community's evolving educational needs.

We can't imagine Todos Santos without the largest public bilingual library in BCS, multi-level English programs for adults and children, and a middle school and high school that prepares local students for positive, choice-filled lives as they become the future leaders of our town. It is our hope that the people of The Palapa Society – the teams of volunteers, teachers, staff, students, and families – will inspire you to continue supporting this dream.

Lastly, if you haven't visited The Palapa Learning Center to explore the library or see the new 2nd floor addition for the high school, we invite you to schedule a guided tour. The Palapa Learning Center is for everyone in the community, including you.

Sincerely,



Erick Ochoa
President, The Palapa Society Board of Directors



THE PALAPA SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



SCOTT BOSCH



PAM BUMANN



HAL BUTLER
TREASURER



LAUREL D'ANGELO
SECRETARY



CINDY HIGGINS



JAMES MASASCHI



SHARON MORRIS
VICE PRESIDENT



DR. WILLIAM NATION



ERICK OCHOA
PRESIDENT



GABY TRUJILLO

COMMITTEES, STAFF AND PROGRAM DIRECTORS

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PAM BUMANN
DAVID HIGGINS
SHARON MORRIS
DR. WILLIAM NATION

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

LAUREL D'ANGELO - CHAIR
HAL BUTLER
CINDY HIGGINS
SHARON MORRIS
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JAMIE SECHRIST - DIRECTOR OF
FUND DEV & MARKETING
JIMENA GARCIA - MARKETING ASST
SCOTT BOSCH
MIGUEL GUERRERO
JAMES MASASCHI

GRANT COMMITTEE

SHARON MORRIS - CHAIR
PAMELA VAZQUEZ
JAMIE SECHRIST

VISION 2025 COMMITTEE

JAMES MASASCHI - CHAIR
SCOTT BOSCH
PAM BUMANN
LAUREL D'ANGELO
CINDY HIGGINS
SHARON MORRIS
JAMIE SECHRIST

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

PATRICIA A. BAUM
Biblioteca Elena Poniatowska
Biblioteca Infantil
JACKI GILLESPIE
Puente al Inglés para Niños
KATE LEWIS
Puente al Inglés para Adultos



JAMIE SECHRIST



PAMELA VAZQUEZ
Grants Coordinator



JIMENA GARCÍA

PARTNERS, GRANTS AND SPONSORS

Over the last year The Grant Committee streamlined our approach to apply for national and international grants, updated financial and administrative documents, and established an accountability process for reporting on grants received. We secured partnerships with 6 new organizations: Centro Mexicano para la Filantropia (CEMEFI), Fundación Educa, Fundación Astra, Alianza Cero Basura, Building Baja's Future, TrustLaw; strengthened 3 ongoing alliances: Asociación Comunitaria Baja California Sur, International Community Foundation, SAHM Family Foundation); and we obtained the highest level of recognition offered by CEMEFI, which strengthens our credibility when connecting with potential partners and donors. We were awarded the Sahn Family Foundation grant for the second year to expand our arts programs, and we received in-kind donations from Red EDUCA, OSC Digital, Google, and Trustlaw.



International Community Foundation (ICF) provides The Palapa Society of Todos Santos, A.C. with a fund that makes it possible to provide U.S. tax deductions to our donors and grantors. Throughout the years of our partnership, they have been vital for the health and growth of our organization.

Our Volunteers

The Palapa Society is fueled by the passion of over 60 volunteers. We depend upon and are grateful for each volunteer who generously gives their precious time and talent.

"Volunteering has been so rewarding – I see the impact the library has had on the community every day."

- Donna Schultz

GRANTS



PARTNERSHIPS



THE PALAPA SCHOOL



Juan Diego González
Director of The Palapa School
Fall 2016 - Spring 2021

Juan Diego González was the premier Director of The Palapa School for five years. During his tenure, Juan Diego was instrumental in securing our

school's accreditation from Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP), the national Department of Education. In addition to his duties as Principal, Juan Diego taught classes in Creative Writing and Philosophy, and also published many articles as a journalist for newspapers throughout Mexico. Juan Diego left The Palapa School at the end of last year, to pursue his career as a Professor at a University in La Paz, BCS. His heart will always remain with the students of The Palapa School, and he returned as a guest speaker at the ceremony for our first graduating Senior class.

Anna Pilar Castillo Mercado
Director of The Palapa School,
Fall 2021 - Present



With the announcement of Juan Diego González's departure, The Palapa Society opened the search for a new School Director throughout Mexico. It turned out that the most qualified candidate was the Spanish teacher at The Palapa School, Anna Castillo. With the encouragement of her teacher peers, Anna applied her administrative experience with SEP and worked to balance the best aspects of a traditional education with a progressive curriculum for the growth of our students.



PALAPA SCHOOL DIRECTOR & STAFF

Director and Teacher

ANNA PILAR CASTILLO MERCADO

Teaching Staff

CITLALLI BALBUENA SORIANO
 Civics and Ethics, Social/Emotional Health, History and Geography

DIEGO CARRANZA SAVAL
 English, Physical Education

ANNA PILAR CASTILLO MERCADO
 Spanish

ISAAC GALINDO
 Sociology, History, Ethics

ELIDE NOPHAL
 Geography, History
 Technology, Literature

YURIXHI OCHOA OCHOA
 Community development, Investigation methods, Ethics, and Social Science

FRANCISCO XAVIER QUIROZ GONZÁLEZ
 Math and Physics

MARLON JOSÉ TUÑÓN REYES
 Statistics, Mathematics, Computer Science, Physical Education

HÉCTOR OMAR VALLEJO CASTILLO
 English

JESÚS ARMANDO VÁZQUEZ GARCÍA
 Biology and Chemistry, Arts

MONICA RODRIGUEZ
 Orientation Project

MARICRUZ TORRES CADENA
 Administration

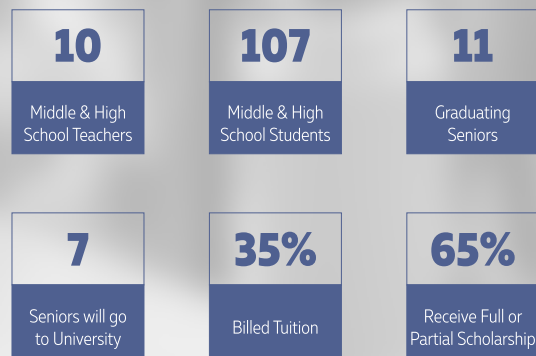
ALONDRA LEÓN
 Custodial Staff

MONSERRATH SANCHEZ
 Custodial Staff

GREGORIA PEREZ
 Cafeteria Catering

ARTURO JIMENEZ
 Groundskeeper

PALAPA SCHOOL BY THE NUMBERS:





This school year started with our new School Director, the grand opening of the second story high school classrooms, and the anticipation of our first graduating Senior class.

Thanks to the generosity of David and Cindy Higgins and The Stewart Family Foundation, the building of the additional classroom space was completed and furnished in time for the new year.

But we can't talk about the 2021-22 School year without mentioning the impacts of the pandemic. As a SEP-certified school, The Palapa School is mandated to follow all SEP-issued educational, health, and safety guidelines. The federal government of Mexico acknowledged that students throughout the country were struggling as the pandemic continued. SEP required all schools to prioritize the socio-emotional well-being of students, above classroom attendance, homework, and testing. SEP provided training for teachers to watch for students who need more help and support, and new techniques to connect with students to ensure that they continue to learn and not drop out of school. The Palapa School hired a part-time teacher with credentials in child psychology, who helped students learn how to recognize the causes of their moods and cope with challenges. We commend the flexibility and dedication of our teachers who pivoted to online learning on three separate occasions due to nation-wide school closures. We also thank the parents who became instant IT experts by troubleshooting internet connectivity, setting up virtual classrooms via Google Meet, and keeping their children focused while learning on screen.

The Parent Association kept active throughout the year. Their Tianguis (flea market) fundraiser helped support the Teacher and Student appreciation days, and the first annual Senior Trip, where the graduating class traveled to Puebla and Mexico City. On this cultural excursion, the Seniors toured the historical cities, visited the Anthropology and Teotihuacán archeological museums, and even went on an African safari.



Growth and development of our teachers is also an important objective for the success of The Palapa School. We congratulate Francisco Xavier Quiroz González and Jesús Armando Vázquez García for earning their advanced degrees in Education Sciences and applying their newly earned skills and knowledge at The Palapa School.



While it has been a year of many challenges, The Palapa School students are resilient and we are proud of how well they are navigating their world. They competed in the national Math Olympics and annual Science Fair, with one of our female Juniors advancing to the third round in the Chemistry competition. They learned how to play guitar and sing traditional Mexican songs. They advanced their learning in science and technology in the robotics program, with plans to compete against other schools globally next year. They formed a volleyball team and played against the CECyT students at the public high school up the road. They are thinking about their futures and whether to attend University or join the workforce after graduating.



We look forward to staying in touch with our graduates through our inaugural Alumni Program. This way we can learn what they plan to study and connect them to scholarships as available. We can support their businesses or their campaigns should they plan to run for office. And we can encourage them to join The Palapa Society, to be the voice of the students, and help keep these educational opportunities in our community going.



COMMUNITY AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

BRIDGE TO ENGLISH (PUENTE AL INGLÉS)

Started in 2003, the Bridge to English Program for Children is one of the longest-running educational programs The Palapa Society offers. The program runs October through June, offering Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced classes 3 days a week for each level to students ages 6-17. While we typically average 130 students a year, this year we only had 75 students due to Covid restrictions. Next year, we plan to increase the number of students and resume our Summer Camp and Water Safety programs as well.

5
English Teachers*

72
Students

11
Students on full scholarship

\$120MX
Monthly Tuition**

Jayna Schweitzer, Executive Director Community Programs 2011 - 21

Jayna Schweitzer started with The Palapa Society as a volunteer teacher for the Puente al Inglés para niños program, and was promoted to Program Director. In addition, from 2016-2021, Jayna helped oversee all Palapa programs as well as the construction of the Palapa Learning Center. We thank Jayna for her 10 years of service.



Jacki Gillespie, Director Puente al Inglés para Niños 2021-Present

Full-time Todos Santos resident since 2015, Jacki Gillespie started as a teacher with the Puente al Inglés para Niños program, bringing her 5 years of teaching experience to our community. In 2021, Jacki was promoted to Director of Puente al Inglés programs.



ENGLISH FOR ADULTS (PUENTE AL INGLÉS PARA ADULTOS)

Started in 2006, the Bridge to English program for adults is geared towards students who have completed the English program for children, as well as for adults in the community who are primarily business owners, workers, and parents of children in the Puente program. This year, we offered quarterly classes designed to better serve the students' schedules, and a new summer Conversational program for all levels. Next year, we aim to offer vocational-focused courses to help improve employment opportunities.

13
English Teachers***

80
Students per Quarter

4
Students on full scholarship

\$500MX
Quarterly Tuition**

Kate Lewis, Director Puente al Inglés para Adultos 2012 - Present

Kate Lewis has been leading the English program for Adults for 10 of the 11 years that she has lived in Todos Santos. When she's not teaching English, Kate can be found at her El Tecolote bookstore in the center of town, or on the beach with her horses, burro, and dogs.



*3 paid teachers, 2 volunteer teachers.

** Discounts are provided to families and groups.

*** All volunteer teachers.

BIBLIOTECA ELENA PONIATOWSKA

In November 2017, the library was formally dedicated in the name of world renowned and award-winning Mexican author, Elena Poniatowska, as the largest bilingual library in Baja California Sur. The library is in the process of procuring more contemporary fiction in Spanish to better serve the community. Book donations in English and Spanish are always welcome.



Donna Schultz, Director Palapa Community Library & Biblioteca Elena Poniatowska 2011-21

Donna started volunteering when the library was just a little room on Calle Obregon. As Director for over a decade, Donna spearheaded two relocations, opened 3 Little Free Libraries, and kept the doors of the library open year-round with the help of a team of dedicated librarians. While Donna retired as Director at the end of 2021, she continues to volunteer at the library throughout high season.



Joy O'Brien, Director Biblioteca Infantil Elena Poniatowska 2017-21

In 2014, Joy O'Brien first joined The Palapa Society as a volunteer teacher for the Puente al Inglés para Niños program. When The Palapa Learning Center opened, Joy became the Director of the Biblioteca Infantil Elena Poniatowska. Joy applied her experience as a former pediatric registered nurse, and helped local children develop a life-long love of reading, especially at the favorite Saturday Reading Circle and Craft Hour. Joy retired in early 2022, and has returned to Louisiana to be near her grandkids.



Patricia A. Baum, Director Biblioteca Elena Poniatowska 2021 - Present

Daughter of a University professor in Oregon, bibliophile Paty Baum moved to Todos Santos in 1996 and started what is now the Biblioteca Elena Poniatowska, with 500 books donated from her father's collection. Paty stepped in as Director in 2022 teeming with new ideas, with a focus on increasing outreach and accessibility to the local Spanish-speaking community.

11 Volunteer Librarians	350 Cardholders
FREE Membership for students	\$250MX* Annual Membership
9000+ Titles in English and Spanish**	OPEN Year-Round

BIBLIOTECA INFANTIL ELENA PONIATOWSKA (CHILDREN'S LIBRARY)

The goal of the Children's Library is to support and encourage the lifelong educational, cultural, and recreational pursuit of learning and reading, for Spanish and English-speaking youth. Recent acquisitions of 200+ Young Adult fiction titles in Spanish, will support our mission to support and encourage young readers. These Young Adult books will also allow satellite collections to be located in the Todos Santos Casa de Estudiante, and the Pescadero Middle School, with plans to expand to other sites in 2023.



* Reduced rate from \$500MX due to COVID closures.
** Titles include books, magazines and DVDs.

THE PALAPA SOCIETY HONOR ROLL

DIAMOND

(\$50,000 and up)

- ★ Cindy & David Higgins

RUBY

(\$25,000-\$49,999)

- ❖ Peter Buck
- ❖ Nancy & David Lacey
- ❖ Pam & Peter McIroy

EMERALD

(\$10,000-\$24,999)

- ❖ Chip Conley
- ❖ Jim & Patricia Kern-Cardillo
- ❖ Cathryn Williams & Greg Broughton

PLATINUM

(\$5,000-\$9,999)

- ❖ Kristen & Jim Bender
- ❖ Susan & Ken Churchill
- ★ Marimar Higgins
- ❖ Kim & Ted Higgins
- ❖ Higgins Hopkins McLain & Roswell
- ❖ Tracy & Chris Lecroy
- Palmer Letzerich
- Jill & David McLain
- ★ Cheryl Myers
- ❖ Leigh & Jack Russo
- ❖ Jae & Jeff Sherwood

GOLD

(\$1,000-\$4,999)

- Ginny & Andrew Ades
- Denise Anderson
- ◆ Eleanor Andrews
- ◆ Suzanne & Rick Arnold
- Onagh Ash
- ❖ Karen & Scot Barker
- ◆ Heather Bauer & Jerry Back
- Susan & Roy Beaton
- ❖ Cheryl H. Benware
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- Bayley, Flora & Diamond Brad
- ◆ Marjolein Brugman
- ❖ Jean Buckner
- ★ Pam & Paul Bumann
- ★ Vickie & Hal Butler
- Christie Cadwell
- David Carpenter
- ★ Ryan Casey
- Susan & Terry Casey
- Jeff Castelaz
- ◆ Kathy Cate & Bill David
- ❖ Rome Chelsei
- ❖ Children's Chance for Life
- ❖ Linda & Grayson Drexel
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- ❖ Kathleen Ecker
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- ❖ Betsy H. Walters
- ◆ Kathy Warnert
- ◆ Lisa Welsch & Doug Colton
- ◆ R.B. Westbrook
- Paul Wrench

LEGEND:

- ◆ Monthly Donor
- ❖ Annual Donor
- ★ Monthly & Annual Donor

SILVER

(\$500-\$999)

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- ◆ Yandara

BRONZE

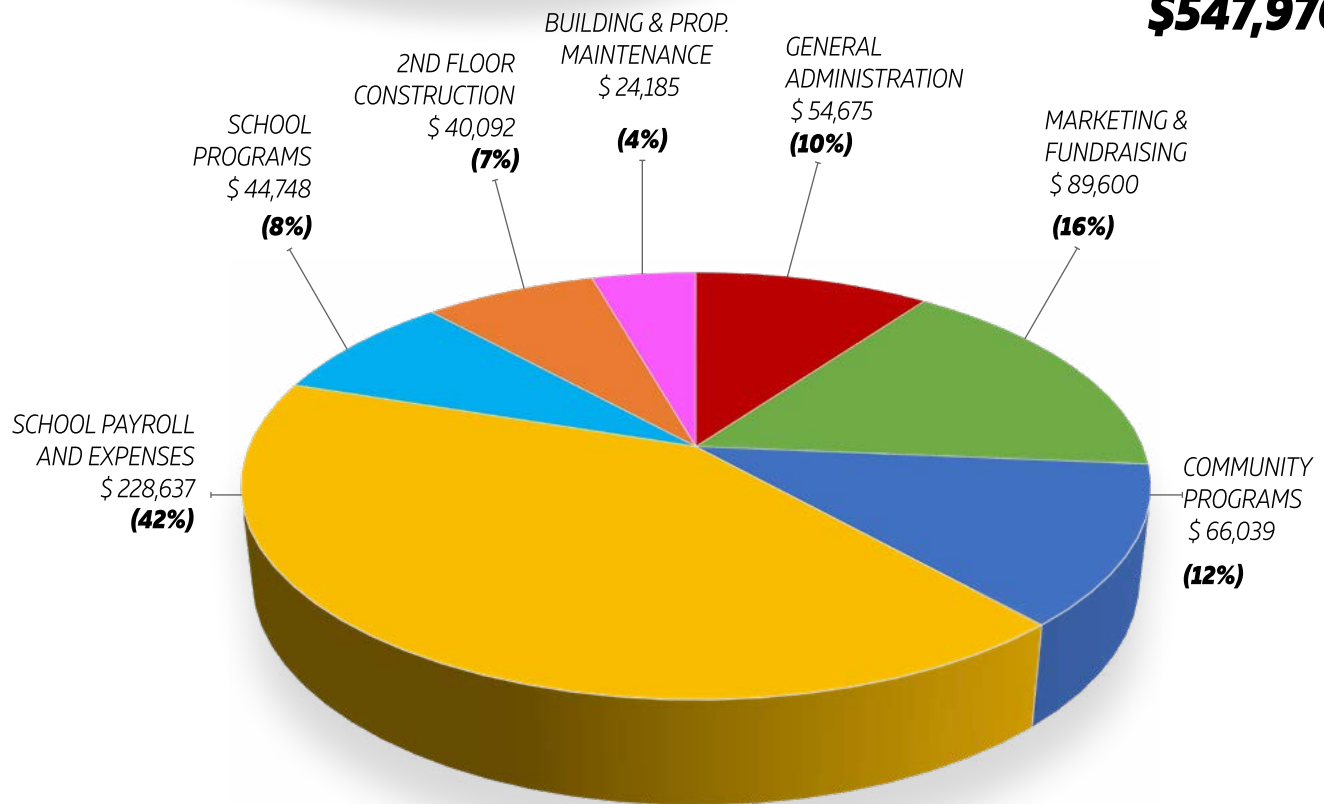
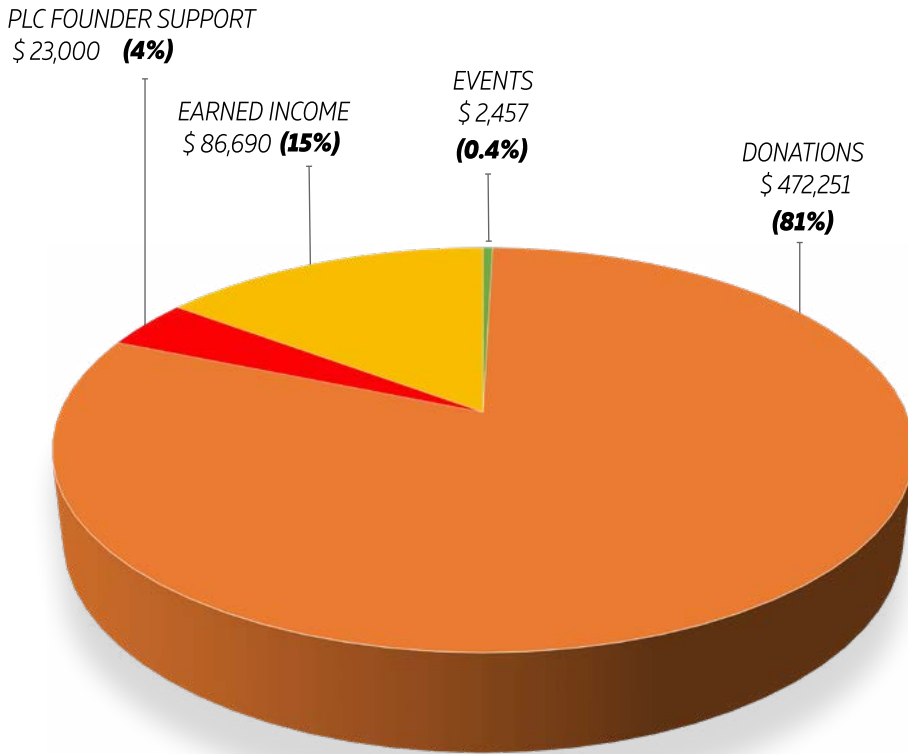
(\$499 and under)

- ◆ Patricia & Eric Adams
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- ◆ Michelle & Steve Bosch
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- ◆ Tiffany Braanfladt-Bale & Jeff Bale
- ❖ Margaretta & Austin Caesar
- ◆ Digna Cassens
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- ◆ Liane Collins
- ◆ Lisa Collins
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- ◆ Paty Rains
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- ❖ Jamie Sechrist & Ricardo Madrazo
- ◆ Cameron Sellers
- ❖ Douglas Seymour
- ◆ Ole Skjefte
- ◆ Alesia Spain
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- ◆ Linda Stobbe
- ◆ Herbert Stone
- ◆ Meredith Sweeney
- ◆ Brian Thacker
- ◆ Grace & Tim Tuttle
- ◆ Peter Van Veen
- ◆ Angelica Velez Mendez
- ❖ Mary Alice Wester
- ❖ Gina & Dr. Geoff Wickwire

Thank you to the many donors who gave gifts in honor / in memoriam.
We also thank those who donated in-kind gifts and supplies for our programs.
We deeply appreciate your generosity.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

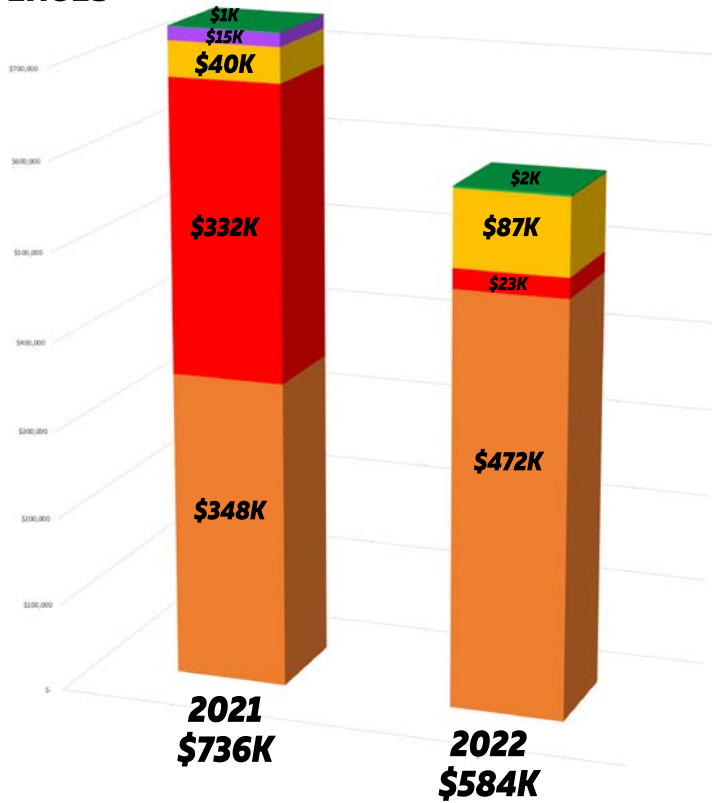
All amounts are in U.S. Dollars



FY 2021 REVENUES	\$ 584,398
FY2021 EXPENSES	\$ 547,976
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) FROM OPERATIONS	\$ 36,422

FY 2021 & FY 2022 COMPARISON

REVENUES



DONATIONS

Contributions from individual donors.

PLC FOUNDER SUPPORT

The Palapa School Founders support funding for organizational stability.

EARNED INCOME

Includes The Palapa School Tuition and fees from the Biblioteca Elena Poniatowska and English programs.

GRANTS

EVENTS

These normally include the Tianguis (community flea market), the Carrera de Todos Santos 5k Run, Todos Santos Open Studio Tour and Historic Home Tour. These events have been on hiatus since 2020 due to COVID constraints.

2ND FLOOR CONSTRUCTION

SCHOOL PAYROLL & EXPENSES

Salaries, Employment Taxes, Training and Education Seminars.

MARKETING & FUNDRAISING

Marketing and Communications, Social Media, Grant Writing and Fundraising Events.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Beca Scholarships, Puente al Inglés, Adult English, Biblioteca Elena Poniatowska and After School Programs.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

SEP-certification requirements, Accountant, Taxes, Insurance, Supplies, Equipment and Technology Expenses.

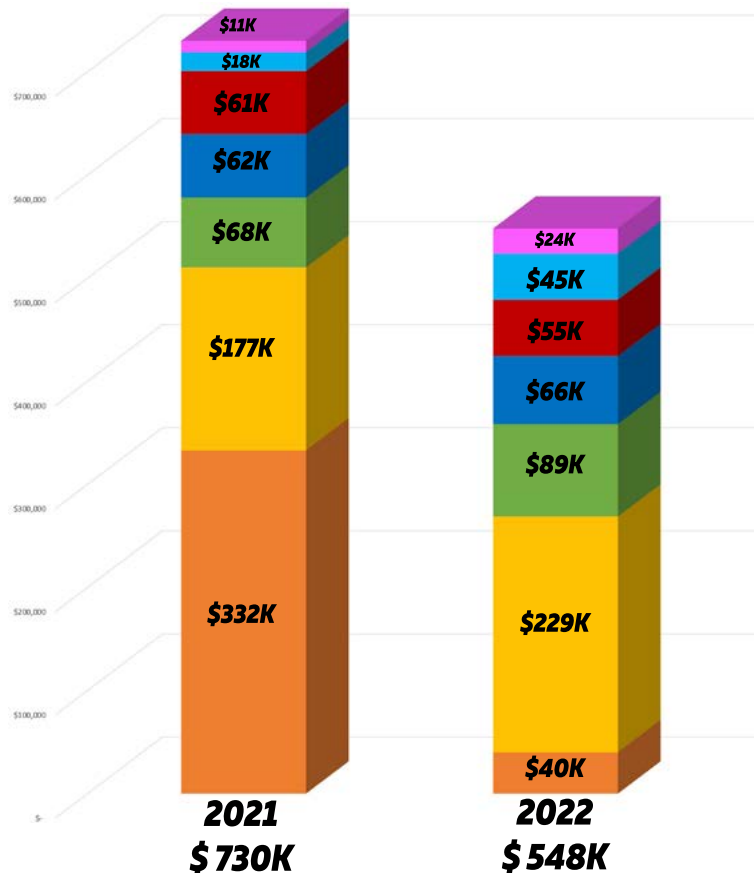
SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Equipment, Computers, Furniture, Books, Supplies and Materials.

BUILDING & PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Security, Custodial Services, Utilities, Repairs and Maintenance, Groundskeeping.

EXPENSES



IN LOVING MEMORY OF HAL BUTLER

Hal Butler was a renowned educator for almost 40 years, retiring as Principal of Douglas High School in Minden, Nevada. Hal and his wife Vickie relocated to Todos Santos, BCS full-time, where he started volunteering with The Palapa Society. Here, Hal continued to apply his belief that access to quality education was the path to leading a productive and fulfilling life.

During his 13 years with The Palapa Society, Hal served as Treasurer on the Board of Directors and as the leader of The Palapa Education and School Committees, where he helped build, staff, create curriculum, and successfully open The Palapa School.

On April 27, 2022, Hal Butler passed away at the Fidepaz Hospital in La Paz, BCS at the age of 91 years, just two months shy of seeing our first Seniors graduate from the high school. No words can express our profound gratitude for his dedicated service, friendship, and deep love for our community. We will greatly miss his calm, steady hand at the helm, and the way he could seamlessly toss a joke into a meeting with a sly smile to lighten the mood.

Hal's experience in education and love of learning contributed to the growth of The Palapa Society, and his legacy will live on for generations to come.

Hal's family held a celebration of his life in December 2022. Donations in memory of Hal Butler can be made to The Palapa Society of Todos Santos, A.C.





Vision

It is the vision of The Palapa Society of Todos Santos, A.C. to be a sustainable, accessible community-focused organization in which quality educational programs empower choice-filled lives and create positive, transformational change.

WE ARE PALAPA



THE PALAPA SOCIETY
LA SOCIEDAD DE LA PALAPA

The Palapa Society of Todos Santos, A.C.
Calle del Huerto entre calles Guayaba y Mango
C.P. 23300 Todos Santos, BCS, MX

Email: info@palapasociety.org

Website: www.palapasociety.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/palapasociety.org

Instagram: www.instagram.com/palapasocietyoftodosantos

Note: Some photos in this publication were taken before the COVID 19 pandemic.