Colleges Program Overview

The Best Buddies Colleges Program consists of 8 chapters in the Capital Region: SUNY Albany, SUNY Plattsburgh, SUNY Oneonta, St. Rose, Union, Skidmore, Siena and Marist. The Colleges Program fosters one-to-one friendships between college students without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their peers on campus or in the community with IDD. Young adults with IDD historically have been isolated at home or in work environments. The Best Buddies Colleges Program is changing this by providing the opportunity for people with IDD to be involved in their local campus and community life.

Chapter Activities

College chapters hold monthly activities for its members. These activities provide an opportunity for all chapter members to be together and have fun! Halloween parties, lip-sync competitions, soccer games, talent shows, Thanksgiving dinners are some examples of what these activities may entail. Furthermore, chapters attend the Capital Region Friendship Ball and Friendship Walk. The Friendship Ball is an opportunity for all Best Buddies participants to dress up and dance the night away in the name of friendship. The Friendship Walk is the largest annual fundraiser for Best Buddies in the Capital Region and gives participants a platform to raise money, spread awareness, and walk for inclusivity of ALL people.

Participant Roles and Expectations

*Peer Buddy* – an individual without IDD who is paired in a one-to-one friendship with a person an IDD.

*Buddy* – an individual with IDD who is paired in a one-to-one friendship with a person without an IDD.

- Participants are matched in a friendship for a minimum of a year
- Participants are able and interested in forming a mutually enriching friendship
- Communicate with their buddy on a regular basis (Best Buddies recommends at least once a week)
- Meet with your buddy twice a month (This can include the chapter activity)
- Attend chapter activities and meetings
- Complete friendship updates each month on Best Buddies Online