

Magical Bridge Playgrounds

All abilities. All ages. All welcome.





The Magical Bridge story starts with a mom, two daughters, and the need for a playground.

It was only after the birth of her second daughter, Ava, that Magical Bridge founder Olenka Villarreal discovered how isolating a playground could be. A place that brought joy and community connections with her older daughter, Emma, had become a dreaded outing when she realized there were no parks designed for families like her own — a family with two children with very different needs.

Determined to create the kind of outdoor space that both her disabled and non-disabled daughters (and all their friends) would love, Olenka mobilized a team of volunteers to create such a place, where visitors of every age and ability could play together.

In 2015, after seven years of design research, advocacy effort and fundraising, Magical Bridge Playground in Palo Alto California opened to the

public. Once visitors discovered it, communities from around the world began reaching out for help in bringing this new kind of playground to their communities.

With generous support from the Enlight Foundation and Steckler Family Fund, Magical Bridge Foundation was launched as a non-profit organization in 2016. The mission was to build more playgrounds and advocate for parks and programs to include the whole family from the youngest to oldest, no matter what the ability or disability.

With 7 custom playgrounds now open to the public, and many more in development, Magical Bridge Foundation is passionate about bringing the joy of play, kindness, and community connections.



“We dream that one day soon we will no longer need to specify ‘inclusive’ or ‘accessible’ when creating something as vital as a playground.”

– Olenka Villarreal, Founder, Magical Bridge Foundation

MAGICAL BRIDGE PLAYGROUND Where Everyone Plays Together



25%

1 in every 4 Americans live with a visible or invisible disability which can include **physical, cognitive, auditory, or visual** impairments. Playgrounds are vital places for community connection, yet most playgrounds do not meet the needs of everyone. With an underlying message of kindness, **Magical Bridge Playgrounds** remove the physical and social barriers of today's typical playgrounds and give everyone a place to play together.



Today's typical
playgrounds are
not enough.

With loose gravel, raised surfaces, and forced pathways, most of today's playgrounds have limitations which make them unfit, unsafe, and not accessible for at least 25% of our population. While ADA requires playgrounds to provide limited access, Magical Bridge improves all components from the ground up — including safety, accessibility, equipment, and layout design — for the best possible gathering and play experience for everyone.



Magical Bridge Playground in Sunnyvale, CA
Shown: Barbara Butler Artist-BUILDER Two-story Playhouse

Innovating playgrounds, parks, and programs for more inclusive communities.

Magical Bridge Playgrounds are welcoming, engaging, and comfortable for all ages and abilities with endless opportunities for visitors to connect, reflect, exercise, and build relationships — with nature and each other.

Magical Bridge Playgrounds and park solutions meet the following criteria:

1

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

Magical Bridge Foundation works with city planners to ensure everyone can safely and easily access the playground. Once there, barrier-free entry points, smooth surfaces, and seamless travel paths enable everyone to move throughout the space. The playground layout, signage, wayfinding, and equipment are all designed for maximum accessibility. Volunteers host activities, concerts, and programs for all ages and abilities making the playground a gathering place that brings the entire community together.

★ MAGIC TOUCH

At Magical Bridge Playgrounds, visitors using wheelchairs or other mobility devices can reach the top of the slide mound and the second story of the custom-designed playhouse.

2

INNOVATIVE AND ORIGINAL

Drawing from over a decade of research and development in collaboration with inclusion visionaries, landscape architects, community leaders, educators, therapists, developers, artists, and families living with disabilities, Magical Bridge Playgrounds are designed for maximum play value with a variety of unique play opportunities at multiple challenge levels. Magical Bridge design and equipment standards consider those with autism, sensory impairments, medical fragility, and varying cognitive and physical limitations, along with other visible and invisible disabilities.

★ MAGIC TOUCH

Patented Slide and Sit Landings™ at the bottom of our slides give those needing extra time a safe space to wait for their mobility device or help from a friend.

3

ENRICHING FOR EVERYONE

Outdoor play is the foundation for physical development and for social-emotional lessons such as cooperation, sharing, and problem solving. Magical Bridge multigenerational solutions enable everyone to enjoy the benefits of outdoor activity together. In addition to engaging play experiences, the playgrounds provide comfortable places to relax and retreat, featuring gathering spaces, shade areas, and quiet places to reflect. Park amenities (i.e. parking, bathrooms, water fountains, etc.) work for everyone, so visitors can plan a long and fulfilling visit.

★ MAGIC TOUCH

Magical Bridge designers pay close attention to the environment, choosing fast-growing shade trees that thrive in each location and provide a natural canopy with maximum coverage.

Magical Bridge Playground in Redwood City, CA



Beyond Inclusion, There's Magic



Magical Bridge Playground in Palo Alto, California

HOW MAGICAL BRIDGE PLAYGROUNDS ARE DIFFERENT

Award-winning Magical Bridge Playgrounds are internationally recognized for these ground-breaking features and more:

Distinct play zones, labeled above in circles, provide playground visitors with predictable navigation and play experiences. With smooth, **seamless surfaces**, the playground offers **ample space** for open play and easy transition between play zones. With no tan bark or loose gravel, the **soft-fall foam ground cover** does not obstruct breathing tubes or create problems for those using wheelchairs or mobility devices.

Variable challenge levels in each zone help playground visitors build skills and confidence. Carefully selected equipment is **accessible for all** — including elevated areas such as the two-story, artist-designed **Playhouse and Stage**, slide mound, ground-level carousel, and ramp-accessible sway boat.

The Kindness Corner is a place for reflection and thoughtful conversations. Inscripted walls offers messaging that promotes acceptance, good will, and friendship.

Hideaway Huts are placed throughout the playground for those, such as people with autism, who need **a retreat from play or a safe place** to observe the action.

Slides with Magical Bridge-patented Slide and Sit Landings™ provide a transitional place to sit at the end of a slide for those needing extra time while waiting for a mobility device or assistance from a friend.

Secure, perimeter fencing offers parents and caregivers peace of mind as their children explore the many play opportunities at Magical Bridge. The playground, designed for **all ages**, including seniors, offers **adult fitness equipment** and tables for **group gatherings**, games, and celebrations.



★ MAGIC TOUCH

Hideaway Huts, placed throughout the playground, offer a quiet and safe place to retreat and observe the action.

PLAY ZONES

Carefully identified play zones are the foundation of Magical Bridge Playgrounds. Each zone offers multiple challenge levels and unique benefits for all ages and abilities. Best of all, the spaces and equipment are intentionally designed to provide maximum accessibility so everyone can play together.

Spinning, Swinging and Sliding offer profound physical and mental benefits:

- Increases physical activity
- Builds coordination and strength
- Improves cardiovascular and gross motor skills
- Increases blood flow to the brain, leading to cognitive development
- Improves balance, and spatial awareness
- Nurtures self-discipline and problem solving skills
- Increases the body's vitamin D levels
- Reduces anxiety and improving mood
- Improves concentration and focus
- Enhances imagination and creativity
- Develops stronger immune systems

Barbara Butler Artist-Builder Original



Two-Story Playhouse and Community Stage



Slide Mound



Swing and Sway Zone



Spin Zone



Tot Zone



Kindness Corner



Music Innovation Zone

Experience the Magic

PLAYGROUNDS AND SPECIALTY PARKS



Mitchell Park, Palo Alto, California



Fair Oaks Park, Sunnyvale, California



Red Morton Park, Redwood City, California



Community Park, Morgan Hill, California

SPECIALTY PLAYGROUNDS

- Magical Bridge Playground at Addison Elementary School in Palo Alto, California
- Magical Bridge Designed Whoosh! Playground at CuriOdyssey Museum in San Mateo, California



UPCOMING PROJECTS Projected openings between 2023-2026



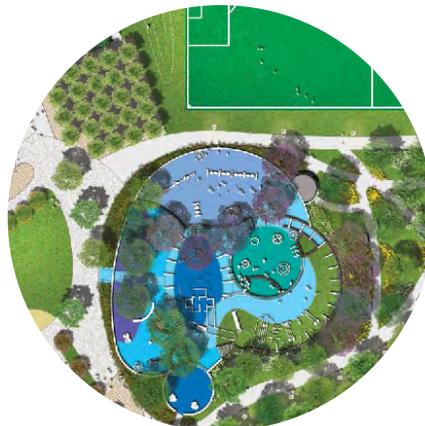
Central Park, Santa Clara, California



Rengstorff Park, Mountain View, California



EAST PALO ALTO
Bell Street Park



EAST PALO ALTO
Cesar Chavez Middle School



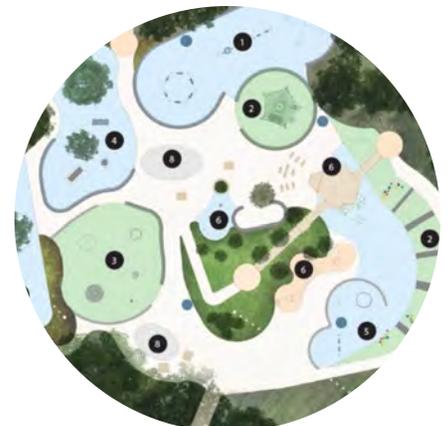
FOOTHILL COLLEGE
Learning Lab



SINGAPORE
National Museum



SINGAPORE
Sun Park Plaza



NEW ZEALAND
Claudesland Park

More Inclusive Communities



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Magical Bridge Kindness Ambassador Program invites people of all ages, regardless of ability or disability, to promote kindness and inclusion both on and off the playground.

Community volunteer groups support Magical Bridge Playgrounds by hosting events including concerts, performances, hands-on activities, and learning. The Kindness Ambassadors program welcomes teens and adults to help facilitate these events and activities. In addition, Kindness Ambassadors provide an active, playful, and kind presence on the playground making Magical Bridge Playgrounds a welcoming place for all.

★ MAGIC TOUCH

Magical Bridge Playgrounds sponsor volunteer Kindness Ambassadors of all ages and abilities to foster kindness and fun on and off the playground. It's a great way for teens to be a positive and engaged member of their community.



AWARD-WINNING DESIGN

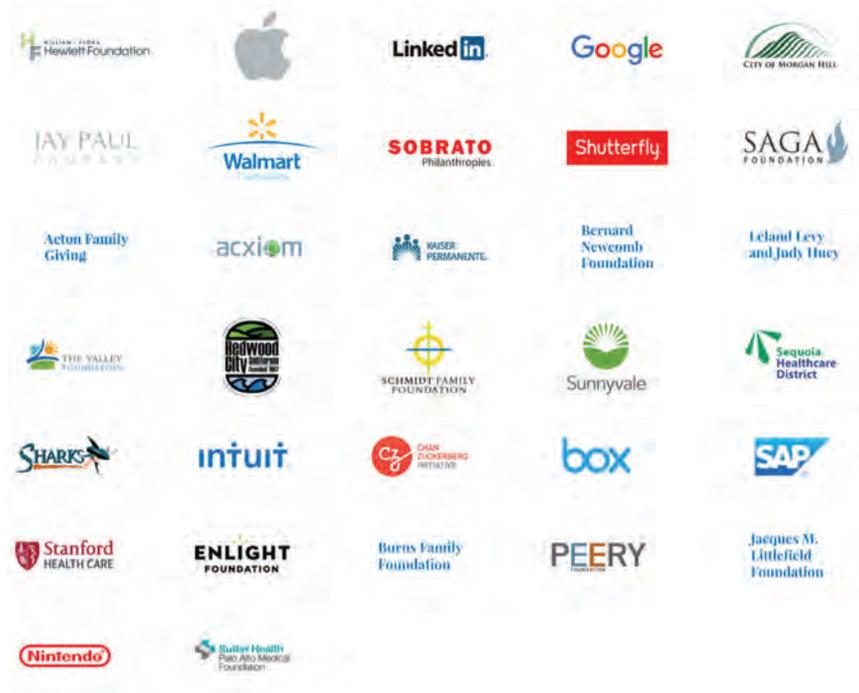
Magical Bridge Foundation is proud to lead a global movement to redefine the nature and context of socially inclusive and physically accessible playgrounds and parks.

AWARDS

- 2022 City of Sunnyvale Mayor’s Award for Excellence
- 2019 Murphy Award for Outstanding Community Contribution, City of Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce
- 2018 “Outstanding Innovation for Youth,” The Gratitude Network
- 2016 Palo Alto Tall Tree Award for Outstanding Citizen Volunteer Award
- 2016 Jefferson Award for Public Service to Community
- 2016 CODA Awards (design and art) for Magic Harp Design
- 2016 “Best Playground in Bay Area,” San Francisco Magazine
- 2016 “Best Community Impact,” Silicon Valley Structures Awards
- 2016 “Nation’s Favorite Playground,” Play Across America
- 2015 Award of Excellence, California Park and Recreation Society
- 2015 Frontline Park Award for Design, City Parks Alliance

MAGICAL GIVING

Magical Bridge Foundation thanks the many community partners, philanthropists, corporations, and foundations who have generously helped bring to life truly inclusive and multigenerational playgrounds for everyone.



SPECIAL THANKS

Santa Clara County All-Inclusive Playground Grant (AIPG)
 Joe Simitian, former California Congressman and current Santa Clara County Supervisor, spearheaded the county to allocate \$20 million towards creating more Magical Bridge and other inclusive playgrounds across the county.

GLOBAL RECOGNITION

★ 2016 ★



**Smithsonian
 Cooper Hewitt Museum**
*Featured for Innovative
 Inclusive Design*

★ 2019 ★



**World Economic
 Forum at Davos**
*On Display for
 Innovative Social Impact*



PBS National NewsHour
*profiles Magical Bridge as a
 “playground for everyone,
 no matter what your
 age or ability” [2.7 million
 global viewers nightly]*



Magical Bridge Playground in Palo Alto, CA



MAGICAL BRIDGE
FOUNDATION

MAGICAL BRIDGE FOUNDATION

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magicalbridge.org | join us on social media: @magicalbridge

Magical Bridge Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Tax ID: #81-2377796