

# AbilityFirst Celebrates Renovated Center Grand Opening

Photos courtesy AbilityFirst

AbilityFirst recently held the grand opening of its Pasadena flagship location, the AbilityFirst Lawrence L. Frank Center, on Thursday, Oct. 21.

The nonprofit, which provides programs and services to help children and adults with disabilities reach their full potential, recently raised \$6 million for its "Building Independence, Celebrating Community" campaign during a time when many fundraising efforts were on hold for nonprofit organizations across the country due to the pandemic.

The funds have been used to complete the planned renovations of AbilityFirst's aging mid-century modern center in Pasadena and the AbilityFirst Long Beach Center, which is still under construction.

A formal presentation and welcoming remarks were given, along with resolutions from legislators. Attendees were taken on a tour, including Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Pasadena Councilman Gene Masuda, Susana Porras of Councilman John Kennedy's office, Ann Hickenbottom of Assemblyman Chris Holden's office, and Dominick Correy of state Sen. Anthony Portantino's office.

The renovations to the Lawrence L. Frank Center, which is a 9,300 square foot building, were completed during the pandemic

and include an upgraded kitchen to maximize the space and create a fully-accessible teaching kitchen where individuals with disabilities can gain valuable cooking, safety and life skills. The center received enhanced office space for the AbilityFirst College to Career program and its staff, plus two updated and expanded outdoor areas for individuals to enjoy outdoor activities.



Richard Frank and AbilityFirst CEO Lori Gangemi



Terri Kohl, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisor Kathryn Barger and Gale Kohl stand by the gaming recreation room named after Barger.



AbilityFirst board member Richard Frank, L.A. County Supervisor Kathryn Barger, AbilityFirst board chair Wendy Lees, and AbilityFirst Lawrence L. Frank Center Director Michael Barkyoub



Denise and Louis Petitfils, Jeff D'Angelo, and Susan and Richard Frank in front of AbilityFirst's newly updated Richard R. Frank Teaching Kitchen



Dion and Debbie Cornejo

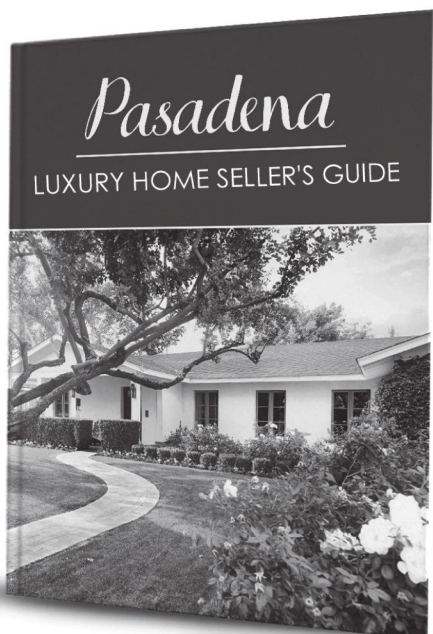


The Lawrence L. Frank Center

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The Terri and Jerry Kohl Conference Room



The Steve and Mary Brockmeyer College to Career Office



The Richard R. Frank Teaching Kitchen