Since I first began working with students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in middle school, I have taken a special interest in recognizing the importance of a club like Best Buddies. I built my first relationships as a peer tutor, where in seventh and eighth grade I had an entire class period devoted to working with students in reading, math, and science as well as non-academic activities such as crafts, games and physical education exercises. My first buddy ever was named Haley, we became good friends in my peer tutor class in middle school and remained friends as I joined the Best Buddies club at my high school. Not only did this club bring me new friendships, it taught me the true importance of diversity and inclusion.

Here at Florida State University, there are five pillars which are glorified and upheld to their fullest potential. ‘Diversity and Inclusion’ is one of these pillars and is an accurate representation the Best Buddies club as well as it’s community. Despite being a school sponsored club, it is all inclusive to many in the Tallahassee community, welcoming people of all ages who live with or without disabilities. Best Buddies focuses on one-to-one friendships, building confidence, and uplifting others to their fullest potential. While analyzing Best Buddies as a whole community, I will focus on this essential question: What important texts exist within the Best Buddies community and how are they functioning within it?