

# BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

of Huntington Valley



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF HUNTINGTON VALLEY



# Happy HOLIDAYS

from the kids at the  
Boys & Girls Club!



CLUB NEWSLETTER Winter 2016

**GREAT FUTURES START [HERE.](#)**



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF HUNTINGTON VALLEY**

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**HUNTINGTON BEACH BRANCH**

2309 Delaware Street  
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

**OAK VIEW BRANCH**

17261 Oak Lane  
Huntington Beach, CA 92647

**PACIFIC LIFE FOUNDATION BRANCH**

15645 Gothard Street  
Huntington Beach, CA 92647

**LEARNING CENTER CHILD  
DEVELOPMENT PRESCHOOL**

17565 Los Alamos Street  
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

**ROBERT MAYER CHILD  
DEVELOPMENT PRESCHOOL**

15744 Golden West Street  
Huntington Beach, CA 92647

**CLUBHOUSE ACADEMY**

17565 Los Alamos Street  
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

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# Your Support Gives Kids in Need a Holiday to Remember

## The Club Needs Your Help to Host Holiday Parties for Disadvantaged Youth

Want to give a child in need a special holiday this year? Team up with the Boys & Girls Club for the annual "On Dasher, On Dancer" holiday parties and give the Club's most at-risk members a special evening to remember. Kids will have the chance to meet Santa and have their picture taken, pick out their own special toy, make holiday crafts, eat holiday treats, sing carols, and celebrate the magic of the season!

Here's how you can help:

- Donate new, unwrapped toys at the front office of any of our branches by December 9.
- Call 714-309-4962 to sign up to volunteer at one of our two parties, on December 13th and 14th.
- Make a financial contribution in the enclosed yellow envelope to help underwrite the cost of the holiday parties.

One of the Club's Unit Directors, Grisel Voigt, comments, "Our holiday parties are amazing. The kids that attend get to see how many people in the community care and participate to make sure that they have an awesome holiday. Every year, kids ask me, 'Are all these people volunteers?' And I get to say, 'Yes. They're all here for you.' That makes the kids feel so special. You can see it in their faces that they feel so important and happy that people they don't even know cared enough to show up for them. That's my favorite part."





# Therapy Dogs Turn Struggling Readers into Bookworms

## Dogs Give Kids an Incentive to Practice Reading at the Huntington Beach Branch

When kids are having a tough time with reading, reading out loud to someone can be embarrassing and frustrating. Kids can start to feel like every word is a struggle and that the people listening are going to think that they're not doing a good enough job. But, reading aloud is a critical part of kids learning process to help them become fluent readers.



So, if you can't skip reading aloud, what can you do to make it better? Take the other people out of the equation and substitute man's best friend!

That's right – kids are reading to DOGS each week at our Huntington Beach Branch. The dogs are specially

trained therapy animals, who are registered as Reading Education Assistance Dogs, commonly called READ dogs. READ dogs and their human companions are registered therapy teams who volunteer at schools, libraries, and after school programs like the Boys & Girls Club. Volunteers from the Woman's Club of Huntington Beach have been bringing their READ

dogs as reading companions for the kids at the Club for more than a year. They come twice a week and have a long list of kids who are excited and eager to sign up for reading time.

Huntington Beach Branch Unit Director Tim Nolan says, "Dogs are the ultimate judgement free pal for the kids. It doesn't matter if the kids are slow or struggling readers, the dogs don't mind. They always listen patiently and think the kids are doing a great job as long as the kids give the dogs a few loving pats along the way. It's been amazing to see the kids' growth and progress in their reading. There are some kids that I've seen go from tripping over their words when they first started the program to confidently breezing through paragraphs. Also, getting special time one-on-one with the animals is a big incentive for a lot of kids. They want to keep coming back and signing up for more reading sessions each week.

The dogs have become a really

special part of our academic programming and we're so grateful to the volunteers from the Woman's Club who bring them each week."

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the ultimate  
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# Hungry Kids Need Your Help

## You Can Sponsor Meals for Hungry Kids in the Twilight Education Project

At the Boys & Girls Club's Twilight Education Project, about 150 kids need your help to get a good meal three nights each week.

In case you haven't heard about the Twilight Education Project, here are a few of the program's details. Three nights each week, the Club buses low-income English Language Learner families from 25 of our community's poorest neighborhoods to our Golden West College

in the program report getting a job, getting a raise or getting a promotion this year because of what they've learned at Twilight.

But in the meantime, while moms and dads are working toward a better life, their kids sometimes go hungry. But you have the power to help. The power to fill kids' hungry bellies. To help them feel focused and ready to learn. Ready to make the most of the tutoring and homework help they get at the Twilight Education Project.

Each night of the program, the Club provides a healthy meal for every child. In the past, we've been able to get the food for free thanks to a federal government program. About a week before the school year started, the Club learned that the federal government program sponsoring the food is no

longer available for Twilight. But, the kids depend on the Club for a healthy meal each night and we can't let them down.

For the past few months, the Club has been scrambling to find the funds to keep feeding the kids. That's why the Club is turning to you today.

**You have the power to help. The power to fill kids' hungry bellies. To help them feel focused and ready to learn.**

The kids need your help. Will you help make sure that no child goes hungry at the Boys & Girls Club?

It costs about \$150 to feed the kids for one night at the program. There are 100 more nights of the program left this school year. Will you chip in \$25 to help? Or, will you sponsor one or more nights with a gift of \$150 or more? You can make your gift in the enclosed yellow envelope.

Thank you for helping make sure that no child goes hungry at the Boys & Girls Club!

location. There, parents go to ESL classes and job skills training in college classrooms, young children get English language focused preschool instruction at the Club's on-campus preschool, and K-12th graders get homework help, tutoring, mentoring, and enrichment programs at the Club's on-campus school age center. This program is 100% free.

Since families are with the Club from 5:30pm – 9:00pm, either on the bus or learning in the Twilight Education Project, families don't have a chance to get dinner at home. Not only that, many families in the program struggle to put food on the table at all. On average, families in the program earn about \$15,000 per year. Basic necessities like food are hard to afford. In fact, that's why most families are in the program - so they can learn the skills they need to make a better life for themselves. And it's working! More than half of parents





# Teaching Kids to Be Buddies, Not Bullies

## Kids Learn Important Life Lessons During National Bullying Prevention Month

“Kids need to learn how to get along with each other, including understanding any differences that they have,” says Unit Director Grisel Voigt. “That’s why every October, we join in the national celebration of Bullying Prevention Month. We have a special week focused on teaching kids what bullying actually means, how to speak up for yourself, and how to talk to each other and make friends.”

Bullying is the #1 issue that kids at our Clubs are concerned about. In a survey at our Oak View Branch this fall, 63% of kids said that they wanted to talk to an adult at the Club about bullying and 49% of kids reported that they had been bullied at some time during the last year. With that in mind, the Club’s staff works hard to make sure that kids feel like they can talk to caring adults about their worries, about what to do in situations that scare them, and about how they can stop bullying from ever starting in the first place.

During Bullying Prevention Week at the Club, lots of fun activities drove home the point about bullying prevention. Kids and staff role played various situations in skits, so kids started to understand what bullying behavior looks like. Kids also learned from the skits what the best ways are to talk to a bully and how to get help when you are being bullied or see it happening. The skits also modeled what positive interactions look like, so kids could see how it’s better to be a friend than a bully.

Trading friendship bracelets was one of the highlights of Bullying Prevention Week. At the beginning of the week, kids received a bracelet. Each day, they traded it with at least one person they’d never talked to before. To trade it, they had to introduce themselves and ask questions about the other person to get to know each other. This taught kids important social skills that will

make a difference through their whole lives, not just at the Club. This fun game encouraged kids to make new friends from outside their own cliques or friend groups. Many kids at the Club say that meeting new friends they wouldn’t have talked to otherwise is their favorite part of Bullying Prevention Week. Those new connections helped kids see that they have things in common, even with kids who might seem really different from them. That makes it easier for everyone to get along better.



At the end of the week, kids made a pledge not to be a bully or a bystander who lets bullying happen. The pledges were displayed up on the wall at the Club. This does two things. It helps kids feel proud of themselves for making a good choice.

And, it helps hold kids accountable to keep their word, reminding them that they promised to be a friend, not a bully.

Lucia Martin, Program Director at the Oak View Branch, commented, “We constantly work toward being a safe haven for the kids in Oak View, especially since they come from a pretty rough neighborhood. Giving them the tools to handle bullying and teaching them to prevent bullying is one more important way we can help keep the kids safe.”

# Your Support Keeps Parents in the Workforce and Off Welfare

## Scholarships Help Give Families a Hand Up Instead of a Hand Out

Thanks to you, the Club is making a big difference to families in need. The Club keeps its fees at less than half the county average, offers a sliding scale scholarship program, and offers many programs for free. That means families pay only what they can afford – even if that's nothing at all.

A mom named Jamie says the Club's scholarship program helps keep her off welfare and helps her stand on her own two feet financially:

“Without scholarship help from the Boys & Girls Club, I would be unable to work at my current job right now. That would mean that I'd have to depend on welfare. I only want to support my family by my own strength. I want my kids to learn that they need to study hard in order to support themselves in the future. The scholarship helps me with both those

things, by making it possible for me to support my family and by helping my kids do better in school.”

That's only possible because of your support! By contributing to the Boys & Girls Club, you are not only changing children's lives by giving them access to the Club's award-winning programs. You are also offering a hand up to hard-working moms and dads who are doing all they can to support their kids and give them a good life. Thank you.

**You can help families like Jamie's by making a donation to the scholarship program in the enclosed yellow envelope.**



## A Thank You Gift – Just for You!

We've enclosed a special gift, just for you, to say thank you for all you do for kids and families in our community. Your support of the Boys & Girls Club gives families the support they need to thrive. Thanks to you, kids have a safe place to learn, play and grow each day. And moms and dads who are working hard to support their families can feel good knowing that while they work, their kids are safe and well cared for during their out of school time. The enclosed holiday ornament is a gift to thank you for making such a big difference to all the kids and families in our community that depend on the Boys & Girls Club. We hope you will hang this ornament in your home as a reminder of all the boys and girls you have helped this year. Thank you!



# Thank You to All Who Supported the “Great Futures Start Here” Annual Benefit

**Supporters Contributed \$460,000 to Help Kids at the Club**

The Boys & Girls Club would like to say a big thank you to everyone who helped make the “Great Futures Start Here” 38th Annual Ed Arnold Benefit Dinner & Auction a big success! 600 community members came together to raise more than \$460,000 to benefit the Club’s programs for disadvantaged youth. This impressive outpouring of generosity goes a long way toward funding the Club’s scholarship program, free programs, and keeping fees affordable for all families.



The dedication, vision, and enthusiasm that Al and John have shared with the Club are an inspiration!

The Club’s Annual Benefit is also a special time because it gives us the opportunity to honor the people who have shown extraordinary dedication to making children’s lives better through the Boys & Girls Club with the Champion of Youth Award. This year, for the first time, Boys & Girls Clubs of Huntington Valley honored two Champions of Youth: Al Guidotti and John Rich. These outstanding individuals made an impact on the Boys & Girls Club that will change the lives of generations of children.

Al Guidotti comments, “I’ll say it ‘til I can no longer talk. Boys & Girls Clubs of Huntington Valley – there’s no other group that has a better cause than we do. I recommend that you take the time to come see the Clubs. You will feel the momentum, you will feel the laughter and the joy when you come into these spaces.” If you’d like to take Al up on his invitation to come see the Boys & Girls Club for yourself, call 714-309-4962 to set up your tour.

Over the last decade, Al and John served as co-chairs of the Building Dreams capital campaign. Their tireless efforts to build community support for the project made it possible for the Club to open the new Kingston Technology Family Campus, including a preschool, school age center, and gymnasium.

Thanks to their leadership:

- The Club will now reach up to 2,500 more children per year.
- Kids will grow up on a college campus and be inspired to go to college - many will be first generation college graduates!
- Parents will be able to go back to school, working toward great futures for their families.



# Kingston Branch Makes Fitness All About Fun

## Kids Set Fitness Goals in National Competition

This October, the kids at the Kingston Branch participated in Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Fitness Competition. But the kids weren't competing against other kids – they were setting goals and pushing themselves to do their very best.

With 15 challenge activities ranging from push ups, sit ups, shuttle runs, 50-yard dash, and many more classic field day type activities, kids had lots of chances to challenge themselves and strive for a personal best. With each activity, the kids got to learn about the activity, then set a goal for themselves on a lanyard that

row, or how long they could jump rope or hula hoop without stopping. This gave the kids a great sense of accomplishment, and also gives them something to strive for next time when the fitness competition is done again in the spring.

Kingston Branch Program Director Diana Kacic comments, "Kids of all ages got really into it. They were excited, going room to room to locate the next challenge. What I loved about it is that the kids were able to

do things that they've never tried before. Maybe they'd never tried pushups before or challenged themselves to see how many they can do. One of the kids came up to me after he finished the challenge and said, 'I didn't know I could do some of those things!' To me, that's what this is all about. Helping kids try new things and find their own personal best. I'm excited that we'll get to do this again in the spring and that the kids will get to see what progress they've made over the course of the school year."



they wore to each station. Then, the kids recorded their actual accomplishments, marking how long they took to finish a run, how many push ups they could do in a

## Calling All Boys & Girls Club Alumni & Friends!

### Share Your Story to Help Celebrate the Club's 50th Anniversary

Celebrating  
**50**  
years  
of service!

In 2017, Boys & Girls Clubs of Huntington Valley will celebrate 50 years of making a difference in the Huntington Beach and Fountain Valley community. During our 50th Anniversary, we'd

love to share your story about what the Club has meant to you. Whether you're a former Club kid, a parent who counted on the Club, a volunteer who gave their time, whatever your connection, we want to hear from you. Please email [laura@bgchv.com](mailto:laura@bgchv.com) with a few sentences or paragraphs about how the Boys & Girls Club made a difference in your life. Please share photos, too, if you've got them. We can't wait to hear your stories!



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