

# MY #GREATFUTURE STARTED WHEN

As part of our celebration of National Boys & Girls Club Week, kids joined in our #GREATFUTURE social media campaign and shared how the Club helped start their great futures.



**GREAT FUTURES START HERE.**

CLUB NEWSLETTER  
Spring 2015



## BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF HUNTINGTON VALLEY

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### HUNTINGTON BEACH BRANCH

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Huntington Beach, CA 92648

### OAK VIEW BRANCH

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### LEARNING CENTER

#### CHILD DEVELOPMENT

#### PRESCHOOL

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### ROBERT MAYER

#### CHILD DEVELOPMENT

#### PRESCHOOL

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# Meet the Club's Youth of the Year

Meet our Club's 2015 "Youth of the Year" winner and finalists!

## Sydney Horner, Age 14

**BRANCH:** ClubHouse Academy,  
member for 6 years

**ABOUT:** The Club and its performing arts programs helped Sydney overcome a crippling social anxiety called selective mutism. At the Club, she built her confidence and found her voice. Read what she has to say about her Club experience: "When I was little, I was afraid of talking to people other than my family. I wanted to speak, but I was filled with so much anxiety that the words just wouldn't come out. I was the most talkative child at home, I sang and danced around the house, but at school,

I felt like a normal kid, and when I performed in shows at the Club, I gained the confidence to know that I could do anything. When I didn't feel safe at school or outside of my house, I turned to the Boys & Girls Club to help me feel like I had a place in the world.

A year after I started attending the Club, my family and I were at a tough time in our lives. My father was out of work, and he had just been diagnosed with cancer. The extra anxieties of having my dad in such a critical position gave me even more fear to speak. My only outlet was the Club's theater, where I could put aside my troubles and become an entirely different person. Without the Boys and Girls Club, I wouldn't have found the light amidst the darkness. I felt like all the adults there were behind me. When I needed extra encouragement, they were there. My personality was able to shine through at the Club. I



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I completely lost my spark. The only place I felt safe was at home.

When I walked into the Boys & Girls Club for the first time, I saw kids everywhere, all grinning ear to ear. It seemed as though there were hundreds of rooms, filled with things devoted just for children. I was immediately filled with a sense of safety and excitement. As I started attending the Club regularly, it became a second home. I felt like I was safe there. No one looked down upon me for not talking, or treated me differently because I was different.

found myself becoming the outgoing and passionate person I had hidden at home. I was becoming more socially open than ever, and it felt just right. I started making friends, and developing relationships with the adults around me. I finally felt accepted. I found my voice."

Sydney is a talented young woman who attends Orange County School for the Arts. She's earned a scholarship from Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Hank Aaron Chasing the Dream program for her arts education. She is also a teacher's assistant in the Club's dance program, preparing for her dream of becoming a performing arts instructor.



## Amy Do, Age 14

**BRANCH:** Kingston Branch, member for 9 years

**ABOUT:** Amy has grown up at the Kingston Branch in Fountain Valley. She loves coming to the Club with her two little sisters. In addition to taking advantage of the Club's homework help, Amy is an active participant in Healthy Habits, Smart Girls, and the Lego Engineers Club. Amy says, "In Smart Girls, we organized a drive for a shelter that houses single women and their children. I have always wanted to volunteer and give back. I wanted to feel the satisfaction of making someone I don't know happy. Coming here gave me the opportunity to feel that satisfaction. It's even better, because I'm volunteering with people I enjoy being around!"



## Giselle Robles, age 14

**BRANCH:** Oak View, member for 3 years

**ABOUT:** Giselle has been at our Oak View branch since it first opened in 2012. Our staff have seen her grow from a shy middle school student, to a confident and assertive freshman in high school. When Giselle is at the Club, she can often be found in the Education Room. Giselle works hard to do well in multiple challenging Advanced Placement courses in school. And, she loves to tutor her peers and the younger children at the Club. Director Rebecca Sanchez says, "Giselle is a young lady full of many talents. She is a well-rounded individual, she seeks to excel in everything that she does. We couldn't be prouder!"



## Ryan Wong, Age 13

**BRANCH:** Huntington Beach, member for 4 years

**ABOUT:** Ryan is a great role model. He enjoys helping out staff and younger Club members. He is especially attentive and caring towards the kindergarteners. Program Director Danielle Tobias says, "Ryan was chosen for Youth of the Year because he is extremely polite, friendly, and positive. Ryan is someone his peers look up to as he is such an optimistic and kind individual. He is a great asset to the Club!" Ryan dedicates his time to helping others. He is also an active participant in our cooking classes, Power Hour, Passport to Manhood and Torch Club.



Will you change a child's life today?  
You can give kids like Sydney,  
Ryan, Giselle and Amy a home away  
from home by making a gift in the  
enclosed blue envelope.



# Kingston Branch Goes All Out for National Boys & Girls Club Week

Every year, Boys & Girls Clubs across the country celebrate National Boys & Girls Club week in unique ways that help get kids and parents excited about the Boys & Girls Club. With a theme of “Open the Door, Take the Tour,” our Clubs encouraged parents to come check out all that the Boys & Girls Club has to offer. During National Boys & Girls Club week, our Kingston Branch showed kids just how much FUN it can be to be active, learn life skills, and even focus on academics.

Trivia games and a scavenger hunt helped the kids work their brains in creative ways to support their academic learning. Princesses Anna and Elsa from Disney’s *Frozen* came by for a life skills lesson, teaching children about proper etiquette. Unit Director Gricel Voigt comments, “Our little girls couldn’t have been more excited to meet the princesses and learn polite ways to speak to each other and build up others’ self esteem. It took a topic that kids are not usually interested in and made it into something they were desperate to know all about!”

Getting kids active was a big part of the week as well. Gricel says, “We had a tug of war with all the boys versus all the girls. The girls just smoked ‘em! It was beautiful! The boys and the girls were both working



hard, but it was great for kids of both genders to see how tough and strong the girls could be.” The Club also converted its gym to a Star Wars themed laser tag arena. Gricel comments, “The rest of my Club has never been so quiet because all our boys were either playing laser tag or lined up quietly waiting their turn. They were so excited and nobody wanted to miss a chance to play! Boys and girls were asking, ‘Can we do this every week?’”

While laser tag might be a once a year activity, that doesn’t mean the fun comes to an end after Boys & Girls Club Week. Our team works hard all year long to make sure that kids’ after school and summer time at the Club are not just an extension of the school day, like some after school programs on school campuses. Our Clubs are special facilities designed especially for children’s out of school time. That means we can do a lot more than have kids sit for a few hours doing homework and worksheets. We have the opportunity to help kids develop skills and talents in academics, fitness, life skills, good character, arts and so much more, all through really fun activities that the kids love being a part of.



# Construction Underway on New Boys & Girls Club

## Your Help is Still Needed!

In January, Lusardi Construction broke ground on our brand new two-story Boys & Girls Club and gymnasium! These two buildings will join the Robert Mayer Child Development Preschool as the Kingston Technology Family Campus, right in the heart of Golden West College's Campus. Under construction now, the two new buildings will be open by the end of the year! What does this mean for our community? The opening of the new facilities will allow the Club to accomplish some



big things to help local kids and families. We'll be able to reach 1,500+ more children each year. Bus service will bring kids to the Club from throughout the community, especially the Ocean View School District in Huntington Beach and parts of Westminster not currently served by the Boys & Girls Club. We'll provide affordable, quality care for kids while moms and dads are working or going to school. The new gym will also allow us to expand our youth basketball league, which serves hundreds of kids year round.

When asked why the Boys & Girls Club holds such a special place in the community, a mom named Krysti says, "Due to the fact that I am a single parent, it is tough for me every day to make ends meet, but I try my best to provide my daughter with a positive and normal life.

She has been enrolled at the Boys & Girls Club since her kindergarten days and loves all the staff and Club members. The Boys & Girls Club is a positive place for her and I can't see her being anywhere else after school. She learns so much and has a lot of fun at the Club!" Families like Krysti's count on the Boys & Girls Club to be there for both parent and child every day before and after school, rain or shine. The new Family Campus at

Golden West College will give even more parents peace of mind, knowing that their children are loved and cared for while they're away at work or school. And, growing up on a college campus will encourage kids to see higher education as more than just a dream, but as something they can and will accomplish. The new Club will help the whole family achieve great futures!

We need your help to raise \$5 million and lend a hand to the community's families who need it most. You can make a difference, no matter your budget. Recognition opportunities include everything from naming a building for \$1 million to helping furnish a room for \$25. You can pledge your support over a period of up to 10 years, give outright gifts of cash or stock, or even name the Club in your estate plans.



**To learn more about the Building Dreams campaign or donate online, visit [buildingdreamscampaign.com](http://buildingdreamscampaign.com). Call 714-309-4962 to arrange a tour or make a donation by phone.**



# At-Risk Kids Get Life Lessons from Horses

What can a horse teach a kid about how to make good choices and be a better person? A lot, actually. In partnership with the Huntington Beach Police Department and the Huntington Park Equestrian Center, some of the most at-risk kids at our Oak View Branch in Huntington Beach are hanging out with the horses every week, participating in equine therapy. From the first moment the kids walk into the paddock, they start learning. If you respect the horses, the horses respect you. If you're aggressive, the horses are aggressive. It's the same with the people in their lives. Starting with that first lesson, kids work their way through the Horse Nation curriculum with certified counselors. In a group therapy setting, kids talk openly about topics like anger, bullying, drugs, gangs, leadership, self-esteem, relationships, family, peace-keeping, and the possibilities for their futures. Then kids get a chance to "hug and groom" the animals and do group activities with the horses that illustrate the concepts they talked about in group therapy. It's a unique way to steer kids who were starting down the wrong path away from

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drugs, violence and other dangerous behaviors. The kids are excited about it and Program Director Becky Sanchez says that parents have been telling her that after just four weeks of the program, they are already seeing a big difference in their children's behavior and choices.



Volunteer Sue Gordon from Rainbow Environmental Services comments, "The social workers and Dr. Carole have the right touch with the kids. The kids don't seem

intimidated at all but open up to the questions asked. While I was there, they all participated in an activity where two horses were used to portray things they'd like to leave in the past and things they'd like to see in their future. They divided the corral up the middle where the east side was the past and the west side was the future. The kids wrote their words on duct tape and applied them to the past horse and the future horse. Some of the things I saw them write to leave in the past were anger, drugs and more. Things to see in the future were peace, smiles, relaxation. It was amazing."





# JMG Security Systems Celebrates 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Golf Tournament

On Wednesday, May 20, 2015, JMG Security Systems and Pacific Premier Bank will host the 20th Annual Benefit Golf Tournament at Mile Square Golf Course to support the Boys & Girls

Club. Proceeds from the tournament's 20-year history total \$1.2 million and are a vital source of support for the Boys & Girls Club. Ken Jacobs, founder and CEO of Fountain Valley-based JMG, launched and runs the event every year because he is committed to making a difference to local kids.

Jacobs comments, "We'll be helping more than 9,500 kids at our local Boys & Girls Clubs. The kids that are on my mind the most are at the Club's Oak View Branch. Most kids in Oak View come from families that earn less than

\$1,000 per month. Think about what that kind of a budget would mean for your family. It's hard to imagine how you would provide the most basic necessities. We know kids living in this kind of extreme poverty can grow up to be successful, contributing members of our community. But, you and I have to step up to help.

That's what keeps me doing this year after year – I know we can change their lives for the better."

Your support DOES change lives for the better at our Oak View Branch. How do we know your support makes a difference? The facts speak for themselves.



- 87% of Oak View members say they do better in school because of the help they get at the Club. Thanks to you, the Club's computer lab, homework help, reading programs, and more give kids the extra support they need to succeed.



- 94% of Oak View Club members say the Club gives them a place they feel like they belong and 95% say there are adults at the Club they can talk to about the problems in their lives. Gangs are a big problem in the Oak View community. But, you're giving kids a sense of belonging and caring adults in their lives. That goes a long way toward preventing kids from joining gangs in the first place.
- 83% of kids at the Boys & Girls Club's Oak View Branch in Huntington Beach say their time at the Club is the only time outside of school that they exercise or play outside. Your support helps get kids active and healthy!
- Last year, we served 26,351 meals to kids at our Oak View Branch. One enthusiastic 11 year old says her favorite thing about the Club is "how I can eat!!!" Your support helps make sure kids who don't have enough to eat at home don't go hungry.

Even if you're not going to be golfing in this special 20th Anniversary Tournament, you can still join JMG Security Systems in making a difference to the kids at the Oak View Branch. Use the enclosed blue envelope to make a donation to the Boys & Girls Club today.



# Kids Learn Digital Photography at the Club

At the Club, we bring together arts and technology so that kids can get creative and also learn the latest in technology. Throughout the year, the Club runs programs that teach digital photography, photo illustration, movie making, digital music making, and more. Huntington Beach Branch Director Tim Nolan comments, "We serve kids from all backgrounds. And, regardless of whether a child comes from a wealthy home or one that's struggling, they deserve the same great opportunities. That's why I think digital arts programs are so important. They give kids from ALL backgrounds a chance to gain experience with the latest technology. It's one more way we level the playing field here at the Club."

This spring, we're especially proud of kids in our Image Makers digital photography program. Twice a week, staff help the kids work through a complete photography curriculum. They learn to use a state of the art camera, going beyond taking

pictures with a point and shoot. Kids learn how to photograph in many different styles – black and white, action pictures, portraits, and much more. They also learn about the artistic side of photography. Kids are even encouraged to create photo-essays that tell the story of their pictures. This encourages depth to their artistry as photographers. And, it also helps reinforce important academic skills. Myrna from the Kingston Branch comments, "What I love about Image Makers is that I learned all about using the camera and taking portraits of people." We hope you enjoy some of these outstanding pictures created by the talented members at our Huntington Beach and Kingston Fountain Valley Branches. If you'd like to support great programs like this one, please make a donation today in the enclosed blue envelope.

