

# Communicator

Community Action Partnership of Orange County  
*Celebrating 44 Years of Caring*

December 2009

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## *Family Resource Center Holiday Toy Distribution*

Christmas came early for some local families. Community Action Partnership of Orange County's (CAPOC) two family resource centers hosted a "Holiday Toy Distribution" toy drive. The Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center (AIFRC) and El Modena Family Resource Center (EMFRC) distributed hundreds of new toys that were donated from individuals, corporations and community groups to support those in need.

Staff members and volunteers sorted through toys and made sure that each child would receive a toy appropriate for their age. Looking at the mass amount of toys, it was hard to imagine there might not be enough toys for every child. Luckily enough toys were donated so no family was turned away.



sighed with relief knowing that their child would have a toy this holiday.

"Volunteering was a good experience and it felt good to help those in need. When the children received their toy it didn't matter if it was the smallest toy they were just grateful to have received something," said Luz Reyes, CAPOC employee who donated some of her time to help out at AIFRC.

AIFRC celebrated the holidays by bringing Santa down from the North Pole. Children had the opportunity to do holiday crafts, tell Santa their holiday wishes and take photos on Santa's lap. Bearemy from Build a Bear was also there to partake in the festivities and brought raffle items to the event. Later that evening, families got together to march in the Posada around the neighborhood. The families sung Spanish holiday songs and wished their neighbors a happy holidays! One mother who showed up to receive toys for her children decided to give back by helping the staff members and other volunteers hand out toys to families.



With the current downturn in the economy, it is CAPOC's goal to provide hope for families this holiday season. Along with the need for toys, people were asking for additional resources. "A few mothers approached us with tears running from their eyes thanking us for giving their children a gift they will remember," said Maribel Reyes. In addition to the toy distribution, Payless Shoe Source donated 200 gift cards valued at \$15 each for the children to buy shoes this holiday season.

Community Action Partnership of Orange County thanks everyone who donated the gifts and volunteered their efforts in making sure that children in our community have hope this holiday season.

# Club Ember Puts On a Party for Charity

Partners Jerry Najera and Luis Amenero teamed with Steve Elkin, Owner of Club Ember in Anaheim, to throw a fundraiser and food drive to benefit the El Modena Family Resource Center (EMFRC). Club Ember provided free entry in exchange for a donation of non-perishable food items. Throughout the night, over 100 attendees brought donations.

As a token of Club Ember's appreciation for helping needy families all year round, the EMFRC staff were presented with a private table to enjoy the night away after a hard day's work at the center. By the end of the night, a total of 122 pounds of canned goods and 16 turkeys were collected to benefit needy families this holiday season.



El Modena Family Resource Center Staff attended the fundraiser. Pictured from the left is Center Manager Maribel Reyes, Maria Vigil, Teresa Collazo and a volunteer.



Luis Armenero and a Colleague help collect donated food items for the EMFRC holiday fundraiser.

The donated food will go towards alleviating hunger for families in the El Modena community this holiday season.

To learn more about how you or your group can get involved this holiday season at Community Action Partnership of Orange County, please contact Marleen Morrill, Hope for the Holidays Coordinator, at 714-897-6670 ext 3404.

## Families Making a Difference



Rosa Arredondo and her four daughters from left to right: Samantha, Jennifer, Senator Lou Correa, Rosa, Stephanie and Jessica.

Rosa Arredondo and her family were one of the families awarded the *2009 Families Making A Difference* award by State Senator Lou Correa. Senator Lou Correa awarded volunteers who used their time and talents to better their community. All awardees were invited to attend a special recognition celebration hosted by Senator Lou Correa at the Santa Ana Zoo on December 6th.

Rosa was nominated by Sandra Ortega, Community Building Initiative (CBI) Program Coordinator at Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAPOC).

Rosa is part of the "Abriendo Caminos" committee which is a team of neighborhood leaders who advocate for healthy and safe changes in their community. The committee has participated in various projects including neighborhood clean-ups, Martin Luther King Day of Service, Latino Health Awareness Month, leadership

trainings, City Council meetings, volunteering at Anaheim Independencia Family Resource Center and other community services.

This past summer the Arredondo family participated in a *Public Safety Campaign* which raised awareness of health and public safety issues in the Anaheim Independencia community. Rosa and her family remained very involved throughout the campaign by helping plan events and promote the campaign. Some of the events planned included a basketball clinic, a "Healthy Communities" art contest and 10 nutrition classes, which Rosa lead.

CAPOC would like to congratulate Rosa and her family for their civic investment in the Anaheim Independencia community.

# *PIMCO's 2nd Annual Share the Harvest*

Over 200 PIMCO employees and their families attended PIMCO's 2nd Annual Share the Harvest event on December 5th. Volunteers assembled 2,000 boxes to fill with food and included a \$15 dollar gift certificate to purchase a turkey. Each Share the Harvest box costs \$25 dollars and provides a holiday meal for a family of four.

Over \$26,000 dollars were raised by over 50 PIMCO employees since the 2nd Annual Share the Harvest Campaign began on October 28th. At the event, CEO Mohammad El-Erian presented a donation matching check for \$26,000 to the food bank to purchase additional food for Community Action Partnership of Orange County's Hope for the Holidays Campaign.



Corporate involvement has made a significant impact to help the less fortunate this holiday season.



To date we have received 92,962 pounds of donated food to feed hungry families this holiday season. Some of our other partners participating in the Hope for the Holidays campaign include Costco, Disneyland Resorts, Edwards Lifescience, the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising, the Ginder Family Foundation, Henry's Marketplace, the Interfaith Youth Council, Office Max, the Orange County Marketplace, Statek Corporation, Target, University of California, Irvine and Whole Foods.

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## *Getting into the Christmas Spirit*



Children at the El Modena Family Resource Center got into the Christmas spirit early with help from Jose Saldana from YMCA of Orange. Jose is one of 3 staff members that work at the El Modena center in the after school program. The after school program provides tutoring for youth in grades kindergarten through 5th grade. The center provides children a place to go after school where they can do their homework and participate in different activities. This is Jose's second school year at El Modena and he is currently working towards getting his A.A and B.A in Social Services.

On December 16th the kids had the opportunity to get into the Holiday spirit by building edible ginger bread houses. Jose two other YMCA staff members assisted each child in building their house. By the end of the activity kids hands were covered with frosting and candy and they were proud of their houses and couldn't wait to show their parents as they arrived to pick them up.



Michelle, 9, said that she enjoys doing different projects, homework time and working in groups at the center. Her favorite thing about Jose is how helpful and kind he is. Hector, 8 said he enjoys the fact that Jose gives out prizes. Hector and the other kids appreciate Jose's presence.



"I enjoy seeing the kids grow, learn and be creative with the activities." said Jose Saldana, YMCA staff member.

At the end of the activity the kids received a very special surprise. Each child got an early Christmas present to their surprise. One parent was brought to tears of joy when she saw that her son had received a toy.

The impact of the K-5th grade after school program has given the youth the support they need to be successful in school. El Modena is now in the process of creating an after school program for kids in 6th through 8th grade.

**Community Action Partnership of Orange County**

12640 Knott Street  
Garden Grove, CA 92841

**TO MAKE DONATIONS:**

**CALL Alex Tran (714) 897-6670 ext. 3405**

**OUR PROMISE**

*Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.*

Visit  
[www.capoc.org](http://www.capoc.org)

**2010  
UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Sept. 1 -Dec. 31:** "Hope for the Holidays" CAPOC is collecting donations for the holidays. Make a family's holiday a bit brighter and donate today. To get involved, contact Marleen Morrill at 714-897-6670 Ext: 3404

**Nov. 28/29–Dec. 19/20:** OC Market Place Holiday Toy & Clothing drive  
Free admission each weekend with donation of new unwrapped toy or clothing item

**Dec. 25:** CAPOC offices closed in observance of Christmas Day

**Jan. 1:** CAPOC offices closed in observance of New Years Day

**Jan. 18:** Martin Luther King Day of Service — Contact CAPOC for available volunteer opportunities, 714-897-6670

*Disney Thanks Volunteers For Giving*



200 Food Bank Volunteers joined Mickey and Minnie Mouse along with the Obama pardoned turkey, "Courage" to spend Thanksgiving at the happiest place on earth in Disney's "Give a Day Get a Day" Thanksgiving parade on November 26<sup>th</sup>. Mickey and Minnie greeted guest from atop a float as volunteers cheered along both sides making their way down Main Street, U.S.A.

Many of the volunteers in the parade gave their time at the Orange County Food Bank and helped prepare more than 20,000 holiday food boxes for those in need.

Leading the participants were Alan Woo, Community Action Partnership of Orange County's (CAPOC) Director of Planning, his family and Marleen Morrill, Planning Department's Administrative Assistant. Alan's granddaughter was given the very special honor of riding on the float with Mickey and Minnie.

"I've never been in a parade before, so being able to participate in one at the Happiest Place on Earth was a once-in-a lifetime opportunity! Not only was it fun, but it was also a great honor to represent our wonderful CAPOC volunteers. We got to show the world that the spirit of volunteerism is alive in Orange County!" said Marleen Morrill.

