

LEADING the WAY



Legacy
of Giving



Message from our
Chief Advancement Officer

Nancy Weintraub

Bright Beginnings! This is the phrase we have aptly chosen for the many exciting projects we have in the pipeline for the youngest of our Easterseals participants, those in the critical first five years.

The children and families in our Head Start and Early Head Start programs come from very diverse backgrounds, including financial insecurity and housing insecurity, with some of our children coming from the foster system.

Our high-quality programs not only set up our children for academic success, but also provide for the whole family, including curriculum around healthy nutrition, parenting classes, family wrap-around services, access to employment resources for parents and much much more. The three impactful projects that will be complete this year include:

- A brand new, flagship North San Diego Child Development Center, which will replace three prior leased locations
- The completion of the Imaginarium in Ventura County, a unique space with more classrooms and parent engagement spaces on an existing campus
- The renovation of a new, purchased location in Ontario to replace a previously leased location, allowing more freedom to build quality space for participants

Please look out for information about grand openings in the coming months. The future is definitely bright for these families, especially with the ongoing support from our community partners such as yourself. Thank you!!

With continued appreciation,



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A Legacy of Love

PUTTING STOCK INTO SOMETHING THAT MATTERS

During the war in the early 1950s, the American Embassy in Korea hired an intelligent, young woman to serve as an interpreter. Bernadette Lee was extremely proud that the Embassy considered her English sufficient to become employed in this field.

More than 70 years later, in her residence at Clearwater Assisted Living and Memory Support in Glendora, surrounded by her son and grandson, Bernadette is still proud of her proficiency in the English language.

At the end of the Korean War, Bernadette boarded a plane for Texas and Baylor University where she received her undergraduate degree in English Literature. Thriving in college life, she moved to New York to attend Columbia University where she added a master's degree in social work to her resumé. It was in New York that she met her future husband.

The Lee's had two children; Albert, an accomplished Southern California attorney, and Beatrice, who was born with an intellectual disability. After various complications with both her health and with the state facility, as an adult Beatrice was moved to a nearby residential care home in Los Angeles where she began receiving services from Easterseals. Beatrice's nephew, Ryan, recalls visiting with his aunt on Sundays and learning about all the activities that Easterseals provided each week. "Beatrice was intentional," said Ryan. "She was always a willing participant and wanted



to be present in each moment."

As a mom, Bernadette was a passionate supporter of the organizations that assisted her daughter. She became a donor and used her knowledge and skills in social work to help others succeed.

Although Beatrice Lee passed away in 2018, her vibrant love of life continues with her family. Thankful for the care she received, the Lee family gifted shares of stock using Easterseals Southern California's DonateStock website portal. The family requested the donation be designated to Adult Day Services to assist individuals like Beatrice.

"We are grateful to the Lee family for this gift of stock", said Julie Reynoso, Development Director. "It is one of the easiest, tax-smart ways to donate. Our partners at DonateStock.com call it 'putting stock into something that matters' and this certainly rings true for us at Easterseals Southern California."

From a young girl in Korea to a scholar, a mother, a grandmother, and philanthropist, Bernadette Lee's life has been a legacy of love. She is proud of her accomplishments, but especially of her children and grandchildren that will carry on her legacy.

To learn more about the benefits of donating stock, go to <https://donatestock.com/easter-seals-southern-california-inc>

In loving memory of Beatrice Lee
1965 – 2018



Getting to Know You

How an Individualized Approach is Changing Adult Day Services

Easterseals Adult Day Services play an important role in the community by providing a place where people with disabilities can stay physically active while connecting with others.

“At ESSC, we’re trying something different,” said Amber Carey-Navarrete, Director of Person-Centered Services. “We are stepping outside of that traditional timeframe, looking at the bigger picture, and asking people, ‘What do you want out of life?’”

Exploring Hopes, Dreams, and Goals

This “whole-life” approach is built on a concept known as Personal Outcome Measures, or POM. To be sure, a person-centered philosophy is not new in the aging and

disability services community. It’s existed for decades and continues to evolve. But the POM approach provides a practical tool that leads to concrete results.

“Through guided POM discussions, people in our Adult Day Services are sharing what really matters to them,” said Amber. During these talks, people gain a stronger sense of who they are and what they want from their lives. For some, it’s the first time they’ve been asked these questions.”

The insights they share guide ESSC’s approach. We can connect them with the tools and resources they need, as well as support them in making informed decisions.

“We are here to **listen**, to **honor** people’s rights, and to **support** them in the ups, downs, mistakes, and successes,” said Carey-Navarrete.

“We want every person to know that no matter what,
we will always have their back.

This is their life to live, and they can make it fully their own.”

AMBER CAREY-NAVARRETE, DIRECTOR OF PERSON-CENTERED SERVICES

Making Cooking into a Career

Easterseals Supports Michelle's Culinary Dreams

Ever since Michelle was a child, cooking has been a big part of her life. From learning how to prepare meals alongside her mom, to taking on some of the cooking responsibilities when her mom passed away, Michelle developed a dream to someday cook in a restaurant to support herself and her family.

Now, she is making that goal a reality by attending culinary school, with the support of Easterseals Southern California (ESSC).

When Michelle first came to Easterseals Adult Day Services (ADS), she was very shy and would not speak up about her wants and needs. But things started to change during the pandemic when she was paired up with Life Skills Coach Magdalena Laveaga, who had been a restaurant cook for 30 years prior to working at Easterseals.

Magdalena quickly discovered Michelle's love for cooking, so she suggested they start cooking together virtually. Soon, this turned into them hosting virtual cooking classes for other participants. When ADS resumed in-person activities, Michelle hosted weekly cooking courses to teach peers her favorite recipes.

"It was good because I got to teach other people how to cook and how to cut up food and use the stove properly," said Michelle.

But Michelle dreamed of doing even more with her skills. She wanted to make cooking a career so she could earn money and someday open her own restaurant. With the guidance and support of Easterseals, she applied to culinary school at Cerritos College, got accepted, and started classes in January 2024.

"She was dreaming about culinary school for many years, and I told her, if you want to do it, you're going to do it," said Magdalena. "We are here to help your dreams come true."

One of the tools Easterseals used to support Michelle's goal was the Personal Outcome Measure (POM) discovery process (see article on page 4). This person-centered approach gives individuals the chance to express what they want to do with their life and establishes concrete steps to make them happen. By setting up a POMs interview with Michelle, Easterseals staff helped identify and support her ambitions.

"I've seen her grow so much from the beginning," said Magdalena. "She is totally different now and I feel really proud to see her in culinary school after we spent so many years cooking together."



"I've seen her grow so much from the beginning..."

Easterseals Southern California

Leading the way to full **EQUITY**, **INCLUSION** and **ACCESS** through life-changing disability and community services.



SERVICES AND



LOCATIONS

PROVIDING SERVICES TO **19,000+** INDIVIDUALS



ADULT DAY SERVICES

Provides individuals the opportunity to become active members of the community by learning daily living, social and work-related skills.

Kern 

Imperial 

Los Angeles              

Orange County 

Riverside 

San Diego 



AUTISM THERAPY SERVICES

Provides Behavior Services for individuals diagnosed on the autism spectrum as well as speech, physical and occupational therapy.

Kern 

Los Angeles     

Orange County  

Riverside 

San Bernadino   

San Diego   

Ventura 



EASTERSEALS CAMP

Provides a week-long, fully accessible camp experience to engage with others and their

San Bernadino 

D LOCATIONS



CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Serves children from birth to five years of age by providing early education and daycare services.

San Bernadino 🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢

San Diego 🏢🏢🏢🏢

Ventura 🏢



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Offers one-on-one assistance to individuals to secure and maintain work.

Los Angeles 🏢

Orange County 🏢

Riverside 🏢

San Bernadino 🏢

San Diego 🏢

Ventura 🏢



LIVING OPTIONS

Provides people with the help needed to live in their own homes, not institutions. Support, tailored to individual need.

Los Angeles 🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢🏢

Orange County 🏢🏢



SENIOR DAY SERVICES

Offers support to seniors with memory impairment and physical disabilities to engage with others and their community in meaningful ways.

Los Angeles 🏢

Orange County 🏢

* Some locations provide multiple services.



New Cerritos College Students from Easterseals Adult Day Services (ADS) Cerritos, with Life Skills Coaches Ruby Javonillo and Marc Vida (center).

Individuals from Easterseals Adult Day Services Enroll in College

What started as a way to help one person from Easterseals Adult Day Services (ADS) in Cerritos reach his goal to attend college, has quickly turned into a transformative partnership that is impacting many people.

Earlier this year, Easterseals Life Skills Coach Marc Vida discovered an Adapted Teams Sports course at Cerritos College that he thought would be a perfect fit for Ryan, an individual using Easterseals services who wanted to work on his physical fitness.

However, the college told Marc the class wouldn't happen unless additional students enrolled. Marc quickly got to work recruiting more people from Easterseals ADS in Cerritos.

"I was initially just thinking about the course for Ryan, but later I found out that more people had similar physical wellness goals," said Marc. "So it just sort of expanded from there." Participation grew from 3 ADS participants to 12 ESSC individuals who are currently enrolled in the course.

With the support of Easterseals, the students took public transportation several times each week to their Adapted Team Sports basketball class. The class helped them develop their fitness goals while creating opportunities for friendship and building greater community.

Participation in the Adapted Team Sports class at Cerritos College was so much fun for everyone.

MARK VIDA
LIFE SKILLS COACH

"This was a totally new experience for them, and the best thing was to see the first time that they got their student ID card; you could see the pride in their faces," said Marc. "They were starting a new chapter in their lives as college students."

Ryan, who enrolled in the course this past fall, added, "I enjoy the class because it helps me to improve my exercise routine and to lose weight."

After a successful first semester, even more people have decided to enroll in spring and summer courses. In classes like Adapted Team Sports, Adapted Strength Training, and Introduction to Adaptive Dance.

In Loving Memory of Howard McBroom

1955–2024



Howard joined Easterseals Southern California (ESSC) in 2018 as a Disability Advocate, regularly speaking with elected officials and community leaders about the importance of supporting the disability community. He was a frequent presenter at disability-related conferences, where he shared his lived experience and educated the audience on the importance of providing person-centered services.

Those who spent time with Howard knew his interest in creating a more compassionate society through making one's voice heard, whether it's through advocacy or voting. Although Howard passed away in January after a battle with cancer, his legacy lives on. Read more at www.howardmcbroom.com.



Scan this QR code to view a video about Howard's work with Easterseals.



A Walk on Water



Each year participants from our Autism Therapy Services experience a day at the beach thanks to volunteers from **A Walk on Water**, which provides surf therapy to children with disabilities and their families. Surf therapy empowers children with a feeling of pride and accomplishment



Grand Opening Celebration in Torrance

A celebration was held to celebrate the grand re-opening of the Adult Day Services (ADS) location in Torrance. ADS participant, George, provided tours of the newly renovated center where participants learn social and daily life skills and build a sense of community. George participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony.

During the event, Dee Prescott, Vice President of Adult Day Services, honored Edith Garvey, ESSC legacy donor, for making the fully accessible upgrades possible. Through Garvey's generosity, the center will support ESSC in continuing to make a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities.



Festival of Human Abilities

Easterseals was proud to participate in the 21st Annual Festival of Human Abilities at the Aquarium of the Pacific. Attendees had an opportunity to discover the incredible talents of people with disabilities, from dancers to musicians and artists who have learned unique adaptive skills to hone their crafts. ESSC shared information about our disability services.



ESSC Lakers Night

On March 4th, Easterseals staff, board members, and participants enjoyed "Easterseals Night" with the Los Angeles Lakers. Before the game, our board members Maria Serrao and Nic Novicki were introduced as honorary team captains and Adult Day Services participants Kevin and Jahad proudly delivered the game ball to referees.

Throughout the night, Easterseals signage lit up the arena, including our PSA video, which was displayed on the scoreboard during half-time. We're so excited for this new partnership that will be extended through the rest of the season and look forward to spreading the word about disability inclusion alongside the Lakers.

THE SOUTHLAND



Easterseals 11th Annual Disability Film Challenge

Created in 2013 by ESSC Board Member, Nic Novicki, the Easterseals Disability Film Challenge (EDFC) gives filmmakers—with and without disabilities—the opportunity to collaborate to tell unique stories that showcase disability in its many forms by inviting aspiring storytellers to creatively write, produce, and complete short films.

This year's theme is "Buddy Comedy," and will award cash prizes, computers and other technology, subscriptions, mentorships and screening opportunities. Also \$15,000 grants will be awarded to the winners of best film, best director, best writer, best actor and best editor categories to develop their projects further. Five additional grants will be awarded to past EDFC participants, with all winners announced at the EDFC awards ceremony on May 9 at Sony Pictures Studios. Go to DisabilityFilmChallenge.com for all the exciting news!



Month of Love Annual Campaign and Auction

The fourth annual Month of Love Campaign and Auction took place in February, bringing with it a spirit of love, appreciation, friendship and acts of kindness. Thank you to the dozens and dozens of people who placed their bids making this the most successful auction to date!

Albertsons, Vons and Pavilions Fundraiser Throughout April

Throughout the month of April, The Albertsons Companies Foundation is hosting an in-store fundraising campaign to benefit ESSC and other disability-related organizations.

Shoppers at Albertsons, Vons and Pavilions can donate to support the 'People With Disabilities' campaign via the PIN pad at checkout. The funds will go to disability-related organizations, including ESSC.

Over the course of our 15-year partnership, the grocer along with their wonderful employees and generous customers, have donated millions of dollars in life-changing support.



Xander Thrives in His Job at Code Ninjas



Few people get offered a job on the spot, but that's exactly what happened to Xander at Code Ninjas in Rolling Hills. Xander is a bright 19-year-old with autism who landed his first job as a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) Room Teaching Assistant with support from Easterseals WorkFirst Employment Services.

The WorkFirst Program provides one-on-one, customized services for people with disabilities who are interested in entering or re-entering the workforce.

At Code Ninjas, Xander's role is to assist with curriculum planning, teaching, class management, and organization. He is also called upon to cover other tasks when needed, including instructing beginners on basic game coding and assisting players with gaming skills.

"It's amazing to see how Xander is not only succeeding but thriving in his role at Code Ninjas. We were able to work closely with Xander to find meaningful employment that he is passionate about and allows him to use his skills," said Stephen Schaffold, Employment Services Manager at ESSC.

Because Xander struggled to fit in with other kids when he was growing up, he is passionate about making sure everyone he teaches feels included and supported. He sees himself as more of a friend than an instructor.



"When I was a kid, I never really had many friends to talk to," said Xander. "I like to make anyone feel included in any way that I possibly can."

The vocational support team at ESSC works hard to match employee skills with employer needs, which benefits everyone. In Xander's case, Code Ninjas was such a perfect fit that they offered him the job without hesitation.

"It's been a good experience and he exceeded my expectations," said Randy Feltham, Center Director, Code Ninjas. "When I spoke to him during the job interview, I realized how great he is and was happy to offer him a position he was qualified for. Xander just has the perfect personality to work with kids. He has the ability, and he was a natural fit for the job."

Gina Finds a Job with the Help of the Tech Lending Library

Easterseals Technology Lending Library (TLL) is so much more than a program that lends out tech devices; it's a vehicle that drives opportunity, inclusion, accessibility, and independence to people with disabilities through technology. The TLL gives individuals the power to learn new skills, find jobs, attend online classes, or stay connected to friends and family.

Gina, a recent TLL recipient, is just one of many who used a TLL device to discover new opportunities and access greater independence. When Gina was referred to the TLL by her Regional Center, she was a caregiver for her father and had been out of work for a long time. She wanted to find a flexible job that would allow her to support herself and her family. Easterseals quickly set Gina up with a laptop, which she used to apply for jobs. After a few months of searching, she got a job offer from a large retail store, where she has been happily working for almost a year.

"After being out of work for a really long time, I finally got a job and the computer helped me get that job," said Gina. "In a way, I still don't really believe it...it's just kind of like, wow, I have a job again. I'm making my own money, I can help take care of the bills, buy groceries and just buy stuff for myself or others if I want to."

Since the summer of 2022, the TLL has provided devices to more than 500 people with disabilities through a partnership with participating Regional Centers*. These devices include iPads, laptops, and JayPads, which are Android tablets with accessible features. Easterseals also provides technology training and support to ensure individuals are able to use their device to the fullest.

The TLL plans to expand and partner with additional regional centers throughout Southern California, with the goal of helping more people with disabilities access technology.



I am very grateful for Easterseals. It was so helpful to have the computer to fill out the application and get a job finally...a big part of it is the independence.

GINA
TLL RECIPIENT

* Participating Regional Centers: San Gabriel/Pomona, North Los Angeles County, Frank D. Lanterman, Eastern Los Angeles, and Harbor Regional Centers.



The Presidents' Council is the premiere giving program that recognizes donations of \$1,000 or more in a calendar year. Presidents' Council members make a difference in the lives of individuals and their families through their support of services that assist people with disabilities to work, live independently, and be active in their communities. Presidents' Council membership also comes with customized benefits.

We extend our warmest gratitude to our newest Presidents' Council members:

Shirley Andrews
 Cynthia Bero
 Jason Calacanis
 Jesse Cruz
 Sarah Gonzalez
 Scott Henry
 William King

The Bernadette Lee Family
 Richard Mogan
 Lupe & Kevin Mahoney
 Mike Mitchell
 Michael Telesca
 Karen Warren
 Suzanne & Bob Zwahlen



The Importance of Monthly Giving

If you've been on the fence about making a recurring gift, here are a few reasons to donate monthly to Easterseals:

- Your gifts provide a steady flow of income that we can count on. Donations are a huge component of the funding for many of our programs, and when you give monthly, you ensure a stable foundation for ESSC to comfortably seek out big-picture solutions that otherwise would not have been possible.
- You will grow with us. Whether it's Autism research, a music class for seniors, or making sure our facilities are in top shape, each month your gift will be utilized for the programs and services that need it the most.
- It's easy & convenient. By opting to make your gift monthly, automatic deductions are the easiest and most convenient way to make sure your donations are being made each month.
- You can adjust your contribution at any time. You're free to increase or decrease your contribution at any time. You can even pick which day of the month to give. You can also place a temporary stop if needed and start back up in a month or two, and you can cancel at any time. The process is easy, convenient, and hassle free.
- It doesn't break your bank account. Monthly giving tends to be easier on your wallet. Instead of making a larger one-time donation, spreading your contribution over months allows you to allocate funds more comfortably within your budget.

Becoming a monthly donor is easier than you might think. All it takes is a few clicks to set up your monthly giving plan, and you're on your way to helping children and adults achieve their goals and live more independent lives!

Call our Advancement team at 714-653-5041 or go to eastersealsoutherncalifornia-bloom.kindful.com



Let Us Count the Ways You Can Spring into Action with Your Giving Spirit

- 1 MAKE A ONE-TIME GIFT.**
You are always able to make a gift using the remit envelope attached, or visiting eastersealssoutherncalifornia-bloom.kindful.com
- 2 BECOME A THRIVE ALLY!**
Mark the “monthly” box when making your gift and sustain the impact you create in the lives of many.
- 3 DO YOU USE A DAF (DONOR ADVISED FUND) FOR YOUR PHILANTHROPY?**
Making a gift to ESSC through your DAF is easy and convenient, while making an impact in the lives of our participants. Speak with your DAF representative or financial advisor to direct your DAF distribution with your name and address to ESSC here:

Easterseals Southern California
ATTN: Advancement
1063 McGaw Ave, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92614

TAX ID: #94-3068149

* Be sure to include your name and address so you may receive an acknowledgment letter as soon as the distribution is received.

- 4 EMPLOYER GIFT-MATCHING**
Maximize your giving efforts by utilizing your employer’s gift-matching programs. Companies that offer gift-matching can double your giving impact. Make sure to check with your employer whether an Employee Giving Program is offered.
- 5 CHARITABLE BEQUEST**
The uncertainty around income tax reform includes estate taxes. Be pro-active, review your estate plans and consider including a gift to ESSC.
- 6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF APPRECIATED STOCK.**
To make your charitable gifts in the most efficient way possible, a donation of appreciated stock is a smart move.

Donors receive a charitable income tax deduction and avoid capital gains tax.

Please visit <https://donatestock.com/easter-seals-southern-california-inc>

Scan the
QR Code
to Donate





1063 McGaw Avenue, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92614
(714) 834-1111 ext. 5027
www.easterseals.com/southernca

The advertisement features a vibrant yellow background with white polka dots. At the top left, the Easterseals logo is present. The main headline reads "MAKE A SUN-SATIONAL IMPACT! SUPPORT DISABILITY SERVICES" in large, bold, blue and white letters. Below this, a blue banner states: "Throughout June, a portion of proceeds will support Easterseals in your community". In the center, a 12oz can of Celsius Sparkling Orange is displayed. To the right of the can are three small images: a man in a wheelchair, a woman with a child, and a person in a wheelchair. Below these images, the text "CELSIUS Any single 12oz unit" is shown. The bottom of the can lists benefits: "ESSENTIAL ENERGY", "ACCELERATES METABOLISM", and "BURNS BODY FAT". The can is set against a background of a beach with a blue sky and green foliage.

CVS pharmacy[™] Annual Campaign June through August

CVS Pharmacy drugstores across Southern California are hosting their fourth annual summer promotion to support ESSC Services.

The Campaign will feature Celsius Energy drinks, a PepsiCo product, in June; Smart Water of the Coca Cola company in July; and Banana Boat Sun care products in August.

CVS is a longtime supporter of ESSC, partnering with Easterseals for more than 12 years on a range of fundraising initiatives, including an annual golf tournament, supporting disability services in your community.
