



## Everychild Gives First \$1 Million Grant to Heart of Los Angeles Youth

### Total Grants Awarded Reach \$4.5 Million

The Everychild Foundation reached its founding goal of a \$1 million annual grant on March 14<sup>th</sup>, when it awarded its 2007 grant to Heart of Los Angeles Youth (HOLA). Since its founding in 1989, HOLA's mission has been to "empower inner city youth to advance their lives and revitalize their communities through enrichment, personal development and leadership programs." Through free after school, intersession, and vacation programs, HOLA strives to create a safe space for children in the heart of the Rampart District, a neighborhood plagued by poverty, gang violence, sexual predation, and drug dealing and abuse.

In partnership with the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, HOLA will use the \$1 million grant to improve their current facilities in Lafayette Park. HOLA is currently in the process of finalizing negotiations with the City and expects groundbreaking for the project to occur in late 2007. Leveraging Prop K funds already dedicated to expand and renovate the existing Community Center, they will use Everychild funds to add a technology learning center, classroom space, and offices for HOLA program staff. A portion of the funding will also be used to expand HOLA's existing programs in academic enrichment, computer literacy, job training, fine arts and athletics. As a result, 900 additional children will be able to take advantage of HOLA's programs each year, bringing the total program capacity to 2300 children. *(cont'd on back page...)*



Above: Rendering of the renovated HOLA facility. Below: To touch or not to touch?



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## 2006 Grant Update: Everychild Foundation Playground at Orthopaedic Hospital Nears Completion



From top to bottom: 1) Two future playground users visit the construction site; 2) OHMMHS students exhibit a popsicle-stick model of a universally accessible merry-go-round they designed; 3) Cal State mechanical engineering students test some of the mechanisms to be used in the prototype design; 4) wood-frame mockup of the base; 5) prototype merry-go-round gets taken for a "test spin" by LAOH staff members.

Since the ground-breaking ceremony last summer at Los Angeles Orthopaedic Hospital, work has progressed steadily on the universally accessible playground funded by Everychild Foundation's \$925,000 grant in March, 2006. As Mary Schmitz, President of the Los Angeles Orthopaedic Hospital Foundation, reports, "The excitement you felt when you first gave Orthopaedic Hospital this gift has just grown over the year. The reality of the playground coming into being was heralded as such a symbol of hope and...well, playfulness for our donors, our support groups, our doctors, nurses, therapists, students at the Orthopaedic Hospital Medical Magnet High School – and just about anyone who will give us a moment to describe this project."

Members of the entire hospital community have gotten involved. As design of the playground began, doctors, nurses, physical therapists, patients and staff came together in focus groups; their valuable suggestions and feedback became an integral part of the playground design. Physics students at the Orthopaedic Hospital Medical Magnet High School (OHMMHS) and their mentors from the Cal State University Los Angeles mechanical engineering department worked in teams to design 3-D models of play equipment for children with disabilities. One design – a merry-go-round – was ultimately chosen to be built for the new playground. In addition, the hospital has set aside a small area of the playground for the students' use to develop more new ideas for universally accessible playground equipment. As one visitor to the project commented, "This is so much more than a playground!"

The park will have two separate play zones, one for children ages 2 to 5 and the other for ages 5 to 12, each filled with new experiences for children with disabilities. Along with the specially designed equipment for the playground, the park will include a sound wall, a sensory wall, and a dragon that mists water from its nostrils. In a rubberized roll-down area, wheelchair-bound children can be assisted from their chairs and laid down to experience the unaccustomed freedom of body movement as they roll safely down the surface. Picnic tables, seating areas, and plenty of greenery and shade will provide pleasant places for parents and caregivers to sit nearby while their young charges enjoy the playground.

Like most construction projects, there have been unforeseen obstacles which have delayed completion of the playground. However, all of the playground equipment has now arrived and is awaiting placement. The park is scheduled to welcome its first children in August, with a grand opening celebration later in the fall. Including neighborhood families and patients of the clinic, estimates are that the playground will serve up to 128,000 annually.

The Everychild Foundation Playground – the first universally accessible playground associated with a major pediatric center in the Western U.S. – has inspired others to follow suit. Children's Hospital LA will now be building two private access parks with Shane's Inspiration, technical consultant on the LAOH project; Santa Monica/UCLA Hospital is also looking into creating a universally accessible park on their grounds. In addition, the CEO of a large orthopedic hospital in Canada who recently toured LAOH was so impressed by the concept of the universally accessible playground that he is taking the idea back to his board for consideration. We are so delighted to find that once again, an Everychild project will reach a far wider group of children in need.

For more information about Los Angeles Orthopaedic Hospital, please contact [www.orthohospital.org](http://www.orthohospital.org).

## 2005 Grant Update: Hillside's Youth Moving On Program Prepares Transitioning Foster Youth for Independence

The 2005 Everychild Foundation grant of \$715,000 was awarded to purchase an apartment complex in Pasadena and create Youth Moving On – a groundbreaking residential program for foster youth who age out of the system upon turning 18. Under the umbrella of Hillside's, a 100-year-old agency serving foster children, Youth Moving On gives these youth the opportunity to become self-sufficient, responsible and caring adults, offering them affordable, quality housing and a comprehensive goal-directed program in a safe, supportive community. One-quarter of the apartments in the complex are set aside for the Youth Moving On residents, and the remaining apartments are rented to the community to fund program costs and will eventually finance the down payment on a second apartment building. Hillside's believes that the YMO model could be replicated by agencies serving foster youth throughout California.

In the short time since the facility was opened, the Youth Moving On program has made impressive progress. Since the first foster youth moved into the complex in April, 2005, a total of 34 young adults have been served.



YMO residents share their success stories with Ninon de Vere De Rosa, host of "Voices of Tomorrow."

Every apartment in the complex has been renovated, and the 37 apartments set aside for the general public have all been rented. A \$7.1 million capital campaign, begun at Hillside's in April 2005 to retire the mortgage on the Youth Moving On building is already nearing its goal, with only \$500,000 left to raise – another testament to the power of this innovative model for assisting transitioning foster youth.

Currently, there are 15 residents in the program, with two remaining apartments to be filled next month. Of the 15 current residents, four are attending college full-time and working part-time; four are in vocational education programs and working part-time; one is working full-time and attending college part-time. The remaining six residents are all gainfully employed. These statistics are in stark contrast to those for the aging-out population in general, where as many as 40% experience bouts of homelessness within three years of aging out, and only 10% are able to hold a job for more than a year.

The first two years at the Youth Moving On complex haven't been without challenges, too. Some of the residents didn't meet the expectations of the program – such as working on goals, getting a job, paying their rent – and were asked to leave. Those who have stayed see the value in the high expectations set by the YMO program, and they now help to instill that sense of value in new residents. This group of young people, who each arrived at the YMO facility with different experiences and attitudes, are developing a sense of community. Together, they feel they are a part of something important, learning to handle life outside the foster care system with confidence.

For more information about Hillside's and Youth Moving On, please visit [www.hillside.org](http://www.hillside.org).





The Everychild Foundation continues to refine and improve our grant selection process to find the best possible candidates for our grant each year. Members are now actively involved throughout the year in every phase of our grant process through three committees: the Grant Outreach Committee, the Grant Screening Board, and the Grant Monitoring Committee. The Everychild Foundation salutes the extensive work and dedication of the women who served on these committees in 2006:

**Grant Screening Board** (pictured above)

Alison Whalen, Chair  
Hilary Nelson Jacobs, Vice Chair  
Susan Adler  
Cynthia Alexander  
Vicki Baker  
Jacqueline Caster  
Sandra Devereaux  
Kay Faguet  
Karin Fielding  
Karen Heilman  
Mary James  
Virginia Johannessen  
Penny Meepos  
Sandy Nagler  
Carolyn Reece  
Michelle Richman  
Eloise Rich-Proctor  
Sue Rosenblum  
Linda Bernstein Rubin  
Tawny Sanders  
Toni Stone  
Marcia Antopol, Consultant

**Grant Outreach Committee**

Cynthia Alexander, Chair  
Debbie Colbert  
Therese Funk  
Kristie Hubbard  
Carol Leif  
Denise McCain-Tharnstrom  
Susan Purcell  
Marcia Antopol, Consultant

**Grant Monitoring Committee**

Linda Bernstein Rubin, Chair  
Mary de Kernion  
Anna Sanders Eigler  
Lisa Finkelstein  
Judy Burn Fishman  
Linda Joyce Hodge  
Melanie Lundquist  
Denise McCain-Tharnstrom  
Nina Pircher  
Barbara Kaye Rothman  
Mindy Stein  
Toni Stone  
Cynthia Troop

In addition, the Foundation is grateful to Advisory Board member Michael Rich and Ann Wang of the RAND Corporation for arranging for use of RAND's conference rooms for Grant Screening Board meetings and the annual Grant Hearing.

## 2004 Grant Update: Optimist Youth Homes Expands Services at Everychild Youth Learning Center



*Thanks to Everychild's support, the Optimist Youth Home now provides 150 students with art, music, and other therapy.*

helped these young people overcome the negative experiences of their youth in order to lead meaningful lives.

On average, an individual stays in the residential program for 13 months and spends two to three years at Optimist's state-accredited special education high school, now housed in the new Learning Center. Because of the school's 1:4 teacher-student ratio and the personalized attention students receive, most students complete two years of public school education in each year they are enrolled at the high school.

Mr. Orlando comments that his students take pride in the Everychild Youth Learning Center, and he has been particularly thrilled when some have gone out of their way to thank him for the new facilities. Optimist already has a long waiting list; as the current LAPD crackdown on gangs places more youth in the juvenile system, facilities like Optimist's are needed now more than ever.

*For more information about Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services, please visit [www.oyhfs.org](http://www.oyhfs.org).*

## Over 100 Everychild Families Enjoy 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Day at Universally Accessible Playground



*Children of all abilities play together at Aidan's Place Universally Accessible Playground during Everychild's 6<sup>th</sup> annual Family Day.*

Since the Everychild Youth Learning Center was dedicated in November, 2005, Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services has significantly expanded many of the services they provide to the troubled adolescents who live at their Highland Park campus.

Executive Director Sil Orlando reports that the services now offered have increased by 50% over what they could provide when housed in the chapel, in closets, and in other small, unsuitable spaces around campus. In addition, with the modern, fully-equipped Youth Learning Center and its computer lab, library, classrooms, therapy rooms, meeting rooms and offices, the quality of educational programs has improved in every area of study. Therapy programs have also been expanded in the new facilities to serve all group home residents; the number of students receiving art, music and other therapy has increased from 100 to 150.

Founded in 1906, Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services has provided care for thousands of abused and neglected children. Many of the adolescents they serve have been referred from the juvenile justice system and have failed in every other placement. By combining therapy, education, life skills instruction and proper home life, Optimist has

Everychild volunteers and their children gathered at Aidan's Place Universally Accessible Playground at the Westwood Recreation Center on April 15<sup>th</sup> for Everychild's 6<sup>th</sup> annual Family Day. Over 100 of our members and their families spent an afternoon with families from Shane's Inspiration, a non-profit organization working to eliminate bias against children with disabilities through the creation of universally accessible playgrounds. Each child was paired up with a buddy with disabilities to enjoy an afternoon playdate and picnic that included arts and crafts, face painting, music, a great magic show – provided by Doug Hopkins, nephew of member Anne Youngblood - and In-N-Out burgers.

In Southern California alone, tens of thousands of children are excluded from traditional neighborhood and school playgrounds because they are disabled. Most playgrounds provide equipment that is not easily accessible; wheelchairs get trapped in sand pits, and leg braces get caught in narrow pathways. This leaves children with disabilities sitting on the sidelines, watching as their able-bodied friends and siblings play. At universally accessible playgrounds like Aidan's Place, these children can play side-by-side with their able-bodied peers, creating a truly integrated environment where compassion and acceptance can flourish.

Since their inception in 1998, Shane's Inspiration has initiated 21 universally accessible playground projects in Southern California. They are currently acting as consultants to our 2006 grantee, Los Angeles Orthopaedic Hospital, for the Everychild Foundation Universally Accessible Playground currently under construction there.

A heartfelt thanks to this year's Family Day Committee – chair Gina Goldsmith (who with her husband, Andrew, also sponsored the In-N-Out truck), Michelle Richman, Linda Rubin, Cindy Simon and Amber Valletta – who along with their families helped to sponsor the event and bring together children of all abilities.

*For more information about Shane's Inspiration, please visit [www.shanesinspiration.org](http://www.shanesinspiration.org).*

## Councilman Bill Rosendahl and Attorney Connie Rice Discuss the Gang Crisis in L.A.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007, the Everychild Foundation was privileged to host Los Angeles Councilman Bill Rosendahl and civil rights attorney and gang expert Connie Rice at the home of Pamela and Jarl Mohn. Elected in May, 2005, to represent the 11<sup>th</sup> District, Rosendahl served on the Los Angeles City Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development; he is currently a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness, which he co-founded. Ms. Rice has worked on gang truce programs in Los Angeles for almost fifteen years. She is currently Co-Director of the Advancement Project Los Angeles, which focuses on making large public systems do a better job for low income residents, especially children and youth.



Councilman Bill Rosendahl (seated) and Connie Rice discuss the epidemic of gang violence in L.A.

The topic of the evening, "Kids and Gangs in Los Angeles," sparked a spirited discussion about the enormity of the gang problem in our city - and why it is our problem, no matter in what district or what social strata we live.

"There are three ways to fight gang crime: suppression, intervention and prevention," Rosendahl said, as he delved into the evening's topic. "I strongly believe that we need to spend more on prevention

and intervention rather than suppression." As a reminder that "jobs and education are the real solution," the councilman always carries a coffee mug from Homeboy Industries - the Los Angeles non-profit which helps former gang members and at-risk youth to turn their lives away from gangs through counseling, education, job training and job placement programs. A recent UCLA study supports his view, finding that jobs are the only factor that correlates directly with the reduction of gang violence.

Rice agrees completely. "We can't arrest our way out of this problem. We've arrested half a million children over 30 years, and yet we have twice the number of gangs today," she said. Currently, there are 40,000 gang members in the city of Los Angeles alone, and twice that many in the county overall. "We must build a city where gangs can't get near a single kid under 16, and where any gang member who wants out can exit 'la vida loca' and live. Then let's get really radical and actually end the malignant poverty that drives the violent dysfunction."

In a shocking statistic, Rice cited a recent study which found that 36% of youth living in chronic gang "hot zones" exhibit signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. She suggests that we need to treat the epidemic of gang violence in our city - where there is an average of one gang-related killing every night - as a disease, and cure its underlying causes with an individualized treatment plan for each stricken neighborhood.

Both speakers emphasize that we must address the enormity of the city's gang crisis by coordinating a variety of city and state departments which are normally more territorial than cooperative. Rosendahl stated that one of the most important elements of his job is his continuing quest to get the left hand and the right hand of the city's bureaucracy to talk to each other.

This coordinated attack, along with contributions of skill and money from the private sector, could prevent our gang crisis from fermenting further and creating "favelas" within our own city, referring to the notorious poverty- and violence-ridden hillside shantytowns of Rio de Janeiro. Violent drug gangs make it almost impossible to even enter some of Rio's favelas, let alone work on improving living conditions in these slums; the police have to resort to war-like maneuvers just to get into the neighborhoods. Rice suggests that we have perhaps another 10 years to address the gang problems in Los Angeles before the drug cartels take hold and it becomes too late.

How can we help? By creating a political mandate for this work, Rice says. The resources already exist to address the poverty, violence and lack of jobs that foster gang problems, but the politicians won't do it themselves. It's up to us, their constituents, to make ourselves heard on this issue. The effort must be educational, economic, political, cultural, and comprehensive - with every segment of society getting involved. With gangs costing Los Angeles and its residents close to \$2 billion a year, we can't afford to do otherwise.

*Many thanks to Salon Committee Chair Amy Sommer and members Denise McCain-Tharnstrom, Charlene Underhill-Miller, Toni Stone and Leslie Weisberg-Hyman for arranging our outstanding Salons over the past year.*

## Juvenile Justice: Working for Less Incarceration, More Rehabilitation

Everychild member Carol Biondi, Los Angeles County Commissioner for Children and Families, hosted a spirited discussion on the state of juvenile justice in Los Angeles at her home on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006. Along with Biondi, the evening featured Cyn Yamashiro, Director of the Center for Juvenile Law and Policy at Loyola Law School, and Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky.

Biondi framed the discussion with these staggering statistics:

- Over one million children in California have a parent in prison, in jail, or on parole.
- Of the 22,000 children tried last year in Los Angeles County's 27 delinquency courts, only 57 were found innocent.
- There are 30,000 children on probation in Los Angeles County; 4,000 of these children are in locked juvenile facilities.
- It costs the county \$92,000 annually to warehouse each youth in one of 19 locked "camps", where 100 boys sleep in one big room; the 3 juvenile halls are more expensive, but the conditions are even worse.
- 70-80% of the youth in the juvenile justice system have mental health issues, but only about 10% receive any mental health treatment or services; the statistics are worse for substance abuse problems.

"We're spending a lot of money to make our communities less safe because of our focus on incarceration and punishment, and only paying lip service to rehabilitation," said Biondi. "If these kids don't have the help they need when they need it, then we're all at risk".

Cyn Yamashiro agreed. "All of these kids are in here for a reason," he said. "You have to deal with the issues that got them into court in the first place." The goal of the clinical program at the Center for Juvenile Law and Policy (CJLP) is to identify those key issues for each of their young clients and work to resolve them. The CJLP's legal staff is comprised of third year Loyola Law School students, who must complete a semester's training and be certified by the state bar before representing youth. Together with a licensed social worker, they work to provide a voice for children and families involved in the juvenile justice system and to shift the focus from punishment to rehabilitation. Yamashiro gave two examples:

A 14-year-old girl was charged with assaulting her mother and given informal probation by the delinquency court judge. When the girl's CJLP attorneys investigated further, they discovered that the girl had recently moved in with her mother when her father was sent to jail for murder. While in his custody, the father would punish his daughter by taking her with him on drive-by shootings.

Through the CJLP, the girl and her mother found counseling and are on the road to establishing a productive parent-child relationship.

A young man was arrested for carrying brass knuckles. Why? The CJLP's law students and social worker discovered that the youth was a paranoid schizophrenic. He needed psychiatric help, not jail. For many of these youths, their first contact with a mental health professional doesn't occur until they are arrested - and even then only a very few receive the psychiatric help that they need.

Carol Biondi summed up the sad truth: "People just don't know about the damage that is being done to these young people. There is an assumption that they have competent lawyers and help dealing with their delinquent behavior; neither is true. These juvenile jails are the mental health facilities for poor children, and they are being criminalized for behaviors that are out of their control. If we don't provide the services they need at the county level, they will go into the state system, where taxpayers pay \$169,000 a year to incarcerate a youth who will almost certainly not receive the services he needs or the education required to function successfully in the community. Almost 80% will return to the system within a year."

Zev Yaroslavsky also emphasized the need for reform in the juvenile justice system, stating, "We have to transition from what has been largely a punitive to a more rehabilitative system." He commented that the nation's juvenile justice system has deteriorated because politicians find it more expedient to appear tough on crime than to push for the social services needed to prevent crime and rehabilitate juvenile offenders. "There is no political upside for politicians to spend political capital on this issue." However, Yaroslavsky also pointed out that, in partnership with people such as Carol Biondi, Cyn Yamashiro, and Juvenile Court Referee Jo Kaplan, his office is making progress in turning the tide from punishment to rehabilitation.



## Rep. Henry Waxman Discusses Health and Environmental Issues Impacting Children



Rep. Henry Waxman

**M**arcie Polier Swartz and her husband, Dave, hosted the tenth Everychild Foundation salon on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006, welcoming Representative Henry A. Waxman (D-California 30<sup>th</sup> District) and a group of Everychild members to their home. The salon, the first held during the day and on a weekend, was an intimate, interesting and inspiring afternoon.

Representative Waxman's talk, like his work in Congress, focused on health and environmental issues and their impact on children. He praised Everychild for our work on the local level then went on to discuss his efforts in Congress to ensure that children throughout the country have a brighter future.

There are many Federal programs that are designed to protect children. However, Waxman explained, due to problems in the ways legislation is written and implemented, many of our nation's most vulnerable young citizens still fall through the cracks. For example, Medicaid – the national

health insurance program administered by the states, known in California as Medi-Cal - mandates coverage for all children under eighteen years of age. However, the program requires cumbersome paperwork from birth parents, who often are not in the picture. Representative Waxman spearheaded legislation to eliminate this roadblock for minors seeking Medicaid coverage. He has also worked to close another crack in the system, which uses the birth parents' finances to judge a foster child's eligibility for Medicaid and other programs.

Representative Waxman's work on environmental issues helps us all but is especially valuable for children, because their immature systems make them more vulnerable to environmental hazards. In 1996, Waxman worked with lawyers from chemical manufacturers, agricultural businesses and others to implement legislation that sets chemical safety standards based on their effect on the most vulnerable in our society – children and senior citizens.

The afternoon ended with a question and answer period that managed to inform and inspire while avoiding political agendas – perhaps one of Everychild's biggest accomplishments to date!

## 7th Annual Everychild Luncheon Celebrates First \$1 Million Grant



*¡Hola! Now that truly IS a large check!*

**T**he annual Everychild luncheon is always a heartwarming affair, a chance for members to come together, present their newest grant, and acknowledge the achievements of the Foundation and its previous grant recipients. This year at the March 14<sup>th</sup> luncheon there was special cause for celebration, as Everychild fulfilled its dream of presenting its first \$1 million grant, awarded to Heart of Los Angeles Youth (HOLA). Present to receive the ceremonial check from the Everychild Executive Board were

HOLA's Executive Director, Tony Brown; Founder and Chairman Mitch Moore; John Kirk Mukri, General Manager of the Department of Parks and Recreation for the City of Los Angeles, HOLA's partner in the project; and HOLA students Kevin Flores and Christian Meitzenheimer.

In accepting the grant award for HOLA, Tony Brown spoke from the heart: "I remember the morning we were supposed to receive the news that we either won or we didn't....Mitch had called our entire staff into the office to hear the words from Jacqueline Caster: 'Congratulations! You've won!' I

looked over at Mitch, who had tears in his eyes, and mine began to well up too. While I wanted to share in that moment with everyone, what I really wanted to do was find a quiet place to fill my head with all of the wonderful visions for the future....Hundreds and hundreds of kids each year will be redirected from a life of poverty onto a path of socioeconomic success because of you, and I'm grateful to every one of you for your mentorship, love and support. On behalf of everyone at Heart of Los Angeles, thank you so much for making the future so much brighter."



*Students reading at the HOLA facility*

Happily, for the second year in a row, the runner-up for our grant did not go away empty handed. At the luncheon, Everychild President Jacqueline Caster was able to announce that finalist John Tracy Clinic had received a \$1 million grant from Everychild member Monica Rosenthal and her husband, Phil, to fund their proposed project – a model infant-toddler screening program developed in partnership with community health care providers in Los Angeles. John Tracy's president, Barbara Hecht, acknowledged that it was through our grant selection process that the Rosenthals learned about the infant hearing initiative and became committed to making the project a reality.

The luncheon also provided living proof of that old saying, "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery." Attending this year's luncheon were representatives

of four of the six organizations which have adopted the Everychild model of giving: The Blue Heron Foundation, founded by Everychild member Stefania Magidson in 2002 to care for orphaned Romanian children, has raised over \$200,000 to build playgrounds, fund newborn care, and provide college scholarships for 37 orphaned youth in Romania. The Santa Barbara Women's organization, founded in 2004, has already granted \$825,000 in their community. The Nevada Women's Philanthropy Foundation awarded their first grant of \$180,000 last November for a job assistance program in Las Vegas. Also in attendance were the founders of a new Westside group, Women Helping Children, who credit Everychild as their inspiration as well. Everychild is proud to have facilitated the creation of these organizations and welcomes them to continue to draw on our expertise.

The luncheon also provided a chance to celebrate our members, without whom there would be no Everychild Foundation. In just seven years, we have gone from a group of less than 60 members and an initial grant of \$230,000 to our present capacity membership of 225 women and a grant of \$1 million. The Foundation has now given away over \$4.5 million and directly served over 50,000 children. As Jackie Caster commented, so many women have contributed to making the Everychild dream a reality – through conversations with friends, coffees, phone calls, mailings, PR efforts; through participation in grant outreach, screening and monitoring; through work on Family Day, the Salon Committee, the Holiday Committee, or the newsletter. Through the commitment, energy and generosity of all our members, the Everychild Foundation has become a significant presence in the city's philanthropic community, known for our rigorous grant process and the real, tangible difference we are making in the lives of children. It's an achievement we can all celebrate with pride.

## Holiday Gift Baskets for Hillside's Teens

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006, an enthusiastic group of Everychild members met at the home of Mary deKernion to prepare holiday baskets for the teens living in the Hillside's Youth Moving On transitional center, the 2005 Everychild grant recipient. After all, for young people, much of the fun of the holidays involves surprises and the experience of opening packages, and these kids certainly deserve that experience. (You just can't take the kid out of the teen!) The group decided that, in addition to American Express gift cards generously donated by Everychild members, it would be wonderful if the YMO residents could also receive a basketful of items to help stock their apartments and some personal items. So the baskets were filled to the brim with toiletries, kitchen utensils, sweets, socks, cameras – you name it. Off they went, all 15 of them wrapped beautifully with cellophane and ribbons. Feedback from Hillside's was instant: the teens loved being remembered!

Thanks to all those who participated: Marge Sharer, Katie Sharer Mullen, Ellie Lederman, Debbie Colbert, Carol Lott, Jacqueline Caster and Mary deKernion. We plan to repeat this in 2007, and any contributions of items will be welcomed.



This year at Everychild, we all felt like a million dollars....literally. This was the very first year that we were able to reach our goal of making a \$1 million grant! And who better to receive it than Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA)! Their revitalization of the Lafayette Community Center will bring hope to many children who are desperately in need of stimulating and enriching after-school activities. With over 700 gangs, Los Angeles has earned itself the unenviable title, "the gang capital of the world." Programs like HOLA work to prevent kids from joining gangs by keeping them occupied and engaged in positive activities, and as a result, can change the course of their lives.

## A Message from Jacqueline Caster

of public policies benefiting children in need.

On behalf of the many, many underserved youth whose voices too often go unheard, a very heartfelt thank you to each and every one of our members for your selfless efforts to enhance, support and build our organization. Your compassion and dedication have made a tangible and lasting difference in our community and beyond that could reverberate for decades.

Warmest regards,  
Jacqueline Caster  
Founder and President

It's just one more way in which the women of Everychild have provided hope and opportunity for tens of thousands of children in our community and are helping to change the outcomes for them. And because of our track record in funding such critically needed projects, we have inspired the creation of six other new non-profits patterned on our philanthropic model. It is also why our voices have been heard this past year when we have spoken out in favor

## Inaugural Job Shadow Day for Aged-Out Foster Youth

Each year, more than 1,500 young people will age out of Los Angeles' foster care system. Although the average age of financial independence in America is now 26 years old, these youth are expected to attain financial and emotional independence by age 18. Not surprisingly, many youth aging out of foster care are ill prepared for living independently. Everychild's 2005 grant to Hillsides for the "Youth Moving On" residence for young adults like these gave everyone at Everychild the opportunity to learn more about this situation.

Last May, Foster Care Awareness month, in conjunction with the official dedication of the Hillsides project, Everychild Founder and President, Jacqueline Caster, announced a new citywide initiative to bring greater awareness to the aging out youth. She, and John Hitchcock, Hillsides Executive Director, then initiated a roundtable of governmental, judicial, and public interest organizations, in partnership with the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and with the support of Zev Yaroslavsky, Los Angeles County Supervisor. The result was a pilot Job Shadow Day on May 22<sup>nd</sup> of this year, coordinated by the Children's Law Center, to help prepare foster youth for independence. Over 50 youth participated in the event. The day was designed to assist foster youth as they identify career interests and to provide them with tools and resources that will contribute to their long-term success. It is hoped that this pilot program will expand next year to include many more youth and become an annual event.

Youth leaving foster care currently face tremendous challenges. Research shows they are underemployed and earn significantly less than youth in the general population. Fewer than half of transitioning youth had any earnings during a three-year period approaching and immediately following their 18th birthday. Former foster youth who are employed average less than \$6000 in annual earnings – substantially below the poverty level. Once they enter the labor market, former foster youth progress more slowly than other youth. The Job Shadow Day exposed youth leaving the foster care system to occupations they may not have considered and connected them with an array of employment-related resources and training opportunities.

Businesses and government offices taking part in the Job Shadow Day included: Cal National Bank; California State University, Northridge; Children's Hospital of Los Angeles; Fast Track Expediting; Hilton Los Angeles Airport; Los Angeles Unified School District; Mayer, Brown, Rowe and Maw; Merrill Lynch; Preventive Cardiology Center; the Office of Assemblywoman Karen Bass; Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors; and the Office of Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa.

## Dior Hosts Fashion Show Benefiting Everychild

This past fall, Dior presented a runway and trunk show at its Beverly Hills boutique premiering its 2007 Cruise Line Collection. Everychild received a share of the proceeds of all purchases and the evening netted the foundation close to \$7,000. Enormous thanks to Dior and its media partner, *Vogue*, as well as the evening's hostesses: Maria Bell, Jacqueline Caster, Elizabeth Stewart, Jamie Tisch and Amber Valletta.

## SUPPORTING EVERYCHILD

The Everychild Foundation provides a unique opportunity to give back to the children of Los Angeles in an immediate, efficient way. We are a group of 225 pioneering women who:

- Share a passion for improving children's lives in our community
- Are ready to commit \$5,000 annually to a project with tangible results
- Want to partner with other women to make a significant difference without a major time commitment.

Where does our money go? Each year, the Foundation makes a single grant in support of a project that will profoundly help local children facing disease, abuse, neglect, poverty, or disability. The grant recipient is chosen by a vote of the entire Foundation membership from a roster of carefully screened candidate projects. Grants are funded entirely from members' dues.

Foundation funds are used to improve the lives of children. We have no large overhead, staff salaries, or rent. No fundraising events or silent auctions are planned. We don't solicit money from our friends or business contacts for auction items or dinner tickets.

We focus on projects where we can have maximum impact within a short time frame. We look for "dream projects," where our money will enable a powerful idea to take hold and grow. We favor programs that encourage us to "act locally and think globally," where funding a pilot project in Los Angeles can provide a springboard for wider use.

If you would like to support the Everychild Foundation, please complete and return the Commitment Form included with this newsletter. While the Foundation has now reached its full capacity of 225 members, we maintain a waiting list and admit new members as space becomes available. In addition, contributions from non-members are always welcome!

For any further information, please contact us:

Tel (310) 573-2153 | Fax (310) 573-4207  
E-mail: [info@everychildfoundation.org](mailto:info@everychildfoundation.org)  
[www.everychildfoundation.org](http://www.everychildfoundation.org)

## EVERYCHILD CALENDAR

### Fall 2007

Opening of Everychild Foundation Universally Accessible Playground at Los Angeles Orthopaedic Hospital (2006 Grant Recipient).

### October 11

Annual Grant Hearing at RAND.

### November 1

Deadline for 2007 member dues and ballots.

### November 8

Grant recipient chosen for 2008.

### November

Salon with Cindy Oser, Director of the western regional office of Zero to Three, the leading national organization focused on the needs of very young children. Ms. Oser and others will address issues relating to our youngest and most vulnerable population, infants and toddlers. Date and other participants to be announced.

### March 2008

Eighth Annual Everychild Luncheon.



**Profile**  
**Reverend Patricia Farris**  
 Advisory Board Member

Tall and willowy with flaming red hair, Reverend Patricia Farris exudes energy, charm and a passion for philanthropy - which is why Farris joined the Everychild Foundation Advisory Board five years ago.

"It was a no-brainer," Farris says with her trademark directness. "It was an honor to be asked."

Farris had heard of the work and vision of Everychild Foundation President Jacqueline Caster, but it was when Dee Menzies, Head of the Carthorp School in Santa Monica and an Everychild Foundation member, invited Farris to meet Caster that the two women "clicked."

Reverend Farris is the senior Pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Santa Monica. The only child of an accountant and a homemaker, she was active in her church growing up in Phoenix.

"When I was coming up," Farris says, "it never even crossed my mind to pursue a career in the church. I had never met a woman who was also a religious leader - probably because women weren't even allowed to be ordained ministers in our church until 1956."

Farris majored in political science at Carlton College in Minnesota. Aiming for a career in law or international relations, Farris was taken aback when her college chaplain suggested she apply for a fellowship offered by the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation, created to support those who wanted to become ordained ministers. But before she knew it, Farris was off to Harvard Divinity School, where she soon realized she did have a calling. "I didn't hear the call before because I had no framework for it, no way to imagine that kind of life," Farris says.

At Harvard, Farris met her husband, David Bremer, who is now Associate Professor of Liberal Studies at OTIS College of Art and Design.

"When I met my wife," Bremer says, "she cared very deeply about her community - her immediate community and our larger community. She cares about connecting with people and making the world a more just place. In all the years I've known her, that has never changed."

Before taking over pastoral duties at First Methodist, Farris was the Superintendent of the San Diego district.

"That's where I really learned the qualities you need to lead," Farris says. "By nature, I am an introvert. So it was a challenge to be responsible for 57 different congregations."

While the mission of Everychild Foundation is to give away a grant every year to an "organization that works to improve the lives of children," Farris especially appreciates the more subtle "subtext" of the Everychild mission.

"Whether Everychild is supporting mobile dental clinics or libraries or computer labs or safe playgrounds for at-risk kids, at the end of the day, Everychild promotes values," Farris says. "The way I see it, the value Everychild embraces most passionately and deeply is that of giving back. And that is a 'world view' I feel very strongly about. Whether you give to your church or your favorite cause doesn't matter, as long as we're all giving. That is what will save us."

Farris also deeply appreciates sharing this goal with more than 200 other women in the Everychild Foundation. "It's an extraordinary thing to see these women come together to create this annual award," Farris says. "It is a diverse group, but we all share one common bond. We are women. We bring a female perspective. We offer a woman's way of knowing, a woman's way of relating. As women, I think we can sometimes set our sights too low and content ourselves with too little. At Everychild, we work together and affirm our desire to think big and raise the bar high, and always, always focus on our mission of improving the lives of our neediest, most vulnerable citizens: our children."

## FRIENDS OF EVERYCHILD

The goal of the Everychild Foundation is to maximize the size of our annual grant by keeping our expenses as low as possible. Therefore, it is our policy to have all foundation activities - including our educational salons, Family Day, and the annual luncheon - completely underwritten. This aim has been realized through the efforts of many dedicated Everychild members, plus the incredible generosity of numerous wonderful friends and supporters listed below:

- |  |  |                          |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| Norman Atkin, M.D.                     | Dorothy Duncan                         | RAND                     |
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\* FOUNDED MEMBER

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| Kristie Hubbard <i>Grant Outreach Chair</i>       |   |

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- |                          |                                 |                         |
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Virginia Johannessen*	

\*Founding Member

**Grant to Heart of Los Angeles Youth (cont'd. from page 1)**



*HOLA students enjoy educational and recreational activities at a safe and caring environment in the heart of the troubled Rampart District.*

With over 700 gangs containing 80,000 members county-wide, Los Angeles is now considered the “gang capital of the world.” Many believe the key to resolving this crisis is not suppression and incarceration, but intervention and prevention. As L.A. County Sheriff Lee Baca has commented, “You can’t arrest your way out of a gang problem. The real problem is these young people don’t have an alternative for gangs.” HOLA’s programs provide just such an alternative in a neighborhood whose youth need it most.

Since receiving word of the Everychild gift in November, HOLA has already received a strong endorsement from the W.M. Keck Foundation, which has pledged \$500,000 toward sustaining the HOLA partnership with the Recreation and Parks Department. In awarding this grant, Everychild’s members aim to demonstrate the success of a new kind of partnership between private organizations and city agencies that will serve as a prototype for after school programs in other neighborhoods of the city.

HOLA’s Executive Director, Tony Brown, had these comments on the impact of the grant: “The Everychild Foundation has not only enabled Heart of Los Angeles to realize our dreams, you have more importantly given HOLA the resources it will need to meet an even larger demand for increasingly necessary programs and services aimed at properly developing the lives of thousands of young people in this city. Our Mayor and Police Chief are on Capitol Hill this month seeking help to thwart the growth in gang violence in LA neighborhoods. Thanks to the Everychild Foundation’s gift, Heart of Los Angeles and LA City Recreation and Parks are going to be able to do our part. We can make a significant difference by providing academic and social developmental programs in inspiring facilities, giving hope not only for the kids of today, but for generations of young people to come.”

*For more information about HOLA, please visit [www.heartofla.org](http://www.heartofla.org).*

**Everychild Foundation Joins Ground-Breaking County-Wide Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers**

In 2006, the Everychild Foundation was invited to join an innovative county-wide group of public and private funders seeking to address the needs of our youngest and most vulnerable population, children from birth to age three. Initiated by philanthropist Richard Atlas and the Atlas Family Foundation, the group is comprised of over 40 Los Angeles public and private funding agencies. The group is committed to learning and promoting best practices, identifying service needs of local children, and targeting opportunities to support and promote practices and innovations that advance the health and well-being of children in the first three years of life. A “Baby Summit” Conference was held in Los Angeles in March, 2007, for business and political leaders and featured speaker Ron Greenwald of the Federal Reserve, whose research demonstrates that the highest rate of return on investment in children occurs in those age three and under.

Everychild representative Denise McCain-Tharnstrom is currently a member of the steering committee and is involved in planning research and assessments and in mapping the current needs and funding gaps in this arena. The collaborative is in the process of identifying the most pressing needs of Los Angeles infants and toddlers by geographic area and educating itself as to best practices.

*Interested funders are welcome to join the collaborative; for more information, contact Denise McCain-Tharnstrom ([denmct@aol.com](mailto:denmct@aol.com)).*

**Everychild Members Work to Affect Public Policy Concerning Children**

As the Everychild Foundation has grown and gained stature in the philanthropic community, members have become interested in extending our impact by working for passage of state legislation targeting the needs of children addressed by our grants. Over the past year, Everychild members have acted to increase public awareness and alert legislators in Sacramento about the problems faced by emancipated foster youth. Member efforts – including a persuasive research package developed by member Dara Reiner and Amy Lemley of the John Burton Foundation – helped secure the passage of SB1576, which increased funding for housing and support services for these youth. Everychild Founder and President, Jacqueline Caster, was also involved in the creation and passage of a bill providing quick credit repair for children whose identity had been stolen by foster parents. Recently, Everychild member letters have helped propel a new bill to committee that will set up tax credits for employers hiring emancipated foster youth.

This spring, the Everychild Policy Committee was formed by a group of Everychild members committed to becoming involved in children’s issues at both the local and state level. The 14-member committee has begun work on a mission statement and has agreed to focus on issues related to families, defined as child-centered households and disenfranchised children and youth, such as children in foster care and the juvenile justice system. The group has determined their best approach is to target on-going issue areas where some members are already involved, giving the committee an early opportunity to participate in important legislative efforts. They have chosen to focus initially on policy issues related to children aged 0-3 and foster care. The committee will be compiling policy resource files on these issues, as well as diabetes, obesity and fitness, health care, and juvenile justice issues.

Most committee members have little or no policy experience, but share an interest in learning more about the process and how they can get involved to make a difference in the lives of local children. Members attended a California Budget Workshop in March and organized a Foster Care Workshop with noted expert, Miriam Krinsky, former Executive Director of the Children’s Law center, on June 4<sup>th</sup>. An upcoming advocacy workshop is also being planned in conjunction with the western regional office of Zero to Three, the nation’s leading nonprofit focused on very young children.

*The committee welcomes new members; if you’re interested, please contact committee chair Denise McCain-Tharnstrom ([denmct@aol.com](mailto:denmct@aol.com)).*