

A Brighter

FUTURE

Para Los Niños / For The Children

Spring/Summer 2007

Kids Helping Kids

Children Get a Lesson in Philanthropy

THE KEY IS YOURS

The Children's Promise Society

WORKING TOGETHER

Partnerships For Families Program

Plus...

Fun in the Sun!

Help a Child in Need This Summer



From the President & CEO . . .

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this, I will have been at the helm of Para Los Niños for one year. As I see what our children and families have accomplished in this short period of time, I am so very proud of their successes and I am honored to be a part of this great organization. From the very smallest infants to elementary and high school students, the children of Para Los Niños are thriving.



In our last newsletter, we presented our *B-HAG* – our Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal – which is that *all* of the children of Para Los Niños have the opportunity to attend college. Yet, we know that there are significant impediments to reaching this goal. For instance, we know that in California only 39% of Latino and 46% of African-American students graduate from high school – the rest drop out, giving up on the education that would change their lives. For children to graduate from college, they must first have the support systems in place to help them successfully complete elementary, middle, and high school.

To that end, we ask ourselves what additional assistance can we provide to the children we serve to help them enroll in and graduate from college? Para Los Niños' early childhood programs prepare children for their first steps to success, but helping children educationally, socially, and emotionally during the rest of their educational journey is just as crucial for future success. In particular, middle school children are often forgotten – and, as anyone who has raised a “tween” (a child between middle childhood and adolescence), knows, these are not easy years, as children’s minds and bodies grow and change in ways that are bewildering to them and their parents.

At Para Los Niños, we continuously assess the needs of children and families in the community, and how best we can use our resources to help them. Currently, we are beginning to look at how middle school students are served in our community, and what opportunities we can offer them. We look forward to reporting to you on all fronts of our progress. We are committed to the present and future success of the children and families you so graciously help us support. Thank you for partnering with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gisselle Acevedo".

Gisselle Acevedo

President/CEO



THE KEY IS YOURS

*Children's
Promise
Society*

What if someone gave you a key that could unlock the door to success for the children and families living in poverty...*would you accept it?*

What if you learned you could purchase a key that would ensure impoverished children could succeed in school and in life...*would you buy it?*

What if you discovered you could hold that powerful key by becoming a founding member of the **Children's Promise Society** of Para Los Niños today...*would you join?*

The key is yours and the time is now.

You will have an immediate impact on the lives of children and families living in poverty as a founding member of the **Children's Promise Society** of Para Los Niños. Pledge \$1,000 or more in annual support and the key can be yours today. Your membership will make a difference. For example:

- A traumatized child and her family will receive 10 hours of professional counseling.
- An exciting and educational field trip will be planned for 240 children.
- A full month of nutritious meals and snacks will be provided for 16 preschool children ensuring they're well fed and ready to learn.

To take advantage of this unique opportunity, contact Evelyn Ramirez-Schultz at (213) 250-4800, ext. 506, before June 30, 2007. Your support counts! ✕

A HEAVENLY EVENING UNDER THE STARS

CIELITO LINDO RAISES OVER \$630,000 FOR PARA LOS NIÑOS

On Friday, May 4, 2007 over 600 Para Los Niños supporters gathered under the stars for *Cielito Lindo*: the 11th Annual Cinco de Mayo Celebration. *Cielito Lindo*, which means “pretty little heaven” in Spanish, was held in the lush gardens of the Gilmore Adobe, a charming historical landmark hidden between the Original Farmers Market and The Grove.

Guests were on cloud nine with cotton candy served to them as they entered the event. The white cabanas, slip-covered furniture and clouds projected onto the dance floor set the stage for an ethereal evening. Guests enjoyed strolling mariachis, Mexican folkloric dance performances, tequila and wine tastings, a cigar lounge, tours of the Gilmore Adobe, and the divine sounds of DJ Pasha. If that wasn't enough, guests shopped till they dropped at the most successful live and silent auction in Para Los Niños history—raising over \$25,000!

The heavenly event raised an unprecedented \$630,000 for Para Los Niños' programs, thanks in large part to the remarkable generosity of Tina and Rick Caruso, who challenged the organization with a \$200,000 matching grant. Honored guests included Mr. and Mrs. Caruso and Nadine Velazquez of ABC's hit television comedy *My Name is Earl*, who served as the event's honorary host. Para Los Niños partnered with networking groups Irish Girls Productions and The Refreshment Project in attracting Los Angeles' young and influential crowd. Para Los Niños thanks all of the event sponsors, participants and guests for their generous support in making this event truly heavenly! ✕



Board members Roger Carrick (left) and John Sussman joined Gisselle Acevedo, Para Los Niños' president and CEO, for an evening of fundraising, music, and great food!



Honorary host, Nadine Velazquez of *My Name is Earl* enjoyed the evening with her husband and a friend.

Event committee member Marcell Tejada (left) and host committee member Jenny Lee (right) pose with Denice Phumchun (center).

Para Los Niños would like to thank the generous sponsors of Cielito Lindo:

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TEEN SCENE

What the Youth of Para Los Niños Are Up To

There's a lot happening in Para Los Niños' programs for youth. From yoga and dance, to financial literacy and health education, Para Los Niños provides teens with a well-rounded experience to help them navigate through the difficult years of adolescence and beyond.



Participants practice balancing a checkbook in workbooks provided in the Financial First workshops.

TEENS GET A LESSON ON FINANCIAL FIRSTS

Para Los Niños' Youth Workforce Services participants are getting a lesson on their "financial firsts." This five-week program teaches youth about their first checking account, first job, first credit card, and first home away from home. The Financial Firsts/Financial Literacy training is part of the EPIC program which exposes low-income youth to the idea of going to college by providing them with job opportunities on Cal State L.A.'s campus.

TEENS LEARN TO SALSA

Every Tuesday, teens at the Youth Center are learning to move to the Latin beat, thanks to veteran dancer, Linda Cevallos. Cevallos uses salsa to get youth off the couch and onto the dance floor. Dancing has not only been a physical outlet for the teens, but also a character-building experience. Students are enjoying increased self-confidence and self-awareness.

**To find out what else Para Los Niños' youth are up to, visit:
www.snipurl.com/plnyouth**



Students learn to incorporate healthy eating habits into their lifestyle.

TEENS GET THE 411 ON HEALTH

Para Los Niños' Youth Center teamed up with the Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center's Hot Spots program to provide bi-weekly health classes, where the students learn about nutrition, fitness, and mental wellness.



Teens get ready to breathe, stretch, and relax their stresses away.

TEENS STRIKE A POSE

In January, the Para Los Niños Youth Center began offering a yoga class in conjunction with Y.O.G.A. for Youth and the Los Angeles Youth Leadership Council. At first, students were hesitant to give the ancient practice a try, but after the first mat class, their minds, bodies, and souls were thirsty for more. Now classes are full — and teens have encouraged their parents to jump on the yoga bandwagon! ✕

WORKING TOGETHER

Partnerships for Families Program

Young. Poor. No family support. No role models for good parenting. Substance abuse. Domestic violence. Depression.

Any one of these factors puts children and families at risk of serious educational and emotional problems. Recognizing gaps in the services provided to at-risk parents, First 5 LA awarded Para Los Niños its Partnership for Families grant. This five-year program, emphasizing prevention, provides early intervention to strengthen fragile parenting skills. Our Partnership for Families program offers in-home services to parents-to-be as well as parents of children ages 0 to 5, who may be at risk of child neglect and abuse.

Working with 15 partner agencies, Partnership for Families is assisting 150 families in its first year of operation. The program offers a wealth of services that are designed to foster a strong parent-child bond — the first step to ensuring healthy growth and development and preventing child maltreatment.

Centered around in-home visits, Partnership for Families offers case management, parenting classes, daily living skills, mental health services, domestic violence counseling and links to medical care, employment guidance, education and job training, food and clothing, child care, and much more. This combination of coordinated services is a holistic approach to helping impoverished parents provide emotional and material support for their very young children. Since its inception, the program has fostered many positive changes, both big and small, in the families we serve.

Para Los Niños is honored to partner with First 5 LA and the families of Los Angeles to build healthy families. ✕



Bonding between a parent and child is important for a child's emotional and educational development.



Most poor families are working. About 34% of poor children have a parent working full-time, and another 39% have a parent working part-time.

Food Wish List

THE PROGRAM HAS REAL RESULTS FOR THE FAMILIES WE SERVE

The program taught Juan to engage with his children. He now sits with them laughing and talking at dinner time, making sure they are happy and enjoying family meals.

Sandra, a shy mother who would not advocate for herself or willingly receive services, is now enrolled in a vocational program and is working on getting her GED.

The Martinez family, once threatened with losing their children to foster care, was counseled by Para Los Niños' caseworkers. Today, they are in permanent housing, working to improve their situation with our support.

Para Los Niños often helps the families we serve with emergency food supplies. Our food pantry is stocked with donations from our supporters, and your gifts of canned and non-perishable foods are greatly appreciated.

Donations may be dropped off Monday through Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., at our Family Resource Center at 234 S. Loma Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90017. For more information, please contact: Evelyn Ramirez-Schultz at (213) 250-4800, ext. 506.

- Baby formula
- Beef stew
- Breakfast cereals and oatmeal
- Canned sauces
- Canned spaghetti or pasta
- Healthy canned protein (tuna, chili, chicken, etc.)
- Gift certificates to local stores
- Jam and jelly
- Macaroni and cheese
- Noodles
- Rice
- Pancake mix
- Peanut butter
- Powdered milk
- Snack foods (graham crackers, unsalted crackers, and fruit bars)
- Spaghetti
- Vanilla wafers



Young parents learn how to interact with their children in healthy and positive ways through parenting classes offered by Para Los Niños.

CAUSE for Celebration



Happy Birthday, Rick! From left: Rick Caruso, Rikki Kleiman, Justin Caruso, Tina Caruso and Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton enjoy the grand celebration.

Para Los Niños Child Development Center Dedicated in Honor of Tina and Rick Caruso

P

ara Los Niños rolled out the red carpet and sent in the clowns on Wednesday January 10, 2007. We were honoring Tina and Rick Caruso for their unwavering support of our children and families — and celebrating Rick’s 48th birthday. During a carnival-themed party, Para Los Niños named our flagship Child Development Center “The Tina and Rick Caruso Child Development Center.” Opened in 1980, the center on East Sixth Street was the first Para Los Niños location and today provides 135 impoverished infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with high-quality care and education in the heart of Skid Row.

Normally an ordinary downtown roadway, the street outside The Tina and Rick Caruso Child Development Center was transformed into a festive carnival. Children shrieked with delight as they enjoyed clowns, a juggler, balloon artists, arts and crafts tables, cookie design tables, cotton candy, popcorn, and a bounce house.

“The children of Para Los Niños represent the future,” said Rick Caruso. “They will be the ones who will build, who will lead, who will change things for the better. This agency and its programs are ensuring that will happen by giving previously overlooked children and their families the safe haven and loving environment the rest of us often take for granted.”

"I am always moved by what goes on here," added Tina. "It has been the greatest gift to our family to be part of the nurturing environment of Para Los Niños. From the minute we walked in the door many years ago, we knew this program was about hope."

Joining the dedication ceremony were several local dignitaries who lauded the Caruso family, including Los Angeles City Councilmember José Huizar, LAUSD school board member Mónica García, and Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton and his wife, Rikki Kleiman.

Para Los Niños is deeply grateful to the Carusos and our other donors who make this important work possible. ✕



Clowns, games, a merry-go-round and plenty of treats were on hand for everyone to enjoy.



Children enjoy the festivities of the carnival-themed events.



California's population is one of the most diverse. No race or ethnic group constitutes a majority of the state's population.



KIDS HELPING KIDS

Children Get a Lesson in Philanthropy

On Thursday, April 19, 2007, in a show of solidarity to help those less fortunate, children from Para Los Niños Charter Elementary School joined students of the Corinne A. Seeds University Elementary School, located at UCLA, to prepare sandwiches for children living at the Union Rescue Mission on Skid Row.

Children from Para Los Niños Charter Elementary School and Corinne A. Seeds University Elementary School joined forces to help children living at the Union Rescue Mission on Skid Row.

Thanks to the creative thinking of UES parents Ken and Debbie Dery, with their daughter UES student Sophia, who secured a grant by State Farm Good Neighbor Service Learning program, nearly 50 children from these cross-town sister schools gathered at Subway on 2nd and Central in downtown Los Angeles in celebration of National and Global Youth Service Day.

Also joining the students was Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, whose children attend University Elementary School and who is a longtime supporter of Para Los Niños.

"Today was a remarkable day," said Gisselle Acevedo, president and CEO of Para Los Niños. "I could not be more proud of all the children who came together for the common purpose of helping other children. Their shared sense of generosity and collective spirit of community service was abundantly clear today. I applaud their efforts to support the children in transition at the Union Rescue Mission."

After lively sandwich-making at Subway, all the children went to the Para Los Niños Charter Elementary School to present the lunches to a representative of Union Rescue Mission. Following the presentation, the students ate lunch together and were treated to a special storytelling session.

Children from both schools expressed how fortunate they felt to give back to children who have less than they do.



Longtime Para Los Niños supporter Los Angeles City Attorney, Rocky Delgadillo, takes his spot on the sandwich line.



Students gathered at the Subway restaurant to prepare, decorate, and package lunches as part of National and Global Youth Service Day.



FUN IN THE SUN

Help a Child in Need This Summer

Team sports are an important part of the day.

H

ave you made your summer plans? Perhaps you are looking forward to a mid-afternoon stroll on the beach, a barbeque with friends, or a family vacation. We hope you will include Para Los Niños in your summer plans.

While the summer months can offer rest and relaxation for many, this time of year is especially difficult for families living in poverty, as parents are often forced to choose between working to make ends meet for their family and staying home to keep their children safe from the dangerous inner-city streets.

Para Los Niños' Summer Day Camp ensures that the summer months are filled with opportunity for the children we serve. Consistent with Para Los Niños' mission, Summer Day Camp is designed to enhance children's literacy and education — even as they enjoy summer fun. Swimming lessons, team sports, field trips, and arts and crafts are all part of an educational, interesting, and safe summer at Para Los Niños.

continued...

**FAST
FACT**

About 60% of California's 2nd- to 11th-graders did not meet state goals for math and reading proficiency in 2006.



Summer afternoons are filled with arts and crafts and other enriching activities.

FUN . . . (continued)

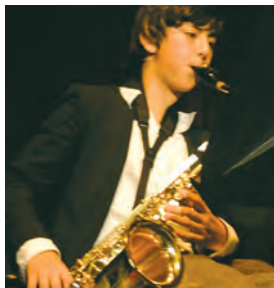
With your help, we can continue to provide safe and nurturing care for our region's poorest children this summer. Your donation to Summer Day Camp will immediately brighten the summer for the children we serve:

- ✦ \$25 pays for breakfast, lunch and snacks for one child for a full week
- ✦ \$100 covers the cost of a child attending camp for a week
- ✦ \$250 takes a group of children on a field trip such as the museum or the zoo
- ✦ \$500 gives the entire camp educational supplies for a week
- ✦ \$1,000 enables one child to attend camp for the entire summer and qualifies you as a founding member of the Children's Promise Society of Para Los Niños

**YOUR SUPPORT WILL CHANGE THE
COURSE OF A CHILD'S LIFE. THANK
YOU FOR MAKING PARA LOS NIÑOS
PART OF YOUR SUMMER PLANS!**



NEWS CLIPS



A young jazz player gets inspired by John Coltrane.

Sweet Music

It is amazing what kids can do when they put their talent to work. The Buckley School's biannual Buckley Benefit Concert (BBC), held on February 9, 2007 benefited Para Los Niños. The theme of the event was "Café Buckley," and featured sounds of jazz and the aroma of java. Fingers snapped and parents clapped as students showcased their talent to the tune of \$20,000 in net proceeds! Evelyn Ramirez-Schultz, director of special events for Para Los Niños, attended the show said, "I was truly amazed by the talent and generosity displayed that night."

Oh What a Night!

The La Cañada Junior Women's Club (LAJWC) sure knows how to have a good time — and raise much needed funds! The group held their annual fundraiser on Friday, February 2, 2007 at Café Santorini in Pasadena. The evening included an elegant cocktail party, a silent auction, live auction, and plenty of merriment. Para Los Niños and Haven House were selected as the beneficiaries of the event. Many thanks to the members of the LAJWC for helping our children succeed!



All smiles at the La Cañada Fundraiser.



Los Angeles Councilmembers Eric Garcetti, Jan Perry, and José Hulzar congratulated Para Los Niños.

Para Los Niños Honored with Treasures of Los Angeles™ Award

Para Los Niños was honored to accept the 13th annual Treasures of Los Angeles™ award on April 5, 2007 from the Central City Association. The award recognizes citizens and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the community of Los Angeles. "Para Los Niños is honored to be chosen as a treasure of Los Angeles and we hope to continue to help this great city shine," said Gisselle Acevedo, president of Para Los Niños.



Para Los Niños works to help children today for a brighter tomorrow . . .

Our mission: Helping children succeed. **Our vision:** Is to become the leading provider of high quality services for children.

Our values: Children come first • Excellence in all areas • Respecting and embracing diversity • Responsive, compassionate, and inspiring to those we serve • Highest ethical standards • Transparency and accountability • Teamwork

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