

FULFILLING PROMISES



Volunteers make the world a better place.

As we begin a new year, it's important to take time and acknowledge our committed and hard working volunteers; thanks to their help and support, Promises2Kids is ***creating a brighter future for foster children!***®

Throughout the holiday season, hundreds of volunteers provided invaluable support during our annual ***Give from the Heart*** Holiday Gift Drive, our Annual Holiday Shopping Event, our Camp Connect Sea World Event, our Guardian Scholars Holiday Dinner and numerous hours in our office making it all happen. Without these holiday helpers, Promises2Kids would never be able to provide the scope of services we do for local foster youth.

One volunteer in particular, Debbie Smith, has been volunteering with Promises2Kids for three years. (See next page for Debbie's story)

In addition to individual volunteers like Debbie, Promises2Kids receives support from corporations, such as ICW Group, SDG&E, Boyer Moving & Storage, BOMA, and Sleep Train. Sleep Train employees have become passionate supporters of both our Camp Connect program and our Guardian Scholars program,

providing countless hours of service by assembling toiletry kits and lanyards for camp as well as assembling care packages and hosting a Thanksgiving dinner for our Guardian Scholar students.

In late 2013, Promises2Kids initiated our Volunteer Outreach Program with monthly orientations, specialized trainings and community outreach projects. Volunteers are our greatest resource, and by educating them on the needs of foster children and Promises2Kids programs, we can actively engage the community to support the 3,100 foster youth in our community.

Promises2Kids has many volunteer opportunities throughout the year, including fundraising events, benefit drives, community projects, and weekly and monthly events through our Camp Connect and Guardian Scholars. If you are interested in learning how you can get involved, please contact Stephanie Trolinger, our Director of Community Outreach at 858.427.1106 or stef@promises2kids.org

Volunteer Spotlight: *Debbie Smith*



Debbie Smith came to Promises2Kids in 2011, looking for a way to give back. She eagerly volunteered to help with office work, whether it be filing, sorting paperwork, organizing our volunteer room or counting the donations that steadily streamed in.

Over the years, Debbie has become an integral part of the Promises2Kids family, assisting with many of our community drives and fundraisers. Even with the passing of her mother and the hospitalization of her father, she continues to make time for Promises2Kids. It is volunteers like Debbie that allow Promises2Kids to effectively and efficiently supporting our local foster youth.

Thank you Debbie and all of our committed volunteers; we are so grateful for your continued dedication and support. To learn more about volunteering at Promises2Kids, please contact Stephanie Trolinger, our Director of Community Outreach at 858.427.1106 or stef@promises2kids.org

Coming Together to Support Children at the Polinsky Children's Center

2014 is off to a bright start for the 1,000 children who arrive annually at the A.B. and Jessie Polinsky Children's Center, San Diego County's emergency shelter for children removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect. HomeAid San Diego, a long-time Promises2Kids partner, volunteered to assist with a special renovation initiated by the Polinsky Children's Center Auxiliary. This renovation focused on bringing new life to the Intake Room and Medical Clinic at the Center and enhanced these two key areas to create the sense of comfort and reassure children that they are in a safe and caring place from the moment they arrive.



HomeAid San Diego provided new lighting, ceiling tiles, paint, a beautiful custom mural spanning the length of the hallway, and new carpet and flooring. Major contributors to

the project include HomeAid San Diego, the Developing Leaders group of NAIOP San Diego, NAIOP's many members and generous donors. The Polinsky Children's Center Auxiliary rounded out renovations to

these areas with furnishings, painting and was so pleased with the mural, they have plans to complete additional murals in the Center.



Message from the CEO...

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the opening of the A.B. and Jessie Polinsky Children's Center, San Diego's emergency shelter for abused and neglected children. In the

past 20 years, the Center has cared for over 60,000 children. I am proud that this temporary home for San Diego's most vulnerable children is still a leader in caring for abused children- using trauma informed treatment modalities, support services and innovative programs to ensure that children in need of our protection are cared for in such a nurturing and supportive environment.

Our Founders, Norma Hirsh, Renée Comeau, Robert K. Butterfield, Mary Avery and Carla Snyder started out with a desire to support these vulnerable children and with their leadership the tens of thousands of children have been helped! Polinsky Children's Center is a true gift to the community and we will be forever grateful to those who had the courage and dedication to stand up for these children. Special thanks to Jeannie and Arthur Rivkin, Jack and Mary Goodall, The Manchester Family, and the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, led by Supervisors Ron Roberts and Greg Cox who made this dream a reality.

In the coming year, Promises2Kids will embark on another lofty goal – we plan to double our scholarship program; Guardian Scholars, to support 125 former foster youth as they embark on a journey towards a higher education. Like the Polinsky Children's Center, our Guardian Scholars program has demonstrated successful outcomes - addressing the national statistic of less than 3% of foster youth who complete college. We have an over 80% success rate and want every foster child to have the opportunity to experience this success.

Our Board of Directors is committed to moving forward and continuing to produce life-changing solutions for foster children. By supporting Promises2Kids and our programs: the Polinsky Children's Center, Guardian Scholars, Camp Connect and Foster Funds, you can be that one small step that leads us to our goal of increasing our support to foster youth. Together we can fulfill our mission of **creating a brighter future for foster children.**®

Tonya L. Torosian, MSW, CFRE

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Promises2Kids continues to provide comfort and hope to more than 3,100 foster children in San Diego who cannot live safely at home. Each day we strive to create a brighter future for foster children in San Diego.

Guardian Scholars



Mentors Make A Difference For Foster Youth

In honor of National Mentoring Month, in January, Guardian Scholars students showed appreciation for their mentors at a private pizza-making course led by Chef Brian at Solare – Ristorante Italiano, Pizzeria, Lounge. It was a great hands-on activity that transcends the restaurant. The majority of former foster youth are not prepared to live on their own when they leave foster care and nutrition and cooking is a new challenge for them. Mentors help their students complete basic tasks such as teaching them healthy options, shopping on a budget, and taking them grocery shopping.

Guardian Scholar Sandra (left) and her mentor, Valerie, are showing off their pizza dough making abilities.

New Class of Junior Guardian Scholars Began in January

Guardian Scholars expanded and now begins working with foster youth in high school to successfully graduate high school, and prepare for college and gain admittance into college. Nationally, approximately 50% of foster youth graduate high school and less than 3% graduate from college. Promises2Kids is taking the lead and intervening during a pivotal time in a foster child's life. In January, we welcomed 15 high school students (Junior Guardian Scholars) into the program eager to prepare for their future. These youth complete SAT preparatory and Science, technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) focused courses to expose them to emerging fields. Exposing foster youth to other academic and career choices, especially those known to be an industry with future growth in the workforce, is a priority.

Guardian Scholars spending the Thanksgiving Holiday together, as a family.



Former foster youth helping other foster youth successfully navigate the transition to independence.

Guardian Scholars share their experiences, insight, and recommendations with current foster youth through the Youth2Youth peer-mentoring program. This program allows Guardian Scholars to mentor foster youth, work a flexible schedule, and earn a livable wage while continuing in school. In addition providing peer-mentoring to the children at the Polinsky Children's Center, Promises2Kids now works with foster youth as they transition from the traditional foster care setting into independence.

Guardian Scholar and Youth2Youth, Briana, is really making a difference in the lives of many foster youth.

To learn more about Promises2Kids Guardian Scholars, contact Stephanie Ortega, Guardian Scholars Director, at 858-427-1109 or Stephanie@Promises2Kids.org.

San Diego Gives From Its Heart

Holidays inspire the community to give back, and this year, San Diegans gave from their hearts to ensure foster children felt special.

Hundreds of local businesses, organizations, and families collected more than 11,000 gifts for more than 3,100 foster children. From mountain bikes to Tonka trucks, Barbie dolls and gift cards, there was no shortage of gifts.

One social worker shared, "A little boy on my caseload asked me if Santa would remember him this year." Pausing to survey the toy-filled warehouse space Kilroy Realty donated, she exclaimed, "Yes, yes he will!"

Promises2Kids' ***Give From Your Heart*** holiday gift drive would not be possible without the outpouring of dedication and support from BOMA San Diego, KUSI, Kilroy Realty, and Boyer Moving and Storage – who, for more than a decade, have been invaluable partners in ***creating a brighter future for foster children®***.

Give From Your Heart is evidence of the good that results from community collaboration and compassion.

Other holiday support was provided by Sleep Train, and San Diego-based actress and model, Brande Roderick, who helped Promises2Kids collect more than 400 toys at an event in Los Angeles.

Promises2Kids Shares the Holiday Spirit

Excitingly, Promises2Kids' holiday shopping event for foster youth, which is now in its third year, was an incredible success, as youth shopped at Costco and Walmart.

Each youth armed with more than \$200 furnished by one man, more than 1,200 foster children treated themselves to special things, such as clothes, iPods, books or other items. In amazing gestures of generosity and selflessness, many children bought holiday gifts for their siblings, caretakers, and teachers.

These activities are a reminder to foster children that the community cares – that we do not forget them at the holidays, or ever.



With the beginning of a new year, many people make commitments to give back to someone in need. Promises2Kids has many ways that you can fulfill this desire to make a positive impact for foster children.

You can share your time, talent and treasure to benefit the over 3,100 children living in foster care in San Diego. We have volunteer opportunities lasting a few hours, to ongoing volunteer positions or serving as a mentor.

Monetary donations are also critical to supporting the children. A gift of \$100 or more qualifies you as a member of the Children's Circle- a group of individuals who commit to helping foster children annually. All

Children's Circle members receive a subscription to our newsletter, recognition on our Annual Donor Support page, and a Children's Circle lapel pin to proudly display your support of foster children.

**Looking for
a way to help
a foster child
this year?**

You can also support our back-to-school drive in the fall, or our holiday gift drive in December, or even host an event to collect monetary or in-kind donations. We do require all items for the children are new and unwrapped but check out our wish list for ideas.

To learn more about all the ways to give, visit promises2kids.org/donate or call Kirsten Running at 858-278-4400.



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**SAVE THE
DATES MAKE
YOUR PLANS NOW
FOR THESE TWO
VERY SPECIAL
EVENTS!**



Dream On 2014 Summer Concert Gala

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JUNE 2014 • DATE & ARTIST TO BE ANNOUNCED IN MARCH

LET YOUR DREAMS SET SAIL! Join us for the Dream On Summer Concert Gala, one of San Diego's most anticipated philanthropic events. Don't miss out on this extraordinary evening held under the stars at the exclusive La Jolla estate of Joan Waitt.

5:30 - 6:30pm VIP Reception & private reception with Artist
6 - 10pm Reception, Dinner, Live Auction & concert

VIP Table: \$6,000 / VIP Tickets: \$600

General Admission Table: \$4,500 / General Admission Tickets: \$450

FORE KIDS SEPTEMBER 15, 2014 GOLF TOURNAMENT

RESERVE YOUR FOURSOME NOW and spend a spectacular day on the greens at the exclusive La Jolla Country Club.

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