

May is Foster Care Month

Meet the Goodhearts

In 2019 we introduced you to Chuy and Kadi - husband and wife team, parents and owners of *The Good Seed Food Company* - a restaurant that uses local ingredients and donates a portion of proceeds to build community gardens. They are also valued partners of Promises2Kids' *Foodies 4 Foster Kids* campaign, graciously giving back to their community in hopes of raising awareness about foster care.

Last March they adopted their daughter Diamora (3) who they fostered since she was just three days old and since then, they have adopted two more beautiful boys - Sincere Hulk (8) and Atreyu Spiderman (6).

"We let our boys choose their own middle names because they have not been able to make any choices about their lives so far. They have had people telling them where to live, what to do/not do, who to live with, etc. We thought it would be nice to give them a little control over something very significant," said Kadi.

Running a business with a growing family isn't easy. Currently, they are going through the adoption process with two more children they foster. Time management and organization have been the key to their balancing act, in addition to having supportive employees who they consider family, and drinking copious amounts of coffee! Even with a crazy schedule, they balance work with fun activities like going to the zoo, cooking together and playing

games... simply making the most out of life!

Fortunately, their children have been able to benefit from Foster Funds - a program that exists thanks to the support of our generous donors. They have received various gifts and opportunities like piano and karate lessons, Grinch play tickets and Disneyland tickets for example. "We otherwise could not have afforded for our kids to have these experiences. It helps them feel "normal" and they get to do fun things like other kids

that may not have been an option without these resources. It takes their mind off being a foster kid and just enjoy life!" stated Kadi.

During this time of crisis, Kadi and Chuy remain optimistic. What keeps them going is their family and faith. "This will all work out. Our kitchen is currently closed, but we get to spend time together as a family... We are researching

ways to come back financially from this and it's nice to see how our community comes together to support each other," Kadi added. They are also planning on opening another kitchen in Little Italy with their friends at *Burgeon Beer Company*.

Upon the reopening of *The Good Seed Food Company* and the opening of their new kitchen, treat yourself to delicious food by supporting their restaurant and amazing family!

For more information, visit www.goodseedfood.com.



Message from the CEO



I am touched seeing our community unite during these uncertain times. I have watched people come together like never before to support and care for our most vulnerable community members.

While I am grateful for the love and support, there is still more to be done to ensure the health and safety of our current and former foster youth.

We are experiencing unprecedented times, and with the constant news updates surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, life has become hectic and overwhelming. We see this not only in our lives, but also in the lives of our youth. Like us, they are experiencing social isolation, loss of school as they know it, working from home, job loss and financial crisis. The tremendous impact ranges from financial burdens to mental health issues, while still trying to provide food, pay bills, stay connected to their siblings and keep up with their studies.

As we work to rebound from COVID-19 and maintain our livelihoods, let's remember to be there for those who need a little more help in these tough times; those who rely upon us as their support system and for many, as their family.

May is National Foster Care Month. If there were ever a time for our community to come together, the time is now; the time to help meet basic needs like food and funding for rent and utilities. With financial assistance, gift cards and guidance from mentors, we can help foster youth get through this and come out stronger than before.

I wish you and yours the best and encourage you to stay safe as we remain focused on the wellbeing of our foster youth. WE are all in this together.

Tonya Torosian, MSW, CFRE
Chief Executive Officer, Promises2Kids

Promises2Kids continues to provide comfort and hope to more than 3,000 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.

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Meet Guardian Scholar, Marie!



We live in a world full of different identities and one I carry is being a former foster youth. This particular identity has shaped me in a variety of ways, some good and some bad. For the longest time I didn't have a voice and I didn't know how to find it. Being moved around so frequently to different schools and foster homes only made my social anxiety worse. I still struggle with my social anxiety on a daily basis, but I have more control over it now.

Promises2Kids has helped me find my voice. By being part of the Speakers Bureau training program within Guardian Scholars, I have gained a range of public speaking skills and more confidence within my ability to talk, not just in front of large groups but also with my friends. I still have more growing to do when it comes to my voice, but now I have found it. It is programs such as this that have given me the platform to have my voice.

I have also gained a community because of Promises2Kids, which includes my case lead Taelani and my mentor Karen. I know that they are always there for me. Above all, I have a community that is made up of people who I am able to relate to and people who understand me. I never felt like I had a space where I was able to just be me, but I have found it here.

- Marie

CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT: La Jolla Cosmetic Surgery Centre

La Jolla Cosmetic Surgery Centre (LJCSC) was founded by Dr. R. Merrel Olesen in 1988 and was one of the first centers in the world to focus solely on cosmetic surgery. Dr. Merrel's team at LJCSC strongly believes in giving back and are proud supporters of Promises2Kids and many other charities. From health and education and the welfare of animals, to arts and culture and international medical and social programs, LJCSC is wholeheartedly invested in helping better the lives of those most in need.



La Jolla
Cosmetic
Surgery
Centre

est. 1988

Promises2Kids' *Grateful Hearts* dinner in November to thank those individuals who so generously supported our foster youth this past year.

In addition to volunteering on the Promises2Kids Advisory Board, Ingrid is helping launch *Cocktails For A Cause* – an initiative beginning this summer that will bring young professionals together for networking, fun and giving back.

Thank you to Marie, Ingrid and the entire team at LJCSC for your continued support and for investing

in the futures of our most vulnerable young people! Leaders like you make it possible for us to do what we do. Promises2Kids is appreciative of your contributions and utmost dedication. Your joint commitment to making a difference has truly helped change the lives of local foster youth.

MEET OUR LATEST PROMISE MAKERS

"I am a Promise Maker" is a campaign to raise awareness about foster care and engage community support by sharing personal stories of inspiration from foster youth supporters. Visit Promises2Kids.org to read their stories about why they are proud to be Promise Makers.

You can become a Promises2Kids Promise Maker with a monthly gift. Visit give.classy.org/promisemaker to learn more and change a life... **FOREVER.**



"Every time a student achieves success, I feel a sense of accomplishment knowing I have helped them by providing the support they need."

George Puga
Guardian Scholars
Coordinator



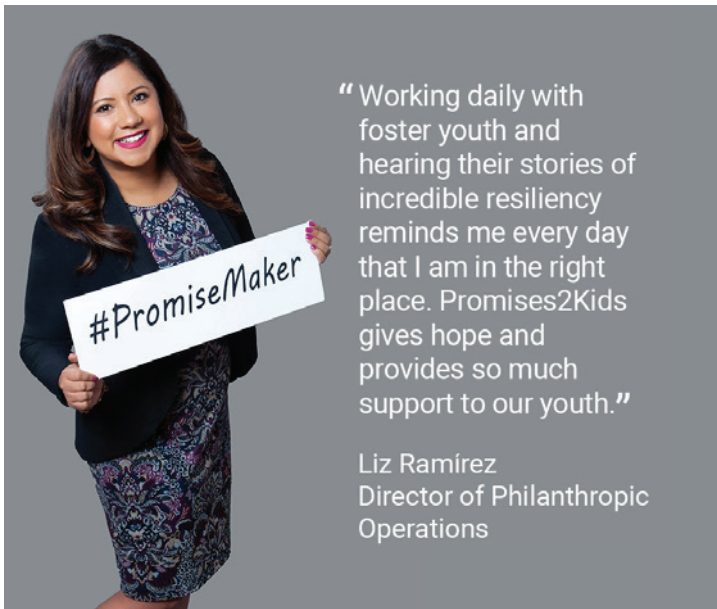
"From being a latchkey kid to working as a foster youth coordinator, I am reminded that youth need opportunities beyond education. Children, youth, and young adults who have experienced foster care deserve to have different doors of opportunities opened."

Taelani Camacho
Guardian Scholars
Coordinator

Overcoming Obstacles With Your Support

Amid these trying times, many unforeseen circumstances have surfaced and are greatly impacting everyone. For foster youth, the impact is even more severe as they do not have family support to rely on like many others do.

Over 60 former foster youth in our Guardian Scholars program have either lost their jobs or have seen a large reduction in hours, making it even more difficult to pay bills, buy food and basic necessities and keep up with their studies.



"Working daily with foster youth and hearing their stories of incredible resiliency reminds me every day that I am in the right place. Promises2Kids gives hope and provides so much support to our youth."

Liz Ramirez
Director of Philanthropic Operations



"I know what it feels like to be separated from siblings and parents and living in multiple homes, which is why I can relate to foster children and understand the importance of Camp Connect, which connects siblings and families through recreational activities throughout the year."

Stephanie Brown
Board of Directors
Vice Chair



"My time volunteering at Promises2Kids contributes to my happiness and satisfaction with what I am doing here on this earth! I am truly blessed to be part of such a calling and for that I am forever grateful."

Lee Otto
Volunteer Leadership Team



Diana

Diana, a 23-year-old student at Mira Costa College recently requested a computer. She used computers on campus because she could not afford one. Diana has struggled as a single parent and with your support of the Guardian Scholars program, she has learned to create budgets and utilize her time wisely

as she navigates school. A part of that was using on campus resources, but upon the unexpected closure of campus, Diana was left with no technology and no on campus support. Thanks to your generosity, she now has a laptop of her own that allows her to connect to the necessary technology and continue her higher education.

Jordan, a 27-year-old student at San Diego State University lost his job. He was in a position of leadership but upon the stay-at-home order, the coffee shop he worked at closed down and he was laid off. Because he lived paycheck to paycheck, he did not have the necessities to get him through the next week. Jordan requested groceries, cleaning supplies, paper towels and toilet paper and thankfully, we were able to provide him with food and supplies.

You are the reason why we are able to help meet these needs. To help more former foster youth like Diana and Jordan, make a gift today at Promises2Kids.org. No amount is too small!

Mentoring Matters

Prior to meeting her mentor, Anita considered her life “very boring”, only going to campus for classes, then straight home. She wanted to put herself out there and become more involved on campus, but didn’t know where to begin. Through Guardian Scholars, she was matched with her mentor Racheal - a former alumni of San Diego State University, where Anita is currently studying.



Anita and Racheal

Racheal introduced Anita to an online website, which connects her with campus clubs and extracurricular activities. Through this, Anita learned how to network and make friends

outside of the classroom. Today, she is proud to be a part of several clubs. “Being active on campus represents to me that I have grown... I am out there making friends”, said Anita.

For over two years, Racheal has helped Anita both professionally and personally. She is one of Anita’s longest friendships, representing stability. Together they enjoy painting and taking cooking classes, among other fun activities. Anita can turn to her when she’s in a stalemate, knowing that Racheal will always provide her wisdom.

Anita shared that, “Racheal is more than my mentor, she is my best friend. My life without her would remain boring. I would not have any friend to look forward to talking to; I would feel lonely... she is the strongest bond I have in my life right now... I want to be like her when I grow up.”

To Anita, having a mentor means that she has guidance and someone she can hold on to. Racheal has not only taught her how to create connections, but how to maintain them.

Many more former foster youth like Anita are in need of a mentor. Will you be that someone? If you’re interested in making a positive impact in a young person’s life, email Hilary@Promises2Kids.org.

Staying Connected in Trying Times

In light of the recent stay-at-home order, separated siblings in foster care have not been able to reunite at any events since February. All events are special but March was especially so, as it was the Disneyland trip! Though they weren’t able to spend time together at the happiest place on earth, that didn’t stop them from staying connected and building new memories. With the help of their caregivers who value and prioritize these relationships, brothers and sisters were able to connect in other ways.



Alana chatting with Natalie

Alana (7) and Natalie (5) have been in foster care for six months and are adjusting to school at home, while still trying to remain active and release energy. They have been able to FaceTime and virtually play together for 30 minutes at a time... building things with Legos and even relocating to the outdoors - Natalie

ran and jumped around on the playground in her the backyard, with the phone in hand connected to Alana the entire time.

Julia (19) and Nicole (11) have been coming to Camp Connect events since 2019, which has provided them with a monthly visit for the past four months. Still making a priority to spend quality time together they used the Cold Stone Creamery gift cards provided by Promises2Kids to enjoy an ice cream date together. Since then, they have been Facetiming every other day. Julia expressed how thankful she is for what Camp Connect has provided for her and her sister.

It’s moments like this that we are reminded of how critical it is for siblings to maintain their bonds. It decreases the level of stress for foster children and lessens their feeling of worry about their siblings, which helps with their level of comfort and safety.

To learn how you can contribute and assure that separated siblings will still have opportunities to reunite on a monthly basis, visit Promises2Kids.org.

Support Local Restaurants!

Due to the current circumstances, many local restaurants have had to close their business and some not knowing when they will reopen again.

In a time of uncertainty, **we as a community can help ease the road to recovery by supporting local establishments who have always been there for us.**

You can help them! Purchase gift cards to use at restaurants after this is all past us. Purchase for birthdays, anniversaries, appreciation gifts and many other important milestones. You can also book your next event there or set up your meetings and social engagements as soon as we are able to return to normal.

We ask you to please support the generous and kindhearted businesses who have supported us - those who bring hope to thousands of foster children. Please support our community.



264 Fresco	Encontro North Park	Mustangs and Burros at Estancia La Jolla Hotel and Spa	The Lot
Animae	Firenze Trattoria	Oceana Coastal Kitchen	The Crack Shack
Arterra	Green Dragon Tavern & Musuem	Pacifica Del Mar	The Good Seed Food Company
Artesano Taco	Harumama	Pamplemousse Grille	The Grill at Torrey Pines
Ben & Jerry's	Herb & Sea	Park & Rec	The Inn at Rancho Sante Fe
Crust Pizzeria	Herb & Wood	Piazza 1909	The Whet Noodle
Cucina Enoteca	Huntress	Richard Walker's Pancake House	Urban Plates
Cucina Sorella	JoJo's Creamery	Seneca	Waverly Restaurant + Lounge
Deanna's Gluten Free	La Cajita	Serëa	Waypoint Public
Dixie Pops	Lolita's Mexican Food	Sisters Pizza	Wood Yu
Eclat Catering	Long Island Mike's	Sugar and Scribe	Woodstock's Pizza
Eddie V's	Masters Kitchen & Cocktail		
En Fuego			

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CREATING A
BRIGHTER
FUTURE FOR
FOSTER
CHILDREN



**2020 DREAM ON
GALA CHAIRS**

Becca Craig
Deborah Marengo
Jolene Perry
Raegan Prior
Joan Waitt

NEW DATE!

SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

A Private Dinner & Concert to Benefit Promises2Kids

ARTIST TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON

HOSTED AT THE FOXHILL ESTATE OF PAPA DOUG MANCHESTER

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT LAUREN@PROMISES2KIDS.ORG PROMISES2KIDS.ORG