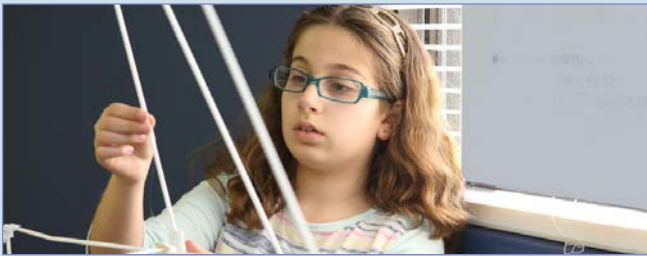


W.M. KECK FOUNDATION GRANT CREATES OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND STEM³ ACADEMY



The Help Group is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a most generous \$300,000, two-year grant by the W.M. Keck Foundation for "Building the STEM³ Academy Model" initiative. This gift will enable STEM³ to significantly expand its nationally acclaimed model that enables students with social and learning differences to acquire the skill sets that will prepare them for jobs in STEM-related fields, and to lead more independent, productive and rewarding lives. STEM³ Academy was launched in August 2015 under the innovative leadership of Help Group COO, Dr. Susan Berman.

"We are most grateful to the Foundation for its commitment to supporting our STEM education initiative dedicated to bridging the opportunity divide so often experienced by these young people," said Dr. Barbara Firestone, Help Group President & CEO.

(Continued on Page 3)

WARREN DE HAAN TO BE HONORED AT THE 25TH ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC



The 25th Annual Keys for Kids Teddy Bear Golf Classic will honor Warren de Haan, Founder and Managing Partner of ACORE Capital, in recognition of his humanitarian spirit and commitment to the children.

Warren and his wife Monica (pictured above with Help Group students) enthusiastically and generously support our efforts on behalf of young people with special needs. The Help Group is proud to present its *Help Fore Children Humanitarian Award* to Warren de Haan.

The Golf Classic will take place on Monday, September 26, 2016 at the Valencia Country Club.

(Continued on Page 3)

MICROSOFT PHILANTHROPIES VISIT



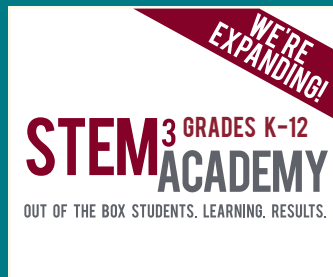
Mary Snapp and Celeste Alleyne at the STEM³ Academy campus

SUMMIT TO FEATURE 30 LEADING EXPERTS



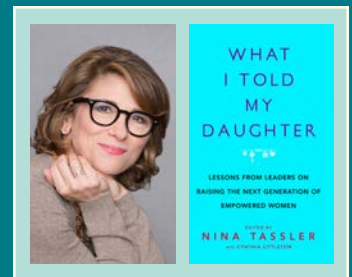
A cutting edge conference for educators, clinicians and parents

STEM³ ACADEMY EXPANDS PROGRAM



Elementary school program opens in August 2016

9TH ANNUAL TEDDY BEAR TEA



Featured special guest speakers Nina Tassler and Cynthia Littleton

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A MESSAGE TO OUR FRIENDS

How great it is to share this summer edition of HelpLine with you featuring a few highlights from the latest Help Group news and happenings.

The Help Group's newest school, STEM³ Academy had a very successful launch last August and will soon begin serving K thru 5th grades, in addition to its middle school and high school programs. The W.M. Keck Foundation recently awarded a major grant to STEM³. In the spring, STEM³ Academy, a participant in the Microsoft YouthSpark "Building Brighter Futures" Initiative, had a very special visit from Microsoft's Mary Snapp and Celeste Alleyne.

We're pleased to announce that Warren de Haan, Founder and Managing Partner of ACORE Capital, will be honored at this year's 25th Annual Keyes for Kids Teddy Bear Golf Classic ~ that will surely score a hole-in-one for the children.

Our 9th Annual Teddy Bear Tea was a great success featuring special guest speakers Nina Tassler and Cynthia Littleton, authors of "What I Told My Daughter."

In April, The Help Group's Autism Awareness Month initiatives were once again graciously supported by The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf®, Gelson's Markets, NBC4, Telemundo 52 and Whole Foods Market. And this coming fall our 2016 Summit will feature 30 of the nation's leading experts in autism, ADHD and learning disabilities.

We are so grateful for your friendship and commitment to the children.

Best regards,

Gary H. Carmona ~ Dr. Barbara Firestone

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- Barbara & Stanley Zax

W.M. KECK FOUNDATION GRANT CREATES OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND STEM³ ACADEMY (CONT'D FROM COVER)



The Help Group looks forward to "amplifying and strengthening STEM³ Academy's capacity in a number of domains and to developing a more enhanced program infrastructure," according to Dr. Diane Flannery, Help Group Director of Design and Strategy. The Foundation's support will help to build capacity to reach more students and to provide practical experience through a vibrant mentorship and internship program, and to forge partnerships with area industry. Additionally, it will help to create the advanced, experiential-based curricula with essential social skills tools that are most needed by STEM³ students.

The W.M. Keck Foundation was founded in 1954, with the goal of generating far-reaching benefits for humanity. In Southern California, the foundation supports the education and healthy development of children and youth through its support of organizations that provide early childhood and pre-collegiate education. The W.M. Keck Foundation is making a real difference in helping young people prepare for their next steps. We thank them for believing in our young people and for encouraging their growth and potential!



SAVE THE DATE
SEPT. 26, 2016

The Help Group's KEYES FOR KIDS Teddy Bear Golf Classic

and
LOCKTON INSURANCE BROKERS Awards Reception

Honoring
WARREN de HAAN
Founder & Managing Partner
Acore Capital



GOLF CLASSIC CHAIRS

- John Brady
- Christopher Chee
- Victor Coleman
- Boyd Fellows
- Jonathan Firestone
- Michael Hackman
- Michael May
- Jonathan Pollack
- Michael Rosenfeld
- Jesse Sharf
- Judd Swarzman
- Howard Tenenbaum
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Please join us ~ 85% of every dollar donated benefits children with autism and other special needs
VALENCIA COUNTRY CLUB • MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2016
Conveniently located 40 minutes north of Los Angeles

For more information visit www.thehelpgroup.org



STEM³ students with Dr. Barbara Firestone, Celeste Alleyne, Lisa Rozati, Ken Moon, Mary Snapp, Dr. Ellis Crasnow and Dr. Diane Flannery in the Innovation Lab

Microsoft Philanthropies

Microsoft's Corporate Vice President and Head of the newly launched Microsoft Philanthropies, Mary Snapp, and Director of Citizenship & Public Affairs and U.S. Education Lead at Microsoft, Celeste Alleyne, visited The Help Group's STEM³ Academy on June 1. According to Mary Snapp, "Microsoft Philanthropies will help bring to life the company's mission to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more...to partner with nonprofits and communities to create lasting positive impact."

The Help Group greatly appreciates Microsoft's support. In 2014, Microsoft YouthSpark awarded The Help Group a magnanimous \$800,000 product grant for its "Building Brighter Futures for Young People with Special Needs" technology initiative. In 2011, Microsoft awarded The Help Group a \$500,000 product donation for "Tools for the Future: The Help Group Technology Project." These grants have enabled The Help Group to promote its students' digital literacy, learning, achievement and preparation for post-secondary education and vocational workplace opportunities.

The STEM³ students were proud to demonstrate the abilities that they have been developing in preparation for their post-secondary and workplace endeavors. "Microsoft recognizes the great work that The Help Group is doing on behalf of young people with special needs, and is fulfilling its commitment to these remarkable young people through technology," Celeste remarked.

"Our many thanks to Microsoft for giving us the tools to equip our schools and programs with the latest technology that provides our students and staff with invaluable resources," said Dr. Barbara Firestone.

"I can't remember when I have had such a rewarding day," Mary said. "I will remember it for a long time."



Student shares computer programming skills to Mary Snapp at STEM³



Celeste Alleyne with high school student in the STEM³ Computer Lab



STEM³ High School students demonstrate their coding abilities to Mary Snapp, Dr. Ellis Crasnow, Help Group Director, STEM³ Academy and STEM Education looks on.

THE HELP GROUP'S STEM³ ACADEMY BUILDS ON INITIAL SUCCESS BY LAUNCHING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR 2016-2017 ACADEMIC YEAR



Help Group COO Dr. Susan Berman announced that The Help Group's STEM³ Academy will launch an elementary school program for the 2016-2017 academic year. STEM³ Academy is the first school of its kind to provide a robust

STEM curriculum to young people with special needs. This growth comes on the heels of a successful first year, which included the expansion of a middle school program at the beginning of 2016.

With the new elementary program, STEM³ Academy will offer a comprehensive and integrated curriculum from kindergarten through high school. By focusing on the long-term development, strength, and needs of each student – many of whom are bright, have a passion for STEM fields, and may benefit from non-traditional learning methods due to autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, and other social and learning differences – the school can provide the time and tools they need to thrive.

"Our experiential, hands-on approach to learning has had a tremendous impact on our students and their academic and personal success," said Dr. Ellis Crasnow, Director of STEM³ Academy. "The new elementary program will cultivate their love of learning at a young age, nourish the potential of our students to accomplish great things, and prepare them for the greater responsibilities that await them in middle school."

Young children are natural scientists, engineers, and problem-solvers, exploring the world by touching, tasting, building, dismantling, and discovering. The elementary school curriculum

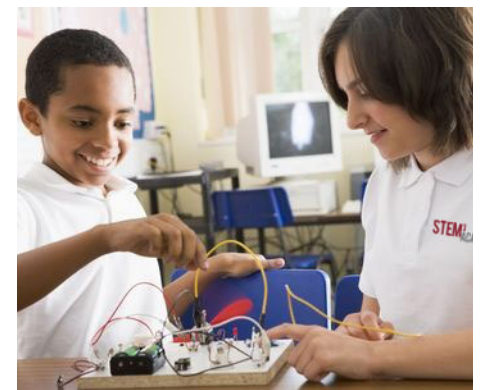
is built on the integration of play and learning, with hands-on content that is developmentally appropriate and age-relevant. Classes focus on general education fundamentals and STEM studies, and the Academy's Innovation and Maker Space will offer young learners access to state-of-the-art equipment and technologies to create and innovate.

"We are proud of the accomplishments of the STEM³ Academy students and staff since opening one year ago," said Dr. Susan Berman. "Our dedicated faculty create exciting new ways to integrate innovation into the curriculum and develop ways for our students to collaborate. Through this elementary program, we can foster their natural abilities and create greater opportunities to grow and learn."

The success of STEM³ Academy is due to an environment that engages students and emphasizes learning rather than teaching. At the heart of the school is an Innovation Lab and Maker Space where students are involved in diverse fields such as robotics, electronics, and 3D modeling and printing using a variety of high-tech equipment, including a mill, CNC machine, 3D printers, electronics, and a CAD system. The curriculum also addresses 21st century skills, such as collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity to cultivate positive attributes and help alleviate social-emotional difficulties.

"STEM-related jobs and industries are constantly evolving and there is a growing need for young, qualified talent," said Dr. Diane Flannery, Help Group Senior Director of Design & Strategy. "Our ultimate goal is to improve the life options for our students, and the initial success of the school shows us that the possibilities are truly endless."

More information on STEM³ Academy can be found at www.stem3academy.org.



a school of The Help Group

STEM³ ACADEMY

GRADES K-12

WE'RE EXPANDING!

OUT OF THE BOX STUDENTS. LEARNING. RESULTS.

www.stem3academy.org

THE 9TH ANNUAL TEDDY BEAR TEA CELEBRATES REMARKABLE WOMEN

The Help Group's 9th Annual Teddy Bear Tea ~ An Affair of the Heart was an unforgettable afternoon featuring special guest speakers entertainment executive Nina Tassler and Managing Editor of Television for *Variety*, Cynthia Littleton. The event was hosted by Sandra Stern, President of Lionsgate Television and a member of the Circle of Friends Board, and co-hosted by Celeste Alleyne, Director of Citizenship and Public Affairs and U.S. Education Lead at Microsoft, and Therese Gamba, Senior Vice President of Marketing and Acquired Programming for the NBCUniversal Owned Television Stations.

Dr. Barbara Firestone began the afternoon by thanking all of those in attendance and introducing special guests. "Our Tea is a celebration of remarkable women like yourselves who support our efforts on behalf of the children."

Sandra welcomed returning guests and new friends to the Tea. "I've always had a special place in my heart for the children and feel a great sense of pride in being a part of The Help Group Family," she said. "Every time I see these beautiful children I am inspired to do all that I can to help."

Parent speaker Kerry Nachenberg moved guests with her son's story. She said her son was diagnosed with autism at just 2 years old and noted that each and every day has become a milestone. She continued, "After having difficulty finding the right school to address his challenges, we found a safe haven at The Help Group."

"The Help Group changed our life for the better," Kerry said.



"We were finally at a school that not only accepted us, but loved us and could help guide us on this journey."

The Help Group's Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Susan Berman, invited guests to support The Help Group's Dr. Adam Opportunity Fund that provides food, clothing and shelter, and other assistance such as scholarships, vocational training, summer camps and after-school enrichment programs to more than 1,600 underserved children and their families. Dr. Berman introduced Estefany, a student at The Help Group's North Hills Prep School, who spoke about the immense difficulties she faced as a child.

Estefany credited The Help Group's North Hills Prep with giving her the emotional support and guidance she needed, as well as the support of the Opportunity Fund, with helping her realize her dream of attending college in the fall where she plans to major in psychology and minor in performing arts.

One of the highlights of the event was a thought-provoking Q&A segment led by Dr. Firestone with authors Nina and Cynthia, who captivated the audience with the insights they shared from their book, *What I told my Daughter: Lessons from Leaders on Raising the Next Generation of Empowered Women*. Their book brought together 54 powerful and diverse women to reflect on the best advice they've given their daughters throughout their lives.

Other highlights of the afternoon included heartwarming performances by The Help Group Children's Choir and a book signing by Nina and Cynthia at the close of the event.

1. Celeste Alleyne, Dr. Barbara Firestone, Nina Tassler, Cynthia Littleton, Sandra Stern, Roma Downey, Nancy Josephson 2. Dr. Barbara Firestone, Nina Tassler, Cynthia Littleton 3. Sandra Stern 4. Help Group COO, Dr. Susan Berman and Help Group Student Estefany 5. Celeste Alleyne 6. Sarah Milken, Dr. Barbara Firestone, Samantha Firestone 7. Rulla Hernandez, Monica Wawrzyniak, Mary Ames, Candace Hobson, Christina Piranio, Help Group Director of Risk Management, Sherri Zahedi, Kari Van Gundy, Anahid Kasparian, Mercedes Labat, Belinda Gillis, Arpi Semerdjian 8. Celeste Alleyne and Julia Cooksey 9. Loni Coombs 10. Kerry Nachenberg 11. Val McCabe, Commissioner Monica Rodriguez, Samantha Martinez, Stacey Siegel, Julian Zolkin, Colleen Goetz 12. Susan & Alyssa Kennedy 13. Angela Nazarian 14. Judy Wolf 15. Director of Autism Schools, Pamela Clark, Clinical Director, Dr. Mary Bauman 16. Sarah Taylor and The Help Group Children's Choir 17. Help Group Student Elijah 18. Dana Sayles 19. Barbara Yaroslavsky 20. Avis Ridley-Thomas, Nina Tassler, Cynthia Littleton 21. State Treasurer, John Chiang 22. USC Chan's Dr. Linsey Smith, Dr. Emily Ochi, Monica Stephen, Dr. Sarah Bream 23. The Help Group Children's Choir

SUMMIT VIEW COLLEGE SUCCESS: Q&A WITH HEAD OF SCHOOL KERI BORZELLO



Summit View School graduates have a long track record of college acceptances from top-tier public and private universities and success in college and beyond. Summit View is dedicated to educating young people with learning differences who possess average to superior intellectual capabilities. Recognizing the unique strengths, aptitudes, and natural gifts of each student, the program fosters academic growth, creativity, and a sense of mastery and accomplishment. A commitment to maximizing each student's potential and performance forms the foundation of the school's educational program.

In a recent interview, Summit View Head of School Keri Borzello takes a closer look at the reasons behind why so many of its students are so successful in getting into top colleges.

Q: The Summit View Class of 2016 had an impressive list of college acceptances!

A: Yes, we are so proud of our senior class. This year's graduates received acceptances from outstanding public schools like UC-Berkeley, UC-Irvine, UC-Santa Cruz, UC-Riverside, and UC-Santa Barbara, University of Arizona, University of Colorado – Boulder, University of Oregon and most of the California State Universities. We also did well with private universities, including USC, Columbia College-Chicago and Loyola Marymount University. A number of our students have both great talent and passion for the arts, and that was reflected in this year's acceptances as well – the Art Center College of Design, California College of the Arts, the Southern California Institute of Architecture and North Carolina School of the Arts.

We're also thrilled at the generous scholarship offers our students received this year. Between our Summit View West and Summit View Valley campuses, our students have been offered over half a million dollars in scholarship money.

Q: The press is filled with stories about how competitive the college admissions process has become. The UC Schools received a record number of applications this year, more than 200,000. How do you explain Summit View students' success within California and beyond?

A: Our students show a level of resiliency and a work ethic that are appealing to colleges and universities. They have achieved great success, despite having a difficult journey, and their tenacity and dedication makes them very attractive candidates. Our curriculum involves rigor as well as a focus on self-advocacy and balance. Our comprehensive, college prep program develops the whole child and sets the table well for post-secondary success. We work very hard to match the college to the student.

Q: Tell me about college counseling at Summit View.

Each Summit View campus has a principal serving as college counselor.

Both have many years of experience working in college counseling and have built great relationships with colleges and universities throughout the United States. The college counselor starts working with students and parents beginning in 8th grade with transition/college information events, which continue year after year.

Individual college counseling meetings with students and parents begin in 11th grade. At this time, students typically start exploring and visiting colleges and researching accommodations, and we make recommendations to guide the process. College reps visit our campuses to meet with 11th and 12th graders, and we also take students to visit local colleges. Starting in 12th grade, students work with our college counselors to complete their applications. Summit View supports each student and family through every step of the process, and I'm pleased that very rarely do our families feel the need to work with private college counselors.

Q: The college admissions process values students who are well-rounded. How does Summit View provide opportunities for learning and growth outside the classroom?

A: We encourage students to create experiences during their time with us. Playing on our CIF sports teams, participating in our drama programs, taking part in a community service project – all these activities help build strong relationships among peers, build self-confidence, and give our students the opportunity to develop and utilize their unique strengths and talents. Our small and nurturing environment provides a safe place for students to step outside their comfort zone and get involved in a myriad of activities. Often it's these experiences that students remember well beyond graduation day.

Q: Summit View provides students with a lot of individualized support, whether it's working on executive functioning skills, time management, test-taking strategies, or integrating technology and assistive technology to allow them to better access the curriculum. What happens to your graduates when they're on their own?

A: Our students thrive in college. From the beginning, self-advocacy is a critical part of the Summit View program. Our students develop an understanding of who they are as learners, which is necessary for their success with us, as well as in college. They need to understand what will benefit them most, whether it be pulling from a toolbox or seeking the assistance of a resource officer or professor. Knowing who they are, what supports they need, and how to get those supports in college and beyond are skills we build over the course of a student's time with us. And the good news is that most colleges and universities do now have resources and support offices for students with learning differences, in response to increased awareness and understanding.

To learn more about Summit View School or schedule a tour, please visit www.summitview.org

SAVE THE DATES

THE HELP GROUP PRESENTS

SUMMIT 2016

Advances and Best Practices in
AUTISM · LEARNING DISABILITIES · ADHD

A CUTTING EDGE CONFERENCE FEATURING 30 LEADING EXPERTS

Friday, October 14th & Saturday, October 15th
Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles

Registration coming soon at www.thehelpgroup.org  

SUMMIT CHAIRS

Barbara Firestone, PhD
Peter C. Whybrow, MD
Robert M. Bilder, PhD, ABPP-CN

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Matthew State, MD, PhD
Thomas E. Brown, PhD
Kevin Pelphrey, PhD
Maryanne Wolf, PhD

PRESENTERS


Anshu Batra, MD, FAAP	Claudia L. Kernan, PhD
Jason Bolton, PsyD	Elizabeth Laugeson, PsyD
Xavier E. Cagigas, PhD	Mary Lawlor ScD, OTR/L, FAOTA
Ellis Crasnow, PhD	Sara McCracken, PsyD, BCBA
Diane M. Danis MD, MPH	Catherine Mogil, PsyD
Mirella Dapretto, PhD	Sally Ozonoff, PhD
Leah Stein Duker PhD, OTR/L	Tanya Paparella, PhD
Michael Enenbach, MD	John Piacentini, PhD, ABPP
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	Katherine Stavropoulos, PhD

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The Help Group  because every child deserves a great future

SPOTLIGHT ON VILLAGE GLEN SCHOOL



The mission of Village Glen School is to guide and support students on the Autism Spectrum and others with special needs in reaching their full potential socially, communicatively, and academically. Village Glen adheres to the belief that students should experience the joy of learning as a lifelong process and develop unique talents and skills in preparation for their future goals. "We seek to inspire students to become creative thinkers, committed and independent citizens, and compassionate, self-reliant individuals through partnerships with parents, the school, and the community," said Pamela Clark, Director of The Help Group's Autism Schools.



Elementary-Middle School

Village Glen's Elementary and Middle School are innovative programs that serve students Kindergarten through 8th grade, promoting social and personal well-being and strong academic achievement. As students mature, the focus expands to address strengthening students' organization, time management, critical thinking skills, and work habits.



High School

In the High School, the curriculum focuses on the students' integration, syntheses and application of their individual learning styles and the knowledge they have acquired. As a college preparatory program, academics are rigorous; there is a strong emphasis on the development of executive functioning skills and promoting appropriate social skills, complimented by a rich and rewarding extracurricular program.



Parents

Village Glen Schools firmly adhere to the adage that "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child." There are several avenues through which parents can be involved in their child's school life. For example, Village Glen Schools are very lucky to have fabulous Parent Associations who work hand-in-hand with the schools to support additional enrichment opportunities.

Village Glen is accredited by WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) and is certified by the California Department of Education.

For more information visit www.thehelpgroup.org

THE HELP GROUP MARKS NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH WITH THE COFFEE BEAN & TEA LEAF® AND GELSON'S



John Fuller, President & CEO of The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf®, and Dr. Barbara Firestone with Coffee Bean staff



Rob McDougall, President & CEO of Gelson's

AUTISM Learn the Facts



The Help Group was once again pleased to launch its annual Autism Awareness Campaign this April in partnership with longtime supporters The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf® and Gelson's.

In recognition of National Autism Awareness Month, The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf® made The Help Group's "Learn the Facts & Early Signs" brochures available in its 193 stores in the western United States. Information about autism was also made available on its in-store television displays and The Coffee Bean's social media outlets.

John Fuller, President & CEO of The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf®, explained the company's commitment to the annual outreach effort, "The number of families impacted by autism has grown tremendously in recent years. The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf® will continue to work with our friends at The Help Group to do all we can to promote greater awareness and understanding of autism."

Gelson's hosted its annual autism awareness and fund-raising campaign in support of the children of The Help Group at all of its 18 Southern California locations. "Learn the Facts" brochures were made available in stores, and customers had the opportunity to make donations to The Help Group.

Rob McDougall, President & CEO of Gelson's, spoke about Gelson's longstanding commitment to giving back to the communities it serves. "It is likely that many of our customers and staff know or love a child with autism. We're here to help and glad to lend a hand."

"Our heartfelt thanks to The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf® and to Gelson's for joining us once again in our annual campaign," said Dr. Barbara Firestone. "It's through outstanding corporate partners like The Coffee Bean and Gelson's that we are able to reach many families with this important information about autism."

The "Learn the Facts and Early Signs" brochures are available online in English and Spanish, and additional copies can be requested by calling 877.943.5747.



Our thanks to NBC4 and Telemundo 52 for airing PSA's throughout Autism Awareness Month, which featured anchors Daniella Guzman and Dania Elvir



Our thanks to Whole Foods Sherman Oaks East for selecting The Help Group for its quarterly 5% Community Giving Day on April 6th

FESTIVAL OF ARTS SPONSORED BY BEAR GIVERS FEATURES 180 YOUNG ARTISTS

With a variety of art on display, The Help Group held its 7th annual Festival of Arts: A Celebration of Young Artists. This exhibition was held on Sunday, April 10 and sponsored by the New York based nonprofit Bear Givers. The show presented three exhibits – “Through Our Eyes” an exhibition of more than 120 original paintings by students, “Inside Out” a collection of images and written words told through photography; and “The Art of STEM” showcasing Science, Technology, Engineering and Math works by STEM³ Academy.

The exhibits were on display at The Help Group’s – Autism Center and provided a wonderful backdrop for students to display their artistic pieces. The special reception was a culmination of the school year’s art program and STEM projects led by faculty. The Help Group West’s Village Glen School engaged in a project with Senior Clinical Director and accomplished photographer, Pat Sandler to utilize the mediums of photography and writing in order to explore themselves and their worlds, as well as those things that mattered most to them. Pat’s photographic portraits of each inside/out student participant were displayed along with the students photography and writing. (See announcement below for upcoming show.)

“Today is such a wonderful event, where we are able to showcase our students’ creative talents,” said Dr. Barbara Firestone. “We are grateful to

Bear Givers for their support of this special arts program year after year.”

The Bear Givers EmpowerArt Program gives young artists across the nation the chance to experience the enjoyment of creating their own unique art pieces and showcasing them at a special exhibit.

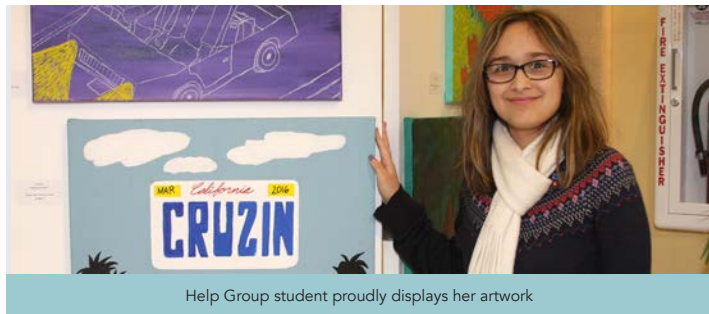
“Bear Givers community art shows are only successful with partners like The Help Group, who have taken the idea and changed a lot of lives,” said Joseph Sprung, Bear Givers Chairman “We’re so thankful to be a small part of The Help Group Festival of Arts and our hearts are so filled when we come here. We feel so fortunate to be just a small part of this organization. Thank you.”

Diane Lempert, President of Bear Givers, also spoke adding, “Every year we are excited to see what’s new and what’s exciting, but the one thing that is always consistent is the beauty and creativity of the artwork and how the kids are so generous in letting us experience the world through their eyes. It’s a really wonderful experience for all of us.”

The Village Glen Recorder Ensemble and The Help Group Children’s Choir added to the ‘artful’ day with their special musical performances.



Dr. Barbara Firestone, Pat Sandler, Diane Lempert and Joseph Sprung



Help Group student proudly displays her artwork



inside/out participant enthusiastically explains meaning of photo



Louis Price performs medley with The Help Group Choir



Save the Date

Opening Reception | dnj Gallery, Bergamot Station
Saturday, September 10 | 6:00pm – 8:00pm

The **inside/out** photo exhibit will be on display at **dnj Gallery at Bergamot Station** from September 10 – October 29, 2016. The exhibition will showcase photography by more than 20 students with autism and other special needs from The Help Group’s Village Glen School in Culver City, along with their commentary and Help Group Senior Clinical Director, Pat Sandler’s portraits of students. **inside/out** was a multi-year project aimed at providing the environment, tools and teaching to encourage students to find their creative voice through photography and writing. **inside/out** was developed and led by Pat Sandler with Help Group Art Educator Dr. Kelly Kotowski.

HELP GROUP STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS CULMINATION



Special Olympics Southern California

This spring sports season The Help Group was so pleased to team-up with The Mirman School and Harvard-Westlake School. Now in its second year, the Special Olympics Southern California in partnership with The Help Group has expanded its sports program to have culminating Game Days with local schools. The School Partnership Program is designed to unify students with and without special needs through sports and whole-school involvement activities to promote acceptance and respect for all young people. These special events gave Help Group athletes the chance to demonstrate the sports skills and physical abilities that they have learned and practiced throughout the season.

More than 30 Harvard-Westlake students welcomed Help Group middle-school and high-school athletes on April 20 for a Track and Field Game Day. Laura Mayo, Regional Director, Special Olympics Santa Clarita & Tri-Valley Region, spoke about the importance of developing this type of school partnership program. “At The Special Olympics we encourage opportunities for mainstream school students to take part in supporting our Special Olympics athletes,” she said. “It’s a great way to help build greater awareness and a wonderful way for Special Olympics athletes to build self-confidence and self-esteem with peers.”

On May 25, more than 75 students from The Help Group’s Early Education Programs, participated in the Young Athletes Festival, hosted by Mirman School. Mirman’s Upper School, first through fifth grade students, had the opportunity to support Help Group students ages 3 through 7.

“Mirman has a remarkable student body whose spirit of generosity towards our students was truly beautiful to see,” shared Dr. Susan Berman, Help Group Chief Operating Officer and Mirman School’s former Board Chair. “They welcomed and supported Help Group students so enthusiastically throughout the games – and gave our young athletes a chance to shine.”

Our tremendous thanks to Kim Villa, Program Specialist, and Laura Mayo for making these such wonderful Game Days for our students and their families. A special thanks to Harvard-Westlake School’s Father Jay Young and Mr. Mike Mori and to Mirman School’s Dan Vorenberg, Alison Denner and Angela Brown, to all of the student volunteers and to Pamela Clark, Help Group Director of Autism Schools, and our wonderful Help Group coaches, volunteers and staff for your tremendous support of our athletes.



Mirman School and Help Group faculty, sports coaches and volunteers, alongside Special Olympics Southern California organizers



ADVANCE LA'S 2016 DAY FOR YOUNG ADULTS



More than 70 young adults attended Advance LA's 2016 Day for Young Adults, a one-of-a-kind event designed specifically for teens and young adults. The event on July 16 featured interactive workshops that provided attendees with the opportunity to practice new skills, interact with peers and make new friendships.



This year's event included sessions on topics ranging from managing stress, getting organized and acing the next job interview to dating, fashion, technology and social media. The day also included a chance to learn mindful awareness and time management. During lunch, Paws and Pals volunteer Victoria Marsh and her dachshund therapy dog Clyde also came by to meet the attendees. The day ended with a fun ice cream social and dance party.

"We were pleased to have so many engaged young adults at this year's conference and to see such significant interest in sessions dealing with social skills," said Dr. Holly Daniels, Director of Advance LA. "This was a great opportunity for our young people to interact and get involved with their friends and peers. We were also happy to see so many parents come to the event to take part in our Parent to Parent sessions and discussion."

Our thanks to everyone who participated - it was a wonderful event!

THE HELP GROUP AND THE MIRACLE PROJECT PRESENT ALL-NEW MUSICALS



The Miracle Project™



This spring, The Help Group's Kids Like Me and The Miracle Project held two performances, "Journey to Dance Island" on March 13 and "Dance Island" on April 17. These productions were written and performed by students with special needs and were the culmination of a 20-week theater and arts program experience that took place at the Sherman Oaks Campus and at the Culver City Campus. This was the first year the performing arts program was offered in Culver City.

The Miracle Project was created by Elaine Hall to give young people with autism and other disabilities the opportunity to express themselves through music, dance, acting, and story writing.

"It has been a miraculous experience to witness a group of students grow in self-confidence, social skills, communication, and joy as they embarked on this 20-week experience with one another," said Ryan Berman, Chief Operating Officer at The Miracle Project.

This year's cast and crew met at The Help Group once a week starting last fall to develop the story and its many components. This is the sixth year The Help Group and The Miracle Project have partnered.

"Every year, we see how our partnership with The Miracle Project is transforming young people and giving them an opportunity to share their passion and talent," said Nicole Webb, Program Director of the Kids Like Me Program at The Help Group. "It's inspiring to see how the arts can have such a positive impact and we are pleased to be able to offer this experience to our students."

This coming school year, The Miracle Project with Kids Like Me will begin its 20-week program at The Help Group's campuses in Sherman Oaks on September 8 and in Culver City on September 12. The Kids Like Me After School Program with Ryan Berman will offer an "Improv For Interaction" class in the spring. For more information for the Sherman Oaks program, contact Nicole Webb at 818.778.7136 and Tracy Peters for Culver City at 310.751.1486.

For more information about Kids Like Me, visit www.kidlikemela.org

THE SHAKESPEARE AND AUTISM PROJECT MAKES ITS L.A. DEBUT AT THE HELP GROUP

A groundbreaking initiative, The Shakespeare and Autism Project made its Los Angeles debut at The Help Group on Friday, May 13 and Saturday, May 14 at the state-of-the-art Autism Center Theater. Presented by The Ohio State University Department of Theatre with Kelly Hunter and the Flute Theater, 15 students from The Help Group's Bridgeport School were invited to take part in these unique and interactive performances of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

"At The Help Group, we're deeply committed to performing arts and believe that all arts provide pathways to self-expression, self-discovery, creativity and self-esteem for our young people," expressed Dr. Barbara Firestone in her welcome remarks to Help Group parents and Ohio State administration and alumni. "We are delighted that our children have the opportunity to take part in this dynamic and engaging production of *The Tempest*."

Students participated on stage with the project's teaching artists in this highly specialized, education-meets-theater concept. "I started using the rhythm of the heartbeat based in Shakespeare's iambic pentameter, and then role playing the characters with very simple games that are short, fun and repeatable," explains Kelly Hunter, a professional actress and emeritus member of the Royal Shakespeare Company who developed the "Hunter Heartbeat Method," which became the foundation of the project. "The idea was for children to experience the theater, form the habit of playing imaginatively, and to most of all enjoy themselves."

In collaboration with the university's Nisonger Center, Dr. Marc Tassé, the center's director, and his doctoral students are conducting research to see how the impact of this program helps children with autism over time. The study is based on the "Hunter Heartbeat Method" and accompanying theater-based games as intervention for children with autism. Dr. Tassé says that researchers have noticed significant improvements in social communication, peer relations and adaptation skills. Lead doctoral student Margaret Mehling, in attendance with Dr. Tassé for the performance and post-performance discussion, explained, "We've seen major improvements in social and facial motion recognition after following the program for a 42-week study that engaged children across five schools and learning centers."

Kevin McClatchy, director, Shakespeare and Autism Project at the university Department of Theater, and one of the teaching artists shared, "The games are constructed in a way that challenge some of the things that children with autism confront. Through the hour twenty-minutes of the performance you see the transformative experience that allows the children with autism to connect. It's a gift to be able to do this work. I get as much from the children as they might get from me."

These special performances were made possible by the Patricia Heaton-Hunt and David Hunt Shakespeare and Autism Fund.

We greatly appreciate The Ohio State University Department of Theatre with Kelly Hunter and the Flute Theater, and all of the teaching artists, Kevin McClatchy, Mahmoud Osman, Robin Post, Gregory Hicks, Chris MacDonald, and Eva Tausig who performed with our students. Our heartfelt thanks for bringing this wonderful program to the children of The Help Group.



1. Dr. Barbara Firestone, David Manderscheid, OSU Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, David Hunt, Patricia Heaton-Hunt, Susan Berk, Help Group Board Member, Dr. Marc Tassé, Margaret Mehling, Janet Parrott, Chair, OSU Department of Theater 2. Kelly Hunter, creator of the "Hunter Heartbeat Method" 3. Kevin McClatchy, Director, Shakespeare and Autism Project 4. Teaching artist Mahmoud Osman demonstrating the Hunter Heartbeat Method 5. Within the intimate setting of the "Heartbeat Circle" the actors invite the children to join them, playing sensory games to bring the story *The Tempest* to life

TELEMUNDO 52 NEWS COVERS THE HELP GROUP'S VILLAGE GLEN GRADUATION

June is an exciting time every year as Help Group students don caps and gowns for their graduation ceremonies. Each commencement was filled with wonderful moments that will leave lasting memories for the graduates and their parents.

This year, news station, Telemundo 52, covered the graduation of 14 students from Village Glen High School to mark their tremendous achievements.

Their story focused on Eduardo, who has made significant strides since enrolling at Village Glen. While at school here, his academics improved as did his self-confidence. Eduardo became an integral member of Village Glen's sports teams and a leader in on-campus organizations. He now has plans to attend college in the fall.

When interviewed by the news station Eduardo had this to say about The Help Group, "Thank you for helping me with all the challenges I had when I first started attending this school."

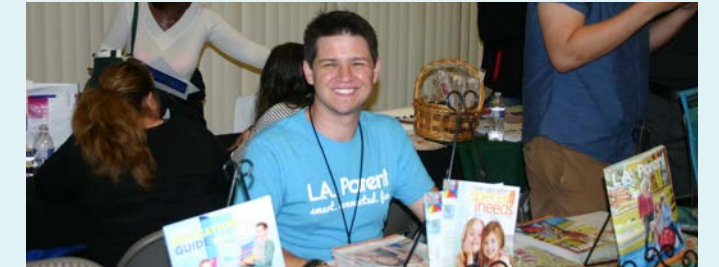
To all of our students — we are so proud of your accomplishments and we wish you all the very best as you embark upon your next steps.

For more information about Village Glen School, please visit, www.villageglen.org



SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCE FAIR

The Help Group held its 6th annual Special Needs Resource Fair on Sunday, May 15 at the organization's Sherman Oaks Campus. The free event—which attracts more than 400 people each year—was an opportunity for parents and professionals to connect with the many companies and resources Los Angeles offers the special needs community. This includes those with autism spectrum disorder, learning disabilities, ADHD and developmental delays.



A varied mix of exhibitors from numerous industries were on hand to provide information and answer questions about services geared toward children, young people, and adults, as well as their parents and families. There were representatives from support groups, medical and therapeutic services, educational supports, financial and estate planning, legal and advocacy services, respite services, recreational and camping programs, vocational and residential programs, and more.

The event also featured opportunities for children and families to interact with therapy dogs from the Alliance of Therapy Dogs; take part in a Wahlbangers Drum Circle; visit with a miniature horse from Special Spirit, Inc. Therapeutic Riding Center, and play with friends on the open playground.



"The Help Group Special Needs Resource Fair is a signature event for the organization and a great way for us to provide valuable information to families who need it most," said Nicole Webb, Program Director of Kids Like Me, a key Help Group program offering after-school classes, clubs, weekend social activities, camps and family events with kids who share similar challenges. "It is an opportunity for families to find quality resources, gain insight on important issues, and connect with other families in the community."

Proceeds from event booth sales help generate scholarship funds for Kids Like Me camps, which are offered during the summer, winter, and spring at The Help Group's Sherman Oaks and Culver City Campuses. The Help Group Kids Like Me programs are created especially for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental challenges.

To learn more about the Fair and stay connected, sign up for Kids Like Me's newsletter here: www.kidslikemela.org/contact-us

ABC7, CBS2 AND KCAL9 COVER SUNRISE SCHOOL'S ROARING 20'S PROM



The Help Group's Sunrise School students and their families celebrated a day to remember at their roaring 20's themed prom. More than 40 students were dressed in their finest to take part in this meaningful rite of passage for all teens. In preparation for this special occasion, students practiced social skills and prom etiquette to help them get ready for the dance that was held on Thursday, May 26.

"We believe in providing a full range of opportunities that foster the growth of our students in all essential areas, including social development," shared Dr. Susan Berman, Help Group Chief Operating Officer. "It's wonderful to see our terrific school community, together with the support of families, create such a meaningful day like this one."

For mothers like Sue Rosen, being able to see her son dance and do the things other kids can do meant a lot to her. "It's among my greatest joys and hardest burdens," she said, "but overall, days like this are just amazing."

"It's all about quality of life for these kids, and they deserve it, just like anybody else does," said Sue Anne, Sunrise School Principal. She started the prom five years so that students with moderate to severe autism could experience this special rite of passage. Sue Anne said seeing the students enjoy themselves brings her to tears. "It's my favorite day of the year," she added. "They're my gift. So we get to celebrate with them. And they show us what they can do, and we display it proudly for everyone to see."

The prom is held during school hours so the students feel comfortable, but just like all other proms, there were grand entrances, corsages and photos. Parent Judy Wolf attended with her daughter Katie, who recently graduated after 10 years at the school. "It's just such a joy to see her so happy and to see her get into it," she said, "it lets me have the opportunity to fuss over her and get a dress." And when student Kyle Rosen was asked what his favorite part of the dance was, he said, "You feel better."

A special thank you to ABC7, CBS2 and KCAL9 News for their coverage of the event and wonderful news segments they featured.

For more information about Sunrise School, please visit, www.thehelpgroup.org/school/sunrise-school



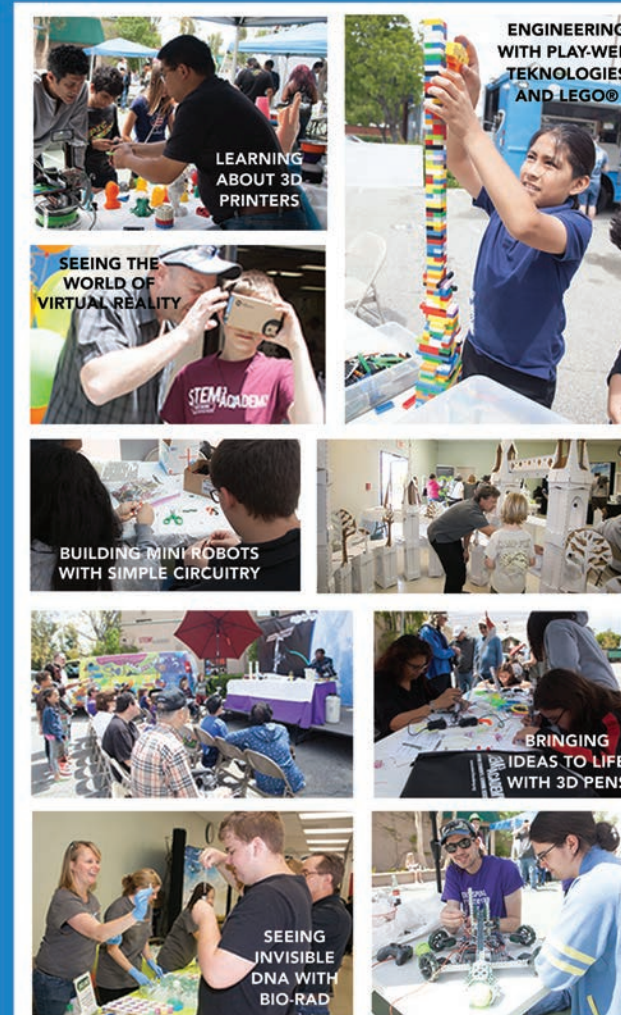
VERY SPECIAL INNOVATION FAIR

More than 500 people on May 21 got hands-on and interactive at the premier "Very Special Innovation Fair" from The Help Group's STEM³ Academy. Exhibits featured rockets, robots, virtual reality, drones, and more from a variety of high-tech and creative companies that entertained children and families of all ages, as they took part in experiments, learned how things work, and took "test drives" of several new gadgets.

The free event was sponsored by technology and innovation leader Raytheon and provided attendees the chance to get excited and inspired by STEM-related studies and experience innovation first-hand.

We would also like to thank Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, who made it possible for us to have the hardware and software to run a constant feed from the International Space Station to the event and on a forward-going basis in our school lobby.

Some highlights of the event included:



SPONSORED BY **Raytheon** HOSTED BY **STEM³ ACADEMY** SPECIAL THANKS TO **Sheila Kuehl** Supervisor Sheila Kuehl



Leading the Way for Young People with SPECIAL NEEDS



- Village Glen School
 - Bridgeport School
 - Bridgeport Vocational Education Center
 - Young Learners Preschool
 - Sunrise School
 - Summit View School
 - Westview
 - North Hills Prep
 - Parkhill School
- Our Newest School*
- STEM³ Academy

Founded in 1975, The Help Group is the largest, most innovative and comprehensive nonprofit of its kind in the United States serving children, adolescents and young adults with special needs related to autism spectrum disorder, learning disabilities, ADHD, developmental delays, abuse and emotional challenges.

The Help Group's ten specialized day schools offer pre-K through high school programs for more than 1,600 students. Its broad range of mental health and therapy services, child abuse and residential programs extends its reach to more than 6,000 children and their families each year. With more than 900 staff members, The Help Group's state-of-the-art schools and programs are located on six campuses in the Los Angeles area.

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- ASSESSMENT
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- AFTER-SCHOOL ENRICHMENT
- DAY CAMPS

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ABOUT THE HELP GROUP

The Help Group is dedicated to the education, treatment and outreach of children, adolescents and young adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other special needs

SPECIALIZED DAY SCHOOLS

*Our Newest School...*STEM³ Academy provides an innovative and rigorous K-12 curriculum for students with social and learning differences, including autism, who have a passion for STEM fields and may benefit from experiential learning approaches. **

*With a 98% college acceptance rate...*Summit View School is a college-preparatory program for students with learning differences who possess average to above-average intellectual capabilities.*

Village Glen School is a college preparatory program that serves students K-12 with high-functioning autism and challenges in the areas of socialization, language development and peer relations. The Pace Program offers honors and AP classes for gifted students. The Beacon Program provides additional positive behavior support for students with behavioral challenges.*

Young Learners Preschool uses an evidence-based and interdisciplinary approach to intensive early intervention for children ages 2.9 to 5 with autism spectrum disorder.

Bridgeport School provides basic skills education, community based instruction and vocational training, for students ages 5 to 22 with mild to moderate cognitive delays and challenges with social communication and/or language development.

Bridgeport Vocational Education Center is for young adults with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental differences, ages 18 to 22, providing vocational skills training, including supported job placements.

Sunrise School is a functional life skills program serving students ages 5 to 22 with moderate to severe cognitive delays associated with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities.

The Help Group's Westview is a college preparatory program for students with mild emotional issues, ADHD and learning differences.

The Help Group's North Hills Prep offers a college preparatory curriculum while supporting students with social emotional challenges.*

The Help Group's Parkhill School is an intensive therapeutic program serving children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral challenges.

*A WASC accredited school

**WASC accreditation in process

MENTAL HEALTH & CLINICAL PROGRAMS

These programs provide a continuum of comprehensive outpatient services for children and families, including assessment; individual, family and group therapy; case management; psychiatric services; parenting groups; in-home counseling; school-based mental health counseling; REACH - after-school day rehabilitation; Stepping Stones - an intensive day treatment for children ages 3 to 5 and therapeutic behavioral services. Wraparound is an innovative program designed to maintain at-risk children in their homes and avoid placement in institutions or other restrictive settings.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER PROGRAMS

The Help Group Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder features multidisciplinary assessment, consultation, intervention, family support groups, as well as seminars for parents and professionals.

Paws and Pals for Kids with Autism is a volunteer-supported pet intervention program designed to engage young people with social and communication challenges.

RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Kids Like Me provides after-school enrichment, social skills groups and day camps designed specifically for children and adolescents with ASD and other developmental challenges. Teens on the Go is a travel camp for young people with ASD. club I.a. TEEN provides a supported social network for teens with ASD.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Community Employment Program assists adolescents and young adults with social-emotional and/or mental health challenges with the special guidance, skills and support needed to obtain and maintain successful employment.

Silverlining Resale Boutique & Vocational Training Center provides students with special needs the opportunity to learn and develop valuable work experience and job skills that contribute to their knowledge, self-confidence, employability and future independence.

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

Project Six is a therapeutic boarding option for teens ages 13 to 17 with Asperger's Disorder, ASD, mood and anxiety disorders, and learning differences.

Project Six Adult Residential Program provides community-based group homes for adults with developmental disabilities.

18 + PROGRAMS

Advance LA provides one-on-one life skills coaching for teens and young adults with unique challenges in their transition to independence.

Live. Advance. LA. offers a supported living experience on a college campus for young adults ages 18 to 29 who are learning the skills needed to transition to independence.

club I.a. facilitates activities for young adults designed to enhance social skills, meet people with similar interests and develop long-lasting friendships.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING & RESEARCH

The Help Group - UCLA Neuropsychology Program provides neuropsychological assessments and consultations for children, adolescents and young adults and enriches the field of knowledge through its research and educational endeavors.

The Help Group - UCLA Autism Research Alliance is dedicated to enhancing and expanding clinical research in the education and treatment of ASD and to contributing to the development, greater understanding and use of best practice models by researchers, educators and clinicians.

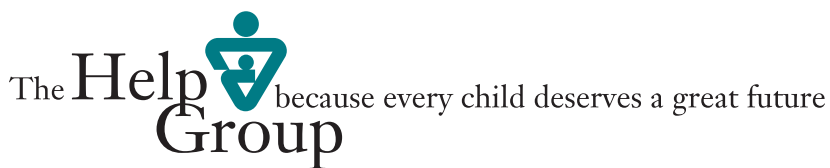
The Help Group - USC Occupational Science Initiative is dedicated to developing evidence-based intervention programs for children with ASD through an interdisciplinary team of researchers, educators and clinicians.

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The Help Group is widely regarded for its high standards of excellence, unique scope and breadth of services. Through its public awareness, professional training and parent education programs and efforts at the state and national levels, The Help Group touches the lives of young people with special needs across the country and in other parts of the world.

At the heart of its efforts is the commitment to helping young people fulfill their potential to lead positive, productive and rewarding lives.

Schools

Village Glen School · Bridgeport School · Bridgeport Vocational Education Center · Sunrise School
 Young Learners Preschool · STEM³ Academy
 Summit View School · Westview · North Hills Prep · Parkhill School

Programs

The Help Group - UCLA Autism Research Alliance · The Help Group - UCLA Neuropsychology Program
 The Help Group - USC Occupational Science Initiative · Advance LA · Live.Advance.LA.
 Project Six/The Commons · Kids Like Me Recreational Programs & Camps · club I.a./club I.a. TEEN
 Paws and Pals for Kids with Autism · Silverlining Resale Boutique & Vocational Training Center
 The Help Group Child & Family Center · The Help Group Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder

Campuses

CULVER CITY · SHERMAN OAKS EAST · SHERMAN OAKS WEST
 VALLEY GLEN · VAN NUYS · SATICOY · VAN NUYS · SHERMAN WAY

www.thehelpgroup.org  

For more information on these and other events, please call 818.779.5212

UPCOMING EVENTS



inside/out photography exhibition
 dnj Gallery at Bergamot Station
 Opening Reception, September 10, 2016



Keys for Kids Teddy Bear Golf Classic
 Honoring Warren de Haan
 Valencia Country Club
 September 26, 2016



The Help Group SUMMIT 2016
 Advances and Best Practices in
 Autism – ADHD – Learning Disabilities
 Skirball Cultural Center
 October 14 - October 15, 2016



The Help Group's Teddy Bear Ball
 The Beverly Hilton Hotel
 December 7, 2016



Annual Holiday Carnival
 The Help Group - Sherman Oaks
 December 10, 2016



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