



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024

Dear Friends,

As we work to help children and families succeed through the most difficult times of their lives, it is the support of our partners – the school districts and public agencies we work with, our committed and caring team members, our donors and foundation supporters, and the families we are privileged to serve – that make our mission achievable. Primarily, due to unique collaboration, this year has once again proven to be a time of great innovation and progress.

Over the last year, the Haynes Family of Programs and David & Margaret Youth and Family Services strategic partnership has expanded its continuum of care and more fully integrated our Unconditional Care model into all our services and settings. It is within this framework that we reach youth and their families, each with varying intensity of needs and challenges.

We demonstrated an increased commitment to school-based interventions for both general education students and special education students, integrating specialized education services and mental health treatment that have proven key to effectively impacting the health and well-being of our children, youth, and their families.

We now partner with more than 115 school districts and Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPAs) in 18 counties with over 500 contracts

providing a range of special education and mental health services designed to help youth and families. We anticipate this model to grow and expand across California and other states for many more children and youth in the years ahead.

Going forward, we are ready to build on the success of local and statewide programs, through continued collaboration with our county agencies, school districts and with support from foundations, individuals, and our board of directors. Critical to effectively serving children, youth and families is the ability to implement, evaluate, and replicate innovative service models. Our focus continues to strive to be a leader in providing specialized programs in a nurturing, caring and therapeutic environment.

Please take a moment to read about the wonderful programs and significant impact they have on those we serve.

We thank you for your past and continuing collaboration and look forward to the opportunities for even greater impact in the year ahead.

Thank you,

Daniel S. Maydeck

President & CEO



RENAISSANCE RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM



Summertime Success

Since 1946, the Haynes campus has been a home to thousands of boys and young men in need of support and structure. While our residential services have evolved over the last 78 years, the sense of community and the life-changing support remains our top priority for every kid who steps foot on our campus.

Our Renaissance Residential Program continues to provide a safe and nurturing environment for the boys and young men who call our campus home. We strive to create a sense of community within our program, which is why the boys come together for monthly barbeques, where the boys work as a team to prepare a home-cooked meal to enjoy together. One of our residents has taken a keen interest in grilling and spends his free time researching new recipes to try. Whether they're manning the grill, helping to prepare the sides, or setting the table, all the boys find a way to contribute to this new family tradition.



In addition to these gatherings, the boys participate in various outings and events such as flag football, trips to the water park, movie theatre visits, pool days, and amusement park adventures. With the summer heat increasing, Raging Waters has become one of their favorite destinations.

This year, one of our residents planned a big summer carnival for him and his peers to enjoy. With a budget in mind, he has planned for a huge 20+ foot water slide, cotton candy machine, and pizza, making the ultimate summer bash! His hard work demonstrates his leadership skills and a commitment to creating a memorable experience for his peers.

Adjusting to a new environment away from home is never easy. With the help of our amazing, dedicated staff, these boys have taken the challenge head-on and are learning invaluable life skills in the process. We are proud of the camaraderie our residents have built within our program and look forward to seeing what they accomplish together.



COMPASS PROGRAMS



The Game of Life

With the twists and turns life can throw at you, sometimes it feels like a game. But for young adults leaving foster care, it's like playing on hard mode without the cheat codes.

COMPASS Programs has taken learning life skills to the next level, turning the Drop-In Center into a real-life version of the classic board game "Life." The players navigated different stations mimicking adulting tasks - from scoring an apartment lease to tackling unexpected hurdles.

Of course, reality is more complex a game, but this fun practice run lets these young adults dip their toes in the water, ask questions, and tackle setbacks without any lasting, real-world consequences.

Just like in real life, early choices can steer the game's course. Opting for a job might mean quick cash, while education could lead to higher-paying gigs in the future. Each player got a monthly income based on the path they chose, becoming their budget for rent, groceries, insurance, and more.

They strolled through the leasing office, grocery shop, DMV, and more, mastering adulting skills and making the best choices for their unique journey.

This game was a hit, helping young adults level up on life skills in a fun way. By facing real-world scenarios, they honed decision-making, problem-solving, and budgeting skills in a supportive setting.



At the "start," everyone was presented with three options for paths to take: employment, education, or military service.

At the "leasing office," players were presented with rental options and learned about late fees, eviction, and paying for utilities.



Players visited the "DMV" to learn the process of getting an ID. There was even a wait time to make the experience more authentic!

Each player learned about getting proper insurance coverage for their needs and how to file and pay their taxes.



DEALING WITH BARRIERS

Players in the game encounter "Barrier Cards" with challenges like flat tires or hospital visits. To advance, they must analyze, seek help, and solve the obstacle.





Reliving the Revolution

We are thrilled to share the success of the drama club's recent production, "Colonists Rise Against Tyranny!" at Renaissance Community Prep/Joan Macy School. The students worked tirelessly to bring this historical and impactful play to life, showcasing their dedication and talent.

The performance highlighted scenes of colonists becoming increasingly dissatisfied with British taxation. When King George III declared a tax on tea and sugar, the colonists ultimately decided to take up arms and start the revolution. The audience was delighted to see so much live action - even a fight scene of the colonists pushing the British back to Boston!



CONGRATS, GRADUATES!

Renaissance Community Prep/Joan Macy School is proud to present our 2024 graduating class!

Here's to a bright future ahead!



We are so proud of all the students who participated, whether on stage delivering lines or behind the scenes helping with set design and stagehand duties.

Cynthia Bowers, Drama Director, shared that our "students worked positively as a team to rehearse lines and practice stage parts. We are proud of all their efforts and shining like stars on stage! It has been a pleasure working with all of these students this summer."

This play is just one example of the amazing work our Vocational Arts Program does in getting students involved in activities they are passionate about, while also teaching valuable skills to better their futures.



BLISS ACADEMY

SCHOOL FOR AUTISM AND
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Teaching with Tech

With excitement, we share the recently expanded our use of Floreo, a skill-building program through virtual reality, to two high functioning high school classrooms, totaling four classrooms at Bliss Academy. This program allows students to experience enriching activities in varied environments and learn real-world skills such as communication, emotional regulation, daily living, and independent living skills.

Floreo is an engaging and effective way for our students to practice these skills at their own pace, without the need to manipulate the environment. This is especially beneficial for our students, as it allows them to access, enjoy, and learn in new environments that they may struggle to visit in real life.

With the addition of VR headsets and smartphones, our students can now practice communication and social skills in a fun and interactive way. We are thrilled to see the progress and growth that our students are experiencing through the use of Floreo, and we are grateful for the support of the Frank Nigro Columbian Foundation that allowed us to provide these innovative programs to our students. Together, we are empowering success!



CONGRATS, GRADUATES!

Congratulations to the graduating class of 2024
at Bliss Academy!

We are so proud of these students for
overcoming obstacles and persevering to
achieve their goals.

Thank you to all the teachers, staff, and families
who stood by these students every step of the
way.

We wish all our graduates good luck in the next
step of their journey!

FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION



Introducing: Serenity Foster Care & Adoption

We are excited to announce the addition of Serenity Foster Care & Adoption to the David & Margaret family. Since 2006, Serenity has been dedicated to breaking the cycle of abuse for children and families in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties through the provision of treatment, resources and quality care.

Serenity focuses its efforts on infants and young children, aiming to end abuse and neglect through early intervention programs that support both the victims and their biological families. By providing treatment, resources, and compassionate care, children can address attachment issues, developmental delays, and emotional trauma.

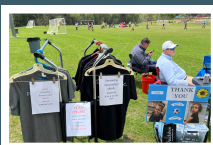
By joining forces with Serenity, David & Margaret has extended its reach to support more children and families in need. We are thrilled to welcome them aboard and look forward to making an even greater positive impact on the lives of those impacted by the foster care system.



Serenity, Inc.
Foster Care & Adoption

SERENITY SOCCER FEST

In May, Serenity and David & Margaret came together to host the annual Serenity Soccer Fest, a cherished, volunteer organized tradition at Serenity. Players enjoyed a fantastic weekend of competition, all in aid of the children, youth, and families served by Serenity programs.



NEW BEGINNINGS



Acculturation Through Art

The New Beginnings program welcomes young people from over 40 different countries who find themselves in the United States without a parent or guardian. The program's diversity brings challenges but also opportunities to exchange cultures, languages, and traditions.

Despite their differences, art serves as a unifying force among them. As the school year drew to a close, the New Beginnings youth organized a vibrant Art Show in the D&M cafeteria. The room was abuzz with joy, laughter, and a multitude of languages from excited students showing off their talents.

The exhibited artwork featured various styles such as landscapes, pop-art, graffiti, and flags representing their native countries. Each piece was accompanied by a description or poem, providing insight into the artist's intentions and emotions.



Infinite Breath of Life

"With this breath I take, I look up to see the clear blue sky and I remember your divinity, our truth, our journeys, our passion, our unity, our patience, our existence."

-New Beginnings Artist

A common theme ran through all the art pieces – resilience and hope. Many of these young individuals arrived in the United States under challenging circumstances but hold onto positivity and optimism for a brighter future.

With the support of David & Margaret, these youth have the opportunity to live securely, access education, and grow into successful, independent individuals.





Empowering Every Learner to Surpass the Expected

We are thrilled to unveil our new logo for STAR Academy, a visual representation of our unwavering commitment to fostering student growth, development, and success. This logo is more than just a design; it is a powerful symbol of our mission and the values that guide our educational approach.

Central to the logo is a triangle, a shape that encompasses the principles of balance, stability, and growth. Each side of the triangle represents the essential pillars of our educational framework: academic excellence, emotional support, and community engagement. This foundation emphasizes our holistic approach to education, where we believe that true success encompasses more than just academic achievement—it involves nurturing well-rounded individuals who are equipped to navigate the complexities of life.



At the core of this triangle shines a brilliant star, which serves as the heart of our identity as STAR Academy. The star symbolizes guidance, aspiration, and excellence, illuminating the path toward knowledge and opportunity.

Our newly refined tagline, "Empowering Every Learner to Surpass the Expected," beautifully encapsulates our core mission. At STAR Academy, we understand that every student is different, with their own strengths, challenges, and aspirations. Our commitment goes beyond merely assisting students in meeting standard expectations; we endeavor to provide the personalized support and resources they need to excel beyond those parameters.

Recognizing that the learning environment can significantly impact a student's growth, we are dedicated to offering specialized services both in-home and in-school. This flexibility ensures that we meet students where they are, creating customized educational plans that cater to their individual needs. Whether it's tutoring, mentorship, or skill-building workshops, our tailored support aims to create meaningful learning experiences that drive success.

As we embrace our new logo, we reaffirm our commitment to the values of growth, guidance, and excellence that it embodies. We are excited about the journey ahead and remain steadfast in our mission to create a transformative impact in the lives of our students and their families. Together, we can nurture the stars of tomorrow, guiding them as they reach for their dreams and exceed all expectations.



Transforming Lives Through Compassionate Care

As we reflect on the profound impact of our mental health services, we are excited to share the inspiring journey of a young man named Ethan, who has shown remarkable resilience and growth through his experience with our program.

Ethan began receiving our services when he was placed on probation and court-ordered to engage in mental health support in December 2023. He was referred to our program due to defiant behaviors, such as leaving home without permission, and displaying aggressive behaviors. Our primary focus was to assist him in reducing defiance and developing appropriate ways to manage and communicate his feelings, all while exploring the dynamics within his family.

From the outset, Ethan demonstrated dedication to his treatment, actively engaging in sessions and showing exceptional progress. We were thrilled to witness his developing insight into his emotions and his tenacity in working through traumatic experiences. Utilizing coping skills that he learned in therapy, Ethan began to identify his triggers and modify his responses to stressors, leading to significant improvements in various aspects of his life.

Ethan's academic performance saw a remarkable turnaround, especially during stressful periods such as finals and graduation. Not only did he successfully graduate from high school, but he also achieved acceptance into a California State University, a testament to his hard work and determination.

At home, the transformation was equally significant. Ethan worked diligently on improving his communication skills with his mother, choosing to disengage from conflicts and recognizing warning signs that miscommunication could arise. Throughout his treatment, he made strides in respecting his mother, adhering to curfews, and stopped running away. Life at home became much more relaxed for both Ethan and his mother and their communication improved.

In June, Ethan met his treatment goals and was discharged from our services, no longer requiring intensive support. As he prepares to start his journey at San Francisco State University in the fall, we are pleased to have connected him with mental health resources available on campus.

Ethan's story is just one among many that illustrate the transformative power of mental health support. Together, we can empower more young individuals like Ethan to navigate their challenges and find a path toward brighter futures.

