

2016

Hand to Hand Chronicle -2016

A FUND OF THE COASTAL COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Boys and Girls Club of Vista	1
Casa Cornelia	2
Girls on the Run	2
Mana de San Diego	3
Girls Rising	3
Just in Time	4

Our Mission Statement

Hand to Hand makes an impact in the lives of women and girls in San Diego County by directing resources to programs that empower change and self-sufficiency.

Hand
to Hand



Funding Opportunities for Women and Girls
A Fund of the Coastal Community Foundation

Boys and Girls Club of Vista (SMART Girls)

The SMART Girls program is designed for girls between 6 and 14 years, providing them with good decision-making and conflict resolution skills. The Hand to Hand grant was used to provide staffing for the program as well as supplies for the ongoing program.

A variety of activities were provided to participants including one-on-one mentoring, regular group meetings & activities, and opportunities for role playing; support is provided throughout the year by both paid staff and volunteers. In addition, many of the volunteers provide peer experience.



One of the outcomes of the program is that the “graduates” have become successful in their own lives and now work as volunteers to support the next “generation” of girls facing these challenges.

A number of additional activities also resulted in fostering self-respect; partnering with members of the Soroptimist Club to provide career path direction; and affiliation with the “Vista Princesses” where participants vied for the “Miss Vista” competition and participated in fun activities such as a mini “spa” day.

The Executive Director, Matt Koumaras, expressed his gratitude for the support that Hand to Hand provided. They had more than 70 participants in 2016. They want to continue this program in the future as the number of attendees has been steadily increasing. The socio-economic conditions in the area and the reputation of the organization are driving this continued growth.

Casa Cornelia

Casa Cornelia Law Center (CCLC) provides free legal services to immigrant victims of domestic violence and human trafficking (DV), and victims of crime (VOC) to help them obtain visas/work permits to escape abusive relationships and to support themselves and their children. It can take up to four years before a client's case can be closed. During that entire time CCLC is the attorney of record for all legal matters for the client. In 2016, CCLC provided legal services, information, and guidance to 395 women and their dependent children. CCLC is dedicated to enlarging their staff of volunteer lawyers, students and translators who provide pro bono services to CCLC and their clients. Hand to Hand was pleased to provide support in 2016 with 37 new volunteer attorneys trained to assist with pro bono representation.

Women assisted through CCLC's DV/VOC programs are on the way to obtaining employment, access to social services for themselves and their children, and becoming fully contributing members of the community. Some even go on to advocate for other clients or help others in the community, creating systemic change at a grassroots level. For example, a former human trafficking client is now a music and academic instructor at La Maestra Community Health Center's Generations After School Program, "Center for Youth Advancement" and recently spoke at UCSD's Second Annual Global Empowerment Summit.



Girls on the Run



The mission at Girls on the Run is to help 3rd – 8th grade girls develop essential skills to help them navigate their worlds and establish a lifetime appreciation for health and fitness.

Hand to Hand grant funds were used to fund the 15 girls of the Heart & Sole team; girls who had been on the waiting list for several seasons and would have been unable to participate without Hand to Hand. These girls, along with 4 volunteer coaches:

- Completed 21 research-based curricula with lessons in heart, spirit and body
- Participated in 21, 75-minute running games with their sisters and coaches
- Got shoes to run in and healthy snacks during practices
- Participated in 5K Day in matching outfits with motivational posters and a team cheer. Each girl was matched with a running buddy
- Completed post-season surveys that showed positive results in these areas: psychological, physical, social, prevention

Amanda, 13, was a member of the Heart & Sole Team. Coming from homelessness after a divorce, Amanda's teachers recommended her for GOTR. Amanda and her mom completed the 5K together for the very first time and have signed up for next year.

Janelle, a military mom with 3 girls is a volunteer coach for GOTR. Says Janelle: "Seeing all the girls cross the 5K finish line makes me cry every time. This is a volunteer opportunity where I always get more than I give."

Mana de San Diego

MANA de San Diego's mission is to empower Latinas through education, leadership development, community service, and advocacy. With help from the Hand to Hand grant, MANA provided a youth leadership and mentoring program for 60 at-risk middle and high school Latinas. The program is called Hermanitas meaning "little sisters." Hermanitas goals include: graduate from high school, apply to at least one college, improve grades over the year, learn the value of support and networking for future success and learn about giving back. The program matched mentors with Hermanitas for a 10-month program that included weekly one-on-one mentoring contacts, monthly career focused seminars at locations around the county (strong emphasis on STEM), optional outings to further the bonding between girls and mentors, parent workshops, and community service hours.

The 2015/16 Hermanitas Program was highly successful as 100% of seniors graduated and pursued higher education, and 100% of non-seniors remained in school and improved their GPA. All Hermanitas developed leadership skills and were prepared for the college application process. Hermanitas not only learned about giving back to their community, they each volunteered 50+ hours of community service throughout the year.

In the words of one Hermanita, "I am so blessed to have met such extraordinary and inspiring women in my community...I can honestly say that I wouldn't be the mature, outspoken, and dedicated young lady I am today without the great role models and support I have received...it is important for me that young women, especially Hispanic women, know that they can do anything they put their mind to."



Girls Rising

Girls Rising is a mentorship program between Big and Little Sisters, focused on increasing self-esteem through one-on-one mentoring, and educational and empowering group experiences. Girls Rising received a grant from Hand to Hand to fund two educational group events, a STEM and Financial Literacy event, and an Annual Campout.

The STEM and Financial Literacy event was created for the Little Sisters by a company called "Science Delivered." This event served to break down educational barriers, teach essential life skills, and introduce the Little Sisters to new career paths and options. A financial expert also shared the basics of money management, and the Little Sisters said they learned "how to spend money wisely."

Girls Rising went to Silver Strand State Beach for their Annual Campout. Partnering with Outdoor Outreach, water activities were provided, along with dinner and a camp out. This event offered unique bonding experiences between the Big and Little Sisters, which in turn aids in a longer match between the two and provides better outcomes.

Program results are impressive! 96% of the Little Sisters meet their annual goals; 96% of the Big/Little Sister matches continue beyond one year, with the average match length being 3.5 years; 83% of the girls realize an increase in self-esteem each year; and 100% of them have graduated high school! Girls Rising also has 0% teen pregnancy rate. These outcomes translate into brighter futures for the Little Sisters.



Just in Time for Foster Youth

Just in Time for Foster Youth (JIT) empowers transition age foster youth to become confident, capable and connected young adults. The JIT program “Financial Horizons for Young Women” combines the dual goals of building the skills needed to find a career and constructing a strong financial foundation.

The career-focused component includes exploring career options, receiving coaching to help determine career goals, working with mentors to craft resumes, shopping for professional clothing and practicing interviewing skills. Financial training addresses introduction to banking, tenant rights, building an effective budget and demonstrating consistent savings behavior.

Karen Lopez, who had been in foster care from age 8 through high school, heard about JIT before she graduated from San Pascual Academy. During her last year at California State University San Marcos she participated in Financial Horizons. Her career coach Marlene became a good friend. Karen explained that “Financial Horizons gave me the finishing touches I felt I lacked, which gave me the self-confidence I needed when interviewing.” She now works at a biotech firm and plans to get a Master’s and a Doctorate in Biotechnology.



Seven young women took part in the first year of the 2-year Financial Horizons program, with the assistance of the grant from Hand to Hand.



Girls Rising



SMART Girls



Girls on the Run



Mana de San Diego



Girls on the Run



Just in Time



Casa Cornelia