



Back by Popular Demand, Suzanna Guzman to Sing at Christmas Gala

Catholic Charities' 2014 City of Angels Christmas Gala will be held on Friday, December 5 at The California Club in downtown Los Angeles. The Gala will honor the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Investees of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, and the Order of St. Gregory the Great.

Highlights of the evening will include a special vocal performance by Grammy-nominated East Los Angeles native Suzanna Guzman, accomplished mezzo-soprano and host of Open Call on KCET. Guzman, best known for her title role in Bizet's Carmen, has been honored by People magazine in Español as an outstanding Latino in Music, and was the first recipient of the Plácido Domingo Award.

Proceeds will benefit the poor children and families served by the community centers of Catholic Charities. For more information about the Christmas Gala, please call (213) 251-3495. ❀

Brownson House Center's Roberto Ramirez Presented Award by Los Angeles Food Bank

Roberto Ramirez, Client Resources Coordinator II of Catholic Charities' Brownson House Community Center in its San Gabriel Region, was recently awarded the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank's highest honor - the Tony Collier Award. Named after the founder of the Food Bank, this honor is given to a person who has exhibited extraordinary efforts to help ensure that no one in Los Angeles goes hungry.



Ramirez has worked at Brownson House Community Center, in the East Los Angeles community of Boyle Heights, for about 35 years. He does his best to provide what is needed by the people who come to the center, warming food for homeless persons when it's cold, stocking the food bags as heartily as possible, and always checking with parents to see if their children are interested in a special treat. He especially loves helping children, and they love seeing him. His sincere and humble care for them radiates from his every interaction, and they feel safe in his presence.

Ramirez knows that hunger in the Boyle Heights community is real, and he does whatever is within his power to allay it. In fact, if he is off work and receives a call about a potential food donation, he will stop whatever he is doing, rearrange his time, retrieve the donation, and bring it to Brownson House. He will not let such an opportunity pass by, knowing that the food will immediately feed families, as well as nurture relationships that provide food in the future. If there is a large donation of fresh food, he will take it around the neighborhood, on his own time, to make sure it gets to hungry families before it perishes.

As one client gratefully wrote: "Roberto has been very helpful and always supported us with what we needed when he had it." The San Gabriel Region of Catholic Charities is very proud of Roberto for most deservedly earning the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank's highest award. ❀

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Message from the Executive Director, Rev. Monsignor Gregory A. Cox

During the last few months, the media has highlighted the influx of unaccompanied minors into the United States. Most of the children are from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras and they are making this long and treacherous journey to the United States to escape abuse and be reunited with their families. Obviously, the U.S. is not prepared to deal with the overwhelming numbers of children crossing the border.

This recent experience is reminder to us that our immigration system needs a serious overhaul. So many people are suffering because we have not addressed this issue with the courage needed. Our elected officials should bring together representatives from religion, business, non-profit, media and government to work out a plan. This is a challenging task because of the strong opinions that we have concerning immigration reform. Build on those issues in which we are in agreement, and compromise on those issues in which we are in disagreement.

Strong opposing views are not something new in our wonderful country. A quality of leadership is not only identifying the critical issues of the day but also bringing people together with different views and resolving them. The leaders of our nation have the responsibility to guide us through this challenging time. ❖

18th Annual Golf Tournament Honors Memory of Diane Vogelsang and Helps Catholic Charities' Programs for the Poor and Homeless

Held at the exclusive Oakmont Country Club in Glendale on June 16, the 18th Annual Catholic Charities' Golf Tournament was a big success, and benefitted programs to feed, house and assist the vulnerable individuals and families who come to the agency in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties. Posters and the tournament program book recognized the late Diane Vogelsang, who volunteered at the agency's past 11 golf tournaments.



Lisa Vogelsang Telesca, Peter Vogelsang, M.D. and Lori Vogelsang Demarest gather at a poster in memory of the late Diane Vogelsang.

More photos of the tournament can be viewed on the agency website at www.CatholicCharitiesLA.org under News and Events.

The success of this fundraising event was made possible by the generosity of the Sponsors and the assistance of the Golf Tournament Committee, which was comprised of Monsignor Gregory Cox - Chair, Susan and Richard D'Amico, Gary Darnell, Harold Greene, Gary D. Krauss, Vincent F. Martin, Jr., Michael D. O'Brien, Paul D. Tosetti, Esq., and Peter J. Vogelsang, M.D. ❖

Thank you to the Golf Tournament Sponsors:

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- * William and Helen Close Family Foundation Fund

El Santo Nino Boasts Soccer League Championships

The El Santo Niño Community Center Soccer Teams, one in the Junior Division (for ages 11 to 13) and another in the Major Division (for ages 14 to 17), became champions of the South Central Soccer League, consisting of six teams from various community centers and one from the Newton Police Division.

Both teams were undefeated, each with a record of 12 wins and no losses. They were coached by Nelson Villegas, a former client of El Santo Niño Community Center.

All the players received an individual trophy and the Community Center also received a beautiful team trophy. ❖



Fernando Sarabia, Jr., Project Coordinator of El Santo Nino Community Center (front row center), holds the trophy for the Junior Division and Major Division soccer team championships won by El Santo Nino soccer teams.

Girl Scout Earns Gold Award for Guadalupe Center Project

Families who are clients of Catholic Charities' Guadalupe Community Center in Canoga Park joined to learn about healthy living at Ella Sudit's Gold Award project, Project Playtime. A Gold Award is a Girl Scouts' project that identifies a key issue in the community and helps to find a solution. The award granted as part of this 80 hour community service project is the highest honor a Girl Scout can receive.

In her project, Ella worked with the Guadalupe Center to teach families about healthy eating and exercising. First, Ella and volunteers met at the center, measured, marked tape, and painted hopscotch, foursquare, and tetherball courts. In addition, Ella donated sports equipment to the center, including balls, pumps, and nets.

Next, Ella hosted a "Fun Day" at the center for families. Throughout the day, various activities were organized to teach children about healthy living. A two-legged race was a perfect way to show youngsters how to work together and a balloon toss taught



Ella Sudit is grateful to Skip Wrightson, Community Outreach Worker of Guadalupe Center, for his wonderful support of her project.

them the importance of staying hydrated. Handball and Basketball games provided an opportunity to have fun and learn about team work. In addition, the boys and girls played a giant game of chutes and ladders followed by suggestions on how to stay healthy. The children also colored worksheets that showed them the different fruits and vegetables to eat and various exercises and activities to complement nutrition.

In addition to the fun activities, Ella also donated a healthy dinner to the families of the center. This meal included fruits, vegetables, salad, and a hearty pasta dish. The youngsters also played with the new sports equipment. Finally, the volunteers served the families all-fruit popsicles.

Ella's project was an amazing experience, teaching her how to be organized and how to plan large-scale events. She thanks Trader Joe's, Target and Lowes for donating supplies to her project and also appreciates her family, friends, and fellow Girl Scouts. ❖

AYE's Robert Gutierrez Awarded 2014 CWA Charlie Brown Workforce Professional of the Year

Robert L. Gutierrez, Director of Catholic Charities' Archdiocesan Youth Employment Services (AYE) since 1976, was recently honored by the California Workforce Association (CWA) as the Charlie Brown Workforce Professional of the Year.

In presenting the award to Gutierrez, Maritza Dubie-Urbe, Human Services Administrator II in Community and Senior Services of Los Angeles County, stated: "Robert exemplifies a tireless dedication, passion and commitment to improving the quality of life for disadvantaged youth through his notable advocacy efforts and involvement with social justice, education, and workforce service for young people."

Moorpark Pantry Plus Hosts Moorpark Chamber of Commerce Mixer

Friend of the Moorpark Pantry Plus and Catholic Charities Ventura County Advisory Board member, Michael Cosenza, told the gathering at the recent Chamber of Commerce Mixer that Catholic Charities' Moorpark Pantry Plus is the community's safety net, providing food and clothing to those in need. There is also emergency assistance for utility bills, rent and temporary shelter.

"Donations help raise funds to keep the Pantry operating efficiently and to help many low income and deserving families who rely on it," Cosenza stated.

The Pantry conducts eight programs for the Moorpark children and their families: Back to School supplies and backpacks; Good Grades = New Shoes; Easter baskets; Mother's Day; Father's Day; Halloween costumes; Thanksgiving; and Christmas.

For more information about Catholic Charities' programs in Ventura County, contact Ms. Pat Esseff at pesseff@ccharities.org. ❖



From left, Patricia Aguirre carries on the legacy of her father Ruben Castro as a Friend of Catholic Charities' Moorpark Pantry Plus in the Ruben Castro Human Services Center. Moorpark Mayor, Janice Parvin, Catholic Charities Ventura County Program Director, Pat Esseff, and community volunteer, Lisa Alvarado, joined Patricia for the Chamber of Commerce mixer hosted by the Pantry. Proceeds from the evening are targeted for utility bill assistance.



1531 James M. Wood Blvd.
Post Office Box 15095
Los Angeles, CA 90015-0095
www.CatholicCharitiesLA.org

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