



## “Koins for Kids” tops \$400,000 over 12 years of giving

Imagine yourself 12 years ago and you need to raise an enormous amount of money. Who would you approach? No doubt you would think of foundations, wealthy donors or corporations. Would you think of children from the ages of 5 to 17? Probably not! But the adults who run *Vision of Hope* and dream big decided to ask the students at DSMSJ affiliated schools to sacrifice their personal spending money for a campaign called “Koins for Kids.” The collection gives students and families the opportunity to be a direct part of *Vision of Hope*. In 1997, who would have thought that in 2009, the collections would top \$400,000? Miracles have always been a part of *Vision of Hope* and they continue to occur!

Each year the schools run a month-long collection of coins and currency. Students and families have been extraordinarily generous. Beyond the monetary contributions of the



The 6th grade winners of this year's Koins for Kids at Saint Elizabeth pose with Pia Penguin.

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### A Message from the Director

Dear Friends,

Thank you for being part of our Dominican Family! As family, we must share a new challenge. Our schools could face an unprecedented 58% loss in families next year because of job losses and other financial hardships. Just over 1,000 children now served by *Vision of Hope* will need funding in addition to the amount they currently receive.

The good news is that schools are trimming already lean budgets and raising additional tuition assistance for these families. *Vision of Hope* is determined to match their efforts!

We trust we can count on you, now more than ever, to answer the prayers of these deserving children. May God continue to bless you!

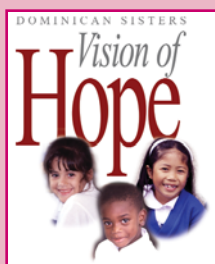
With gratitude,

*Sister John Martin*

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## Dream becomes reality for autistic children in Los Angeles

A 2007 graduate of Sacred Heart School and presently a sophomore at Cathedral High School in Los Angeles, Zachary Gonzalez had a dream to “make a difference” in the lives of autistic children. The sibling of an autistic child, he understands that too often these children are excluded and denied participation in events with other children because of their disability.

Zachary came up with the idea of organizing a baseball game in which autistic children would play. He understands that these children are sometimes perceived as “weird” and “different.” As such, he wanted to do something that would give them a chance to hit a ball and be themselves. Zachary devoted a great deal of energy to organize the event. With the help of generous organizations and companies, “Play Now For Autism” was a day filled with baseball, great food,



entertainment, some Los Angeles Dodgers as spectators, donations for autism research, and most importantly, love.

Zachary started with a dream and it became a reality. To see more about Zachary and “Play Now For Autism” see the website <http://www.myspace.com/playnowforautism>.

## Saint James grant for staff development benefits teachers, students

Saint James School, along with other members of the Alliance of Mission District Catholic Schools, was a participant in a phenomenal professional development experience during the second semester. Principals and two teachers per school participated in a nine-day training in differentiated instruction. The training began with three consecutive days in January, followed by one or two days per month through May. The Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development provided funding and consultant Judy Rex for the program.

Differentiation is a classroom practice that recognizes that each child is different, and the most effective teachers do whatever it takes to engage the entire range of students in learning.

Faculty members are already beginning to use some of the best practices. There is great enthusiasm at Saint James as faculty look forward to more fully implementing differentiated instruction during the next school year to benefit every child.



## Saint Elizabeth 'takes a hike!' Earth Adventures Club discovers local sites

Beginning in the spring of 2007, Saint Elizabeth's Earth Adventures Club has been the gathering spot for the school's students and parents wishing to explore the outdoors. Trips have included local sites such as Angel Island. An overnight trip at the beginning of May was the culmination of the experiences.

Thirteen students from the 5th to the 8th grade carried their belongings in backpacks and explored the Sunol Regional Wilderness near Fremont. The trek was physically and psychologically challenging: "We had to walk nearly two miles uphill!" stated 5th grader Eduardo Lara, who had to participate in a volleyball tournament the day after the hike!

The highlight of the trip was a shooting star across the sky after all was quiet on Saturday night. For many, this was their first experience of God's wonder of creation away from the city.



## Saint Ignatius Library Program continues to grow

Saint Ignatius' librarian, Bobbie Aguilar, has been a leading force in exciting students about reading. Bobbie was instrumental in acquiring "Alexandria," the online cataloging system. She introduced the Scholastic Reading Counts and the Scholastic Reading Inventory, which are online comprehension programs that allow teachers access to the students' progress. Book Fairs enhance the availability of excellent reading materials.



Bobbie launched the "Homework Club" and the "Book Club." The Homework Club meets three days a week after school. Any student wanting extra help with homework or just wishing to finish their work before going home is welcome to attend.

The Book Club has grown into three groups: 5th grade, Junior High and Anime. Rebecca Ayala, a 7th grader, stated, "The Book Club is the best! It brings all of us book-lovers together. When we read a book and talk about it, it's great to see everyone's reaction towards that book. All of us love to read and give opinions, and that's a great experience to voice your opinion."

Mrs. Aguilar provides many wonderful opportunities for students to become captivated by reading!

## 'Future Leaders for Peace' engages SAIC students

Junior High students gathered in the school auditorium in March for a presentation by Jonathan Kathrein, Co-founder and Executive Director of "Future Leaders for Peace." The program teaches young people positive leadership and interpersonal skills. It creates a movement of change by inspiring them to share the skills they learn with others. The program paraphrases Mahatma Gandhi for its central theme: "You be the change you want to see in the world."

Mr. Kathrein grabbed the students' attention as he relayed the story of being attacked by a great white shark. That experience, which occurred at Stinson Beach in 1998, has changed his life.

Talking at the students' level, he created an environment where all could interact. After a question and answer period, students were placed in small groups with Peace Team leaders for break-out sessions. The objective was to provide the tools to help build skill in the following areas: leadership, mutual respect, communication, humility, confidence, appreciation and goal setting.



## Santa Teresita celebrates and thanks Sister Barbara

At the end of the 2008-2009 school year, Santa Teresita School said a heartfelt “thank you and good-bye” to Sister Barbara Darby. For eight years Sister served the school as Curriculum Coordinator and Assistant Principal.

Sister Barbara mentored teachers at Santa Teresita School by setting high standards for lesson plans, conducting classroom walk-throughs, organizing a curriculum resource room and providing supplementary materials for instruction across the curriculum.

Above and beyond her work with the teachers, Sister Barbara won the hearts of the students. A favorite celebration for Santa Teresita School was St. Patrick’s Day when students and teachers alike celebrated Sister’s Irish heritage and delighted in preparing Irish greeting cards for her.

Sister came to Santa Teresita after her principalship at Saint James, San Francisco.

She will be missed as she transitions to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Fremont.



## Cabrini celebrates partnership

On March 27, the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Aero Department landed its helicopter in the school field to celebrate safety partnership with Saint Frances X. Cabrini. The Sheriff’s Department has helped in many areas, especially by their presence at school and community outreach. Many great opportunities have led to alumni taking an active role in the school renewing its vision and mission.

Cabrini is also proud that 19 of 21 graduates will be attending Catholic high schools: Loyola, Saint Mary’s, Verbum Dei, Junipero Serra, Saint Bernard and Saint Anthony.



## Second Annual Events

### Day at Races, Golf Outing respond to additional tuition needs of school families

This year’s second annual Day at the Races was an unqualified success! Thanks to the Races Committee, Adrienne Krumins (chair), Sheri Stuckey and Nick Rasic, and to more than 200 wonderful donors, Vision of Hope netted more than \$12,500! More in the Annual Report!

Eric Choi (chair) and Nancy Mason, along with committee members, are hard at work putting together the Golf Outing, July 20th at the Wilshire Country Club in Los Angeles. There are still some spaces left for golfers, or those who would simply like to attend the dinner and auction. For more information, please go to website, [www.visionofhope.org](http://www.visionofhope.org) and click on “online giving,” or call 510-533-5768.

The profit from both events will go directly to Vision of Hope schools. All eight principals anticipate an average of 58% of their families will require additional support during this time of unprecedented financial hardship. (See Director’s Message, page 1.)

## Dominican Sisters at Saint Michael’s enhance learning

For the staff and children of Saint Michael’s, this has been a year of keeping alive our relationship with the Dominican Sisters. Sister Johnellen Turner, the Director of Schools, visited the campus in December. Her appearance on campus along with many hugs meant a great deal to all. Sister Margaret Anne Burke, DSMSJ New Teacher Mentor, came to mentor the new teachers. She worked to help them more fully appreciate the Dominican charism, while sharing her wisdom and “tricks of the trade.”

The entire staff completed the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory to help understand themselves and those with whom they work. Sister Mary Peter Traviss, Educational Consultant, arrived on campus in May for a workshop on the personality inventory; through this fascinating instrument, all grew in the knowledge of how to understand learning styles and the many ways intelligence can be shown. Thanks to these Sisters for continued support and partnership with Saint Michael’s.

## Koins for Kids tops \$400,000 - from page 1

donors have been the countless hours spent by teachers, parents and students counting coins.

Over the years, aside from the phenomenal fundraising, a legendary figure has emerged in each school participating in Koins for Kids. This beloved character is Pia Penguin, an 18-inch stuffed animal. She is not only the mascot of the drive, but also the perpetual trophy on each campus, living in the room of the winning class until the end of the school year.

At Saint Joseph School in Fremont, it is an unbroken tradition that the 8th graders excel. The penguin processes in with them at their graduation ceremony, complete with a cap and gown!

It is not just the acquisition of Pia Penguin that motivates the children to donate. There have been many heartwarming stories of students turning in money for the “poor kids,” when the children themselves need assistance. Students of VOH schools have sacrificed money they had been saving for shoes, a sweater, toys or a book.

At Saint Ignatius in East Los Angeles, the entire school gets into the act. Due to this community effort, they have brought in the highest percentage each year - a cumulative \$85,000, or 21%, of the \$400,000. When Koins for Kids arrives, the students become excited and their hearts open up to help others. What greater lesson for the schools to teach than to give to others?

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SUMMER 2009

## Impressive students behind Hitchcock bequest to Vision of Hope

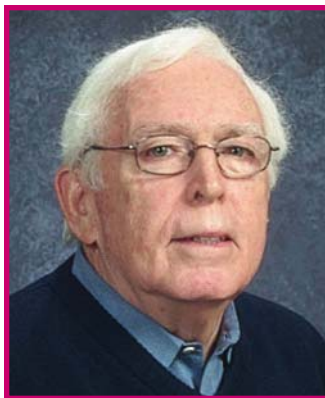
Jack Hitchcock was convinced to include *Vision of Hope* in his estate plan by its most powerful advocates: the children VOH serves.

Hitchcock, retired president of Franklin Templeton Trust, is adding a bequest to *Vision of Hope* because he believes VOH schools work.

"We hold our board meetings at *Vision of Hope* schools," he said. "I met the Sisters, teachers, and the families involved. I was impressed." But the students impressed him the most.

"The kids would direct us to our room and then would put on a program: a musical presentation or a talk by the student body president. They were motivated and attractive. These were grammar school students. They may be poor, but they don't think of themselves as victims. They're developing skills so they can take their place in the world."

Hitchcock, the oldest of 12 brothers and sisters—his wife Marilu is the oldest of 14—knows the relationship



between education and success.

While in the U.S. Air Force, he discovered he had a knack for bringing people of different cultures and points of view together, a skill he thought he could hone in law school. When he left the Air Force in 1961, married and the father of four, he worked full-time for a trust company that underwrote his nighttime law school classes.

Law degree in hand, he started a trust company for a southern California savings and loan and, in 1984, did the same for Franklin Templeton Investments, retiring

seven years ago as company president.

He and Marilu are currently updating their estate plan. Because of the quality of the students he's met, *Vision of Hope* will be among the Hitchcocks' beneficiaries.

*Vision of Hope* welcomes Jack and Marilu Hitchcock as honored members of its Legacy Circle. For Legacy Circle information contact Sister John Martin Fixa, OP, at 510-533-5768 or [osd@msjdominicans.org](mailto:osd@msjdominicans.org).

## Bragging Writes: News from our campuses

### San Francisco/Oakland

The Herbst Foundation honored Junior High teachers throughout San Francisco with the Teaching Excellence Award. The criterion was to celebrate teachers who stimulate, challenge and encourage their students. **Saint Anthony-Immaculate Conception's** eighth grade teacher, Alicia Cabe-Reyes, and **Saint James'** sixth grade teacher, Adrienne Murphey, were this year's recipients. Their awards included \$2,000 for personal use and a school grant of \$2,000. Herbst Foundation Board Director, Jerrol Harris presented awards at both schools.

When the ceremonies to inaugurate the new bishop of Oakland, Salvatore Cordileone, were celebrated at the Cathedral of Christ the Light on May 5, **Saint Elizabeth's** Ballet Folklórico performed on the Cathedral Plaza.



The students, ages 8 to 13, danced for most of the afternoon and won great acclaim.

### South Central Los Angeles

**Saint Frances X. Cabrini School** is proud of 7th graders Kimberly Juarez and Maria Vega, who represented Los Angeles at the Junior National Youth Leadership Conference in Washington, DC. Of the 200 students nationwide, they spoke about how inner city students are the heart of Los Angeles and that without Saint Frances X.

Cabrini School they would not have had all the opportunities they have now.

### East Los Angeles

**Sacred Heart Elementary School** graduate of 2005, Christine Nicole Guerrero, has been selected to attend the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland! Congratulations to Christine, her family, and the Sacred Heart community on this outstanding accomplishment!

With Tim Hagen of Education Through Music at the maestro's baton, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students at **Saint Ignatius School** were instructed on the recorder. Not only did the ensemble perform their first concert at Christmas, but they also gave a wonderful Spring concert for the final meeting of the Parent Guild. Parents and teachers left wanting to hear more and raving about the program!