“Optimist Helps Provide a Permanent Home for Natalie”
Our Mission
Our mission is to provide innovative and individualized treatment, education, and support services to children, young adults and families to better their lives.

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Welcome
Sil Orlando, Chief Executive Officer

Optimist continues to adjust to the state’s newly implemented Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) system. As of this writing, we are one of only 14 agencies statewide to have obtained our permanent license to operate under the new system and we were the first of those. While we are proud to lead the way, we are not pleased with the implementation at the state level. Constant delays and changing regulations force us to spend much of our time writing new plans and having to undergo consistent program reviews, which takes staff away from focusing on the youth. Far fewer children are being placed in residential care, especially those who are part of the Probation department, and this is hurting us fiscally although we have made adjustments in next year’s budget, which begins on July 1st.

Today, many of the children in our care are extremely violent and have severe mental health issues. This results in a significant amount of acting out which leads to investigations by the state. Recent newspaper articles demonstrate the same problems in the County juvenile halls although I’m not sure that the blame directed at the Department of Probation is warranted. The entire revamped approach to care for these children needs to be re-examined quickly by the State and counties.

Those of us who have been in the field for decades are noting a deterioration in the system and while agencies are having difficulties adjusting, the real issue is that our children are suffering. In the meantime, we will maintain our transition status and do what we need to do in order to go forward and hopefully influence the state. This has been a struggle for all but ultimately we will succeed.

New plans to convert our Pacific Lodge campus to a site for girls including a Temporary Shelter Care Facility are underway and we’ve reorganized our administrative structure in the residential programs to ensure they are as effective as possible.

Despite the turmoil in the residential care arena, our foster family and adoptions agency continues to grow as do our outpatient mental health programs.

Our Charter school has been downsized to account for the lower population in our residential programs and the daily schedule has been modified to allow for more learning in the earlier part of the day.

Despite all the changes, we did get some relief and solace as we celebrated six high school graduates at a wonderful dinner in a Pasadena restaurant sponsored by our advisory board and our first Alumni event held at our Pacific Lodge campus brought together past residents from the 60’s though 2016. Hearing their stories about the impact of their time with us was very validating.

I want to thank all of our staff in all of our programs who have struggled along with us as we go through this period of transition as they are truly our champions and deserve all the accolades they can get.

I also want to thank outgoing board president Malak Kazan for her leadership and support over the past two years and welcome president-elect Steve Duben, who will assume the office on July 1st.

Please consider including OYHFS in your will. We who have devoted our professional life in the charitable world have seen the great good a bequest can provide for our ultimate beneficiary, Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services. Indeed, estate gifts help us serve future generations.

Chief Advancement & Communications Officer, Jennifer D’Alvarez, is available to talk with you confidentially about your gift and estate plans, and to assist you in finding a qualified attorney. Contact her at (323) 443-3023; Email: jdalvarez@oyhfs.org
On April 15, members of the Pacific Palisades Optimist Club and staff from Saint John’s Health Center Foundation visited our main campus to see, first-hand, the impact their numerous donations have had on our agency.

The group enjoyed a nice lunch, a tour and a talk from one of our residents who discussed how he’s grown during his stay at Optimist.

In total, the Optimists of Pacific Palisades have donated more than $270,000 to our agency with a great deal of that money generated by the Pacific Palisades Will Rogers 5k & 10k Run. We are incredibly grateful to the Palisades Optimist Club, the Will Rogers Run and Saint John’s Health Center Foundation for their continued support and belief in our mission.

For the sixth year in a row, longtime Optimist board member Larry Brown and his wife, Ronna, donated $10,000 to support our vital services and programs for at-risk youth and families.

Thank you from the bottom of our heart, Larry and Ronna. Your commitment to Optimist is exceptional and we are so grateful to both of you.

19-month old Natalie was placed with Heather and Jesus Hernandez when she was 3 days old and has lived with them ever since. The couple, who does not have biological children, has now completed two adoptions through Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services.

We are grateful for people like Heather and Jesus who provide permanent, loving homes for children.

Congratulations to Natalie and the rest of the Hernandez family!

On April 27, four bankers from Wells Fargo spoke to our youth to discuss the importance of savings, credit, paying bills on time and how to track spending. They had fun quizzes as well as giveaways and snacks, which the boys of course loved.

Thank You
Priska Neely, Volunteer

Priska Neely has been a music volunteer with Optimist since 2017 and has worked with several different residents. She chose to volunteer at Optimist because she wanted to invest her time with young people who are in need of a positive influence and to know someone genuinely cares.

Priska used her passion in music to impact our residents’ lives and her guitar has been an instrument of change, evidenced by the residents’ decision to become better musicians.

The boys can be heard practicing the guitar in their dorm and utilizing other sources to expand their skills.

Her approach with our residents has been individualized in order to meet each one where they’re at, whether that means teaching new chords, listening to different kinds of songs and evaluating the chords played, or just talking about their day. She’s built great relationships with the youth and challenges them to become better musicians and individuals.

Professionally, Priska is a Senior Early Childhood Reporter for KPCC, a public media outlet in Los Angeles.

Thank you for your time, dedication and caring, Priska!

Jeff Stern, Volunteer

In the volunteer spotlight, we recognize volunteers who are critical to our success as an organization. Jeff Stern is one of them. He is committed to transforming lives. As a long-time volunteer, he has donated his time and energy to help our residents thrive. Jeff shares how he started volunteering at our Pacific Lodge campus:

“I started to visit the PLYS about 20 years ago which was shortly after I joined the Woodland Hills Rotary Club who has had a relationship with the Lodge for almost 50 years. Our club has enjoyed working with the Lodge and its residents in many different ways over the years. Including art projects, teaching them cooking, mentor talks, off campus trips to retirement homes to visit seniors and conversations over pizza in the cottages.”

What is your favorite part about being a volunteer and working with our residents?

“To just have a chance to possibly make a change in a boy’s outlook and maybe be a small part in a positive change in their life or outlook.”

Jeff and his wife, Barbara Stern, visit our residents every month and organize fun and educational activities. Last month, they did a fun button art craft activity with the boys. They also helped the residents make delicious and mouth-watering funnel cakes during Rotary Club’s recent visit. The boys enjoy interacting with them and always look forward to their next visit.

We would like to thank Jeff and Barbara for their support over the years and commitment to “building productive lives.” Your dedication is truly appreciated!
Malachi has resided at Optimist since September 2018 and is slated to graduate from our high school in June 2019. For the last three months he’s worked at Tacos Poncitlan, a restaurant owned and operated by Martha Mendel, the daughter of one of our employees, Leticia Vega.

During graduate school, Martha volunteered in one of our dorms and fell in love with the organization and our kids so when she opened her restaurants, she expressed interest in hiring our residents. Martha believes in giving back to the community and her goal is to help kids who are transitioning out of residential care gain some real world work experience.

Malachi was the first Optimist resident Martha hired (and the only male out of nine employees) and she and the rest of her team are very happy with him. She reports that Malachi is dependable, follows directions, is a good listener, is rapidly developing skills, is eager to learn, works hard, has a positive attitude and that this experience has been empowering for him as well as for her.

When Malachi first got the job, Martha paid for him to receive his food handler’s certification and even bought him work shoes and a uniform. Malachi performs a variety of tasks including food preparation, serving as the cashier and cleaning. He is moving into a transitional housing program once he leaves Optimist and is scheduled to begin classes at Long Beach Community College this summer. He wants to major in sociology and help kids in some fashion.

Martha plans to expand her business via farmers markets and hopes to hire one or two additional residents. She’s excited that her team is on board with her vision of helping at-risk youth make a smoother transition to adulthood and said, “If I can make the difference in one person’s life and provide them with a skillset they can later use, then I’ve accomplished my goal”.

Former Volunteer Hires Optimist Resident

Jesus Garcia, Officer of the Day

These days, working at the same child care facility for twenty-three years is uncommon yet Jesus Garcia has done just that.

Jesus received his Bachelor’s Degree in Veterinary Medicine in the 1990’s before he immigrated to the US from Mexico. While he worked in the US as a veterinary assistant, he could not move up as the degree was not recognized here so he sought alternate employment.

Jesus came to Optimist in 1996 as a child care worker in one of our main campus dorms. Three years later he was promoted to a case aide position because of superb work habits, a willingness to constantly learn and a strong sense of accountability for both himself and the children he worked with. Several years later he transferred to a nighttime child care worker position. Again, his excellent performance led to yet another promotion as the nighttime Officer of the Day, putting him in charge of all the night staff working on campus during his shifts. This position requires a great deal of diligence and accountability as at that time other administrators and clinicians are not onsite to help. One needs to be a special person to hold this position and Jesus has done so for years. He is dedicated both to the agency and the children we serve and for that, and for his tenure, we have selected Jesus as this edition’s Staff Hero.
1st Annual Alumni Reunion is a Hit!

On May 15 we hosted an Alumni Reunion for Pacific Lodge and Optimist clients, and it was wonderful.

There were alum who had lived at one of our facilities during the 1950’s and those who left just a couple years ago. They enjoyed taking us down memory lane and credited many of their life lessons and successes to the stability, nurturing and guidance they received while in our care.

Board member Lenna Welling, longtime volunteers Sheri Polak and Eva Hainer from the Rotary Club of Woodland Hills and past board member George Lange were also in attendance.

It was truly a night to remember and we look forward to doing it again in 2020.

Los Angeles County Probation Department’s 27th Annual Success is our Future

On May 30, the Los Angeles County Probation Department’s 27th Annual Success is our Future Awards Banquet was held at Almansor Court in Alhambra. Friar Tux once again generously helped underwrite tuxedos so our boys would look sharp and the Glamour Gowns and Suit Up committee of CASA graciously provided dresses for our girls.

The purpose of this event is to honor youth in foster care and provide them with scholarships and awards. One of our clients, Malachi Scott, received the prestigious Success is Our Future Scholarship and the girls from our community-based homes performed an excellent salsa dance thanks to the direction and assistance provided by the Center for the Empowerment of Families, Inc. and the Dance for Healing Project.

Joel Ward, a talented magician who has volunteered at many of our events, performed magic tricks for each table and truly made it a night to remember.
We recently heard from a former Pacific Lodge resident who wanted to express his gratitude for the time he spent in our care. His story is below:

After a somewhat traumatic childhood, I developed a keen interest in stealing cars at the age of fourteen – not the best idea, yet it was an interest I indulged. I still don't understand why.

I inevitably drew the attention of the Pomona Police department and on one occasion a detective pulled a gun on me. I think he was trying to scare me, but I didn’t scare, and as I recall I told him to go ahead and shoot me. I could be a very hostile and surly teenager.

I was sent to the downtown Los Angeles juvenile hall where I spent 90 days in detention. I don’t think the probation department knew what to do with me and I would often wonder what my future held in store for me. There really wasn’t much, if any, basis for optimism.

Eventually, I was transferred to Pacific Lodge. I was an emotionally troubled teenager with a keen interest in stealing cars. I couldn’t say a word about my family situation without crying and I thought of myself as a person who didn’t cry.

Four months and twenty days later, I left Pacific Lodge with no interest in stealing cars. The direction of my life had profoundly changed and to this day I don’t really understand how a transformation of that magnitude could have occurred in less than 5 months. I think it must have been a result of the counseling and care I received.

Shortly after leaving, I had an opportunity to receive an excellent education, partially funded by a stipend from Pacific Lodge. I went on to graduate school and earned an advanced degree and completed the course work requirements for a doctoral degree.

For virtually all of my career, I worked in the energy industry in positions of increasing responsibility. I was invited to have lunch at the White House with an assistant to President Carter to discuss national energy policy.

Over the span of my career, I became the Director of Business Development and the Director of Strategic Planning for Sempra Energy, a Fortune 500 company with annual revenues of $11 billion and over 21,000 employees, and retired as a Vice President of a subsidiary of the company.

By conventional standards, I have had a very successful life. A person who worked for me once described me as a “star”, which made me feel very humble and grateful. I don’t know what my life would have been like if I hadn’t spent time at Pacific Lodge, but I know it wouldn’t be nearly as good as it is now. I can’t exaggerate the impact that my time at Pacific Lodge had on my life. Credit goes where it is deserved.

-Mark Sweeney
PURCHASE TICKETS TODAY!

THE HAWAIIAN OPPORTUNITY DRAWING WILL BE HELD ON OUR MAIN CAMPUS ON MONDAY, AUGUST 5, 2019 AT 6:30 P.M.

**Valid from one year following the date of the drawing**

GRAND PRIZE INCLUDES:
- 8 days and 7 nights at the Royal Lahaina Resort on Kaanapali Beach, Maui
- Roundtrip airfare for 2 from LAX
- Two complimentary tickets to Myths of Maui Luau
- $300 food & beverage credit towards restaurants, room service and more!

**THERE WILL ALSO BE A 2ND PRIZE OF $100 AND A 3RD PRIZE OF $50**

PURCHASE TICKETS TODAY!

THE HAWAIIAN OPPORTUNITY DRAWING WILL BE HELD ON OUR MAIN CAMPUS ON MONDAY, AUGUST 5, 2019 AT 6:30 P.M.

Please complete the tickets and mail along with your payment in the enclosed envelope or fax to (323) 443-3264

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**Buy Tickets Online!**
www.OYHFS.org

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Name: __________________________
Address: _________________________
City: ___________ State: _______ Zip: ____
Phone: __________________________ Email: ________________

Please make checks payable to OYHFS

Address: Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services, attn: Development: 6957 North Figueroa Street P.O. Box 41-1076 Los Angeles, CA 90041

Please charge our: AMEX □ Visa □ MasterCard □

Name on Card: __________________________ Amount to charge: __$_________

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On May 1, the Optimist Advisory Board hosted the 12th Annual Graduation Dinner to celebrate this spring’s high school graduates.

The event was held at Green Street Tavern in Pasadena and each student was allowed to bring a guest to help them celebrate this monumental achievement. Several advisory board members, teachers, therapists and other staff were present and special guest speaker and former Optimist resident, Jerry Salazar, delivered a moving and uplifting message. Most of the graduates spoke and expressed their excitement and gratitude, as well.

Each graduate received a new suit or dress thanks to Jennifer Parker-Stanton and the Glamour Gowns and Suit Up Committee, a $100 Target gift card and a Chromebook, courtesy of one of our generous donors.

The evening as a whole was perfect and we’re so proud of our graduates!
WHEN DESIGNED THE BEST CUPCAKE?
The Rotary Club of Woodland Hills recently hosted a Cupcake Decorating Contest at our Pacific Lodge campus. Nine residents decorated several cupcakes and chose one to submit for judging. The criteria included edibility, creativity and neatness and the volunteer judges awarded monetary prizes to the winners.

WHO DESIGNED THE BEST CUPCAKE?

LETS MAKE TACOS!
The residents at our Pacific Lodge campus made tacos with the Rotary Club of Woodland Hills. Several stations were set-up and some boys prepared the meat while others sliced and diced the other ingredients. The boys had a fabulous time cooking, eating and interacting with the Rotarians!

ROCK CLIMBING AT VERIDGO BOULDERS
Several of our residents and staff recently had the opportunity to take four weeks of rock climbing classes at Verdigo Boulders. The manager, KJ De Jesus, reached out to us with an incredibly generous offer and provided our group with two instructors per class as well as t-shirts. It was a wonderful experience for all and they invited us to participate again every quarter. Needless to say, we’ll be going back! Thank you, Verdigo Boulders!

THANKS KIRK O THE VALLEY!
Kirk O’The Valley Presbyterian Church donates 10 welcome bags to our Pacific Lodge campus each month which are then given to our new residents in an effort to ease their transition.

Thanks for your thoughtfulness and generosity, Kirk O’The Valley!

PASADENA SHOWCASE HOUSE FOR THE ARTS PROVIDES GRANT FOR MUSIC THERAPY
Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services is grateful for another generous grant from the Pasadena Showcase House for the Arts (PSHA) for our Music Therapy Program. Our check was awarded on April 9, 2019 at the Pasadena Showcase Gifts & Grants Reception.

Photo credit: Peter Valli

THANK YOU, SHELTER PARTNERSHIP!
We are incredibly grateful for the ongoing support we receive from Shelter Partnership, Inc., which donated over $85,000 in new goods to Optimist over the last year from the S. Mark Taper Foundation Shelter Resource Bank!
Honor Roll of Donors
February 16, 2019 - May 15, 2019

Benefactor
$25,000 ~ $99,999 (cumulative)
The Green Foundation

Mentor
$10,000 ~ $24,999 (cumulative)
Ronna & Larry Brown
Los Angeles Optimist Youth Foundation
The Audrey and Sydney Irmas Charitable Foundation
Variety-The Children’s Charity of Southern California
Visionary Women

Guardian
$5,000 ~ $9,999 (cumulative)
Goodwin Family Memorial Trust
Pacific Palisades Optimist Club

Sponsor
$1,000 ~ $4,999 (cumulative)
Amgen Foundation
Cerritos Optimist Club Foundation
Los Angeles Department of Water & Power Employees’ Association, Inc.
Noontime Optimist Club of Camarillo
Pasadena Optimist Club
Pasadena Showcase House for the Arts
Calvin Ridley

Friends
$250 ~ $999 (cumulative)
Advanced Imaging Center
Christopher Appelhans
Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger
Della Bertrand
Thad & Manuela Brennan
Bright Bay Creative, LLC
Butterfield Family Charitable Fund
William Coonce
Garibaldina M.B. Society
Zuzana Gaspar
Dr. Heidi’s Kids Dental Center
Kasim Khan
Eddy Lopez
Gloria Lopez-Hicks
Los Angeles Central City Optimist Foundation
Kelli McCoy
Optimist Club of Paso Robles
Palm Desert Optimist Club
Jeff Salcido
Lana & Jim Speer
Jennifer & Ken Watten
Taylor Williams

Honorariums (Continued)
In Honor of:
Sil Orlando
Lorra-Lea Bartlett
Andy Bernath
Alyssa Bray
Andy Diamond
Eva Eichler
Ron Eichler
Jesse Fox
James Friel
Dee Gadbury
Zuzana Gaspar
Susan Kaplon-Wong
Ian Keses
Hugh McDonald
Colleen McFadden
Linda & Terry McWeeney
Shari Moon
Willena Oosterbeek
Stephen Sax
Ron Villachica

Memorials
In Memory of:
Wayne Avers
Woodland Hills Woman’s Club

Bill Bertrand
Della Bertrand
William Bertrand

Brian Callihan
Christopher Appelhans

Pat & John Herman
Sandra Woods

Ronald B. Hicks
Gloria Lopez-Hicks

Marilyn Jernigan
Norris Jernigan

Dr. Anthony Leggio
Anthony Leggio

Chuck Liberto
Garibaldina Society

M. Rudy Radofsky
Mary Alvarado

Lee Simmons
Palm Desert Optimist Club

In-Kind
Angeleno Wine Company
Baby2Baby
Margaret Brammal
Alisa Celaya
Cirque du Soleil
Donut Queen
Marilyn Finegold

In-Kind (Continued)
Vita Galvan-Roth
Michael D. Harris
Haugh Performing Arts Center
Dr. Julie Jackson
Wini Jackson
Amanda Juarez
Kaiser Permanente
Jayne Marie Kehoe
Kirk O’The Valley Presbyterian Church
Linda Maher
Mary & Shehab Mohammad
Jeff Moscaret and Valerie Tesauro
Michael O’Neal
James Panozzo
Sheri Polak
Calvin Ridley
Michael Sanders
Ann Scanlon
Steve Segal
Gina & Barry Shafer
Shelter Partnership
Georgia Simmons
Cheri & Larry Smith
Gail Stone
Emily Sue
Tickets for Kids Charities
Muriel Usselerman
Verdigo Boulders

The Benefit of Donating Appreciated Stock Instead of Cash

By making a gift of appreciated stock to Optimist Youth Homes, the benefit is two-fold; Optimist receives the same amount of money we would had you donated cash instead of stock, and you avoid capital gain taxes while receiving a full deduction for your donation.

For more information on donating stock to Optimist Youth Homes, please contact Jennifer D’Alvarez at (323) 443-3023 or jdalvarez@oyhfs.org.
SAVE THE DATE
OCTOBER 16, 2019

Please join us for a delicious array of food, wine and spirits as we honor Shehab & Mary Mohammad

Mentor Award Recipients

Maz Jobrani
Humanitarian Award Recipient

Joe Binning
Guest Speaker
Former Pacific Lodge Resident

Michaela Pereira
Event Emcee

Time: 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Location: Taglyan Complex 1201 Vine Street Los Angeles, California 90038

For more information, please contact: Jennifer D’Alvarez
OYHFS Development Department Tel: (323) 443-3023 or Email: jdalvarez@oyhfs.org

All proceeds will benefit the children and families of Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services and our Pacific Lodge Division

Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services 6957 N. Figueroa Street PO Box 41-1076 Los Angeles, CA 90041 www.OYHFS.org

BUY TICKETS ONLINE
WWW.OYHFS.ORG
Longtime supporters Gina and Barry Shafer recently hosted a reception at their home designed to introduce new people to Optimist and the great work we do.

Two of our residents attended and showcased the artwork they completed in our arts and crafts workshop. They explained what inspired each piece and even sold most of their work to attendees.

We were fortunate to have delicious wine served by Jasper Dickson & Amy Luftig Viste, founders of Angeleno Wine Co. and appreciate their participation.

Thank you to all who supported the event!

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Optimist Employee Provides Easter Baskets for Youth

We are grateful to one of our incredibly dedicated and generous employees, Amanda Juarez, who, along with her friends and family, put together and donated 90 Easter baskets for our youth.

We Love Our Volunteers!

We recently hosted two Volunteer Thank You receptions to express our sincere gratitude to all of our selfless volunteers who take time out of their busy lives to work with our kids. We are so grateful!

Palmdale Staff Host Paint Party Potluck

The staff in our Palmdale office recently coordinated a paint party potluck during lunch. An instructor brought the materials and showed everyone, step-by-step, how to paint a particular picture. Everyone had a great time and said it was a really fun and bonding experience.
Where Are they Now?

The Power of Music Therapy

Here is another example of the power of Music Therapy, written by our music therapist Summer Lall.

A resident who had extensive issues with angry outbursts, violence and needing to be repeatedly restrained, found a positive outlet in music. He discovered that he loves to sing as well as write songs and record.

When I first met him, he was shy, reserved and unwilling to take risks in front of the "cool" kids, for fear of judgment or ridicule. He wasn’t a kid who had any music background or was particularly well versed on any instrument and his preferences didn’t blend in with that of his peers. However, he decided to try the Songwriting & Support music therapy group anyway.

Every week I would witness him start to open up more, take positive risks, and build his confidence. Eventually he even started showing up with lyric and chorus ideas. He stopped apologizing for his opinions and unique musical tastes. He sang in front of his peers, and on the last day he even recorded. He went on to join our choir, sang a solo for the holiday show and performed at Open Mic Night.

He shared with me that the music therapy space makes him feel happy and calm and expressed his interest in becoming a volunteer. He was a quick study and now supports his peers in their music expression and building their self-esteem, coming full circle.

Since starting music therapy, the incidences of his angry and violent outbursts have decreased dramatically. It was a non-invasive and creative way that he could practice appropriate socialization, utilize positive coping skills and be a team player. I am so proud of his growth.

Where Are They Now?

Matt Mellin was a resident at our Pacific Lodge campus from December 2006 to September 2007. After graduating from the program, Matt pursued his academic goals but remained connected to the agency and even participated in our special events as a guest speaker. Today, Matt is a father and has a beautiful family. He shares his story below. Enjoy.

“Pacific Lodge helped me in so many ways, both while I was a resident and after I left. They had counselors, peers, a school, a dining hall, and a sports field. It felt like a mini-college dorm.

They gave me weekly chores for which I got paid and I could use that money on outings, which I was able to go on if I was well behaved”.

I got my first real job working in the office and received an actual paycheck. I was able to socialize with peers in my own age group, make friends, and learn important life skills.

After leaving Pacific Lodge, I graduated high school and moved on to Moorpark College where I got four Associate’s Degrees then transferred to the University of California, Santa Barbara where I got my Bachelor’s Degree in Sociology. While I attended college, the staff at Pacific Lodge kept in contact with me and the agency even paid for my textbooks and supplies.

I really appreciated my experience at Pacific Lodge and everything they have done for me.”

Thank you, Matt, for sharing your story. We wish you success in all your future endeavors.
We recently received the heartfelt email below from a very grateful client in our Outpatient Mental Health program at our Pacific Lodge campus.

Hello Tracy, Paula and Gina,

I am writing this email to express my deep gratitude towards you, this agency and especially my therapist Paula Vargas who has proven to be a phenomenal therapist. Paula taught me to how to cope with and overcome anxiety and not to be discouraged. She showed me how to move forward, look at life in an optimistic way, and to think happy thoughts that encourage me to keep striving for success. Her lessons have been worth more than gold.

I will treasure Paula’s advice until the day I pass away. She took extra time and energy to help me overcome my difficulties which made me the person I am today. When I look in the mirror, I have a hard time recognizing who I am looking at because in my first days of therapy I was a total disorganized mess. I’m glad I’m much better now and feel I am a totally transformed version of myself - much more vibrant and happy.

I can’t find the words to express my full gratitude to you and this agency but feel indebted to you because I am once again captain of my mind and master of my soul. I am now able to do good for this world and be a great man with dignity and integrity.

Thank you so much for your help.

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Pacific Palisades Optimist Club Provides Grant for Trauma Informed Care

The Optimists of Pacific Palisades recently provided us with an $8,500 grant to be used towards Trauma Informed Care, the model in which all of our staff are being trained.

The Palisades Club has donated over $380,000 to support our various programs over the years and we are incredibly grateful for their ongoing belief in our mission and tremendous support of our agency.

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Button Art with Rotary

The Rotary Club of Woodland Hills recently hosted a fun arts and crafts event with our kids featuring buttons.

The participants first drew an image on their canvas, sketching lightly with a pen. They then placed buttons on the canvas and used glue to adhere them to the surface.

Our staff and residents made a button tree, a beautiful heart, animals and even wrote names and words using buttons. Some of the boys plan to give their artwork to family members since it makes a beautiful gift.

Thanks to Barbara Stern and the Rotary Club for coming up with this wonderful project.
Casinos in Motion is Southern California's premier poker tournament provider.

July 27, 2019

OPTIMIST YOUTH HOMES & FAMILY SERVICES

POKER NIGHT

BUY-IN $125

Maximum number of players is 60 so Register ASAP! Additional Buy-Ins Available Throughout Tournament

BUY TICKETS ONLINE:
OptimistPokerNight.com

1 Week stay in a beautiful home in Jackson Hole
1 Weekend stay at a ranch in San Luis Obispo
3 Night stay at a private river front ranch in Camp Verde, Arizona
2 Night stay in Big Bear cabin
Rams Tickets
Lakers Tickets
Dodgers tickets
Amazon Echo

HOSTED BY THE OPTIMIST PROFESSIONALS
Proceeds will benefit the children of Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services

Hart Park House 222 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. Sierra Madre, CA 91024
Date: Saturday, July 27, 2019 Time: 6:00pm - 11:00pm

For more information, please contact:
Jennifer D'Alvarez, Chief Advancement and Communications Officer
Tel: (323) 443-3023 Email: jdalvarez@oyhfs.org
You may be able to double, or even triple, the amount of your gift to Optimist at no additional cost to you. How?

Many corporations match the gifts their employees and often retirees, gift to tax exempt charitable organizations. These matching programs have been part of many corporate giving initiatives both to extend the reach of corporate giving and to encourage employees to be actively involved in supporting their communities.

To see if your employer has a matching gift program, contact the company’s human resources or benefits department. They can provide you with a Matching Gift form, part of which you fill out and the remaining part is completed by our office and returned to your company for the matching gift.

For more information about Matching Gifts, contact our Chief Advancement & Communications Officer, Jennifer D’Alvarez, at (323) 443-3023 or by Email: jdalvarez@oyhfs.org