

FEBRUARY 2018

VISTA LA ROSA APARTMENTS

RESIDENT SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT



Center for Academic Achievement

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After School Program Update

After School Program attendance remained consistent in February with daily attendance of 15-17 young residents. Our Homework Help program continues to provide individualized academic support. Learning Center Assistant Alexis Martinez reports that she has noticed a significant improvement in participants' literacy levels, their enthusiasm for academic projects and completion of homework assignments.

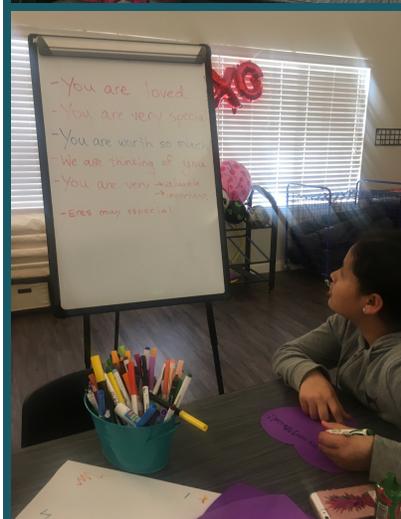
Program participants completed two art projects on Valentine's Day, aimed at exploring ways to make their community more compassionate, inclusive and caring. The first encouraged camaraderie among the group by having participants write notes to one another that identified their peers' character strengths. The second, "Hearts for the Homeless" project, was inspired by participants who shared with Alexis that they have seen a growing number of homeless individuals in their neighborhood. Young residents wrote positive messages and greetings to those experiencing homelessness. A few notes read:

"You are valued, Happy Valentine's Day"
"You are very special, and we are thinking of you"

The cards, in both English and Spanish, were dropped off at a local South Bay church that provides assistance to the homeless. HOM is proud to provide our young residents with opportunities to discuss issues impacting their communities and to encourage civic engagement.

Boys To Men Townhall

HOM is excited to announce our new community partnership with Boys To Men, a community-based organization that provides at-risk boys with male mentors and role models. Boys To Men offers a weekly after school program to middle and high school aged boys, annual leadership training, and social outings such as camping and surfing trips. Mentors are trained to listen, encourage and empower boys to make positive changes to their lives. We held our first informational session at Vista La Rosa in February, and we look forward to the Town Hall informational session and the launch of the Boys To Men after school program in March!





Girls Who Code IMPACT Project Update

Our Girls Who Code Club completed week five of the Girls Who Code curriculum in February. Participants enjoy learning to code in a supportive peer-to-peer learning environment. There are currently 11 girls registered for the club at Vista La Rosa and a core group of 7 who participate consistently. The girls recently learned how to create a moveable image and add a layer of sound to those images using code!

Each Girls Who Code Club must design an "IMPACT" project using the computer coding skills they have developed all year long. Our young residents at Vista La Rosa decided to use Scratch, a website and interactive game building software platform, to create a game to teach middle and high school girls how to make healthy life choices. The girls envision the game will simulate a girl making healthy eating choices, handling toxic friendships, and dealing with stress by using healthy coping skills.

We look forward to seeing the progress of the "IMPACT" project as our young residents continue to develop coding skills!



Volunteer Spotlight: Carol Spartz

Carol Spartz is our volunteer Girls Who Code club facilitator at Vista La Rosa. She recently met with our Resident Services Coordinator to discuss her volunteer work with HOM and the importance of diversity in STEM fields. Carol was one of only a few women to graduate from her computer science program in the mid-1980s, and is passionate about combating gender bias in tech. She has worked at MetricStream, a San Diego computer software company, for over 10 years.

Carol has been volunteering with our young residents since December. She has recently noticed that, despite some struggles with the curriculum material, the girls are motivated to learn how to code and are having fun while doing it. The younger participants in the program, particularly the 6th grade girls, have recently taken an interest in exploring the benefits of careers in tech. For their “interview of a professional” section of the curriculum, program participants interviewed Carol.

Our young residents were particularly interested in hearing about Carol’s flexible work schedule how she gets to travel all over the world and earn a comfortable living. Youth exposure to role models like Carol is critical to combating gender bias in STEM careers.

According to a 2015 National Science Foundation report, underrepresented minority women received only 11.2 % of bachelor’s degrees in science and engineering nationwide. Through programs like Girls Who Code, we hope to close this gap and provide our young residents a gateway to STEM education and careers. We are grateful to Carol for her dedication to the success of our young residents!