

MARCH 2018

# VISTA LA ROSA APARTMENTS

RESIDENT SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT

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## Center for Academic Excellence

- Spring Break Programming
- Resident Success Story Follow-Up: Valeria Parra

## Spring Break Programming

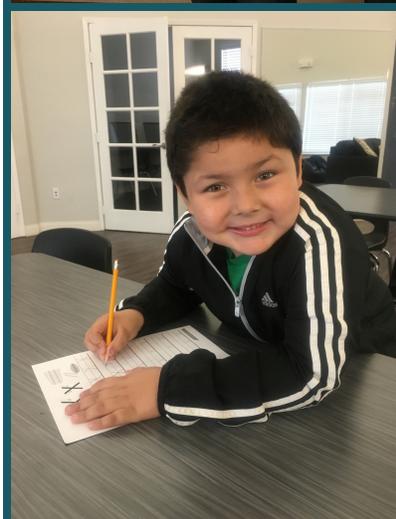
Housing on Merit partnered with Girl Scouts of San Diego for the second consecutive year to offer a fun arts and science program to girls at Vista La Rosa over spring break. Girl Scout troop leaders led daily empowerment activities to promote camaraderie amongst our young residents.

Numerous studies indicate that girls thrive in an all-girl learning environment. During one session, participants discussed the role of technology in their lives, and what they can do to combat online bullying and support their peers on social media. Several participants are also part of our Future Coders Club, and were excited to explore these topics further as they pertain to the anti-bullying and body-positivity app the club is working on.

All participants received a certificate of completion and a free Girl Scouts backpack filled with Girl Scouts swag. HOM's partnership with Girl Scouts of San Diego helps to reinforce academic success and positive social interactions among young girls.

In addition, HOM provided STEM-themed programming to all young residents during spring break. The Resident Services Coordinator\*, Alexis Martinez, planned a weeklong program of fun STEM and arts activities. This included a group slime creation project, during which participants learned about elasticity, how to formulate a hypothesis, and practiced math.

\* Note: HOM Learning Center Assistants are now referred to as Resident Services Coordinators.





## Resident Success Story Follow-Up: Valeria Parra

In January, we profiled Vista La Rosa resident Valeria Parra (pictured above on right) for our resident success story. We caught up with Valeria in March and she had some exciting news to share with us! Valeria has been selected as the Mar Vista High School AVID “Junior Standout.” Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a college readiness program designed to help students develop the skills they need to be successful in college. Valeria is the Vice President of the Mar Vista High School chapter, which currently has over 140 students enrolled in the program. One student is selected annually from each AVID chapter in San Diego County as the “Junior Standout.” The San Diego YMCA invites all AVID “Junior Standout” award recipients to participate in the College Caravan Campus Crawl. Valeria will join 11 other students from high schools across San Diego County on overnight college campus visits. During this weeklong excursion, Valeria will visit the campuses of UC Berkeley, San Francisco State University, Stanford, UC Santa Cruz, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, UC Santa Barbara, Pepperdine, UC Los Angeles, and University of Southern California. The College Caravan Campus Crawl is an all-expense paid trip for low-income students. Valeria told Alexis that she feels “grateful for this honor,” because she recognizes that she could not otherwise afford to tour these colleges.

Valeria and her family are long-time residents of Vista La Rosa Apartments. Valeria is the oldest of three siblings and will be the first in her family to go to college. She was previously discouraged from applying to four-year colleges due to lack of affordability. However, Valeria believes that participation in HOM’s supportive services, including scholarship application assistance, motivated her to pursue her dream of attending college. Through HOM’s college readiness programming at our Center for Academic Excellence, we are equipping our young residents with the tools they need to make positive changes in their lives. We look forward to hearing about Valeria’s college acceptances next year!