



Santa Barbara Police Activities Annual Report June 2016

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The Santa Barbara Police Activities League currently provides educational, athletic, cultural, summer camps, and leadership development programs to more than 1000 youth annually. PAL offers a preventive & educational opportunity for Jr. and Sr. High students who do not have a safe and supervised place to attend when the temptations for at-risk behavior and gang influence is high. Due to city budget cuts and a decrease in school funding, PAL has taken up the responsibility of providing programs at no cost to families. On a daily basis, more than 30 youth pass through the doors of PAL's Twelve35 Teen Center. More than 85% of these youth are from low-income Hispanic families. The teen center has a full time Program Director and 3 part-time staffers. Additionally, police officers and other community volunteers visit the teen center to mentor, coach, and provide positive interaction with the youth. Through these programs PAL is able to mentor youth toward higher education, increase their community involvement through community service projects, and create positive interactions with law enforcement. This school year, PAL has more than 15 seniors graduating from high school with plans to attend a 4 year college or university in the fall. Several of these teens will be the first generation to attend college.

PAL focuses on three primary areas: Teen Center Enrichment, Teen Leadership, and Family/Community Outreach.

The Teen Center Enrichment programs provide youth with development & learning opportunities in the following area: educational, sports & health, art & culture, and social recreational. Teens are able to interact and socialize with their peers in a safe environment, free from the pressures and negative influences on the streets.

Education

Extending the learning period of public schools & providing much needed support and enrichment to underprivileged youth in our community helps to close the achievement gap. Our computer lab is available for students every day afterschool to complete homework assignments and school projects. Many of the youth come to us from homes without the appropriate technology or parental guidance to help with homework assignments thus putting them further behind in school. The teen center provides after-school tutoring year-round including three bi-lingual tutors from CAL-Soap and two from Westmont College. PAL has a staff member currently assigned to work with the tutors to track the individual progress of each student by monitoring grades and coordinating with teachers to ensure the overall success of each student.

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Art & Culture

The Jensen Music Foundation partnered with PAL in 2015 to provide ten brand new guitars including all of the classroom equipment for the bi-weekly guitar lessons held at the teen center. Additionally, PAL introduced a new Flamenco dance class to PAL programming, instructing youth on the basics of dance and educating them on the cultural importance to the Hispanic/Latino population. The Flamenco class has performed at the Menudo Festival, Lights On, and PAL's annual "Putting Kids First" gala. This past spring, PAL partnered with the Audubon Society of Santa Barbara to provide an 8 week E.Y.E. to Nature program which exposes PAL youth to bird watching, kayaking, surfing and environmental concerns.

Sport & Health

Dramatic cuts in both physical education and after-school athletics at the schools combined with the high cost of club sports, results in many youth not participating in daily physical activities. PAL has brought fitness and nutritional concepts to the teen center to help educate teens on the importance of healthy living while providing them with fun structured activities to improve their overall fitness. Currently, PAL offers weekly classes in Jiu Jitsu through a partnership with SB Grace Barra, a bi-weekly leadership and fitness class in partnership with Montecito YMCA, and a weekly golf class at the SB Golf Course. The golf program culminates with a 4 person golf scramble, pairing 2 police officers, board members or community members with 2 youth. These programs not only encourage physical health but also include the added benefits of self-discipline, increased self-esteem benefits, and social skills.

Leadership Programs

Teen Leadership is comprised of 2 youth driven programs, PAL Youth Leadership Council (YLC) and the Santa Barbara Police Explorer Post. Both groups inspire to better their communities by participating in community service projects, and to become more effective leaders by participating in leadership training designed to prepare them for post-secondary education and/or careers in law enforcement. Both the YLC and Explorers provide mentorship to their peers and to younger populations.

The PAL Youth Leadership Council is composed of 20 highly motivated and dedicated high school students referred by law enforcement, the school district and other community partners. YLC members go through an extensive interview process, are required to maintain a 2.5 GPA along with participation in community service projects. The weekly YLC meetings encourage participants to complete their education, to prepare for post-secondary education, and to learn and demonstrate leadership & teamwork skills. YLC members are expected to become self-responsible, to give back to PAL & their community, and to serve as role models for their friends and siblings. The currently YLC members combined for more than 2500 community service hours this past year.

YLC members host a spring break camp called "Big Pal Little Pal", where they mentor elementary aged youth for the week and treat them to unique experiences such as ice skating or a day at the Santa Monica Pier. The YLC also participate in two four day leadership conferences. The CAL PAL Leadership conference in Anaheim is

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a four day excursion where participants are partnered up with teens from all over the state and includes two afternoons at Disneyland. The Cops and Kids Leadership Conference is the culminating event for the YLC which includes mentoring by Police Officers, leadership and team build activities, and morning career development workshops taught by local professionals in their respective fields.

Santa Barbara Explorer Post 104

The Santa Barbara Explorer Post has been mentoring youth for over 20 years and currently serves 28 explorers with a waitlist. The Explorer Post provides an educational training program for youth and young adults on the purposes, mission, and objectives of law enforcement and public safety. Rigorous in nature, the program helps to develop young people into good citizens, caring and helpful community members, as well as prepare them for the police academy and a career in public safety. The program consists of weekly 3 hour meetings, which include physical & mental training, inspections, community service projects, and leadership skills. The post members wear uniforms, have a ranking structure and are expected active members of the department. Approximately 80% of the post is below the poverty line, Hispanic and first generation Americans. The Santa Barbara Police Department recently hired one of the explorers as a cadet – her first step in fulfilling her dream of becoming a police officer.

Community Outreach

The Campership Alliance Program is a collaboration between 14 non-profit organizations which offers low-income families summer camp scholarships for their children. PAL provides the staffing and support for the program including income verification, matching kids to their appropriate camps, and providing transportation. Last year PAL allocated more than 500 camp scholarships.

Each winter, PAL hosts the “Help Portrait” day at the teen center, providing low-income families with professional quality family portraits. Local photographers volunteer their time & talent, creating lasting memories for the families, who are given a digital copy of their photo session for their personal use. PAL also hosts a Holiday Dinner for 60 low-income families referred by the A-OK after school program. The event is complete with arts & crafts and a visit from Santa Claus, and each child leaves with a gift donated by PAL supporters.

PAL partnered with United Way and the Housing Authority to be a host site for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program during the 2016 tax season. PAL opened the tutoring lab after hours 3 days a week for 6 weeks for low-income and non-English speaking individuals to receive assistance on completing their individual income tax returns. PAL was award “Financial Empowerment Partner of the Year” for our efforts.

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