



3rd Graders from the Charter Elementary School

Lionel Chavez - The "Kid Expert" Goes to Middle School

Change is never easy but that hasn't stopped Lionel Chavez from stepping out of his comfort zone. "Nine and a half years ago I was living in Nashville, Tennessee when I decided to come back to L.A. and do something I had never done before," said Lionel.



Spotlight

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Para Los Niños Youth Attend College Day at Cal State University, Los Angeles

More than 90 high school seniors, community college students and out of school youth from the Para Los Niños Youth Workforce Services (YWS) program attended College Day on Friday, April 3 at Cal State University, Los Angeles.



"This is an incredible opportunity for our youth to spend the day on the campus, learn about admissions, financial aid, career choices, take a campus tour and attend a student panel discussion," said Jorge Orozco, Director of YWS. Participants took part in a student panel with YWS Alumni who now attend Cal State LA and discussed how to navigate their journey through college, surmounting the challenges and avoiding the pitfalls along the way. College Day is one of the many events Para Los Niños and Cal State LA produce each year; over the past 10 years they have served more than 900 young people.

PLN and Imagine LA Team Up to Create New Volunteer Program



Para Los Niños has partnered with Imagine LA to help our families achieve self-sufficiency, confidence and wellness.

The mentor team provides guidance in budgeting, career counseling, health & nutrition, academic tutoring and more, based on each family's needs. Each team of volunteers is supervised by a professional social worker at Imagine

LA. Most volunteers work 1-2 hours per week over two years, though each family and situation is different. For more information or to become a volunteer, please visit www.paralosninos.org/volunteer/

Getting Your Teeth Checked in Between Math and English Class

"It's convenient to have a dental office at my school. My parents don't have to take time off work to have my teeth checked," says Para

From On the Verge of Dropping Out to College

by
Nicodemus Jeremiah Harper

Since moving to Los Angeles in 2011, I've lived in Northridge, North Hollywood, Florence, Highland Park, and now Lincoln Heights. I constantly found myself in trouble because of the instability I faced from moving all the time. The only thing I could transfer from place to place was the ability to relate to like-minded individuals who, like me, had no hopes of graduating high school or ever entering college.

However, in my senior year at Franklin High School, the third high school I'd attended since moving to LA, I tried my hardest to change and graduate. I joined my school's wrestling team and started passing my classes. Then my counselor told me I would not be able to graduate on time because I did not have enough credits. I hit a new low. I felt all of my hard work had amounted to nothing. I was ready to give up on high school altogether and drop out, but then my counselor introduced me to Griselda Hernandez, the LAUSD PSA counselor assigned to the PLN YouthSource Center.

She told me that not only could I graduate with my class in 2014 but PLN would also teach me how to manage my money, improve my literacy skills, build a resume, find a job, and guarantee me an internship. However, to describe the organization by those things alone would be doing it a huge disservice. PLN is a stepping stone into adulthood that any troubled or non-troubled youth can learn and grow from. It not only helped me with locating an internship, but helped me discover what I wanted out of a career and what I wanted to become in life: a probation officer. Since coming to PLN I have had internships in their human resources department, with

Los Niños middle school 7th grader, Lissett. "But yes, I'm nervous."

Thanks to the Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center, Para Los Niños offers free dental services to students and their siblings at the new 9th Street Wellness Center.

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Dental Team: Candy Morales-Case Manager, Dr. Daniel Romo-Dentist, Jaime Rivera-Dental Assistant, Vicki Serinana Registered Dental Assistant

Families Grateful PLN Re-Opens Cypress Park Head Start Center

The day had finally come for the Cypress Park Head Start to re-open its doors to 39 children and their families who had come to rely on its services. "I feel happy Para Los Niños took over this center," says Ashley, PLN Head Start parent, "I was taking my daughter to a local child care center, but I wanted her to go to a preschool like this



one." Cypress Park is one of four Head Start sites opened this year, which involved major renovations to the classrooms and playground. "It was a process, but we are thrilled to be open and clearly our families are happy to be here," said Elizabeth Mora, Site Supervisor, "We have a great educational program here."

Ronald McDonald House Charities awards \$15,000 to Para Los Niños & More...

Para Los Niños received a \$15,000 grant from the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern California (RMHCSC) in April to purchase three state-of-the-art Smart Boards for the Elementary School. "Our students are more engaged, motivated and less likely to misbehave with the use of a Smart Board in a classroom," said Principal Mynor Montiel.



**RONALD MCDONALD
HOUSE CHARITIES**

RHMCS will also provide a one-week stay at Camp Ronald McDonald in Idyllwild for a PLN 5th grader who currently is receiving cancer treatment at Children's Hospital.

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Bank of America, and was even offered a job with both. Since my dream is to become a probation officer, PLN has helped me file for Financial Aid and enter Pasadena City College.

Without PLN as a stepping stone into adulthood I have no idea where and who I would be today. PLN has allowed me to discover who I truly wanted to become in life, opened my eyes to a new world and allowed me to become a young adult.

P.S. I would like to thank my career advisor Fabiola Del Toro for being a constant reference for me on countless job applications, and advocating for me to get the internships I did. Without her help and guidance I would not be the young man I am today. Thank you Fabiola!

Thank You to Our Terrific Supporters

- Many thanks to **Assemblyman Jimmy Gomez** (AD 51) for visiting our Youth Workforce Services program, where he learned about the range of career and educational supports we offer. He also spent time chatting with YWS youth, Nicodemus Harper (featured in the Spotlight story) and Daneyda Garcia.

- Thank you to one of our newest supporters, **Grifols Biologicals, Inc.**, for their \$5,000 grant to support the youth enrolled in our Certified Nursing Assistant program through YWS. "Grifols is focused on improving people's health and well-being through the development of life-saving plasma medicines. It's exciting to support Para Los

Niños, which will give our local youth the opportunity to explore the nursing profession," said Public Affairs Manager Karen Glenn. "We are grateful to Grifols for their support and look forward to working with them," says Martine Singer, President & CEO.

- The **Joseph Drown Foundation** generously awarded us \$25,000 in support of our Charter Schools. Foundation President Wendy Wachtell wrote, "As always, we are pleased to support your effort to ensure that all children have access to a quality education. It is wonderful to see the safe and stimulating environments that you have created for children in Downtown Los Angeles."
- Many thanks to the **Diane & Dorothy Brooks Foundation** for their gift of \$10,000. The Foundation has been generously donating to PLN since 2012. The award will be used to offset operational costs for the entire organization.
- The **Heffernan Foundation** has given us a grant of \$2,500 for general operating support. This is the third time PLN has received an award from the Heffernan Foundation.

If you have story ideas for us or would like further information please contact:

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