



a place called home

2023 Newsletter

Celebrating 30 Years of Service



APCH Founder,
Debrah Constance,
with youth member



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CEO's Message

Dear APCH Community,

I am excited to share with you our 2023 Newsletter, a piece that commemorates both this year and A Place Called Home's 30 years of service to our South Central community. First, I want to extend my immense gratitude on behalf of all of us here at APCH for your generous support – whether time, talent, or treasure – that has helped us transform the lives of so many young people and families.

It's hard to believe it's already been a year since I stepped into the role of CEO, and I feel so fortunate to have done so at such a special time for the agency. As we celebrate this momentous occasion, we are not only honoring our origins and the work we've accomplished since our founding in 1993, but we are looking forward, too, envisioning the future, and asking ourselves "who do we want to become in the next 30 years?"

We've been hard at work, delving into this very question, and together with our Board of Directors and Organizational Leadership Team, have solidified our vision for the future and developed a strong road map to help us get there. We are looking critically at our strengths and areas of opportunity, focusing on how we can make the most impact with our resources.

We are completing a program evaluation to drive our data-informed decision making and ensure that we are providing effective and meaningful programming for our youth. We've brought on a Chief Administrative Officer to strengthen and streamline our financial processes across the agency. And, we continue to make progress on our Technology Transformation, both upgrading our on-campus capacity

and providing our members and families with the hardware, software, and connectivity they need to participate in today's technology-driven society.

This is just the beginning. I am excited for what the future holds for APCH, and I hope you are too. We look forward to expanding both our center and our reach to continue serving South Central for another 30 years to come.



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As you read through the pages of this newsletter, I hope you will see just how much of an impact your support has made for our members, families, and community. Enjoy!

In Service,

Norayma Cabot, CEO

30

1. A Place Called Home offers 18 diverse programs to underserved youth, as well as opportunities for members' families and the community!

2. More than one third of APCH's staff are from or live in South Central, ensuring that we are connected to the needs of our community.

3. The APCH band, 29 Live, has performed with Diana Ross, Beyonce, the Black Eyed Peas, Stevie Wonder, and more!

4. APCH was founded in 1993 in the aftermath of the LA Uprising to give kids a safe place to hang out.

5. In August 2017, A Place Called Home opened the doors of DaVinci RISE High at APCH, an innovative partnership to serve the needs of homeless, foster and recently incarcerated youth.

6. APCH has its very own film festival, theater festival, and actors' showcase.

7. APCH serves more than 1,000 meals to kids each week - pineapple pizza is hands down a favorite!

8. APCH's longest serving board member is Sister Pat, a Catholic nun who is beloved by all!

9. The New York Times hailed APCH's El Centro Del Sur Latinx Theater Festival as a presenter of "intriguing offerings" following the festival's 2021 debut

10. APCH delivered 700,000+ meals to food insecure families during the pandemic (2020-2022).

11. Every year, APCH makes it snow in South Central during our Home for the Holidays community event.

12. APCH's recording studio was founded in partnership with Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith, Tupac Shakur, and Janet Jackson.



13. APCH's 32,000 square foot facility houses a dance studio, music production and recording studio, digital technology lab, art studio, nutrition tech space, community gardens, athletic field and court, and a state of the art theater.

14. APCH has over 800 dedicated volunteers who help bring to life

Facts *for* Years

numerous programs and new initiatives every year.

15. APCH has 3 organic gardens - one on campus and two in the neighborhood where community members can harvest food for free including tomatoes, kale, peppers, and collards. Onsite composting encourages regenerative urban agriculture practices.

16. Many APCH alumni have gone on to achieve notable accomplishments in education, entertainment, entrepreneurship, and community leadership, making a positive impact beyond their local communities.

17. APCH was able to move from a church basement to its current location with the help of famed late night host Johnny Carson.

18. The APCH Nutrition team makes the BEST poppyseed dressing in all of Los Angeles.

19. At APCH, PREP stands for Professional Readiness and Employment Pathways and the program aims to prepare the young adults we serve who are ready to enter the workforce.

20. APCH charts the South Central Sports League, a partnership with other nonprofit organizations and schools to bring free sports to youth ages 8-18.

21. APCH's Annual Comic Art & Literacy Expo, established in 2018, brings the worlds of comic books and art to South Central and includes special appearances by prominent writers, artists, and creatives in the field.

22. Over the years, APCH has fed over 20,000 community members with its Thanksgiving Dinner events, and its turkey and food distributions.

23. APCH's mascot is a griffin, known as a protector and a symbol of courage, leadership, and strength.

24. APCH hosts its own Moondance Film Festival featuring short films and works of art created by members through the Digital Media program.

25. APCH works in partnership with many community organizations, local schools, businesses, public offices, and corporations to further expand its impact and provide comprehensive support to its members.

26. APCH was the first community partner to launch with Berklee College of Music's 5-Week Intensive Summer Program. Each year, APCH sends aspiring musicians and songwriters on full scholarship to spend the summer honing their talents in Boston.

27. APCH's Shaheen Scholarship Program has successfully sent more than 500 first-generation students to college.

28. Some APCH alumni have returned to work for the organization, and two alumni currently serve on the board of directors.

29. All of APCH's programs and services are FREE of cost to ALL of our members.

30. At APCH, we live our REACH values every day - Respect, Empathy, Accountability, Courage, and Hope.

I've Got the Music

Angel's Story

By

When Angel Rubin stepped off the plane in Boston to attend Berklee School of Music on a full-ride scholarship it was the culmination of years of practice sparked and nurtured at A Place Called Home (APCH).

Raised in South Los Angeles, Angel started at APCH when her mother, raising daughters on her own, was battling cancer and needed the extra support. She had heard of the organization from a friend and enrolled Angel and her older sister. Angel started first in dance, but quickly transitioned over to music, tagging along with her sister.

"I had never done music before, I think the closest thing was in my elementary school there would occasionally be a teacher who would come and make us sing, 'Mary had a little lamb,'" she said. "I remember being encouraged to pursue different instruments at APCH. Then, I met Mr. Joaquin."

"I've always been her biggest fan," said Joaquin Pacheco, the Music Programs Senior Manager at APCH. "I first met Angel when she was in elementary school, she was about eight. She was part of the exposure-based programming we have every semester to encourage members of all ages to explore and discover."

Angel finally settled on the flute, later adding in other wind instruments. APCH provided extensive support, not only from the staff who worked with Angel and the other students, but from specialized tutors. APCH also provided additional resources such as mouthpieces and a "beautiful leather neck strap" that Angel admits to "guarding with my life."

The dream of attending Berklee School of Music started right before her entrance to middle school.

"I'm a preacher of all the resources APCH has, and I remember telling the students about the

Shaheen scholarship program through APCH as well as our long-standing relationship with Berklee School of Music," Pacheco said. Pacheco still recalled the moment Angel's ears perked up after hearing about the legendary music school.

"I immediately went to Mr. Joaquin and I told him, 'How do I sign up for scholarships? When can I apply,'" said Angel. "I knew without scholarships I wouldn't be able to pursue a higher education. He told me there was time, give it a few years."

Angel eventually leaned into jazz. As part of APCH's in-house band, which she was invited to at 13, Angel was introduced to Blue Bossa. "It was the first ever jazz standard I ever played," she said. She was then encouraged to do a solo, which she admitted "horrified her." But from there "it clicked."

Angel continued to hone her skills, both at APCH and at the performing arts school she attended – an opportunity that APCH guided her toward. At APCH, she participated every Saturday in the Accelerated Music Program and was also part of the organization's 29 Live Band.

"It felt like I was being taken seriously for the first time in my life," said Angel. "People were telling me, 'Yeah, you should definitely do this, you're really great.' The motivation and the encouragement the staff showed me over the years helped me build my confidence and understand that my passions are reasonable and are something I should pursue."

It was finally time for her to audition for Berklee, the essays had been written, the applications filled out, APCH staff working closely with her. Her audition piece was 'Armando's Rhumba' by Chick Corea, whom she idolized. The piece "resonated" with her, she said. "I never paid attention to whether it was too hard. As long as I had an emotional connection, I could perform it."

Sic In Me

: Mira Zimet

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After receiving her acceptance from Berklee, and the necessary financial support, including an APCH Shaheen Scholarship, Angel traveled to Boston in July for a five-week session before she starts in the fall. She was joined by Jade Valdes, who also received a full scholarship, and Dayra Fructoso who was accepted into the summer program – both APCH graduates as well.

Pacheco, who accompanied them, was extremely proud, “They were walking down the street like a trio, it was very cool. A drummer, a singer and a windwood player,” he said. “It’s a blessing to see them build what they will continue to use in their future.”



A League of *Their Own*

Athletics

Young members like Larry Hernandez are exactly why A Place Called Home was envisioned. Growing up in South Los Angeles, Hernandez shared how his brothers and uncles were in gangs and in and out of prison. When he joined APCH at 12, it became a refuge for him.

“It was something different, out of the environment that I was in,” he said. “When I went to APCH it was just about sports for me. I forgot about everything. You can’t hear helicopters, sirens, nothing. You can just run around and chase the ball.”



Hernandez started in volleyball, switched to basketball, but admittedly felt he was too short for both. He tried soccer and it stuck. For Hernandez, the fact that APCH provided shoes and a uniform made all the difference. “It made me feel like I was — it sounds funny — but in the big leagues,” he said.

“That’s what makes us so special,” said Desiree Torres, the Athletic Programs Manager. “We are

able to offer free sports programming to the city of South Los Angeles.”

Torres, along with Eder Lujan, the Athletics Program Coordinator, run the South Los Angeles Sports League. Members from elementary through middle school can choose from volleyball, basketball, flag football or soccer. Torres and Lujan continued the 13-year-old history of the league by establishing partnerships with local organizations. Some, such as All People’s Community Center,



Hernandez ended up playing soccer in high school and at Santa Monica College, where he earned an associate degree in behavioral science. Soccer is now on hold as he completes his credits for a bachelor's at California State University, Los Angeles. Reflecting on his time at APCH, Hernandez said, "At home I never had anybody to look up to, I never had a role model. I didn't want to go to college. I didn't even know what community college was. If it wasn't for APCH, I honestly don't even know where I would have ended up. APCH – that's home. That's one place that saved me." - M.Z.

offer up their facility space for practice and games.

There are currently between 8 and 10 leagues for the two age divisions and APCH members compete against other students enrolled in local non-profits and charter schools in the area. Torres and Lujan coordinate and manage referees and volunteer coaches and APCH incurs all costs for both its members and their partner organizations.

"It's just about development of skills and accessibility to the community here in South Central," Lujan said.

In addition to teaching students about healthy competition, mentorship is also a big piece of the sports program. "I don't just go out there and teach kids how to dribble a ball," Torres said. "Because we have a one to 15 ratio, we can have those one-on-one conversations about their lives."

For Lujan, who also runs a soccer specialty camp over the summer, the hope is that members walk away with a "newfound love for athletics," he said. "We are preparing them for a lifelong journey in sports, wherever it is they go throughout the rest of their lives."

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The Power of *Storytelling*

Educational Services



Walking into Adam Yerima's Storytelling Together workshop you might see students imagining a scenario where a bear needs to find a magic cap. That bear might have inadvertently found itself in the middle of a horror movie or maybe, instead, a romantic comedy. In either case, the twists and turns of the plot are dependent on the writing genre Yerima used as a prompt. The fifteen students who took the course work together to build a story, in turn, practicing their own creativity skills.

An English and Language Arts Academic Assistant, Yerima's main responsibilities are to

tutor members and guide them through writing high school term papers and college application essays. Because of their extensive academic background, including a bachelor's degree in creative writing, along with a masters and a PhD, Yerima realized there was an opportunity to expand members' writing skills beyond the purely academic.

"It's not just writing for the sake of critical analysis," Yerima said. "It's writing to tell our stories, emphasizing how much voice matters. Our experiences help shape who we are."

“It’s writing to tell our stories, emphasizing how much voice matters. Our experiences help shape who we are.”

The opportunity to move in this direction started in Fall of 2021 when Yerima ran a creative writing workshop to introduce members to the genres of poetry, personal essay and short story.

Allison Romero, one of the members in the workshop, had always wanted to be a writer. “Ever since I was little, I would write the random-est stories,” she said. “I was like, one day I’m going to become a writer and write the types of stories that I like to read.”

During this time, Romero started a short story entitled, “I met Calavera Catrina at the CVS Pharmacy.” Over the next few months, she continued to work with Yerima on the piece about death and acceptance and later submitted it to Polyphony Lit, a student-run international literary magazine. The short story won the Latin Heritage Contest.

“Even though I’ve done so many different types of arts, like music, dance, visual arts, I’ve always felt like I can’t properly say what I want to say,” said Romero, who is now a senior in high school. “So, while it was cool that I won the contest, I liked how I was finally able to write about a theme that was important to me.”

Members interested in continuing to learn storytelling skills, were able to enroll in Yerima’s Storyteller’s Together class this past Spring. The course was improvisational in nature and members, grades 9 to 12, met weekly for an hour to continue to build stories as a team.

“Writing is sometimes seen as a very individual thing, where I need to lock myself in a room and just write by myself,” Yerima said. “But here, we all work together to make something fun and not only work off each other but learn together.” They then added, “Writing is an outlet that can help us work through things, but also help us grow.” - M.Z.



Moving Toward the Future





In addition to our in-house programming and services here at A Place Called Home, we support our members' development by providing real-world professional experience to help them prepare for the future. This collage features pictures of our dancers from a professional photoshoot with Las Fotos Project.

House of ARTS

Dance, Visual Art, and Digital Media

When the doors to The Bridge Theatre opened on June 2 for the annual end of year dance recital, parents, family, friends and caregivers were also treated to a huge assortment of artistic endeavors. Billed as “House of Arts,” the event showcased not only the dance company, but also members who were part of the visual arts and digital media programs.

Jocelyn Garcia, the Dance Program Manager, explained that the idea to invite the two other programs was sparked because of the large gallery space and a screening room in the theater. “I thought it would be really cool for everyone to witness a lot of art at the same time,” she said. “And the collaboration was born.”

Throughout the year, these three programs at A Place Called Home serve members from 8 to 18. They all function independently of one other, teaching members a wide variety of ways to express their creativity.

The Dance program begins with an exposure class giving members a taste of the various dance styles available. Later, members can specialize in methods such as hip-hop, ballet, jazz, contemporary and more. There is also a dance company for advanced students. Starting at 13, they are eligible to audition and practice twice a week with Jocelyn Garcia, the Dance Program Manager and Michael Vallejos, the Dance Program Assistant.

“We are teaching all our members to find their voice as individuals,” Garcia said. “We are not only cultivating their technique and their performance abilities, but we’re coaching them on life skills, such as how to think critically about what they are doing — skills that can transfer to the real world.”

The Visual Arts program offers classes in sculpture, painting, media collage, textile art, printmaking and bookmaking, to name a few. “I



just created this class called Recreate Art,” said Miranda Ynez, Visual Arts Manager. “I’m teaching them not only popular historical art pieces, such as works by Pablo Picasso, Frida Kahlo, but they get to recreate them.”

The Digital Media team members start by learning media literacy skills and later, how to advance their filmmaking and photography projects using the Adobe Creative Suite. Younger members start out being taught basic stop-motion animation, while middle school students can discover more advanced animation skills. All members have access to DSLR cameras (donated to APCH by Sony) to learn how to shoot stills and video.

“It’s really important that youth — especially youth of color or from marginalized communities — understand they have a voice and that voice lives inside them and they are given the tools and opportunity to experience this,” said Jahcobie Cosom, the Digital Media Program Coordinator.

On the evening of the event, the gallery space was filled with multimedia artwork, sculptures, photographs and drawings, curated by Ynez.

The screening room aired a highlight video of work created by Digital Media students. Guests moved through these spaces toward the main stage, where they were treated to a one-hour dance concert that featured performances in hip hop, contemporary, modern, jazz and ballet.

“I think it was awesome that everybody could kind of piggyback off of each other’s strengths,” said Nick Flessa, the Digital Media Program Manager. “It gave kids a cool opportunity to see how these mediums can be interdisciplinary and how the different art forms complement one another.”

Ynez shared that she believed, “in the transformative power of the arts,” she shared. “The arts help us grow into who we are.” - M.Z.

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PREParing for the Future

By: Maggie Stillman

Professional Readiness & Employment Pathways (PREP)



Walk through the halls of A Place Called Home (APCH) and you're likely to find one of our teen members sending emails in a cubicle in our Development office or preparing a meal with the Nutrition team. These members are part of APCH's internship program through the PREP (Professional Readiness and Employment Pathways) program, an opportunity designed to give APCH members aged 16-18 years real-world job experiences.

"The goal of the program is to empower our members," said Ufoma Okoriogha, Career Guidance Assistant Manager. "It's to teach them valuable life skills and give them the tools they need to be successful in the world outside APCH."

To apply, members first indicate which APCH department they'd be most interested in joining. Then, our PREP team assesses their existing skills, the skills they'd like to improve, and conducts an interview to determine the final placement. Okoriogha shares, "The process is very individualized because we want to make sure each young person is getting placed in a program that will best support their needs and goals."

"At first I didn't know what communications was, but during my freshman year, I realized I enjoyed creating and editing videos," said Marlen, APCH member intern. "I Googled what jobs would allow me to do that and communications popped up, so when I saw that APCH was offering an internship with the Communications team, I applied, and was super excited when I got it!"

This being her first internship, Marlen shares, "I didn't know what to expect, but the PREP team

was there to support me along the way. I learned how to adapt to new projects – one day I was archiving photos, the next I was filming videos of

members saying 'thank you!' to share with volunteers. I also learned how to manage my time and work with a team, and I realized I really like working, especially in anything that has to do with communications!"

"Ultimately, we want to introduce our young people to a variety of career pathways – including those they may have never heard of before," shares Katherine Monterroso, Sr. Manager, PREP. "The reality, especially for the young people we serve, is that most of us have to work no matter what trajectory we're on. We want to make sure that our members are well-prepared to be successful in careers they pursue."

In addition to the internship program, PREP offers resume and cover letter support, mock interviews, job application assistance, career exploration and entrepreneurship classes, and more. They also have a career fair for teens and young adults in November and a panel lined up in Spring 2024. *If you're a professional interested in being a part of these events, we'd love to have you! Please email prep@apch.org. -M. S.

"We want to make sure that our members are well-prepared to be *successful* in careers they pursue."

Impacting a *Life*

L.I.F.E. Mentoring

One of the things David Kerns and David Baldovines really enjoy doing together is hiking. The two, affectionately known as ‘the David’s’ met in late 2019 at a meet and greet as part of A Place Called Home’s L.I.F.E. mentoring program. They immediately clicked.

“I became aware of A Place Called Home (APCH) by searching for organizations that were community driven and had a personal impact on people,” Kerns said. “I thought it would be really cool to have the experience of mentoring a kid.” Kerns, who works in the entertainment media industry, gave Baldovines a few choices of what they could do during that first meeting. Baldovines, now entering Los Angeles Trade Technical college this semester, picked a hike in Griffith Park.

The young APCH member joked that he hadn’t chosen the right clothing, wearing jeans and the wrong shoes. “I wore some white shoes, and they ended up looking pretty bad, but I had a good time with David,” he said.

Baldovones was urged to get into the mentoring program by another staff member at APCH. He jumped at the opportunity to get more “guidance,” he said. “I’ve learned a lot of things from David [Kerns]. I’m a pretty shy person, and he has helped me be more open, to not be afraid, to speak up and ask for help.”

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Started in 2013, the L.I.F.E. Mentoring program — Lead, Inspire, Foster, Empower — was designed to provide opportunities for enrichment, exposure, support and guidance through one-to-one relationships between members and caring adults in the community. To date, there have been more than 110 mentoring matches created overall.

The David’s were able to meet a few more times in person after that initial hike and then closures due to the coronavirus pandemic required them to spend the next few years talking via Zoom. Conversations ranged from gardening and family life to navigating school via computer. “I was also a step ahead as we started to plan what I want for my future and stuff,” Baldovines said.

Once Los Angeles re-opened businesses, the two started meeting in person again. They continued to go on hikes, went bowling and rock climbing and tried Korean barbeque.

Kerns said one of the bonuses he got from this relationship was not only learning — and discussing — what Baldavones was studying in school, but the great connection they had established. “Putting yourself out there and becoming a part of someone else’s life in a big way, it’s been very engaging and impactful for me,” Kerns said.

The two plan to stay connected. Speaking directly to his mentor, the young member shared: “You helped me gain confidence. I am able to talk to you and trust you with, like, anything.” - M.Z.

In Service

Volunteerism

‘The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.’ – Mahatma Gandhi

People choose to volunteer for many different reasons. Sometimes they want to share their expertise, other times it is to give back to their communities. For Raquel Fuentes it was to demonstrate to her son, Derek, the importance of civic responsibility. “Es importante porque pienso que vivimos en una sociedad...,” Fuentes shares in Spanish. “It’s important because I believe we live in a society where we show our empathy to others. If there is need for help, then with the little that I can bring, I want Derek to see it as something that yo tengo que hacer... I have to do it because it is my responsibility as a good citizen.”

Fuentes started volunteering in 2017 a few years after Derek – then eight – started at A Place Called Home (APCH). She said she “fell in love with the services APCH offered, which inspired me.” In the beginning she was mainly involved in one-time events, such as the Halloween Festival and decorating the center during the holiday season. During Covid, Fuentes stepped up to work with APCH in their Family Resource Depot, helping sort and bag food for families in need.

“I just think there’s something really special and joyful about the parents, family members and caregivers who share their time here as volunteers,” said Ann Stacy, Senior Manager of Volunteerism at APCH. “They’re bringing to life the partnership that we have and exemplifying a tenant of our mission, which is that we exist to empower members to make a difference in the community and in the world.”

On a more personal level, Stacy adds, “We need each other.”

This mission isn’t lost on Fuentes. The need to help families didn’t end when staff and members returned to campus. According to Stacy, more

“Yo puedo decir
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e of Others

than 85 families were identified as food insecure, so APCH continued the Family Resource Depot, dedicating one day a month for parents and caregivers to volunteer. Fuentes raised her hand.

“Él siempre está muy emocionado que yo pueda participar porque...he [Derek] is always very excited that I can participate because for him it is important to see that his mother is also giving importance to what he is doing,” Fuentes said. “Look, you go to class, I tell him, but I’m also going to do my bit.”

Fuentes has also found chances to volunteer with Derek. During the Shaheen Scholarship Luncheon, held to celebrate members who had received the scholarship and were going to college, the two joined to assist in servicing the event. “Yo puedo decir ...I can say ‘yes’ because I feel it is a place where I have always felt heard, I have always felt that I can count on them during difficult times,” Fuentes said.

“This sounds cheesy, but I mean it genuinely, everybody who plays any sort of role at APCH is essential in us existing and continuing to carry

out our mission,” Stacy said. “If that is sorting and packing groceries for our families, serving as a tutor, leading a workshop for our kids — or serving as a member of our board of directors — all of that is essential. It is part of the ripple effect of positivity that creates the beautiful community that is A Place Called Home.” -M. Z.

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In the DNA of A Place

Counseling

The ping of an email alert rings out from the computers of the counseling staff at A Place Called Home (APCH) — a new member has enrolled in programming. The team springs into action, our therapists set up an in-person meeting with the member, and our case managers schedule a phone call home to their family.

These check-ins are an integral part of each new members' introduction to APCH. They allow our team to get a pulse on an individuals' mental health needs, along with those of their family. Additionally, they provide an opportunity for our Counseling team to educate our members and parents about mental health services and reduce the stigma of "going to counseling." At their core, the check-ins are a chance for our Counseling staff to build connections with new members, so they have someone to talk to if they need support.

After the initial assessment, the Counseling team directs each member and their family to the appropriate services. This can range from counseling classes covering stress management and coping strategies, monthly Parent Cafe group sessions and ongoing individual or family therapy, to financial assistance, and grocery and supply distribution. "Our goal is to come alongside our members and families," said Jose Manuel Soria, Sr. Manager of Case Management "There's no shame, no embarrassment. We're here to help with whatever it is that they need."

Dr. Maria Austin, the Senior, Sr. Director of Counseling adds, "Counseling is in the DNA of APCH, which is so unique. Where other

organizations are more recently saying "Mental health and counseling are so important...we should add that, counseling and mental health support has always been a part of APCH."

In addition to the mental health, counseling, and case management services they provide, the Counseling team often works in collaboration with all the departments at APCH. "We coordinate with other staff who bring members to our attention," Soria said. "Maybe they're having an off day, so we check in. Maybe they need to get some energy out, so we'll connect them with Athletics, or they just want to draw, so we'll connect them to Art. It's about meeting members where they are."

Alumnae Lesley Garcia started attending APCH at age 9, and although she admitted it wasn't always smooth sailing, she said, "The staff members in the [Counseling] department were always supportive and never disregarded my feelings. It was a safe space for me where I knew I could speak freely and receive the advice that I needed without getting in trouble."

Lesley also credits APCH's Counseling department for much of her personal growth sharing, "After many visits to the counseling department, it became a place that I would go to in my free time for fun. It was an environment that I felt very comfortable in and never judged; it was the one place where I felt like someone was genuinely invested in what I had to say and how I was feeling. I will forever be thankful for the Counseling department at A Place Called Home." - M.S.

A Place Called Home

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The Importance

Not only will getting involved with A Place Called Home change the lives of thousands of young people in South Los Angeles, but it will also change the lives of our SEIA Investment Advisors.

We sat down with Chad and Drew to talk about experiences as supporters of APCH, how giving back has influenced their lives, and how SEIA has been able to support APCH's mission.

How did SEIA become involved with APCH?

Chad: Philanthropy has been a long-standing pillar for SEIA, its founders, and employees. Before the founding of the firm, partners, advisors and employees donated their time and financial resources to make the world a better place for others. In our mutual recognition of the importance of giving back, we came together as a firm to pool our resources in support of children's causes. A Place Called Home became one of our first partner organizations through that philanthropic initiative. Over the past decade, our dedication and support of APCH and their mission has continued to grow.



How has SEIA's involvement with APCH impacted company culture?

SEIA has always been a very philanthropically oriented company. However, far too often, philanthropic efforts only come in the form of monetary donations. As a partner with APCH we can also donate our time as volunteers and are able to observe the direct impact of our financial contributions and how those donations impact the APCH community. The ability for our advisors and employees to spend time directly interacting with APCH breeds an ever-stronger culture of giving back. Over the past decade, we have expanded our philanthropic outreach to include more organizations with missions of supporting the youth of our local communities.

What has been a memorable moment for you and SEIA at APCH?

SEIA is the presenting sponsor of the annual Back to School event for APCH. At this event, our team of volunteers prepares backpacks filled with school supplies and essentials which are distributed to APCH members and the surrounding community. This event is always the most personally rewarding as you can witness firsthand the impact of APCH's outreach. Returning from summer break and heading back to school isn't always the easiest thing for young children, but through APCH and SEIA's efforts we are able to ensure that the children are best prepared to start the school year on a solid foundation.

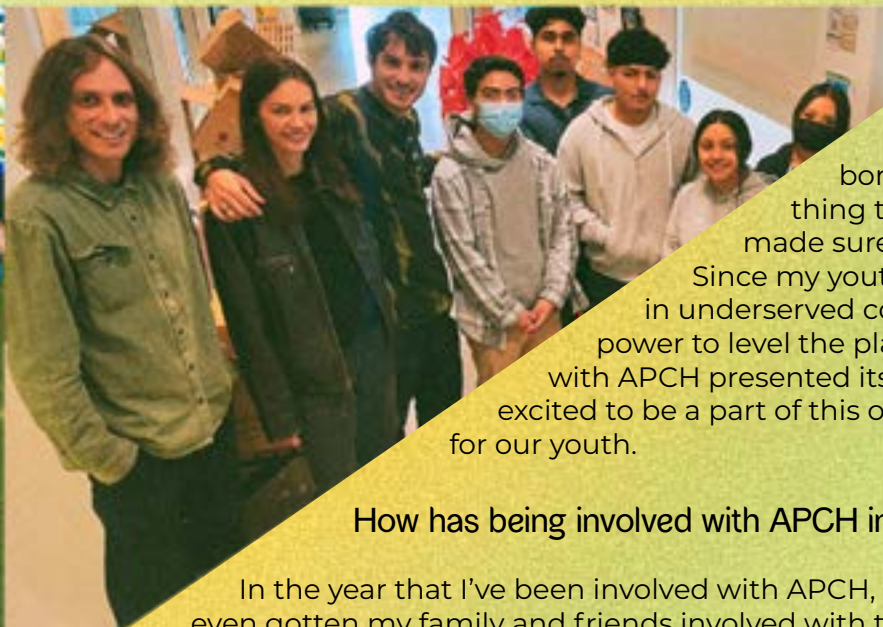
What would you share with other companies/organizations interested in getting involved with APCH?

I encourage companies, organizations, and individuals interested in partnering with APCH to visit the center to observe the impact APCH has on the local community. The scale of the APCH operation and the offerings available to its members are nothing short of incredible.

e of Giving Back

geles, but it's proven that giving back can change your life, too. Take it from supporters Chad Bates of Signature Estate & and Drew Meyers.

r personal and professional lives, and advice for those interested in getting involved. Enjoy!



What inspired you to get involved with A Place Called Home?

Drew: I got involved with APCH last year. I was born and raised in LA, and this city means everything to me. My family was very culturally aware, and made sure we watched the news during the LA Riots.

Since my youth I've always wanted to get involved with kids in underserved communities and do whatever I could in my power to level the playing field. The opportunity to get involved with APCH presented itself last year and I was sold! I couldn't be more excited to be a part of this organization and to create more opportunities for our youth.

How has being involved with APCH impacted your life?

In the year that I've been involved with APCH, my life has already been greatly impacted – I've even gotten my family and friends involved with the organization, too! APCH makes me feel like there is a deeper purpose in life. Through interacting with the youth members, I've seen firsthand that, although it may seem like you can't make a huge difference as one individual, showing up in whatever ways you can – donating, volunteering, mentoring – does make an impact. And, when we all decide to show up as individuals, together we can change lives.

Is there an experience you've had at APCH that stands out to you?

My friends and I recently visited APCH to put together hygienic kits for the members' households. It was not only heartwarming seeing how grateful the students were, but it gave us a chance to get to know them on a personal level. We got to talk with members who were in the midst of their college visits, and I enjoyed hearing about their favorite parts of the experiences at different schools. It was extremely moving to hear their stories, and their dreams and aspirations. Throughout our conversations, I was able to tell them about my own college journey, and to share a bit of knowledge and advice I learned along the way. Getting to connect with APCH's youth members was a very special moment for me and I can't wait for another experience like that.

What would you say to folks interested in getting involved with APCH?

It's time for action! Let's get to work – these kids need you. I've had the privilege of meeting some of the youth that APCH serves and to learn about their incredible dreams for the future. We have the opportunity – and responsibility – to help make sure those dreams aren't hindered just because of the neighborhood they were born in. Everyone deserves an opportunity to win. If you have the means to support the amazing work of A Place Called Home, get involved! Not only will it change young peoples' lives, but it will change yours, too.

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joining the
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Visit apch.org/LC to learn more.

Giving Options



Want to help change the world?
Join the club!

For a minimum annual or monthly donation, you can help support APCH's work serving South Central youth and families, AND get access to exciting, exclusive benefits!

As an SCC member, your benefits include:

- An exclusive Social Change Club enamel pin
- Networking opportunities with industry experts
- Discounted access to APCH events
- Priority hands-on volunteer opportunities
- Invitation to the private Social Change Club LinkedIn group



The
2830
Legacy Society

Leave a legacy for the future
of Los Angeles.

Thank you for investing in the young people of South Central Los Angeles. We would like to invite you to join our 2830 Legacy Society, honoring those whose estate plans include A Place Called Home.

We are deeply grateful for the generous support of longtime friends of APCH who have entrusted us with carrying on their legacy through our work.

If you would like to learn more and discuss options for your philanthropic legacy, please visit: <https://apch.org/2830-society>

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At A Place Called Home, we envision a world where your zip code does not determine your future; where all children have the opportunity to find happiness and success in life. Our mission is to inspire, encourage, and support the young people in South Los Angeles to achieve social, emotional, and economic success.

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