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Boys service group hosts bowling for injured adults

High Hopes founder says his nonprofit was the first in the country to serve those with serious head injuries.

November 30, 2011 | By Jamie Rowe

The Beach City Service League (BCSL) hosted its annual bowling and lunch over the weekend for a nonprofit serving adults with serious head injuries, according to a news release.

On Saturday, 15 BCSL members, who are also seniors at local high schools, joined 20 students, aides and family members from the Santa Ana-based High Hopes Head Injury Program at Irvine Lanes, 3415 Michelson Drive, Irvine, to spend quality time together and give a respite for the family and aides of the head-injury adults.

"Having one-on-one events with the High Hopes students makes a huge impact on the young men of BCSL," said Geri Frazier, a BCSL mom who organized the event. "One of our goals is to teach our young high school men about the importance of initiating charitable efforts."

High Hopes patients were injured during events ranging from drunk-driving accidents to criminal assaults, according to the release.

During lunch, Mark Desmond, High Hopes' founder and executive director, spoke about head injuries — the leading cause of disability and death in people younger than 35.

He said that High Hopes was the first private nonprofit formed in the U.S. to exclusively serve the needs of head-injury patients and their families. High Hopes offers a full-service day treatment program to help patients in their recovery from brain injuries.

Since its inception in 1975, the organization has been recognized numerous times in the development and facilitation of community-based services. This year more than 400,000 people will suffer a head injury with some degree of impairment.

Desmond said he wishes that he could serve more patients, but funding limits his ability.

"My experience today has excited me about the possibility volunteering next summer with High Hopes students," said BCSL member Jack Presson

BCSL is for young men in ninth to 12th grades, who together with their mothers, are organized to do charitable endeavors, foster the mother-son relationship and become community leaders.

Newport Beach residents Diane Edmonston and Mary Pat Lucas founded BCSL in January 2007. The first year consisted of two classes of 43 boys and their mothers, and has grown to include four classes.

Members have volunteered for causes that include the Special Olympics, the American Cancer Society, Second Harvest Food Bank, the U.S. Army, soup kitchens, fire stations, the OASIS Senior Center and other youth groups.