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Charitable Teenagers Visit Elementary School



Charitable teenager Brian Team visits with Project Success students at Whittier Elementary. — Photo by Sara Hall

Some local high school boys recently donated their time and efforts, along with pencil boxes full of school supplies, to underprivileged kids in Costa Mesa.

The boys, from the Beach City Service League, hand delivered the boxes and spent some time with all of the kids last Thursday and Friday at Whittier Elementary School. They also handed out Christmas cookies.

The kids were equally excited about both the cookies and the pencil boxes full of supplies. They cheered and yelled thank you to the boys.

"BCSL seeks to set an example to all that a small act of kindness can make a difference in the lives of others right in our own backyard," said Susan Friend, one of the event organizers and mom to two boys in the league.



Brian Team colors with some first graders at Whittier Elementary School in Costa Mesa after he and others, including David Weitz (front left), from the Beach City Service League donated pencil boxes full of school supplies to the kids. — Photo by Sara Hall

The school supplies came from a campaign led by student-led group, Orlando's Outreach and Catty's Kids, a club formed specifically to provide school supplies to less fortunate students. Beach City, which several of the Orlando members were already a part of, supported the group from the beginning and recently adopted their mission and donated over 200 pencil boxes to the Illumination Foundation and students in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District's Project Success program.

The Beach City boys decided to take over the mission and discussed how to proceed at one of their meetings earlier this year. They decided that donating the supplies right before winter break would be the most helpful.

"By the time we get back to school in January, everyone's school supplies are either worn down to the nub or completely used up and sometimes or somehow things just get lost or misplaced," said Matt Porteous, a senior at Newport Harbor High School and is a four year member of BCSL.

The boys that attended the Friday donation included John Mooers, freshman, Brian Team, junior, Riley Hunt, sophomore, David Weitz, junior, John Connelly, freshman and alumni Clay Friend. They visited three classrooms of younger students.



Beach City alumni, Clay Friend, helps students with math problems with some 2nd graders. — Photo by Sara Hall

“It’s kids helping kids,” Susan Friend said.

It’s great for the boys to be able to experience firsthand helping others that are less fortunate, she said, it teaches them a valuable lesson.

“The boys have gotten so much out of it,” said Beach City mom, Kyle Team. They have been very pleasantly surprised by the experience, she added.

All the boys agreed that it was a fun experience.

“This stuff is the most fun,” out of all the charitable efforts the BCSL does, said Brian Team. “Getting to hang out with little kids and color... It’s a lot of fun.”

The boys colored, helped with math problems, and worked on a crossword puzzle with the kids.



John Mooers visits with kids at Whittier Elementary School during the Beach City Service League visit last Friday. — Photo by Sara Hall

“The coolest thing is when you’d ask them if they want to color or do math and one of the kids said he’d rather do math because he wanted to be smarter,” said Weitz.

“It’s great to see the impact we have on them,” Weitz said. It’s important to be a good role model for them as well, he added.

“A lot of them were really happy to see us,” Brian Team said.

Many of the boys are hoping to return and help out, Susan Friend said.

Beach City Service League is a local philanthropic organization for high school boys to work with their mothers in the league to initiate and promote charitable endeavors, foster the mother-son relationship and develop community leaders through a structured program of community service, educational, leadership and cultural experiences.

Project Success is a district program dedicated to providing students with a safe place to learn and play after school. There are 120 kids at Whittier in the Project Success program and the entire program currently serves over 1,000 students at nine different elementary schools, according to Julpha Maniquis-Dormitorio, a teacher on special assignment for extended day programs, specifically Project Success, for the district.

“We partner with principals, teachers, and the community to deliver quality after school care focused on academics, recreation and enrichment,” she said.



Kids laugh with Beach City Service League member Brian Team as they color during the group's visit to Whittier Elementary School last Friday. — Photo by Sara Hall

Orlando's Outreach was created by several Newport Harbor High School students last year in an effort to send school supplies to less fortunate students. The group was formed by Clay, Logan and Mollie Friend and Caroline Graham after some of them visited Costa Rica during their school break last summer. The club is named after the Friends' contact, Orlando, in Costa Rica, and Graham's friend Catalina, nicknamed Catty, in El Salvador.

"I hope this will become a great tradition for BCSL in the years to come," Susan Friend said. "[The] Project Success Program, [serves] over 1000 kids in our back yard, living at or below the poverty line. We will make a small dent but the need is there and we hope to make this an annual endeavor. We are hoping the hands-on part makes lifetime givers out of these young men. Helping locally is a goal for BCSL and what a great fit...kids helping kids."



Riley Hunt talks with kids during the club's visit to Whittier Elementary on Friday. — Photo by Sara Hall