



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF GREATER REDLANDS-RIVERSIDE

Serving communities in the Inland Empire since 1967

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 28, 2021

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Boys & Girls Club honors community supporters, Youth of the Year

REDLANDS – Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Redlands-Riverside honored local youth and supporters at its annual Be Great Awards Wednesday, May 26.

The event was held at the Redlands Country Club and included dinner. Lillian Vasquez, from KVCR 91.9, served as master of ceremonies.

The Club's community awards were:

- Be Great Impact Award, to Inland Harvest, and
- Be Great Mission Award, to Linda and Ed Serros.

The Be Great Impact Award is given to a business or organization that provides in-kind resources, impacting the daily programs at the Club.

Inland Harvest has provided Club families with food boxes, fresh produce, and bread every week during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have been instrumental in the growth of the Club's Family Support food program in the last 14 months.

For the last several months, Inland Harvest has coordinated distribution of tens of thousands of USDA food boxes. Each week, volunteers unload tractor trailers filled with fresh produce, eggs, milk, cheese and meat "to be distributed to churches, neighborhoods and nonprofit organizations to keep food on the table of those in need," according to the organization.

"It's our sincere pleasure to help provide food to feeding agencies to help those in need, and to be a part of the solution in the Inland Empire," said Inland Harvest board member Jim Ortiz.

Inland Harvest was established in 1990 and has distributed more than 38 million pounds of donated food.

"My mother would be so proud," said Steve Wormser, whose mother Barbara Wormser co-founded Inland Harvest.

The Be Great Mission Award goes to an individual or organization that financially supports the Club's ability to accomplish its mission.

Linda and Ed Serros are long-time supporters of Boys & Girls Clubs who have dedicated their time in many capacities, serving a combined 16 years on the Board of Directors.

Ed attended a Boys & Girls Club as a child. Linda, a former special education teacher, was president of the Club's board twice between 2000 and 2007. Ed, a retired nephrologist, is treasurer of the board.

Linda spoke about the people who worked together to build up the Club in the last 21 years.

"Each of these people, and everybody else connected, has helped in their own time and their own way and they've built on each other's shoulders and each other's work that has come before, to bring us to the point that we are right now, where the Club creates and helps and builds relationships with these young people that we heard tonight, who are totally amazing. And we appreciate everybody who's helped through the years," she said.

Ed recalled developing the Club's computer lab, with the help of others.

"That's the gift I got from the Boys & Girls Club, working with a lot of remarkable people who gave their time," he said.

Three high school students were recognized as the Club's Youth of the Year Ambassadors – **Joshua Fernandez, Joseph Fernandez** and **Nicole Perez**. To complete the Club's Youth of the Year program, earlier this year they wrote essays, gave a speech and answered questions from a panel of judges about how the Club has impacted their lives and their vision for the future.

The Fernandez brothers, who live in Highland, spoke at the Be Great Awards.

The Youth of the Year Ambassadors were chosen for their character and citizenship, academics, and commitment to a healthy lifestyle. Joshua was chosen as the Club's Youth of the Year and was runner-up in the regional Boys & Girls Clubs Youth of the Year competition. Each Ambassador receives college scholarships.

At the Be Great Awards, Club board member Jon Fenster and his wife Laura and Club supporters Tom and Karen Kaney and John and Dorothy Ware announced they are matching the Ambassadors' scholarship money. The Ambassadors get \$750 from the Club and the Youth of the Year gets \$1,000.

About Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Redlands-Riverside

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Redlands-Riverside has served the Inland Empire since 1967, and has sites in the communities of Corona, Moreno Valley, Redlands, Rialto, Riverside, San Bernardino and Victorville. Our Clubs serve over 2,000 youth daily in after-school settings, and we offer both winter and summer camps. For more information, visit www.BeGreatIE.org