

Summer Youth Fund 2011

IMPACT REPORT



Campers from East Los Angeles enjoyed nature with the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles this summer, thanks to donors who contributed to CCF's Summer Youth Fund. (Courtesy of the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles)

Thousands Enjoy Safe Summer Options

Since 2009, the Summer Youth Fund at the California Community Foundation has provided opportunities for low-income youth to experience education, fun and enrichment over the summer. Summer 2011 was a resounding success once again, providing nearly \$150,000 in contributions (nearly \$95,000 from CCF donors and \$50,000 from CCF) to support thousands of young people through the City of L.A.'s Summer Night Lights program and the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles.

Thanks to your support, youth and their families were able to take part in activities from cooking class to basketball leagues, from arts and crafts to leadership development, filling a significant need in the community. In recent years, programs and opportunities for low-income youth have dwindled; notably, LAUSD's summer school programs budget has been slashed from more than \$20 million annually to \$3 million, limiting programs to only those upper class high school students who risk not graduating. Many low-income families have no affordable options, forcing youth to spend days of boredom inside.

For many of us, summer brings back memories of new adventures and personal growth. Your contributions enabled thousands of young people to enjoy a similar experience that wouldn't have been available otherwise.

Read on for stories and specifics about the impact of your giving.

Your Impact



Thousands of children and youth enjoyed programs at Nickerson Gardens with Summer Night Lights (Courtesy of SNL)

Total Contributions:
\$145,000

Total Summer Night Lights Visits: 774,800

Visits to Nickerson Gardens Summer Night Lights Program: 19,176

Total Reduction in Gang-Related Crime around Summer Night Lights Sites: 35%

Youth and Families Provided YMCA Scholarships for Camp and Memberships: 736

Increase in At-Risk Youth Served at 3 YMCA Sites through Scholarships: Up to 45%

CITY OF L.A.'S SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS

Year 4 Sees More Sites, More Program Options

The Summer Night Lights program (SNL), run by the City of Los Angeles, has grown from 8 sites in 2008 to 32 sites in 2011, with consistent success rates in its number one goal: reducing violence at peak times and in communities most affected by violence. In 2008, SNL sites saw a 17 percent reduction in gang-related crime across 8 sites; in 2009, an 11 percent reduction across 16 sites; in 2010, a 40 percent reduction across 24 sites; and in 2011, a 35 percent reduction across 32 sites. The program is a national model that has been replicated in Jacksonville, Fla., and is being considered in other regions.

The program achieves this success by providing extended programming between 7 p.m. and midnight, four days each week from July 4th to Labor Day. Athletic, recreational, educational and artistic activities provide fun and enrichment, while community leaders help to create a safe, open space for all community stakeholders to be part of the fun.

The Summer Youth Fund of the California Community Foundation provided more than \$72,000 in 2011 dedicated to the SNL site at Nickerson Gardens Housing Development in Watts.

What Sets SNL Apart

Youth Leadership: Youth leaders are a cornerstone of the SNL model. The youth squad, comprised of at-risk youth from the surrounding community, ages 17-20, provides job training



Sports of all types for all ages are a big part of the fun at Summer Night Lights. (Courtesy of SNL)

and leadership development for about 10 young people per site. The youth squad oversees activities, organizes schedules, supplies meals and performs other tasks as needed. What's more, this year they participated in a curriculum including financial literacy, violence awareness, career building, community awareness and drug abuse. These young people serve an important function on site; moreover, participants have shown increased ambitions to work or attend school after participating in the program, according to survey results.

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Leaders in Training

New this year, the Summer Night Lights program added a position to each site's job roster: Lead Youth Squad. SNL hoped that it would provide returning Youth Squad members with an opportunity to continue developing their leadership skills.

Marquon, the Lead Youth Squad at Nickerson Gardens, was a great example of how well the position can

work. Marquon embraced the opportunities provided to him to be a leader. Highly respected by the team and staff, he took initiative and showed determination in everything he did.

Marquon is enrolled in community college, and is eligible for a new educational scholarship offered to Lead Youth Squad this year.



Youth Squad members help run the Summer Night Lights program. (Courtesy of SNL)

YMCA OF METROPOLITAN L.A.



YMCA cooking classes attracted kids of all ages to learn healthy habits.
(Courtesy of the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles)

Engaging Youth through Opportunity

The YMCA engages youth and their families in summer day camps, weeklong resident camps and membership in local YMCAs, with the enriching programming that comes along with all of these. The YMCA is a prevention program, offering children and youth a safe, healthy place to play, learn and engage in new ways.

While many low-income children who aren't involved in summer enrichment programs can fall behind their counterparts during the summer, the Y strives to fill that gap for children whose families cannot afford these programs themselves. In the last three summers, requests for financial assistance have exploded – up to a 240 percent increase at urban YMCAs.

Becoming a Camp Counselor

Jesus, now 15, has participated in Y programs since he was 7. He has volunteered with the Y since he was 13 – helping out however and wherever he could. Over the years, Jesus has focused on taking responsibility for himself, an important aspect of his Y experience.

Jesus had been to resident camp before, but this summer was a big one – he was finally old enough to train as a camp counselor. Funded by a camp

scholarship from CCF's Summer Youth Fund, Jesus eagerly accepted the challenges of being a counselor and being responsible for others.

Today, Jesus has set his sights on his next responsibility – college. Building on his Y experiences, Jesus is dedicating himself to being accepted into UCLA to study business.

The Summer Youth Fund of the California Community Foundation provided more than \$72,000 to the Y Summer Youth Fund in 2011 to provide 878 scholarships at three YMCAs where the need was greatest: Southeast Rio-Vista Family YMCA in Huntington Park, the Weingart East Los Angeles YMCA in Boyle Heights and the Weingart YMCA Wellness and Aquatic Center in South Los Angeles.

What Sets the Y Apart

Y Day Camp: Day camps provide a healthy outlet for kids – complete with free healthy snacks, exercise and fun activities including book discussions, field trips, team sports, photo expeditions, neighborhood clean-ups, creative writing, dance or cooking classes, tutoring and drama. From 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. in some cases, the days are full, enriching and just what many children need during the long summer months.

Resident Camp: Resident camp is one week long, but it can have a lifelong effect on the kids who attend. Camp Whittle in Big Bear may be the first introduction to the natural world for many participants. Camp is a place for expanding their horizons, meeting youth from different backgrounds, learning new skills, mentoring younger campers and simply enjoying a carefree week. The YMCA consistently sees that kids carry their experience with them long after they are back home.

Teen Memberships: Youth received teen memberships to the South Los Angeles YMCA branch and became part of the College Club, which helped prepare them to take college entrance exams, research colleges and fill out admission paperwork.

Participant Perspective

"I got to go out and do things, not sit around the house. I played Legos and built whole cities! I swam a lot, every day, and I laughed."

"Oh, and I made friends! I was excited to come to camp here. I wanted to make friends, and I made three."

-Quinton, Age 12

Dance Camp Transforms 7-Year-Old

Reginald, 7, had never participated in Y day camp before, but his mom was hunting for an enriching, affordable experience for her son. The only space was in the dance program.

Not knowing how Reginald would like it – he’s more wall-flower than dancer – his mom signed him up.

Reginald was transformed. All that week, Reginald came home from camp excited, moving, waving his hands and spinning through the house.

At week’s end, the camp had a recital, and Reginald’s mom was moved to tears watching her son dance across the stage, happy, smiling and confident. After the performance he remarked to his mom, “Nothing I could do was wrong, Mom. Dancing is really cool!”



(Courtesy of the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles)



The basketball league engages kids in organized competitive activities emphasizing teamwork, leadership and fun. (Courtesy of Summer Night Lights)

Summer Night Lights program, cont.

For All Community Stakeholders, Infant to Elderly – SNL provides programs to support families and all members of the community, knowing that violence reduction is a joint effort. Each site strives to include all community stakeholders, meaning those who may be perpetrators of violence as well as those who could be victims.

Soccer to Silk Screening to Skateboarding – SNL recognized early on that the key to a successful program is community participation, which is why it continues to deepen the educational, recreational, artistic and athletic programs tailored to each community. New this year at Nickerson Gardens was a partnership with ChivasUSA to provide soccer clinics with CHIVAS USA players and coaches. In soccer, basketball and softball leagues alone at Nickerson Gardens, there were 129 participants. These activities provide opportunities for people to do what they love and learn new things as well.

Job Creation – Because SNL is largely staffed by community members, an additional benefit of the program is job creation. Across all SNL locations, SNL supported 1,614 jobs and vendors. At Nickerson Gardens, 36 jobs were provided including Youth Squad, Lead Youth Squad, Site Coordinator, Community Intervention Workers, Coaches, etc.

“I was able to spend a lot of time with my mother in the cooking class. We loved it so much.”

– Anonymous (Male, 17 years old)

The California Community Foundation (CCF) is a public, charitable organization serving Los Angeles County since 1915, and playing several roles in the community today. It manages more than 1,600 funds created by individuals, families, companies and organizations, and serves as a steward of their funds and legacies. It makes grants to nonprofits working with low-income and underserved L.A. communities, and actively engages in community problem solving with business, civic, government and other organizations. For more information, visit calfund.org.

California Community Foundation | 221 S. Figueroa St., Suite 400 | Los Angeles, CA 90012 | (213) 413-4130

calfund.org

