



Storyteller Children's Center

"Kindergarten Readiness for Santa Barbara's Homeless Children"

You can positively change the first 5 years of a child's life and transform his future.

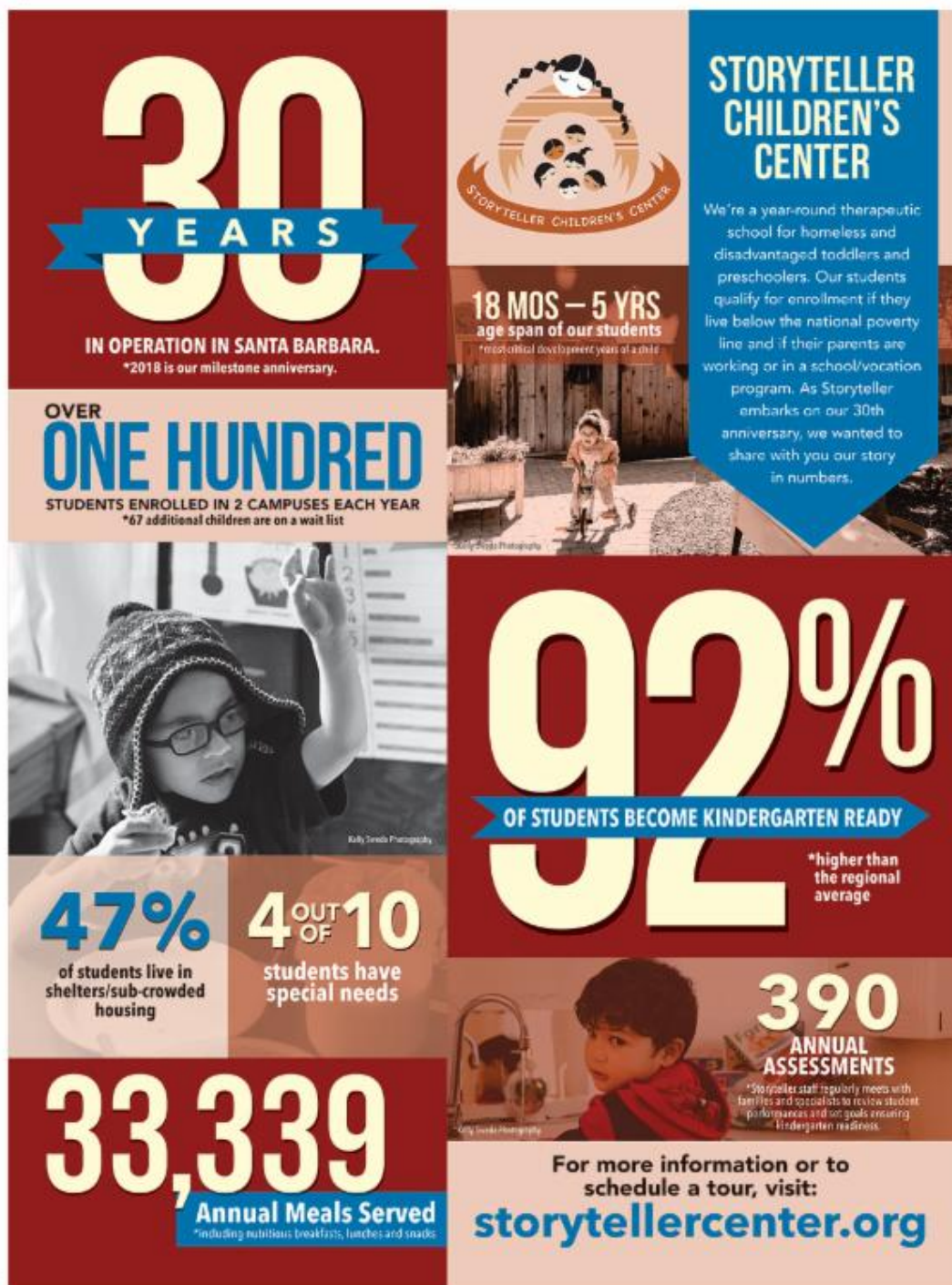
As our community has been threatened by fires and affected by hazardous air quality, I understand our focuses are elsewhere. What we know about this community is that it's proud and resilient. Most of us made a very conscious decision to live in Santa Barbara based on the quality of life it offers. We will get our community back. We will clean, rebuild and support our each other in the process. As we consider what to pack during these evacuation events, we are reminded of what's important: friends, families and our cherished memories.

Storyteller is wishing you and yours a safe holiday season. We are working to remain open during this difficult time. We hope to deliver our Christmas wish lists for all of our children, and have extended our deadline to Friday, December 22nd.

Be Safe, Santa Barbara!

Donna Barranco Fisher

Executive Director



YOUR GENEROSITY - OUR FUTURE

If you have not made a gift to Storyteller during our fiscal year - now is the time to make a dramatic difference in the life of a child and their family with a gift before December 31, 2017.

To be successful at what we do every day, we need your help.

We hope that you are inspired to once again make a year-end gift to Storyteller Children's Center.

MAKE A GIFT NOW



Volunteer Spotlight *Joe Marshall*

We are very fortunate to have Joe Marshall as one of our Storyteller volunteers! Joe has been volunteering in the preschool program at our State Street location for over a year. About a year ago, Joe felt compelled to seek ways he could give back to the community. He heard about Storyteller through his peer and his employer Procore, and instantly became motivated to get involved.

Joe has great enthusiasm for helping others which translates into his ability to work well with the children. His faith inspires him to always emanate positive energy and love back into the community. He has truly enjoyed seeing children grow and prosper throughout his time with Storyteller.

"In light of all the tragedy we see in the world, these children radiate pure joy, and every time I leave encouraged and refreshed, even if I just chased them all around the playground for 90 minutes. My hope is that everyone finds a way to get involved in some capacity, whether that's giving of your money or time." Joe made these comments during our Gala event where he was the featured speaker.

Joe's experience volunteering has overall made a lasting impact on his life. Seeing the children smile and be happy is so meaningful to Joe that volunteering has become his favorite part of the week. He has witnessed the power Storyteller has had on children; inspires him to continue volunteering. His bright, attentive demeanor had made Joe a valuable role model for Storyteller children.



"Students 4 Storyteller Club" at Santa Barbara High School

With the leadership of SBHS Sophomore Lane Peus, SBHS has established a student club to support Storyteller Children's Center. Over 20 students have already joined, with goals of raising money for and awareness of Storyteller's important mission. Students 4 Storyteller have kicked off the club to a great start! Earlier in December they held a bake sale to raise funds. In early 2018, they plan to do a warm clothing drive at Santa Barbara High School. In the long term, the students plan on keeping the club going for many years. The club meets every second Monday of the month. They have created an Instagram page and a plan for social media outreach to help grow the club's membership. The funds raised this school year will go toward the purchase of new playground equipment at Storyteller's State Street site. Students 4 Storyteller will also help on the playground to engage with the children as mentors.

"My Mom, Lizzie Peus, has been actively involved with Storyteller since 2003, and I deeply understand that our club is helping a good local cause and can make a true difference in children's futures."



Donor Spotlight - Kristin Linehan

Storyteller will soon commemorate 30 years of service to our community. Much has changed over these 3 decades, but one thing has been constant and that is the Storyteller "extended family" of supporters.

A familiar face at Storyteller Children's Center for the last 25 years is Kristin Linehan. Kristin has served as a tireless volunteer and fundraiser, and multiple term Board Member. She was Co-Chair of the Annual Gala (several times!), Chair of the Board, and founded and still leads the important Advisory Board.

It was 22 years ago that Kristin met a fellow neighborhood mom (Marisa Grimes), who asked if she'd come help make lunch for a small group of homeless children. From the basement of the First Congregational Church, making lunches became a weekly commitment for both Marisa and Kristin. At the time, the church was the only shelter for these children while their families looked for work or attended school.

The women recognized the need was growing and important, and that something bigger could happen to help this group of children. They decided to put on the first fundraiser, hosted at Kenny Slaughter's house. They successfully raised enough funds and attention to help more children. This started the path towards opening Storyteller's first pre-school.

"Storyteller became a part of my family's culture. My children were also volunteers throughout their growing up years, playing with the children, making lunch, and doing bake sales to raise money at their own schools," says Kristin.

Kristin's commitment to Storyteller has never wavered. Many of her closest friends have been made through Storyteller's network of volunteers and supporters.

"There is a magic to this organization," says Kristin. "It not only provides an excellent early childhood education, but it lays the foundation for these kids and their families to positively change their life trajectories. It feels very good to be involved."

Kristin also volunteers weekly at Transition House, caring for the infants. She is truly grateful to know that for many of these babies, there is a place to go called Storyteller.

Teacher Spotlight



Alicia Jiminez
Preschool Teacher

Alicia connects Storyteller children with the great outdoors.

Being outdoors and in nature is a great way to keep our children excited about learning! Studies show that at-risk children experience success in self-confidence, motivation, problem solving and inquiry. Nature based education provides essential learning building blocks that last a lifetime.

Alicia Jiminez has been a teacher at Storyteller for over ten years and has also spearheaded Storyteller's Nature Program, providing Storyteller children with important opportunities to explore and create memories in the lush Santa Barbara environment.

"Through time outdoors, our students develop new language and begin to develop a deeper understanding of the world around them. Some families, including parents and grandparents, join us on outings. The children inspire our parents to interact with the outdoors, sharing their newfound love of nature," Alicia shared in a recent Noozhawk article.

Alicia is proud of Storyteller success. "It is a true joy for me to see the children explore and discover their outdoor community, and to see how nature ignites their love of learning. It is an integral part of Storyteller's special role in early childhood education."

Alicia actively fuses her passions for teaching and nature through her own education. She is currently working on obtaining a Masters Degree in Nature Based Early Childhood Education at Antioch University. She will be the first generation in her family to receive her Master's. The connection between nature and personal well-being excites Alicia to pursue the work she does.

"Storyteller Children's Center helps Santa Barbara's homeless and at-risk toddlers and preschoolers achieve kindergarten readiness by providing therapeutic preschool

and support services for their families."

Storyteller Children's Center

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