



**As one more chapter in the Volunteer Center's 50+ year history comes to a close...**

...we celebrate our past year “At the Heart of Helping”

THE VOLUNTEER CENTER’S YEAR IN NUMBERS 2017-2018



OPERATION TEDDY BEAR

4,160 Schoolbags for First Grade Students  
68,802 Educational Items/Wellness Tools  
158 Classrooms                      259 Volunteers  
36 Schools                              599 Hours



FOOD FOR KIDS

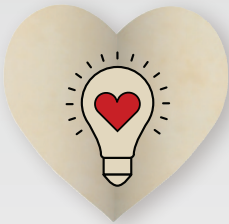
32,394 Pounds Donated  
5,454 Bags Delivered      49 Volunteers  
9 Schools                              359 Hours

*"Pounds" and "Bags" refer to the food collected for and provided to eligible students and their families*



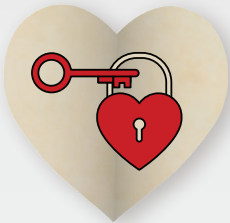
COURT REFERRALS

454 Agencies Served  
16,065 Volunteers  
679,921 Hours



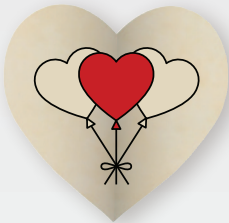
VOLUNTEER CONNECTIONS

354 Volunteer Referrals  
585 New Volunteers Registered  
1,337 Total Registered Volunteers



ESCAPE ROOM

8 Community Sponsors      48 Teams  
278 Participants                      38 Volunteers  
\$13,000 Raised                      365 Hours



FAMILY FUN FAIR

16 Community Sponsors  
300+ Attendees                      93 Volunteers  
\$16,000 Raised                      233 Hours



DURFEE SCHOLARSHIPS

\$4,000 Awarded                      5 High Schools  
8 Local Students                      8 Future Colleges



LONG BEACH SERVES: MLK DAY OF SERVICE

9 Projects Throughout Long Beach  
266 Volunteers  
766 Hours

COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS

College Access, Readiness and Success (CARS) Scholarship Foundation  
Palos Verdes Junior Women’s Club Scholarship Program  
Sandpipers College Scholarship Program

PROJECT LEADS

Leadership Long Beach                      Office of Mayor Robert Garcia  
Port of Long Beach                              Office of Vice Mayor Rex Richardson



CORPORATE VOLUNTEER COUNCIL

4 Projects                                      65 Volunteers  
8 Local Companies                      167 Hours

BUSINESSES REPRESENTED

DoubleTree by Hilton South Bay-Torrance      John Deere  
GreenDart    Malaga Bank  
Griswold & Griswold Insurance                      Moog  
Jobar International                                      Saatchi & Saatchi

PROJECTS

Craft Booth at the Special Olympics Summer Games  
First Responder Appreciation Baskets for the 9/11 Day of Service  
Holiday Gift Wrapping at Barnes & Noble in Torrance  
Beautification Project at Beacon House in San Pedro



16,835 Volunteers  
682,410 Hours  
\$19,851,307 Value of Community Support\*

*\*This estimated figure is based on California’s hourly volunteer rate of \$29.09 and represents the value of support provided to the community. The hourly rate is based on earnings reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and indexed by Independent Sector to determine state values. The data above reflects the period between July 2017 and May 2018.*

and turn the page to a new chapter...



*...building on the foundation left by past President/CEO De De Hicks upon her retirement.*

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We've all seen the heartbreaking headlines and heard the stories:

*Youth who do well in school, participate in sports and are friends with everyone are shocking those closest to them taking their own lives at alarming rates...*

Youth are exhausted, anxious, depressed and overly-stressed, and an alarming number of them have contemplated or attempted suicide - 46% more youth took their lives nationwide in 2017 than in 2007, and an astounding 22% of local middle school students seriously considered suicide last year.

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When our new President/CEO, Sara Myers, partnered with our Board of Directors on a three-year strategic planning process to establish an updated vision of the Volunteer Center's future, it included an evaluation of the current programs created to keep the organization at the heart of responding to the community's needs, such as Operation Teddy Bear and Food For Kids. More importantly, it included an assessment of the critical needs *currently* facing our community. After combing through data and speaking with members of the community, it became quite clear where we needed to focus most in the future – **the mental health crisis facing our youth.**

*Story after story revealed that our youth show a lack of resiliency, empathy, balance, self-confidence and other characteristics of emotional wellness. **But why is this happening?***

Think about the youth in your life – they are glued to handheld screens in restaurants, at events and at family gatherings. We've all seen it and here is what the facts show:

- The youth in our lives **spend 6-9 hours a day on screens** – *not* counting time spent for school-related purposes.
- The more time they spend glued to screens, **the higher the likelihood they will suffer** from extreme lack of sleep, and exhibit signs of anxiety and depression – all factors in an increased risk of suicide.
- Although they have hundreds of "friends" online, **many feel completely isolated and alone.** On top of that, they have difficulty reading emotions, communicating effectively and empathizing with each other.

Despite extreme personal costs to their health and emotional well-being, many of these high-achieving students will be accepted into phenomenal colleges. Unfortunately, an alarming amount of them

will drop out, return home or attempt suicide. Southern California universities have seen a 100-168% increase in requests for counseling services – and that's just the students who *seek out* help.

The mental health field is severely understaffed. The schools and medical field can't face this crisis alone. Screens are now an everyday part of our lives... but the suffering doesn't have to be. The Volunteer Center is taking on a significant leadership role in confronting this issue. **We have a history of mobilizing volunteers with diverse talents and expertise to find creative solutions to urgent community needs just like this.**

*These are our children. This is our community.  
This is our next big challenge and **we need your help.***

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#### **Your support will help us:**

- Bring all the major organizations serving youth together, so we can build strong partnerships to make a collective impact and start the tidal wave of necessary changes.
- Spread community-wide awareness of the problem and help initiate gradual changes in behavior to help all of us.
- Develop and implement services that will help families learn how to best assist their children from a place of empathy and compassion.

We know there are many worthy causes. We hope you will elevate **this cause** to the top of your list.

**Visit [www.volcenter.org/makeanimpact](http://www.volcenter.org/makeanimpact) to join us, so together, we can create the services our local families so desperately need.**

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