

THE DOWNEY KIWANIAN

Serving the Children of the World

2026

JULY NEWS

downeykiwanis.org

The President's Message - Independence, Service, and Unity

July is a time to celebrate freedom, service, and community. As we mark **Independence Day** and the **250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence**, we are reminded that liberty is strengthened by those who serve others.

Vice President-Elect Erica Vasquez and I were honored to represent the **Downey Kiwanis Club** at the **Kiwanis International Convention in Manila, Philippines**. We returned inspired by the global impact of Kiwanis and renewed in our commitment to serve here at home.

This month, we are also proud to sponsor the **First Annual Day at the Lake Fishing Event** in honor of our veterans. It is a meaningful way to show gratitude to those who have served our nation.

And as the **World Cup** continues, we wish **Team USA and Team Mexico** all the best. May the games remind us of the friendship and unity that bring people together across borders.

Thank you for your dedication to Kiwanis and to our community.

Serving the Children of the World,

Phil Requejo
President, Downey Kiwanis Club



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Board Member's Message

As we welcome July, we are reminded of the importance of community, service, and the freedoms that allow us to make a difference in the lives of others. It's a month to celebrate our nation's independence, spend time with those we love, and reflect on the impact we can have when we choose to serve.



This year also marks a personal milestone for me, four years as a member of the Downey Kiwanis Club. Looking back, I can honestly say that becoming part of this organization has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. What started as an opportunity to volunteer has grown into a passion for serving alongside individuals who truly embody compassion, generosity, and leadership.

Kiwanis is about so much more than organizing events or fundraising. It's about building relationships, mentoring future leaders, supporting families, and investing in children who represent the future of our communities. Every hour volunteered, every scholarship awarded, every meal served, and every smile shared creates a ripple effect that extends far beyond what we can see. Those moments are what truly define who we are as Kiwanians, and they're the reason I'm proud to be part of this incredible organization.

A week ago, I had the privilege of attending the Kiwanis International Convention in Manila, Philippines, and I came home inspired, energized, and reminded of the incredible impact our organization has around the world.

Two keynote speakers left a lasting impression on me. **Lei Wang**, the first Asian woman to complete the Explorer's Grand Slam including summiting Mount Everest and reaching both the North and South Poles, she shared a powerful message about perseverance, resilience, and having the courage to pursue goals that seem impossible.

We also had the honor of hearing from **Bana Alabed**, who began sharing her experiences of living through the war in Syria when she was just seven years old. Through her words, she gave the world a child's perspective on conflict and reminded us that even the smallest voices can inspire hope, compassion, and change.

Their stories reinforced what I have come to appreciate most over the past four years, every act of service matters. Whether we're volunteering at a local event, mentoring a student, awarding scholarships, or simply showing up for our community, we are creating opportunities and changing lives in ways we may never fully realize.

As we celebrate the **Fourth of July** and our nation's **250th anniversary**, let's also celebrate the freedoms that allow us to serve others with purpose and heart. One of the greatest ways we can honor those freedoms is by giving back, lifting others up, and strengthening the communities we proudly call home.

To my fellow members of the Downey Kiwanis Club, thank you for your dedication, friendship, and unwavering commitment to service. It has been an honor to spend the past four years serving alongside each of you, and I look forward to continuing our mission of making a lasting difference one child, one family, and one act of kindness at a time.

If you've ever thought about giving back to your community, making meaningful connections, or finding a place where service truly makes an impact, I invite you to visit one of our meetings. Whether you're a business owner, community leader, young professional, or simply someone with a heart for serving others, there is a place for you at Downey Kiwanis.

Our club is built on the belief that when people come together with a shared purpose, incredible things happen. Beyond the service projects, you'll discover lasting friendships, opportunities for personal and professional growth, and the satisfaction of knowing you're making a real difference in the lives of children and families in our community.

Together, we can continue building a stronger Downey one act of kindness, one project, and one child at a time.

Wishing you and your families a safe, joyful, and meaningful Independence Day.

Happy Fourth of July, and here's to another month of serving with purpose, leading with heart, and remembering that Kids Need Kiwanis.

Kiwanis International Convention



Downey Kiwanis Represented at the 2026 Kiwanis International Convention

President Phil Requejo and Vice President-Elect Erica Vasquez proudly represented the Downey Kiwanis Club at the 2026 Kiwanis International Convention in Manila, Philippines, joining delegates from around the world to conduct the business of Kiwanis International and help shape its future. They were joined by Division 13 Lt. Governor Elect **Hailes Soto**.

One of the convention's most important responsibilities was the House of Delegates, where clubs voted on international leadership and proposed amendments to the Kiwanis governing documents.

Delegates elected **Trinidad "Toto" Gonzales** as the new Kiwanis International Vice President. Also elected to serve as International Trustees for North America were **Taka Ogata, Linda Ramsay, and Valarie Brown-Klingelhofer**.

Delegates also considered three proposed amendments:

- Amendment #1 (Remote Voting): The amendment was withdrawn by its maker prior to the session, and delegates approved its **removal** with 84.46% voting in favor.
- Amendment #2 (Reducing the Size of the International Executive Committee from 9 to 7): **Failed**.
- Amendment #3 (Modifying the word "Aggressive" in the Objects of Kiwanis): **Failed**.

Beyond the official business, the convention provided opportunities to connect with Kiwanians from across the globe, exchange ideas, and celebrate our shared commitment to Serving the Children of the World. The experience reinforced the strength of the Kiwanis family and brought back new perspectives and inspiration that will benefit the Downey Kiwanis Club in the year ahead.

ALL VETERANS PARTICIPATING IN THE FISHING EVENT WILL RECEIVE
A T-SHIRT, HOT LUNCH, & TACKLE BOX

1ST ANNUAL
DAY
— *at the* —
LAKE
— FISHING EVENT —

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— 2026 —

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Chick-Fil-A
Taco's Gavilan
Randy's Donuts

Donation Drive



Help us set local students up for success this school year! Every backpack, notebook, pencil, and glue stick makes a difference. Together, we can help ease the financial burden on local families and ensure every child has the tools they need to learn and thrive.

 Donation Drive: **June 15 – July 16**
 Drop-Off Location:

Steve Garcia's Farmers Insurance Agency
8648 Florence Ave.
Downey, CA 90240
 **Monday-Friday | 9:00 AM–6:00 PM**

Backpack Giveaway Event: **Saturday, July 25, 2026**. Let's come together and show what our community can accomplish when we support one another. 

Lorena Knott, founder of Solidarity Bears



ast week's program introduced us to the inspiring work of Lorena Knott, founder of Solidarity Bears.

Lorena shared how Solidarity Bears is making a meaningful difference by providing resources and support to disadvantaged families in Downey and surrounding communities. Her passion for serving others is a powerful reminder that even small acts of kindness can create lasting change.

Thank you, Lorena, for sharing your mission and for the incredible impact you're making in our community. We look forward to cheering on your continued success!

Please consider supporting this important program.

World Cup Watch Party



What a match, and what a day!

A huge thank you to TLD Law for co-hosting an incredible World Cup Watch Party that brought our community together to celebrate the beautiful game. From the excitement of every goal to the camaraderie among friends, it was an day filled with energy, laughter, and plenty of soccer spirit.

Special recognition goes to our own Past President and Membership Chair, Roy Jimenez, who once again proved he knows how to put on a fun and memorable event. Your dedication, enthusiasm, and ability to bring people together make all the difference!

Thank you to everyone who came out, cheered loud, and made the event such a success. We can't wait for the next one!

Downey Kiwanis Club Roundtable



Celebrating Friendship, Service, and Birthdays! 🎉

At Thursday's Downey Kiwanis Club Roundtable luncheon, we had the joy of celebrating three very special members on their birthdays! 🎂🎉

Please join us in wishing a very Happy Birthday to Evelyn, Sarah, and Sam Jr. 🎁🎉 Your dedication, kindness, and commitment to serving our community make our club stronger and brighter every day.

We are grateful for all that you do and hope your birthdays are filled with happiness, good health, and many blessings in the year ahead!

Happy Birthday, Evelyn, Sarah, and Sam Jr.! 🎉🎂🎉

Melanie and Members of the Kiwanis Club of Downey



We were honored to welcome Melanie from Get on the Bus, an incredible program dedicated to helping children maintain meaningful connections with their incarcerated parents.

Through transportation, support services, and family-centered resources, Get on the Bus provides children with the opportunity to visit their parents and strengthen bonds that can have a lasting positive impact on their lives. ❤️🚌

Thank you, Melanie, for sharing your inspiring work and helping us better understand the challenges faced by these families. We are grateful for organizations like Get on the Bus that bring hope, healing, and connection to children who need it most.

Pictured are Melanie and members of the Kiwanis Club of Downey following the presentation.

Fantastic Nighthawk Meeting



We were thrilled to welcome our newest Kiwanian, Helen Claros! A proud graduate of Downey High School and former KIWIN'S member, Helen represents the next generation of servant leadership, and we are excited to have her join the Kiwanis family. 💙💛

Helen was proudly pinned by our own Downey Mayor Pro Tem Horacio Ortiz, a dedicated Kiwanian and owner of El Pescador. Thank you, Horacio, for helping mark this special milestone!

The evening also featured a meaningful presentation from the Downey Kiwanis Foundation, which proudly presented a check to Saint Raymond School in support of the Builder's Club community

garden project. 🌱 Together, we are helping cultivate leadership, service, and community pride in our youth.

To top off an already inspiring night, our incoming President Adam Dygard shared his vision and priorities for the coming year. His passion, leadership, and commitment to service have us excited for what lies ahead! The evening was filled with warm smiles, friendly conversations, encouragement, and the spirit of service that makes Kiwanis so special.

Interested in making a difference and connecting with amazing people in our community? We'd love to meet you! Send us a DM and join us at our next meeting. ✉️

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Tony Coronel



Meet Tony Coronel, one of our passionate and energetic members of the Downey Kiwanis Club!

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Tony works in real estate and spends his free time staying active at the gym, hosting BBQs with friends and family, and finding ways to give back to his community.

Tony's family roots trace back to Jalisco, Mexico, a region known for its rich traditions, including mariachi music and tequila. Inspired by his heritage and his desire to help others, Tony has always believed in lending a hand whenever he can.

When Tony was first introduced to Kiwanis in Downey, he had never even heard of the organization—let alone knew how to pronounce it! But after learning about our mission and meeting our members, he knew he had found a group that shared his values of service, generosity, and community.

"I've always enjoyed helping people without expecting anything in return. There's no better feeling than knowing you've made a difference in someone's life."

Thank you, Tony, for bringing your energy, heart, and commitment to service to the Downey Kiwanis family!

Club Officers and Directors 2025-2026



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President



Adam Dygard



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Art Montoya



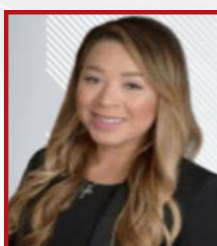
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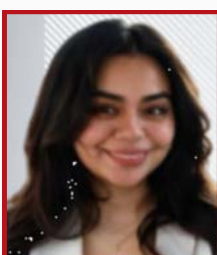
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Board Member



Amy Scott



Board Member



Brian Tello



Board Member

JULY

Events

Kiwanis Anniversary

Vicky Santos - 18 yrs

Howard Friedman - 7 yrs

Douglas Hall - 7 yrs

Sergio Vasquez - 7 yrs

Art Montoya - 5 yrs

Roman Saenz - 3 yrs

Sam Sarofeem, Jr. - 3 yrs

Sarah Sarofeem - 3 yrs

Happy Birthday!

Daisy Vargas - July 3

Phil Requejo - July 10

Carmen Ondrusek - July 12

Helen Claris - July 17

Robert Jacobs - July 19

Sergio Vasquez - July 20

Ed Schneeberger - July 21

Ash Patel - July 29

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