

# RISE

Newsletter for StandUp for Kids - Orange County

## STANDING WITH THE SCHOOLS

These are uncertain times and there are many questions about the upcoming school year, but StandUp for Kids will be there to answer the call and support those in need.

As the new school year approaches, many people have questions on how schools and families are going to react to the changes COVID-19 has made. The COVID-19 crisis in the United States has not slowed down and statistics show that the U.S., in particular California, will continue to battle this pandemic for the coming weeks and months. On July 17, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that all California schools need to fulfill multiple requirements, including lowering the number of cases in a county and requiring masks, in order to allow schools to reopen which makes physical schooling unlikely in the near term. Executive Director Justine Palmore is steadfast in her resolve. "Families and students are going to struggle to adjust to the new online school year, but StandUp for Kids will always do everything in our power to help, whether it's in person or online."

Congrats  
Xiomara. Read  
about her on  
Page 7!

### IN THIS ISSUE

Virtual Run Recap &  
Virtual Gala Invite | 2

Alex & Michelle:  
Youth Stories | 3

OC Register &  
TAY-CES | 4

Our Partners:  
The Crossing Church &  
Seabreeze | 5

Supporters Spotlight | 6

Xiomara Staff  
Spotlight | 7

**370.9 mi**  
**and**  
**\$30,510**



## ALL THANKS TO YOU!

Our 1st Annual Virtual Run/Walk to End Youth Homelessness came to an end on July 18th. Thanks to you we were able to meet all of our goals with 370.9 miles and a total of \$30,510 raised to support our kids. Thank you so much for walking, running, and donating!



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**SEPT**  
**17**

Reserve your  
tickets now at  
<https://standupforkids.ticketleap.com>

### VIRTUAL GALA

You are invited to our 3rd annual Gala! This year we're celebrating 30 years of StandUp for Kids, so make sure to be there. The night's virtual festivities will include guest speakers, silent and live auctions, and much more. Meet like-minded individuals who are fighting to end the youth homelessness epidemic - all from the comfort of your home.

A few of our current and former youth will also be in attendance. Dilan Oezkan, who endured an unstable and tumultuous upbringing and is now attending UCLA as a Political Science major, will speak on the profound impact organizations like StandUp for Kids have had on his life and how they continue to support him and his siblings.

# YOUTH STORIES

Our youth have overcome difficult pasts, and these are their stories of hope and tenacity

## ALEX'S STORY



Alex's path to recovery has been challenging. Originally from Fort Worth, Alex was forced to live on the streets because of issues in the home that were out of his control. Alex also struggled with addiction as a way to both cope and keep himself awake to keep safe while living on the streets. But Alex had that internal drive and earned his GED and started college at the age of 16. He now has his Associates of Applied Arts and EMT certification and is on his way to becoming a paramedic so he can help others struggling with addiction. Alex has been sober since January 20, 2020 and gives back to his community by running for charity through StandUp for Kids and is continuing to find ways to help others. His message to the youth who are in a similar situation is "there is a way out, rain will come, and rain will go, keep moving forward".

## MICHELLE'S STORY

Michelle's life has been one of struggle and perseverance. Her mother was an addict, leading to her father moving their children from Oakland to Orange County. The family struggled finding a place to live. Her father's health issues, caring for her siblings, and her own struggle with mental illness and alcohol added further stress to her life. No one was looking out for Michelle until she met Denise with StandUp for Kids. As her mentor, Denise was able to provide Michelle with the resources to deal with her mental health, living situation, and many other challenges that come with living in a car. Denise has also helped Michelle focus on what she's passionate about and potential career paths and given her window to a brighter future.



# WE'RE ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE OC REGISTER!

StandUp for Kids was mentioned in the OC Register article "Homeless young adults meet their housing match in Orange County" by Theresa Walker. The article focuses on the story of Marquis Bowen, a 24 year old who is a part of the StandUp for Kids' housing program. Bowen was able to qualify for the OC Coordinated Entry System (CES), which aims to battle homelessness in Orange County. Bowen is one of the many homeless young adults, aged 18 to 24 years old, who are known as Transitional Age Youth (TAY). Many of these kids lived in unstable households or were in the fostercare until they were 18 years old.



Bowen, like many of our youth, had a tough childhood. His father abused phencyclidine, and family members and friends died from heroin overdoses. Bowen also began to struggle with drugs when he was just 11 years old. Bowen entered drug rehabilitation in his late teens. He, however, became homeless after a recovery house kicked him out because of an insurance issue and he then relapsed while homeless on the streets. He heard about StandUp for Kids through his cousin but was initially reluctant to reach out. With StandUp for Kids' help, Bowen got sober, landed a job, and found a place to stay. Although staying clean can be a challenge, StandUp for Kids is always there to support Bowen, who now volunteers with StandUp for Kids as a mentor to other youth.

**"I thought, 'God finally blessed you. Now, it's time to do your part.'"**

There has recently been a national push to better respond to the TAY youth housing needs. StandUp for Kids has been one of the voices advocating for our kids. We have recently been awarded funding to support these youth with housing from several cities in Orange County through Emergency Solutions Grants. These grants originate from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). "The Orange County chapter has helped about 100 youth per year get housing with 85 percent able to cover rent on their own after they get jobs" says Justine Palmore, Executive Director of the chapter. As part of the county CES process StandUp for Kids participates in TAY match meetings where homeless youth are matched with available housing resources. With your help we continue to support our community, one youth at a time.

**Read the full article  
on the OC  
Register website and  
look for the July 10,  
2020 issue!**



# THANK YOU SEABREEZE!

## Seabreeze Management Company tirelessly gives back to the community

Seabreeze Management Company is a company that aims to serve its community by connecting to local charities and clients. Isaiah Henry, CEO, is passionate about helping others. "At Seabreeze, we have team members who are in their late teens and early 20s, and each one is an exemplary employee and exceptional person. So, when it came time for Seabreeze to partner with an organization where we can invest our time and resources, StandUp for Kids was the obvious choice. Not only do we love their mission, we know that in just a few short years, some of those previously forgotten kids could become a part of our team. And we hope that happens." The Seabreeze team has been a strong partner and we look forward to growing our impact alongside their great team. A big THANK YOU to Seabreeze.



# JOINING HANDS WITH THE CROSSING

## The Crossing Church reaches a hand out to StandUp for Kids

Located in Costa Mesa, The Crossing Church opened 31 years ago with the goal of helping people no matter their background or circumstance. Throughout its history, the church has routinely shown their commitment to helping those in need through several different mediums.

The Crossing Church has been partnering with StandUp for Kids for about five years and began with a discovery of shared values and a common mission around the issue of homelessness. The support given through numerous donations and countless volunteer hours is truly remarkable and has helped define the trajectory of StandUp for Kids to becoming a leading organization in helping the at-risk and homeless youth population in our communities across Orange County. If your church, school, company or social group would like to get involved, please email Justine at [justines@standupforkids.org](mailto:justines@standupforkids.org).



**"The Crossing is a church for all people, including those that sit on the margins of society."**

**- Executive Pastor Bruce Swerdfeger**

# SUPERSTAR SPOTLIGHT

A shoutout and big thank you to some of our biggest supporters

Although Rich has not been with StandUp for Kids for very long, he has an extensive background in volunteering. After volunteering at the American Youth Soccer Organization for over 15 years, Rich decided to start a new chapter of his life. He chose to volunteer at StandUp for Kids because he knows that being a positive influence in the lives of troubled youth has a huge impact on their future. Rich acts as the volunteer coordinator and systems expert, and was recently hired on as a staff member to manage our Rapid Rehousing program which began after being awarded an Emergency Solutions Grant. StandUp for Kids sincerely appreciates Rich for taking on these roles and making a big impact very quickly.



**RICH VEDAS**



**BELLE RIEGG**

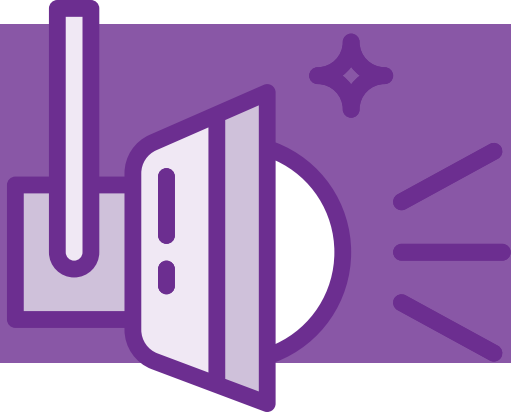
Belle Riegg has been an exemplary volunteer in her work with StandUp for Kids. StandUp for Kids' goal of helping homeless youth motivated Belle to join, and she has since become a valuable asset to the organization and our communications team. Belle has used her creativity and skills to help further spread StandUp for Kids' message. "I always knew I wanted to be in a position that would let me make a positive impact through my work," Belle said. "StandUp for Kids has not only helped me develop my skills and gain experience but has shown me that I can use them in a meaningful way no matter where I end up in my career." Belle has extended her internship twice now and credits her fellow volunteers' camaraderie and helping kids as the main reason for why she keeps returning. Thank you Belle!

Abe Neudorf is the co-founder and Microsoft business solutions advisor of Skyline Consultants. Although he is only 25 years old, he has gained a lot of experience from his family's small business and joining the Army Reserve. Abe taught himself how to develop and customize software and then partnered with Aliona Chertash to found Skyline Consultants. Abe heard about StandUp for Kids through a volunteer, and his love for kids and families made him excited to help. He is currently designing a new case management system to optimize youth records and tracking. StandUp for Kids thanks Abe and Skyline Consultants for their support and looks forward to further growing our relationship.



**ABE NEUDORF**

*You can read all of these stories and more at our blog here: [standupforkids.org/orangecounty/news](https://standupforkids.org/orangecounty/news)*



## SPOTLIGHT: XIOMARA OROZCO

Xiomara Orozco has proven that she is resilient and can adapt to any problem that comes her way. She was born in Acapulco, Mexico, and her family immigrated to the USA in hopes of achieving the American Dream. She is a Dreamer and a DACA recipient. Xiomara struggled with school because of the language barrier, but her 5th grade teacher helped her learn English and inspired her to help those in need. When the 2008 Recession hit, her family lost their home and became homeless, forced to live in a garage. Xiomara was forced to become a role model and parent to her younger siblings because her mom could not speak English. Her parents eventually found jobs but still struggled with their finances.

Xiomara had a good support system and started to work at Target and go to community college. After 5 years of community college, she transferred to CSU-Fullerton to earn her Bachelor's in Child and Adolescent Development with a focus on elementary education. She considers earning her bachelor's her biggest achievement because of the struggles she faced with the language barrier and adapting to life in America.

Xiomara knew that she wanted to make a big impact in her community, so she applied for a job with StandUp for Kids after researching the organization. She began working at StandUp for Kids on May 29, 2019, working as the program coordinator while also meeting with youth, providing homework help, working on the entrepreneur program, and more.

She was recently promoted to program supervisor, running the e-tutoring program and guiding the 'We Deliver' program which provides groceries and hygiene kits.

She has fostered relationships with the kids and volunteers through weekly group mentoring meetings where kids and volunteers can chat and play fun games. Although she gets paid, she does not consider it a job. Xiomara loves what she does and StandUp for Kids wants to spotlight her tireless efforts and love for her kids and the organization.





**ORANGE COUNTY**

P.O. Box 14398  
Irvine, CA 92623-4398

Phone (714) 356-5437  
Email [orangecounty@standupforkids.org](mailto:orangecounty@standupforkids.org)  
Website [standupforkids.org/orangecounty](http://standupforkids.org/orangecounty)



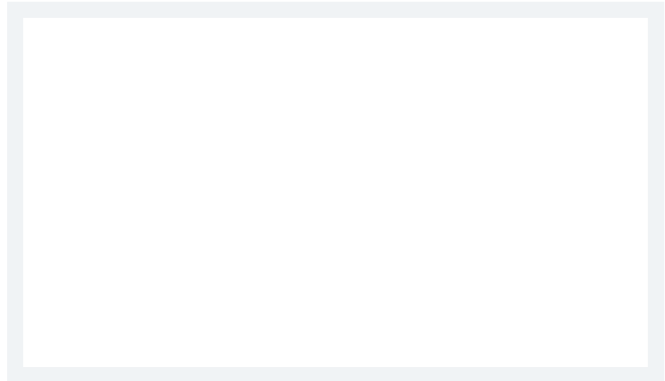
**Follow us on Social Media:**

Facebook: @SUFKOC

Instagram: @standupforkids\_orangecounty

Twitter: @StandUp4KidsOC

LinkedIn: [standup-for-kids-orange-county](http://standup-for-kids-orange-county)



One life at a time.



If you are experiencing homelessness in the Orange County area and are between the ages of 12 and 24, please call our hotline at (714) 356-5437

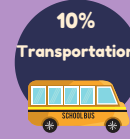


#ENDYOUTHHOMELESSNESS



**DONATE NOW**

[WWW.STANDUPFORKIDS.ORG/ORANGECOUNTY/DONATE](http://WWW.STANDUPFORKIDS.ORG/ORANGECOUNTY/DONATE)



The impact your dollar has on our youth

95% of total expenses are fueled into one of six categories that impact the future of our youth



**LOOK FOR AMAZON  
US ON SMILE!**