



YPO CHAPTER EDUCATION AWARD 2008 - 2009

*Glenn Stearns, Education Chair*

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA YPO – LIFE CHANGING LIVES

We discussed. We debated. We argued. We sought counsel from our friends, our spouses and our families. Soon, our choice became clear. We would spend the year working for the benefit of children. While some of the ascent was painstaking, we were nonetheless resolute. We began to plan our first major event, which would set the tone for an entire year of giving back.

Celebrities and cultural luminaries were quick to come aboard. Our kick off event – a private, YPO-only experience – included a meet and greet with John Elway, Tony Hawk, Dave Winfield, talented members of American Idol, and several other stars of sport and screen. Our members-only reception was followed by one of the biggest fundraisers ever seen in the great state of California. It was an evening of extraordinary performances from our new celebrity friends and moving remarks from Children’s Hospital, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Orangewood. All tolled, YPO’s efforts raised nearly \$1 Million.

We could hardly believe the success and trust we had earned as stewards of good will from our community. After such a tremendous outpouring of generosity, we redoubled our efforts not only to transform the lives of the people our charities assisted, but to transform our own lives and understanding of the role that we play in society.

We had a theme that resonated, not only within our chapter, but throughout the community. It allowed us access to top notch resources and venues that gave their time, services and materials free of charge. With the resounding success of our initial event our mission was set and each Day Chair was completely dedicated to the mission and the vision for the year.

In seemingly no time, top-tier, event-related talents were volunteering their time for our events, all because they believed in our cause and our ability to do good for our community. The generosity inspired by our mission and cause is the reason our Chapter ended its year \$75,000 under budget.

I had a plan for each month and worked closely with each Day Chair to create my big picture vision for the year. Each event included exclusive-to-YPO/WPO experiences, as well as an introduction to a local charity that we had initially selected as being one of our multiple beneficiaries throughout the year. Following the introduction, we would proudly present a check to the charity with monies we had raised during that first “tour-de-force” outpouring of philanthropy.

There were many highlights from the year as we pushed ourselves to new levels of comfort, broke molds, abandoned old perceptions, and adopted new outlooks on life. The resulting year found each one of us evaluating our priorities and discovering a greater meaning for our existence. A full commitment of the Chapter and a collective belief that we were doing something special was the key element that contributed to the success of the year.

We became Life Changing Lives.

