

Student gives PTA experience high marks

At Vista Murrieta High School Riley Jacobs sometimes catches students giving him glances. Jacobs is the PTSA historian. He is also a senior this year, and one of the winners of a California PTA Student Involvement Award.

“They look at PTA as a mom thing,” Jacobs said. “They don’t know how much PTA advocates on behalf of students.”

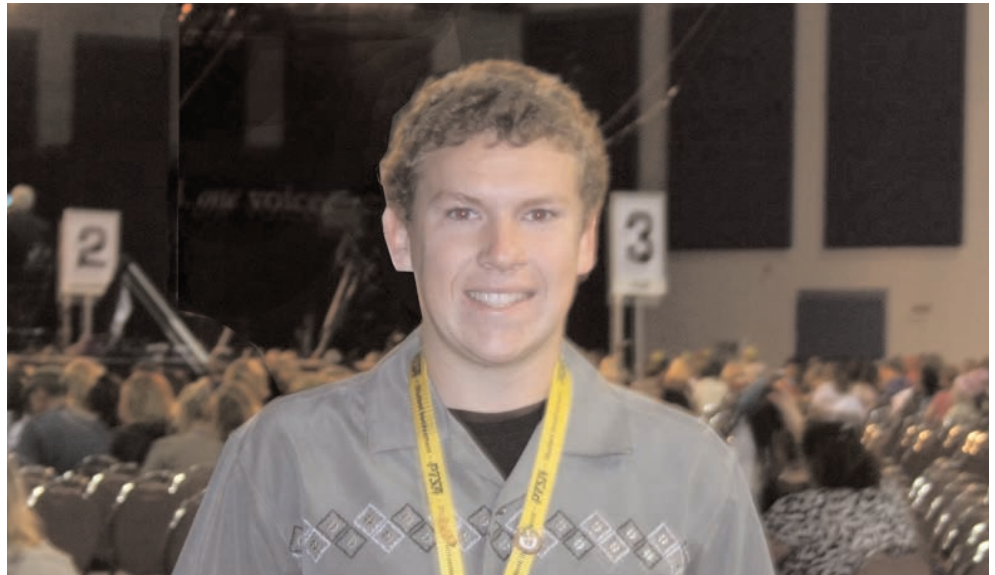
It is that advocacy he emphasizes when he talks to his peers: “PTA does as much or more than ASB (Associated Student Body) and teachers.” He is from the Twenty-Third District in the community of Murrieta in Riverside County.

Jacobs picked up his award and then spoke before a packed room at the 110th California State PTA Convention in San Jose. Jacob’s high school PTSA board includes other students who hold positions – in the Reflections program and as parliamentarian.

Jacobs was one of about 100 students who attended this year’s state PTA convention. It was his third.

In his school, having so many students on the PTSA board has increased interaction with other student groups, Jacobs said. The ASB regularly sent representatives to PTSA meetings to give reports and take back PTA information about its work on behalf of students.

While he touts PTA’s work on behalf of all children, he quickly admits that PTA has also helped him particularly.



Photograph/Mark Buchman

Riley Jacobs: “I think that PTA helped me be better – better leadership abilities, better communication skills.”

“I think that PTA helped me be better – better leadership abilities, better communication skills. All these abilities will help me later in life, no matter what I do,” Jacobs said.

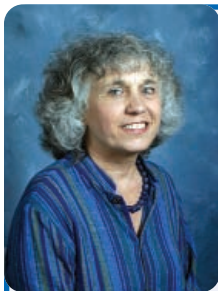
For now, “later in life” means attending the University of Utah.

He leaves high school with a message for other students: “Get involved. I chose to do this, not band, not ASB. I would not have gotten a chance to be involved in an organization as large as this with more than 1,000 people here.”

He also has a message for all the adults involved in PTA: “Ask students to help out, be on committees. At worst they might say no, but if they say yes then there is one more involved student.”

Scenes from the California State PTA 110th Annual Convention, page 6.





Members make the mission clear and safeguard faith in the future

With each day of my presidency, I am grateful and appreciate the honor and privilege to serve as the president of the California State PTA. Throughout my term I have had the opportunity to travel throughout California and, more importantly, to meet the heart of PTA in our membership. There are so many of you who have inspired me with your dedication and commitment to children. Your journey in PTA began just like mine, with wanting what is best for your children. And then the path led you and me to wanting the same for all children.

My faith in PTA is steadfast. PTA is a remarkable volunteer organization. For more than 112 years PTA has given countless hours willingly to benefit all children. We must ensure our voice for children continues to be even stronger in the future.

Each of us must commit to outreach and bringing in new members. I implore those units who only send in 15 members to consider greater outreach efforts to ensure more voices at their local schools are speaking on behalf of children. We need to continue to revitalize this organization and ensure our membership represents the diversity of the children we serve. It will only be through our continued outreach, revitalization, and willingness to speak up on crucial issues that we can ensure we will be known as the largest and most dedicated volunteer go-to children's organization in California.

Remind people that by joining PTA, they inherit a rich history of volunteer advocacy. By joining PTA, they have a greater opportunity to have a significant impact on children's issues at the local, state, and national level. By joining PTA, they ensure we have many voices speaking together on behalf of children.

California is facing the most horrendous economy of its time. Unemployment is skyrocketing and is the highest it has been in 25 years. The state budget is in a downward slide and yet the hopes and dreams of children remain at the forefront of our volunteer work. I see each PTA member throughout California as a dream keeper! It is up to each of us to dedicate our time and energy to ensure all children have the opportunity to reach their greatest potential. Together we must continue to send our message by making the connection between a viable economy and investing in our children. It is not just coincidence that during the years that California invested less money in education and services that support our children, our great state fell from fifth to seventh and now eighth position as a global economy. There is a direct relationship between investing in children and a viable economy.

We are not only the dream keepers; we also have the responsibility to be the truth tellers and ensure that everyone understands that relationship and how expensive it is for any society when they cut education and services to children. Remember the math: Over time as we cut programs or attempt to save money in education, we drive expenses up by 1,000 percent to 2,000 percent in other areas of the budget. Unemployment rates soar, homelessness increases, social services costs rise, and there is a higher demand for police services in our local communities, along with escalating prison populations and costs. If that were not enough, it also creates a burden on emergency medical services as families who are without health care insurance postpone treatment and as a last resort access care in our emergency centers at an astronomical cost. The cycle continues into the classroom as children with illnesses miss more and more school and fall further and further behind, requiring multitudes of supplemental educational services.

'Together we must continue making the connection between a viable economy and investing in our children.'

There was a time when California was truly the Golden State; it understood that children were our No. 1 precious resource. In our Golden State there was a time when Californians recognized that viable economies don't just happen – you plan, strategize, and invest resources to build them. It is up to us to remind people that we must start with a vision and work together to make it happen. If we all pitch in and help, we can build the Golden State dream again. First, we need to look past our own discomfort, reach out and help others succeed. Because when we do that it comes back to us tenfold. There is a huge multiplying factor that is capable of turning a state completely around. When the whole population joins together we in turn build our internal capacity, and in the end the state economy thrives. The essential ingredient is ensuring we have the will to make it happen.

Never doubt for a minute that your individual power does make a difference, and that together we are the hope for an entire generation of children. Thank you for your dedication to children. PTA members are the children's dream keepers, truth tellers, and have the collective power to make a difference and change the future! The heart of PTA is its membership, and together we have the faith, vision, and tenacity to create a new day for California. A day where we can ensure we live in a state that values our most precious resource ... our children.

*– Forever a child advocate,
Pam Brady*

everychild.onevoice.

Reflections Award of Excellence – California State PTA awardees

2008-2009 Reflections Program theme: "Wow!"



Z. Lefton, Title: Falling Leaves



P. Nance, Title: Loco-motion



A. Austin, Title: Wow!



K. Kim, Title: Fireworks



A. Yang, Title: Knowledge Is Power



A. Lillywhite, Title: The Carrion of Dreams

PHOTOGRAPHY

Primary Division: Preschool-Grade 2
Z. Lefton, Fourth District

Intermediate Division: Grades 3-5
P. Nance, Tenth District

Middle-Junior Division: Grades 6-8
A. Austin, Twelfth District

Senior Division: Grades 9-12
J. Himes, Peralta District

VISUAL ARTS

Primary Division: Preschool-Grade 2
K. Kim, Tenth District

Intermediate Division: Grades 3-5
M. Villarreal, Thirtieth District

Middle-Junior Division: Grades 6-8
A. Yang, First District

Senior Division: Grades 9-12
A. Lillywhite, Third District

DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY

Primary Division: Preschool-Grade 2
C. Minor, Ninth District

Intermediate Division: Grades 3-5
K. Schaffer, Thirty-First District

Middle-Junior Division: Grades 6-8
M. Chong, Second District

Senior Division: Grades 9-12
N. Vidal, Twenty-Third District

MUSIC COMPOSITION

Primary Division: Preschool-Grade 2
D. MacKani, Third District

Intermediate Division: Grades 3-5
A. Low, Eighth District

Middle-Junior Division: Grades 6-8
S. Bell, Seventeenth District

Senior Division: Grades 9-12
A. Rosen, First District

FILM/VIDEO PRODUCTION

Primary Division: Preschool-Grade 2
S. Verweyen, Tenth District

Intermediate Division: Grades 3-5
M. Quesenberry, Thirtieth District

Middle-Junior Division: Grades 6-8
G. Irvine, Twenty-Third District

Senior Division: Grades 9-12
G. Lau, Fourth District

LITERATURE

Primary Division: Preschool-Grade 2
L. Fellows, Fourth District

Intermediate Literature
J. Hinkle, Twelfth District

Middle-Junior Division: Grades 6-8
T. Nguyen, Sixth District

Senior Division: Grades 9-12
K. Huh, Fourth District

PTA leadership practices in inclusiveness and diversity

PTA values and appreciates diversity, which enriches and strengthens the structure of our society within our state and nation. PTAs must be reflective of their communities to assure we speak for every child with one voice.

- Assure inclusiveness in all work with schools and families and within the PTA.
- Make every effort to create a PTA board and membership that is reflective of the community.
- Become acquainted with leaders of the many diverse groups in the community.
- Share community history and traditions. Focus on the rich diversity comprising the members of the school community.
- Propose change wherever you perceive exclusive or discriminatory practices.
- Empower your members with support and encouragement to build a learning community based upon trust, care and respect.
- Allocate ample resource support to meet programming needs.
- Measure results, identify barriers and problem-solve as needed.

– Membership Committee

Volunteer time pays off for the children of California

Throughout the state of California, PTA volunteers donated in excess of 19.2 million volunteer hours between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008 for an estimated value exceeding \$4.2 million. Thank you for the countless hours you put in to help the children in our state. You are truly “Every Child. One Voice.”

Units, councils, districts and State PTA track volunteer hours. These hours should include participation in school and community service or activities benefiting children, unit, council, district, state and National PTA programs, projects, training, and PTA-related travel, telephone, meetings and paperwork time. The totals of volunteer hours are used to raise awareness of the importance of all that members do.

One program: Two worthy results Honorary Service Awards program recognizes service and funds scholarships and grants

The Scholarship and Grant Committee awarded \$26,127 to 30 PTA/PTSA members and to 20 PTA/PTSA units in California. In addition, the committee awarded \$29,000 for leadership development for our 29 PTA districts. In March, we awarded 161 scholarships, totaling \$80,500 to graduating high school seniors. Congratulations to all our recipients!

Do you know where we receive the money to provide these scholarships and grants? We fund these scholarships and grants through your generosity by direct donations to the California State PTA scholarship fund, by participation in the Convention Healthy Lifestyle Walk, and by participation in the Honorary Service Award program. Almost two-thirds of the funds used for these grants and scholarships are a direct result of donations through the Honorary Service Award program.

This year, we received more than 130 applications for various scholarships and grants that the California State PTA provides, and 400 applications for the Graduating High School Senior scholar-

ship program. The amounts requested were five times greater than the amount of money we awarded. We are limited by the amount of money we have.

So, we are asking for your help and inviting you to participate in the California State PTA Honorary Service Award program. Recognize the service and dedication of both individuals and organizations at your school or in your community. Choose to award an Honorary Service Award, a Continuing Service Award, a Golden Oak Service Award, or a Very Special Person Award to people at your school site or in your community. Not only will you be honoring them but you will also contribute to the scholarship and grant program. You will be helping others by participating in the Honorary Service Award Program, and the program needs your support.

For more information, go to www.capta.org.

– Scholarship and Grant Committee &
Honorary Service Committee

You and your superintendent: Nurturing a PTA ally, advocate and friend

Your council has welcomed 400 students, parents, teachers, principals and PTA friends to your winter Reflections gala. There's a festive gallery showcasing your student entries and a celebratory program to honor your K-12 artists, writers, composers, choreographers and photographers.

And on stage to welcome the assembly – and remind your audience of the key role the arts play in student learning and in daily life – is your superintendent. As the program commences, parents beam as that same superintendent smiles broadly and shakes the hands – small, tentative, sweaty, strong – of the dozens of little kids and teens your PTA is honoring this night.

Ideally, you count on that same superintendent as your PTA's constant cheerleader, champion, ally and advocate: participating at your fall program; part of the agenda at your council round table; on stage to share data and details at your budget rally. In a perfect PTA partnership, your district or county leader is a prominent presence, enjoying the fun of your end-of-year dinner or helping to honor a community leader at your HSA celebration.

Who said that a superintendent couldn't be a workshop leader at your Saturday training or mini-convention?

And if the alliance works mutually well, that same superintendent considers you, the PTA leader, an accessible and reliable voice of the parent community in your district or county. You've been invited ... encouraged ... to sit on the county-wide P-16 council (preschool through college student support initiative); you have a place on the agenda at your school board meeting or monthly meeting of principals.

Bravo to the units, councils and districts across California who enjoy a supportive relationship with their local or county school superintendents! So many good things are possible when the leadership respect is mutual.

"Remember, being a superintendent can be a lonely job," says Mario Contini, superintendent of the 22,000-student Conejo Valley Unified School District.

"Just as you want to forge a great relationship with your superintendent, he/she wants to forge one with you," he adds. "Working together can be a powerful and friendly bond and make the work you do that much more thrilling."

For those who are starting from scratch, seeking to build that bridge with your superintendent, here are a few tips to get you started:

- **Introduce yourself!** Share the facts about your PTA and



Working partnership: Mario Contini, superintendent of the Conejo Valley Unified School District in Ventura County, joins Patti Yomantas, president, Twelfth District PTA, at a meeting of the Conejo Schools Foundation. Both serve on the foundation board.

- how it serves your school, district and community. Send an introductory letter or email. Begin a dialogue.
- **Extend an invitation!** Pick a PTA event early in the school year that will showcase your PTA's efforts in parent education, or a PTA-sponsored assembly, or a safety event. Ask your principal to join you in hosting the superintendent on your campus.
- **Enlist your superintendent** as a classroom reader on "Read Across America" day, or invite him or her to that PTA-organized breakfast or brunch for "Teacher Appreciation Week." Your school staff will be thrilled that the "super" has come to campus. And the superintendent will consider it time well spent, out in the field.
- **Request a meeting.** It may be a daunting prospect, but a superintendent who recognizes the value of a strong and supportive PTA and parent community will welcome your visit. Take a few board members with you. Prepare a diverse agenda or talking points before you go, outlining your PTA's ideas to work together for your local schools.
- **Plan and sponsor a program together.** PTA has energy, ideas and volunteers. Your superintendent has the district- or county-wide influence to gather school leaders, panelists and experts to build the agenda. The superintendent also has a central venue to host your joint event. Think of the value, reach and benefit of a cosponsored conference or workshop for parents, legislators, or education leaders. Invite the media to cover it. Consider the possibilities!

PTA connections are essential, and few are as important as a strong relationship with your local and regional education leaders. We're all working for the same important cause. Together, we amplify and multiply one voice into many – for the welfare and potential of every child.

Start tomorrow to cement a super relationship with your superintendent. And don't forget that invitation to join your PTA!

– *Communications Commission*



Representing children



Leaders address leaders



A bubbly moment



Exhibit "haul"



The tough go workshoping



Running the show



Drop and give us 10



Laptops of luxury



VOTING!



Hello, Carol



Speaking up for students



Together under one banner



Never too soon

State PTA Convention is a family outing for Richard Velasquez

Richard Velasquez is – and has been – many things: deputy sheriff; drill sergeant; state correctional officer; PTA unit founder; and membership chair for two PTA units, a council and for Sixth District.

Next year he will be Sixth District president in the California State PTA.

The 110th annual convention in San Jose was the fifth Richard Velasquez has attended, just two more than his granddaughter, Alyssa, a fifth-grader in Millbrook Elementary School in Santa Clara County. His wife (and Alyssa's grandmother), Lupe Velasquez, also came along.

It makes sense they are here together; Alyssa is the reason Velasquez joined the PTA.

"I was never involved with PTA when my daughters went to school. That was my wife's thing," Velasquez said. But when he retired he wanted to do volunteer work.

When granddaughter Alyssa, now 10, was starting kindergarten, Velasquez volunteered to be in her classroom one

day a week. That soon grew to just about all day every day for five years.

When the school decided to form a PTA, it was natural to turn to Velasquez to help. After getting that PTA off the ground at Alyssa's school, the principal moved to a new site and asked Velasquez for help with the PTA at her new school.

One reason for his participation is the hope that some of his activism rubs off on Alyssa. Alyssa, wearing five ribbons, is comfortable walking the convention hall with her grandmother. She visits workshops, but it is the exhibit hall and the student artworks displayed as part of the Reflections program that she enjoys the most.

"Reflections is about people my age," she said.

Her grandmother says that attending convention and feeling at home in the PTA world seems to help Alyssa become more outgoing.

"She is very shy, but I see her getting involved in PTSA when she gets to junior high school," Lupe Velasquez said. "If you get involved you get to make changes."



"I was never involved with PTA when my daughter went to school," Richard Velasquez said. But since his granddaughter started kindergarten, all that changed. Next year, he'll be president of the Sixth District.

Alyssa's grandfather models an outgoing kind of involvement that doesn't hold back anything. At one school where he was membership chair he donned a Clifford the Big Red Dog costume and "hounded" people until they joined the PTA.

"Someone has to sell it," he explained.

Getting new members means interacting with people, and Velasquez said his previous jobs in law enforcement gave him the people skills he needs. He had thought he would drop off all the PTA boards when Alyssa moves to junior high, but he has changed his mind.

"If someone had asked me if I was staying in PTA, I would have said no," he said. "I now see myself involved for ... years."

That may mean someday running for a board position against his granddaughter, Alyssa.



Photographs/Mark Buchman

Lupe Velasquez and her granddaughter, Alyssa, took in the student artworks at the convention.

Career Technical Education (CTE): Connecting students to their future

Career Technical Education (CTE) has become the topic of one of California's most important policy discussions over the last several years. CTE can reengage the thousands of students considering dropping out due to boredom or a perceived lack of connection between schoolwork and workforce preparation. CTE can be a powerful strategy for addressing the growing achievement gap between white and Asian students and other minority and English learner students.

California high school education moved from a broad-based curriculum that included "vocational education programs" to a more college- and university-driven curriculum that focuses on the need to complete the "a-g" course requirements necessary to gain entry into a California State University or University of California.

In 2005, the State Board of Education adopted Model Curriculum Standards for CTE in grades seven through 12. These standards were designed to help achieve that goal by providing educators with rigorous, balanced criteria reflecting both the essential knowledge needed and specific skills to achieve a seamless transition to careers or postsecondary education.

In 2007, the State Board of Education adopted the Career Technical Education Framework for California Public Schools, grades seven through 12. The development and adoption of the framework were mandated by the passage in 2002 of Senate Bill 1934, a companion bill to the earlier Assembly Bill 1412, passed in the same year, which required the development of the CTE model curriculum standards. An Advisory Group on California CTE Standards and Framework was formed in 2003 by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in response to the legislation.

Six key indicators that demonstrate Career Technical Education's increasingly important role in California's high school reform efforts are:

- strong legislation support;
- increased student interest;
- increased academic and community interest;
- increased business support;
- greater access for resources for CTE; and
- UC and CSU support for CT.

Structure of CTE in California

To carry out the mandate, CTE programs throughout the state have evolved into the following:

Middle school introductory CTE courses in which students can experience hands-on educational opportunities while trying various industry sectors they may choose to pursue in high school. Decades of research have established that the middle school years are a time of exploration for early adolescents.

High school CTE courses in most comprehensive high schools offer a range of stand-alone and sequenced courses, including traditional classes, such as construction and automotive repair, as well as biotechnology and digital media. CTE in comprehensive high schools is flexible, ideally allowing students to sample several different career tracks during their high school experience. High schools with CTE courses authorized as UC/CSU a-g requirements can entice students into CTE who might otherwise miss the opportunity.

Regional occupational centers and programs (ROP & ROC/P). ROP was initiated in 1967 to serve high school students and adults and is the largest delivery system for CTE in California. These programs are operated regionally by county offices of education or by districts working on their own. ROC/Ps offer more than 100 career pathways and programs as well as career exploration, career counseling and job placement assistance.

Integrated academic and CTE programs, such as magnet schools and academies, have integrated core academic instruction with their courses for years at many high school CTE and ROC/P programs. These programs should be integrated with academics to provide students with a rigorous and relevant educational experience.

Tech Prep/2+2 programs also work to integrate academics and CTE programs. Combining at least two years of high school CTE and academics with two years of postsecondary education, Tech Prep is designed to provide maximum preparation for higher-wage employment or continued education.

In California, CTE is a relevant, important educational route to success. Research shows that rigorous CTE course work combined with challenging academic classes leads to students being better prepared for success, both in the world of work and in postsecondary education and training, than many of their peers who have had only academic preparation. Parents and students should seek out the California CTE Model Curriculum Standards www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/sf/documents/ctestandards.pdf and Framework www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/sf/documents/cteframework.pdf adopted by the California State Board of Education. Copies can also be ordered by phone, at CDE at (800) 995-4099.

Team effort and trips to Sacramento lead to advocacy awards

Kim Anderson didn't know she was embarking on a high-mileage life as an advocate when she joined her local PTA. Like countless others, she was just thinking about helping her kids succeed in school when she joined about 12 years ago, when her youngest child was in kindergarten. That soon led to becoming active on the board of the Capistrano Unified Council of PTSAs, where she focuses on legislation.

"It has changed my life so much for the better in every single way," Anderson said. All the planning and meetings, including frequent trips to Sacramento, have allowed Anderson, in turn, to change the lives of children in California for the better.

One of the rewards of her efforts: Becoming the first recipient of the Shirley Igo Outstanding Advocate of the Year for 2009 by the National PTA. The award is presented in memory of Shirley Igo, who served as president of the National PTA from 2001-2003. She died in 2008.

"I feel humbled to receive an award with Shirley Igo's name on it," Anderson said. "She demonstrated that we can advocate for our children with grace and dignity, and I try to follow that example in my volunteer work."

Anderson is legislative chair of the Capistrano Unified Council of PTSAs (CUCPTSA), made up of PTA leaders from 52 Capistrano Unified School District schools. The council also won a National PTA award, the 2009 Outstanding Advocacy Award, recognizing a PTA entity for its "dedication, leadership and efforts

that affected child-related policy, regulation or legislation compatible with PTA's mission and goals." As part of the award, the council received two all-expenses paid trips to the 2009 National Legislative Conference.

Anderson's individual award and the council's award are very much linked, and every step of their work has relied on collaboration and a team approach.

"I have wonderful leg reps – about 45 – and I'm nothing without them," Anderson said. "All of us combined changed the outcome."

The council was honored for its "Shock and Awe" advocacy effort to preserve Proposition 98, guaranteeing a minimum level of funding for public education, when the state was threatening major budget cuts for the 2008-2009 school year.

"It felt great to know our efforts made a big difference in Sacramento, and that our work directly benefited our students," said Lisa Scharmann, CUCPTSA president.

The effort was orchestrated throughout the community.

"There were the individual unit leg reps that got their parents involved, but we also went wider in the community with other schools districts to form a coalition (the South Orange County Education Coalition) so people weren't just hearing from one school, or one school district," Scharmann explained.

The campaign included monthly meetings and training sessions. Actions included sending more than 25,000 "pink slips" to



Kim Anderson was named the Shirley Igo Outstanding Advocate of the Year for 2009 by the National PTA.

the Governor's office, to protest the notices of layoffs to teachers.

Making it personal – by getting to know policymakers – is key to effective advocacy, Anderson says. Her legislative team members, for instance, visit Sacramento six or seven times a year, usually in small groups of about six.

"That has enabled us to develop relationships up there," she says. "With that comes much greater ability to understanding what's really going on – and advocating effectively."

"Kim understands the importance of team play as an advocate, and she always credits those she works with for every success," said Pam Brady, president of the California State PTA. "She keeps her focus on changing outcomes, honoring everyone's efforts and ideas. She is a wonderful example for all of us working to improve the lives of children."

Today, Anderson's kids are in eighth, 11th and 12th grades, and their mother shows no signs of giving up her life advocating for them and for all children. Her award is just another opportunity to do more.

"I just feel like our profile is being raised in terms of what we can do for kids," Anderson says. "And that's what we're all about."



National PTA President Jan Harp Domene, seated at center, recently joined a meeting of Legislation Team of the Capistrano Unified Council of PTSAs. Seated next to Domene and wearing white pants, is the team chair, Kim Anderson, who was named the Shirley Igo Outstanding Advocate of the Year by the National PTA. The red sash was a gift of the team to Anderson.

A new unit brings a new sense of community to school

How do you build a voice for children throughout California? PTA unit by PTA unit.

The formation of a new unit at any school is a big deal – the prime local action that powers a global approach to improving the lives of all children. The California State PTA wouldn't have nearly 1 million volunteer members without its approximately 3,800 local units throughout the state.

At William Land Elementary School in Sacramento, the formation of a new PTA unit was celebrated during a special gathering to mark the Second Annual California Family Involvement Day in February.

There were representatives from the California Department of Education, the Sacramento City Unified School District, the Sacramento Council of PTAs and the California State PTA Board of Managers. There were also plenty of parents, kids, educators, balloons and banners.

Adriana Yáñez, the new president of the unit, said there had been a PTA unit at the school in years past, but not recently. After speaking with the principal about the need for a PTA, Yáñez decided it was time to step up and help start one. Her son, Darryel Abraham Jr., just turned 9 and has attended the school since kindergarten.

"I think that I'm doing what I'm supposed to do as a parent," Yáñez said. "When parents are involved with their children's school, the children show it academically. It's always a victory – even if it's just one parent that gets involved. That one can make a difference in a child's life."

"I can see it in my own child; the more I'm involved, I can see a turnaround in his academics and in his behavior," she added.

Yáñez said talk of a possible school closure spurred parents to consider getting involved to protect and assist the school. The new unit has only had a couple of meetings so far, but it has officers and plans in place ready to ramp up in the fall. "At first I thought it was just doing the



Photographs/Patty Fagalnifin, William Land PTA

Charlie Fager, member of the California State PTA Board of Managers serving on the Parent Involvement Commission, was among those who celebrated the formation of a new PTA unit at William Land Elementary School.

meetings," Yáñez said. "I've learned it's a lot more. It's a challenge trying to get more parents involved."

It's that parental involvement that counts, from serving on committees to reviewing spelling words at the kitchen table, according to Lynetta Hughes, president of the Sacramento Council of PTAs.

"We must take a moment to thank our PTAs, school site councils, school site volunteers, and all parents who work with their children on their homework assignments," Hughes said.

Involved parents are key to student success, according to Manuel Guillot, director of the Office of Parent Support Services for the Sacramento City Unified School District.

"The parent-teacher association is vital for schools – because it creates that sense of community that you need for students to succeed," he said. "The PTA draws parents to come into the school, and it's important that children see that the home comes into the schools, that the school is not an isolated institution."

For parents, too, being part of the PTA offers a chance to find community support that can help out beyond the classroom. Yáñez occasionally calls on the power of the PTA for a little backup on the home front.

"I kid around with my son about it," she said. "When I tell him to do things I'll put it out there: 'As PTA president I expect you to be on your best behavior.'"



Adriana Yáñez is president of the new PTA at William Land Elementary School in Sacramento. Her son, Darryel Abraham Jr., just finished third grade at the school.

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**Be sure to check the website
for specials and new items**

Upcoming Events

June

- 15 Leadership Development Grant Report for District PTAs due
- 27-30 National PTA Convention
- 30 Grant Report for Unit, Council and District PTAs
- 30 Freewill Offering Remittance due to state office

July

- 1 New term starts
- 3 State office closed

111th Annual California State PTA Convention
April 29-May 2, 2010
Sacramento Convention Center

**If you are no longer a PTA president,
please forward this and all mailings
immediately to your successor.**

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The mission of the California State PTA is to positively impact the lives of all children and families by representing our members and empowering and supporting them with skills in advocacy, leadership and communications.

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