

***Benefit  
Golf Tournament  
Raises more  
than \$80,000  
Baker Foundation  
Announces \$25,000 Gift***



*Frank Scott of the R.C. Baker Foundation shares a moment of celebration with SLDC Golf Tournament Chair Dick Gorrie.*

Thanks to a generous \$25,000 gift by the Baker Foundation, SLDC's 29th Annual Benefit Golf Tournament raised \$82,000 for the school. The surprise announcement, which longtime supporter Frank Scott made during the awards dinner, caught golfers and staff completely off guard.

"The Baker Foundation donation turned a good event into a great event," said Tournament Chair Dick Gorrie. "It really made the difference."

The gift announcement was one of several highlights of

*continued on page 4*

***SLDC Named  
Program of the Year  
CSHA Bestows Honor to  
Regional Special Education School***

SLDC recently was named Program of the Year by the California Speech-Language-Hearing Association (CSHA). The award, one of the highest honors the Association bestows, recognizes one outstanding speech-language and/or hearing program each year that meets CSHA's defined guidelines for exemplary performance. SLDC was recognized for its outstanding clinical service, innovative service delivery models, coordination of its related program services, and use of innovative techniques.

"The Honors Committee found SLDC to have an innovative, comprehensive and enduring program," said Diane Collins, president-elect of CSHA, a professional association for nearly 5,000 California speech-language pathologists, audiologists, speech-language-hearing scientists, speech-language pathology assistants and students.

The awards committee cited SLDC's reverse inclusion classrooms, transition program for young adults, and such environmental enhancements as FM sound field systems and barrier-free playgrounds, as just a few examples of SLDC's contributions in the field of Communicative Sciences and Disorders.

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***"The Honors Committee found SLDC  
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and enduring program."***

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"Clinical programs such as audiology, counseling, occupational and physical therapies, and speech language pathology are coordinated to treat the 'whole' child," said Collins. "This innovative trans-disciplinary approach increases each student's opportunity for success."

The entry application was spearheaded by Speech Department Director Sara Jones, the daughter of SLDC Co-Founder Aleen Agranowitz. Both mother and daughter are licensed speech therapists.

"This truly is welcome news," said Jones. "To be recognized by our peers and the CSHA association is a prestigious honor. We are fortunate to have such great staff. This (award) is the icing on the cake."

CSHA is affiliated with the national American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). SLDC will be honored at the CSHA annual convention to be held in April 2008 in Monterey, California.

## ***SLDC Makes OCBJ Nonprofit List Center Ranks 12th in Orange County***

In December, the *Orange County Business Journal* published its annual list of the top 40 nonprofit agencies in the county. Speech and Language Development Center ranked 12th based on revenue for the 12 months that ended in June 2007. The ranking placed SLDC higher than such well-known nonprofits as the Girl Scouts of Orange County, Habitat for Humanity of Orange County, Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, Braille Institute and Orangewood Children's Foundation.

"This recognition presents us with both an opportunity and a challenge," said SLDC Board President Patricia "Trish" Wright. "We now have the chance to tell our story to business leaders who may not have heard about us. Our challenge is to match our visibility to our accomplishments."

### ***SLDC Board of Directors***

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### ***StairSteps Editor***

Muff Elstran  
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## ***SLDC's Coaster Run Named The USA Track & Field 2008 Southern California 5K Road Championship***

In only its third year of existence, SLDC's Coaster Run has earned the designation as *The USA Track and Field 2008 Southern California 5K Road Championship*. In addition, the Coaster Run Committee has added a race for "elite runners"—USA TF members who can complete the 5K in less than 17:00 minutes (men) or 20:00 minutes (women).

But what makes the Coaster Run distinctive is that the race committee has made sure that this family event has something for everyone. In addition to the 5K elite race, the 10K run and the 5K run/walk, they've retained the popular 1K kids walk through Camp Snoopy.

The expanded EXPO features displays, samples, and giveaways from local businesses as well as running-focused companies. Knott's Berry Farm once again has offered discount tickets. All participants will receive a coupon good for half-price entry to Knott's Berry Farm for up to four adults. Participants with \$100 or more in pledges will receive free entry to Knott's.

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***"...what makes the Coaster Run  
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has something for everyone"***

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The race is the idea of Board Member James Gonzales, who wanted a spring special event to complement the annual fall Benefit Golf Tournament (see story on front page.) Serving on his committee this year are: Jim Amato, Dave Duckworth, Jennifer Blazey, Mary Herman, David Cavanaugh, Dawn O'Connor, Michelle Doney, Muff Elstran, Nancy Egbert, Ray Bell, Santy Agranowitz, Steve Fifield, Jonathan Pauley and Anneka Sakovitch.



"Community events are a great way to reach out to a new audience," said Gonzales. "Our goal is to create a good time for a good cause."

The flat and fast course is certified by USA Track & Field. For more information and registration, call Muff Elstran at SLDC at 714/821-3620 ext. 226. Online registration is at [www.make-u-fit.com](http://www.make-u-fit.com) and [www.active.com](http://www.active.com).

## ***Grandparents Day is Just...Grand!***

On November 8, SLDC had more than 40 adult “students for the day” when it sponsored its first Grandparents (and Special Friends) Day. The purpose of the event was to give grandparents and others who serve an important role in a child’s life, an insight in to their students’ day at SLDC.



*Guests started the day by gathering in the Multipurpose Room.*

After a welcome by SLDC Co-founders Aleen Agranowitz and Gladys Gleason, guests toured the campus. They saw the new Boundless Playgrounds, the occupational therapy clinic, computer and fitness labs, and student classrooms. A Q&A session with SLDC Program Director/Chief Operating Officer Dawn O’Connor followed a delightful lunch.



*A special graphic was created to initiate the practice of Grandparents’ and Special Friends Day.*

Grandparents and special friends who were not able to attend the event had the chance to send a special note. It was read to their student that day to remind them just how special he/she is.



*SLDC Co-founder Aleen Agranowitz addresses the audience at Grandparents Day as Board Member Marlene Henry and Development Committee Member Lillian Maglione coordinate registration details.*

# ***Grant Total Nears \$60,000 in Second Half of 2007 Critical Financial Support Allows Enrichment Programs to Continue***

SLDC’s grant-writing efforts paid off during the second half of 2007, when 10 grants totaling \$59,100 were awarded. The financial support will help underwrite important enrichment programs at the school that often go unfunded by public school districts.

The **Green Foundation** awarded \$12,500 in support of the Center’s Art and Music Program. The funds will help fund two part-time program specialists.

The **Bruce Ford and Anne Smith Bundy Foundation** gave \$7,000 to help sustain the Center’s Vision Lab.

The **Angels Baseball Foundation’s** grant of \$5,000 will help expand the Center’s reading instruction capacity and to purchase textbooks.

The **Allergan Foundation** donated \$4,100 toward the Art and Music Program. This will partially fund a part-time music instructor and provide two classroom projectors.

The **Employees Community Fund of Boeing California** awarded a \$4,000 grant to help complete the installation of FM Sound Field Systems in SLDC classrooms.

The **Norris Foundation** \$5,000 grant will be used for SLDC Staff Development as will the \$5,000 donation from the **Wachovia Foundation**. Over the next three years, some 27 teachers and 16 therapists will be able to attend local special education workshops and conferences.

The **Bank of America Charitable Foundation’s** \$10,000 grant funded work on the Social Courtyard.

**Citi Foundation** awarded \$3,500 to purchase Smart Carts—movable carts that contain a computer with DVD/VHS capability, Internet hookup and a projector.

The **TJX Foundation** approved a \$3,000 request to support SLDC’s *Fast ForWord*® – Literacy Development Program.

SLDC is very grateful to all the donors whose gifts have provided these programs and services for students. Because staff considers these programs to be critical to students’ success, SLDC will continue grant-writing efforts in 2008.

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## ***Morning Sky Update***

As announced in the last issue of *StairSteps*, Morning Sky School and Residential Program closed its doors September 7, 2007. SLDC COO Dawn O’Connor said that staff ensured that all students had found appropriate placements in the weeks before that date. The Morning Sky site has been appraised, and while SLDC has had several interested parties inquire, no decision had been made on the property as of press time.

**Golf Tournament**  
*continued from front page*

this perennial fall classic. There also was a special presentation to Elden and Terre Peterson for their continued support of the event, a moving dedication by the Hi-Tops to Michael B., one of their members who had recently passed away, and a heartfelt thank-you from committee member Scott Clarkson. Clarkson said he hoped to have his son Brooks, an SLDC student, play in the tournament next year.

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***“The turnout and support for the kids from contributors, players and staff alike is just awe-inspiring.”***

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In addition to Gorrie and Clarkson, Tony Cousimano, Gary Elder, Louie Giampapa, Elden Peterson, Howard Platte and Janet Thomas served on this year’s golf committee. Many return to help the tournament year after year. One member said it was the attendees who inspired him to participate – not the other way around.

“The turnout and support for the kids from contributors, players and staff alike is just awe-inspiring,” said Platte.

SLDC’s Annual Benefit Golf Tournament will celebrate its 30th anniversary on October 6, 2008, returning once again to Alta Vista Country Club. Mark your calendars!

# **2008 Annual Campaign Gets a Wonderful Gift**

## ***Anonymous Benefactor Matches First-time Donor Contributions***

For many, the holidays are a traditional time for giving. And annually, Speech and Language Development Center has been the recipient of many thoughtful year-end gifts. This year, SLDC got an unexpected surprise when an anonymous donor offered to match any first-time donor’s gift up to \$5,000.

“Can you imagine what this means?” asked SLDC’s Director of Development Ray Bell. “One gift gives us the chance to really make a difference this year.”

Bell said the announcement was especially timely. The school depends on these donations to underwrite unfunded programs. Without financial support, the school might not be able to offer auditory training, art and music programs, or a vision lab. These are just a few of the services that reach out to students in a different way – yet are not generally reimbursed through public school funding.

Bell said that donors also should check to see if the company they work offers a matching gifts program.

“Many do,” said Bell, “and some started theirs because an employee asked. Check with your human resources department.”

To make a give via cash, check or credit card, contact Bell at 714/821-3620. He also can discuss gifts of appreciated securities or planned giving opportunities.



*NIMS Certification: SLDC staff members (from l to r) JoAnn Hill, Harriett Hasson, Dawn O'Connor, Malena Ugalde and Muff Elstran recently completed National Incident Management System training sponsored by FEMA and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. SLDC's Emergency Response Team (all of those listed above plus Brenda Dickey and Gina Gonzalez) meet every week to organize and update SLDC's preparedness efforts; conduct drills; stay informed about local, regional and national developments; and coordinate with local authorities.*

## ***Giving the Gift of Sound***

### ***SLDC Provides Hearing Aids to Those in Need***

SLDC's Audiology Department, in a community partnership with the Lions Club, has quietly been helping people in need regain their hearing. The Lions Club accepts donations of used hearing aids. It then prescreens requests based on ability to pay and refers patients to the Center. SLDC's trained audiologist evaluates the patient's hearing and custom fits the refurbished hearing aid. The results are almost immediate.

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***“Mom is hearing things that she hasn't heard in years. You should have seen her eyes light up when she heard the chimes on the grandfather clock for the first time...”***

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“It's a fantastic program,” said Gary Plant, whose mother received her hearing aid through the service. “Mom is hearing things that she hasn't heard in years. You should have seen her eyes light up when she heard the chimes on the grandfather clock for the first time in years. I wish we had found SLDC years ago.”

“The gift of sound is precious,” said SLDC Audiologist Rose-Marie Davis. “Hearing loss is so gradual most people don't even realize it's diminished. I'm glad we can help provide this needed service one patient at a time.”

If you know someone who might benefit from this service, contact Lions Club member Bill Wewer at 714/533-3029.

## ***Social Courtyard Completed***

SLDC's high school and transition students returned to school this fall to discover that they finally have a place to call their own—the Social Courtyard. Thanks to generous Capital Campaign supporters, the \$205,000 goal was reached. Now a landscaped area with benches and a canopy offers an age-appropriate setting for lunch and break time. Donations are still being accepted—and appreciated—for a built-in barbeque and game tables.



*Cover of the DVD created to raise funds for the Social Courtyard.*



*View from the west end of the newly completed Social Courtyard on the SLDC campus.*

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# Capital Campaign Event Celebrates Milestone

## Phase I Donors Honored During Champagne Reception

Recently, SLDC Capital Campaign volunteers and staff held a reception to acknowledge a milestone in its capital campaign, "its all about the kids!" The event celebrated the completion of its \$4.5 million goal and outlined the plans for Phase II. The guests of honor were many of the donors responsible for Phase I of the Center's campus renovation.

"I was amazed at the projects that have been completed so far—and the projects still to come are spectacular," said longtime SLDC supporter Anita Boorman. "Every donation, even the small amount that I've contributed, has been maximized. Our children are truly blessed to have this school."

Guests, like Boorman, first walked to the Jolin Primary Cluster where the school's first Boundless Playground serves as centerpiece. They were greeted by Executive Director Aleen Agranowitz and Board Member Jim Amato. Amato had served as Board President when the capital campaign first launched. A champagne toast to celebrate the accomplishment followed.

Next, everyone donned hard hats to tour the Phase II construction area. Guests walked through doors to signify the transition to new SLDC dreams such as a communications center, sports complex and transition terrace.

"I've been a board member for four years and I still learned a lot about SLDC by taking the tour," said Veronica Orrick. "We tend to think only of the primary cluster and our elementary school children because that's where the focus has been. It's great to see the plans for our high school and transition students."

Many others mirrored Orrick's comments.

"The evening was very special to many of us who heard for the first time from staff just how important each one of the new initiatives would be to the students," said Capital Campaign Member Bill Ford. "Seeing their passion and commitment told the story best."



*SLDC CEO Aleen Agranowitz and COO/Program Director Dawn O'Connor address staff, board members and donors in the Jolin Courtyard to celebrate the conclusion of Phase I of the Capital Campaign.*

# Mark Your Calendars!

**The Coaster Run**  
Run, Walk and Ride the Coasters for the Kids of SLDC

Sunday, April 13, 2008

Hosted by  
**Knott's BERRY FARM**  
Buena Park, CA

Register online:  
[www.coastermats.com](http://www.coastermats.com)  
[www.renegaderscoasterline.com](http://www.renegaderscoasterline.com)

All 5k & 10k participants will receive half-price adult entry (good for up to four people) to Knott's Berry Farm.

All 5k & 10k participants with \$100 or more in sponsorship will receive complimentary entry to Knott's Berry Farm.

10k Run - 5k Run/Walk  
1k Kids Run/Walk in Camp Snoopy

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START

Founded in 1955, the Speech and Language Development Center (SLDC) is a non-profit corporation comprised of: a non-public school and therapy center serving the special needs of 340 children and young adults with language, learning, and behavior disabilities; and a school and residential program for 24 emotionally disturbed boys. SLDC is certified by the California State Department of Education and licensed by the Department of Social Services.

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If you're receiving more than one copy of StairSteps, or if your address needs revising, please let us know!

## Moving?

Please notify us of your new address so that we may stay in touch.

## An Afternoon Tea

May 10 2008

For more information  
call Nancy Egbert at SLDC  
714-821-3620 x264.

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