

LA CASA

Orangewood Children's Home Auxiliary Organization



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An Orangewood resident learns to milk a cow at Amy's Farm, a working farm located in Ontario, CA.

Mooooving Forward:

Orangewood's return to normalcy... field trips, cooking classes, and holiday celebrations!

Imagine that you, as a La Casa donor, schedule a visit to the Orangewood Children and Family Center in Santa Ana. You pass the reception area, making your way to the intake desk where you observe an Orangewood resident sharing a snack with her brother. Did you know that La Casa gives the intake office a monthly food allowance? You glance to your left and see a medical center. Bookshelves filled with children's books, paid for by La Casa, line the sky-blue walls of the waiting area. You leave the intake office and walk down a path with cottages on both sides. You observe a group of adolescent girls, in one cottage, huddled under a large comforter listening to music on a radio. The bedding and radio were paid for with La Casa funds. On the opposite side of the path, there are a group of teenage boys watching the Angels

LA CASA:

Who we are and what we do.

game on a 60-inch Smart TV – an electronic device paid for by La Casa and hand delivered by our President, Tim Branoff. These examples show your donor dollars at work on a daily basis.

And then there are those truly special moments, courtesy of La Casa, like one in which an Orangewood resident realizes that “farm” isn’t just a word but a real-life experience. This past spring, La Casa sent twelve residents to Amy’s Farm in Ontario. The kids spent the day touring the farm and learning about cows, goats, horses, sheep, and pigs. Each child had the opportunity to pet the farm animals, learn how to milk a cow, and harvest vegetables from a polyculture garden.



Orangewood residents learn to make lasagna during their monthly cooking class. *Note: The faces of Orangewood residents have been obscured for their privacy and protection.

La Casa also provided funding for a field trip to the Lyon Air Museum in Santa Ana. In June, Orangewood residents participated in a guided tour of the facility. They learned about WWII-era American military aircrafts and vehicles and viewed an BMW automobile exhibit featuring classic racing cars. Orangewood residents and staff ended the day with a visit to Victory Diner in Orange for burgers and milkshakes.

In addition to off-site excursions, La Casa funded several on-site activities including a cooking class

series. As part of an effort to foster life skills development, Orangewood kids and teens can participate in monthly cooking classes. The staff led program focuses on teaching kitchen basics such as following recipes, kitchen knife safety, and preparing, measuring, and mixing ingredients. Thus far, residents learned to make Korean BBQ chicken and ribs, pizza, lasagna, garlic bread, cupcakes, and brownies. Thanks to the baked goods whipped up by our cooking class students, our La Casa Board meetings are cheerier and more flavorful.



Orangewood's Cinco de Mayo celebration included a pinata.

Lastly, La Casa recognizes national holidays and holiday weekends can be a challenging time for children in the child welfare system. In hopes of creating positive memories and promoting fun, La Casa funds numerous on-site holiday celebrations. This year, Orangewood residents hunted for Easter eggs in April, broke a candy-filled pinata in celebration of Cinco de Mayo, barbequed hamburgers on Memorial Day, and spent the Fourth of July munching on hot dogs, navigating an obstacle course, and jumping on bounce houses.

La Casa: The Who's and What's

La Casa is a non-profit public benefit corporation. La Casa’s mission is to foster interest and community involvement in Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC), 24-hour emergency shelter care facility, operated by the County of Orange Social Services Agency for children who have been abused, abandoned and/or neglected. La Casa’s purpose is to engage in fundraising activities to purchase goods and services required to meet the needs of children under the care of OCFC. In short, we strive to ease the trauma and pain children experience when they are placed in the child welfare system.