

HILARY & HAL DUNNING HONORED AT WINE D'VINE 2018

On November 2 it was Walden Family Services' great honor to recognize Hilary and Hal Dunning with the *Fostering Hearts Legacy Award*. For nearly two decades, the Dunnings' unwavering support has ensured that the foster children in Walden's care grow up in safe and loving homes, breaking the cycle of child abuse and neglect.

As the former Chair of our Governance Board, Hal channeled his expertise and empathy towards Walden's strategic and financial development. Hilary has devoted her time and talents to Walden through the healing power of music, contributing to past entertainment underwriting and meditative CD's distributed to our staff and youth.

Currently, Hal continues to oversee the growth of Walden by serving on our Finance Committee, and both he and Hilary hold integral roles in creating and sustaining resources for our children and families.

Walden Family Services is thankful to have been on the receiving end of the Dunnings' generosity over the years. As professional partners and dear friends, the Dunnings are exemplary and steadfast humanitarians.

For more Wine D'Vine 2018 coverage, please turn to page 3

A Word From WALDEN

Walden Family Services Newsletter • Holiday 2018

ADOPTION STORY: FINDING A FOREVER MOM



At three years old, Caleb was found wandering the streets of Los Angeles wearing nothing more than a soiled diaper. He was referred into the foster care system, and brought to Walden Family Services for placement. Caleb was placed with Ms. Bailey, a newly certified Walden Family Services foster parent.

Their first few months together were challenging. Caleb tended to have emotional outbursts and difficult behaviors stemming from past trauma. These included daily tantrums, running away from caregivers, using inappropriate language, throwing himself on the ground, and difficulty sleeping. He also found it hard to focus on tasks or follow directions.

But Ms. Bailey was unfazed. Instead, she got proactive. She stayed in close touch with her Walden social worker, who helped her find a range of therapeutic interventions designed to support traumatized children, ranging from counseling to parenting classes and even horse therapy. With Ms. Bailey's patience, endurance, and loving support, Caleb's behavior steadily improved.

Now six years old, Caleb continues to grow and thrive, meeting all his learning and behavioral milestones. It is evident that Caleb and Ms. Bailey have established a strong and loving relationship. Caleb fondly calls Ms. Bailey "Mom," and informed the family court that he wanted to live with her "forever!" In October, Ms. Bailey became Caleb's forever mom and Walden Family Services joins them in celebrating the finalization of his adoption!

LET'S MAKE SURE
ALL CHILDREN
HAVE A PLACE AT
THE TABLE

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LEARNING TO TRUST

Growing up, Lana’s home life was chaotic. Her parents used drugs and had many people in and out of the house. There was violence in the home. She also had to move frequently. These circumstances combined to make it very difficult for young Lana to form lasting, trust-filled relationships with anyone. She ran away.

Lana ended up in a group home and spent some time in juvenile detention. When she turned 18, she was referred to Walden Family Services. At Walden, Lana was able to develop a close relationship with a social worker and access many supportive services, including the Transitional Housing+Foster Care (THP+FC) program.

With THP+FC Lana was able to get her own apartment, go to school and work, all while accessing support to help her learn to take good care of herself—emotionally, physically and financially.

Lana also became active with David’s Harp Foundation, a youth music organization that helped her tap into her creativity, which made her heart sing. Lana’s lyrics reveal her poetic heart:

*All these rumors going around, judging everybody—
You see that he is homeless, but back then he was heroic.
You see a girl out on the streets, but inside—
She wants to be an artist.
She wants to be an artist.*

Now, Lana proudly shares that she is working, has a 3.8 grade point average in school and has lots of loving people in her life. “I have learned that there are people I can trust. I have learned that there are people who love me. Before, I thought nobody loved me.”

Congratulations to Lana—we look forward to supporting her as she continues to blossom into a kind and capable young woman!

Unless noted, names of children and youth have been changed throughout this publication for the sake of privacy.



*“I have learned that
there are people
I can trust.*

*I have learned that
there are people
who love me.*

*Before, I thought
nobody loved me.”*

WE THANK THE FOLLOWING FUNDERS FOR THEIR RECENT GRANTS

THE GREEN FOUNDATION

\$20,000 to provide operational support of Walden’s foster, adoption and transitioning youth services in Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino

LAS PATRONAS

\$18,200 for computer equipment to be used in Walden programs across San Diego County

UNITED WAY OF THE INLAND VALLEYS

\$25,000 for Walden’s Transitional Housing Program in Riverside County

**MARY ALICE & RON BRADY
AND MICHELLE & ART CANDLAND**

\$25,000 each in matching funds at Wine D’Vine in support of Walden’s programs throughout Southern California

Walden greatly appreciates all of its generous donors! To learn more about our programs, please visit waldenfamily.org

WINE D'VINE

TO BENEFIT WALDEN FAMILY SERVICES



Top: Concert Presenters Harley & Maryanne Sefton with Wine D'Vine Co-Chairs Vicki & Chris Eddy and Micki Olin & Reid Abrams

Middle Left: Walden CEO Teresa Stivers with Walden Youth Haley Bergam

Middle Right: Wine DVine Honorees Hal and Hilary Dunning with daughter Haley

Bottom: Legendary rock band The Moody Blues

Wine D'Vine, Walden's annual fundraiser on November 2, 2018, raised over \$400,000 in support of our programs for the most vulnerable children in Southern California.

The hospitality and enthusiasm of event co-chairs Vicki & Chris Eddy and Reid Abrams & Micki Olin prompted guests and sponsors to dig deep in support of our children and youth in foster care as they raised their paddles.

In addition to having the opportunity to bid on premium auction items, guests enjoyed fine wines from California's leading vineyards, delicious gourmet cuisine, and an exclusive concert with iconic rock band The Moody Blues, made possible through the generous concert underwriting of Harley and Maryanne Sefton.

The evening also included a stirring experience from Haley Bergam, who grew up in foster care and is now in Walden's transitional housing program. Now 22 and ready to graduate with an Associate's degree in Biology, Haley credits her foster family and Walden Family Services with giving her the support she needed in her transition to adulthood.

The Moody Blues original members Justin Hayward, Graeme Edge and John Lodge performed "Nights in White Satin," "Question," "Ride My See-saw," "Your Wildest Dreams," "I Know You're Out There" and many other hits. The hour-plus concert was truly special, and—according to a source close to the band—may have been the group's last performance together.

Walden is deeply grateful to all the supporters, volunteers and partners who made this event such a success.





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THE RECIPE FOR A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON IS IN YOUR HANDS

Dear Friends,

For most of us, the holidays are spent with family and friends gathered around tables, joined in shared traditions...rooting for favorite teams, taste-testing the pumpkin pie, planning on going back on our diets on Monday.

But for the more than 35,000 children and youth in the foster care system in Southern California, the holidays are just another time of uncertainty. Of wondering if there will be a table, or family, or friends. If those people will still be with them next year, or next week, or tomorrow.

LET'S MAKE SURE ALL CHILDREN HAVE A PLACE AT THE TABLE

You can help Walden Family Services find these children loving, stable families. For over 40 years we've made sure the hardest-to-place children—the medically fragile, sibling groups, teens and LGBTQ youth—have found the unconditional love they deserve. And we help young people transition from foster care to independence, so they can grow up to make their own traditions.

Please make a gift to Walden part of your tradition this year. If you believe that kindness to others is an ingredient for a happy life, the recipe is in your hands. Let's make sure all children have a place at the table.

Sincerely,

Teresa Stivers, CEO, Walden Family Services

