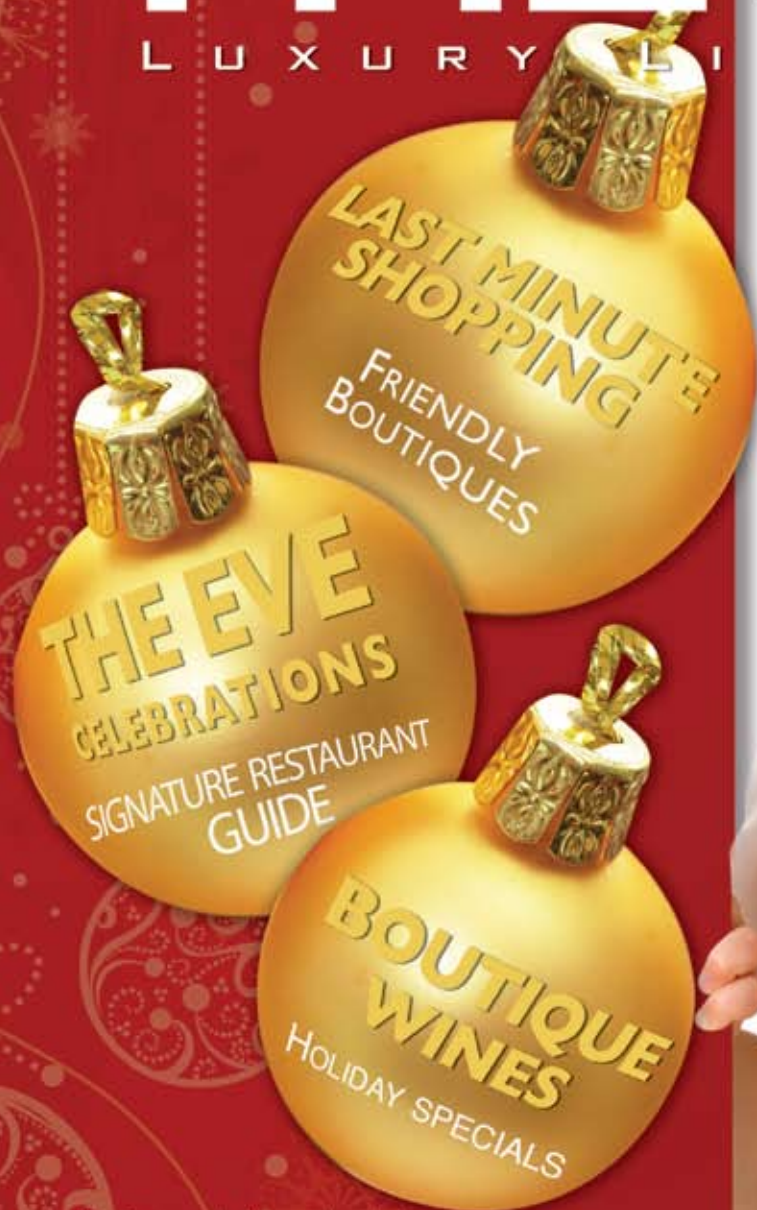


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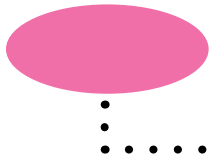
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MOTHERS' CLUB

THE POWER OF TWO

By **Karen Greene**

We all know that children are the future of our community and society. Nevertheless, many children in our Region have not received the assistance that they need – and that their parents need – in order to be successful in the future. To remedy this ever-growing issue, a local organiza-

tion has created a sanctuary where both the parent and the child learn that they are not alone and that they can succeed in the real world.



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Mothers' Club was founded by Mara Moser, a Quaker who reached out to single mothers in our Region and offered a kitchen, coffee, conversation and a shared daycare system. Eventually, the women in the group began to desire more than just an opportuni-

ty for babysitting, and education for both the parents and the children became top priority. Officially established in 1961, Mothers' Club Family Learning Center has evolved into an incredible support system and educational tool for mothers (and fathers) and their children who do not qualify for gov-

ernment programs like Head Start or Early Head Start, yet still cannot afford to pay for preschool and parenting centers. (Head Start is available only for those children that are living at or below the federal poverty level, but does not include impoverished children or the working poor. Early Head Start serves only 24 infants and toddlers in all of Pasadena, Altadena and Glendale.)

The Mothers' Club's "Power of Two" philosophy educates single parents on how to raise their children from birth through five-years-old.

It is increasingly evident that public school systems are behind as far as providing for kids at an early age, especially those that come from lower-income families. And in our community, immigrant families frequently struggle with a new culture and new language. As Sarah E. Orth, Development Director for the Mothers' Club, points out, taking preventative measures – meaning education and attention to development in the early years – can greatly impact the child later in life. Recent research has proven that children from low-income and minority families who participate in quality early childhood education programs with intensive parent participation are less likely to drop out of school, wind up in the juvenile system, join gangs or become pregnant.

Recently, the Mothers' Club was able to move to a new Green facility, which cost a total of \$6.5 million to construct. Only \$25,000 came from government funding. The rest of the funds came largely from private foundations and individual donors – without which the Mothers' Club could not exist, or afford to attain LEED Certification at the Gold Level from the U.S. Green Building Council as part of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System, a national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. Their new building perfectly embodies the mission of their organization – to provide a safe, healthy, and inspiring learning environment, in which families can prepare for success in school and in life.

To learn about volunteer opportunities or to make a donation, logon to MothersClub.org. ■