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EL NIDO FAMILY CENTERS CELEBRATES 90 YEARS OF SAVING LIVES

In Partnership with Robinson Gardens

SEPTEMBER 19 "GARDEN GALA" EVENT SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON AT-RISK YOUTHS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS WITH LA CULINARY and ART COMMUNITIES

"Jane the Virgin" Gina Rodriguez to be honored

El Nido Family Centers has so much to celebrate. It has come a long way from its modest beginning in 1925 as a health camp in Laurel Canyon for undernourished children. On Saturday, September 19, from 5:00-9:30 pm, El Nido will salute its past, present and future at the historic Robinson Gardens, a partner in this celebration. The "Garden Gala" will highlight the power of collaboration, partnership, mentorship and El Nido's history in LA County.

The event will raise funds for El Nido's many services for the over 10,000 families, youth and children they provide for each year. What sets this evening apart from other charity events however, is El Nido youth who will take center stage with their professional mentors in the culinary and art communities.

Gina Rodriguez: Early in her career, Rodriguez decided she would only play characters that serve as role models for young Latinos. She will receive the Exemplar Award for her advocacy of Latinos and their impact on our communities.

The spotlight will be on El Nido's newly launched "Garden to Table" program that provides training and mentorship with the culinary industry through urban gardening, cooking and restaurant management. Youth in the Garden to Table program will assist in cooking demonstrations at the Garden Gala with leading Los Angeles chefs who have been their mentors. Students from El Nido's Urban Gardening program will share home gardening tips and guidelines from Robinson's Kitchen Garden.

Chefs and restaurants donating their time and mentorship, include: (in alphabetical order) Hannah An, founder & executive chef, The District by Hannah An; Betty Fraser and Denise DeCarlo AKA The Grub Gals, co-owners, Grub Restaurant and As You Like It Catering; Ryan Legaux, owner & executive chef, Harold & Belle's; Nabor Prado-Diaz, chef de cuisine, Hugo's; and Jimmy Shaw, Garden Gala honorary committee member, and owner and executive chef, Loteria Grill.

Young photographers, whose work will be on exhibit from El Nido's Gang Reduction Youth Development program (GRYD), will be on hand to speak with guests about their artwork. The exhibit, "Two Neighborhoods-One Vision," represents photographs taken in Pacoima and at Robinson Gardens. The photos will be available for a donation at the Garden Gala. Professional photographer, Richard Doran, has mentored these young artists and instructed them in the use of DSLR (digital single lens reflex) cameras.

OTHER HONOREES INCLUDE:

Kaiser Permanente: For the compassionate and varied health and other services offered in its menu of programs to El Nido families via our community partnership, we gladly honor Kaiser Permanente.

The Harold Edelstein Foundation: Thanks to the Harold Edelstein Foundation, since 2004 hundreds of El Nido teen parents have been in a job training program "Harold Cares for Your Future Job Preparation." El Nido also salutes the Edelstein Foundation for aiding and assisting the impoverished, hungry, homeless, uneducated, abused, and at risk families in the community.

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STORIES THAT SPAN 90 YEARS

Guests will have an opportunity to meet some of El Nido's past clients who received services over the last nine decades. Their success stories, which cover generations, ethnicities and backgrounds, will be presented during the evening program via a compelling video montage. Much like the history of Los Angeles, a city of reinvention, El Nido has adapted to meet the needs of different generations and changing demographics. Starting with immigrant families in the '20s and '30s, to troubled teen girls in the '50s, riot-torn communities in the '70s and '80s, young teen mothers in the '90s, and youth facing gang influence, to today's families dealing with the need for jobs and financial literacy, El Nido has been an enduring resource.

"El Nido is proud to have helped hundreds of thousands of individuals on their journeys since 1925. El Nido Family Centers has established itself as a beacon in Los Angeles, inextricably linked to the fabric of our city," states Liz Herrera, El Nido executive director, who has got her start with El Nido 32 years ago as a UCLA intern.

EVENT DESCRIPTION & TIMELINE

Guests enter the estate's expansive grounds and wind their way past fruit, vegetable and flower gardens to the tennis court that will be transformed into a lounge for the evening, and where the cooking demonstrations and photo exhibition will take place. Walking back down the hill, guests will pass a reflecting pool on their way to the Great Lawn and garden-inspired dinner stations and bars. There will be docent-led tours of Robinson Gardens that include an Italian Terrace garden and ponds, a palm forest, chickens, rare specimen plants and the oldest coral tree in Los Angeles. In addition, guests will enjoy live music provided by student musicians from the LA Jazz Society, signature Bombay Sapphire cocktails, dancing, raffles and a live auction. El Nido is the first to co-host an event at Robinson Gardens since the Friends of Robinson Gardens and the County began the restoration in 1982. For many Angelenos attending, this will be their first visit to view Beverly Hills' first luxury six-acre estate, which was built in 1911.

EL NIDO: For 90 years El Nido, a 501c3, has been guided by the philosophy that "a child cannot grow up twice," El Nido is a safe haven for at-risk populations in LA, providing critical services to over 10,000 children, youth and family members each year in some of LA County's most disadvantaged neighborhoods. El Nido's mission is to empower families to break the cycle of poverty, child abuse, violence, academic failure, and teen pregnancy through outstanding educational, youth development, health and therapeutic services. [Watch our video](#). [Learn about our programs](#). www.elnidofamilycenters.org.

ROBINSON GARDENS: Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Robinson Gardens estate was built in 1911 and originally owned by Virginia and Harry Robinson of LA's J. W. Robinson department store fame. On the passing of Virginia Robinson, the estate was bequeathed to the County of Los Angeles and today is part of the Department of Parks and Recreation. The County, along with the Friends of Robinson Gardens, a non-profit organization, maintains the lush, six-acre grounds that include an awe-inspiring Australian King Palm Forest and an urban farm where history and science come to life for visiting schoolchildren. El Nido has partnered with this historic estate on several of its current projects that are being highlighted at the event. www.robinsongardens.org.

SPONSORS

Kaiser Permanente; Susie and Stuart Berton; Rose Norton and Phil Savenick

PARTNERS

Robinson Gardens, Friends of Robinson Gardens, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, Bombay Sapphire, Snyder Diamond, Limoneira, Valley Presbyterian Hospital, Beverly Hills BMW, Sklar Kirsh LLP, Alila Hotels & Resorts, St. Kitts Tourism Authority/Belle Mont Farm

EL NIDO GARDEN GALA REGISTRATION AND TICKETS

Open table seating, hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, dinner and a dessert stations, \$250 per person.

LOCATION AND PARKING:



Driving Directions

EVENT INFORMATION: Contact Denise Lopez at El Nido Family Centers at 818.830.3646 or email Denise at dlopez@elnidofamilycenters.org

PRESS GUIDELINES and Press contact: Private press event. All press must be cleared in advance with press credentials. Pre and night of interviews please contact Elaine Doran at E L Doran PR 818.399.8579 or email at eldoranpr@gmail.com. No press or crews will be allowed to park on Elden Way. Press parking arrangements need to be made prior to the event.

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