



Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos
1 Positive Place
San Marcos, CA 92069
www.boysgirlsclubsm.org

PRESS RELEASE

*For immediate release

Jared Diaz Barrios: Community Service, Dedication to Helping Others, Yields San Diego County Youth of the Year Award

SAN MARCOS, CA – Jared Diaz Barrios, an academic standout and Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos member who helped serve more than 500 meals daily during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, has been named the 2021 San Diego County Youth of the Year.

“This is a great honor,” said Jared, 15, who was selected to represent the Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos as Youth of the Year in January, was named San Diego County Youth of the Year on March 9, and will move on to represent the county in the California Youth of the Year competition in April.

Jared was introduced to the Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos when his parents enrolled him as a member in 2016 as a safe harbor from their neighborhood overrun by crime and where gang fights and drug deals were part of the landscape. Jared quickly immersed himself in club programs and community outreach activities. “It’s my home away from home,” he said. “It’s a true family.”

Active in the Leaders in Training program and Keystone, the latter a national Boys & Girls Club program that encourages leadership and community service, Jared has a 4.0 grade point average at Mission Hills High School in San Marcos, where he plays setter on the junior varsity volleyball team and is active in the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program. He refuses to be defined by where he came from; he has his sights set on attending UC Irvine as a criminology major and aspires to a career as a canine officer, preferably with the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department.

“Jared embodies what the Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos is all about through his selfless dedication and growth as a leader since he first walked in our doors,” said Cathy Baur, President & CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos. “He has shown a phenomenal work ethic and character and his dedication to serving the community is unsurpassed. We are proud of what he has accomplished and we are excited to see what the future holds.”

Armando Lara, Director of Teen Services at the Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos, praised Jared in a recommendation letter for the National Youth of the Year award. “He joined our leadership groups because he has a passion for helping others and giving back to his friends, family, and community.”

Giving back to the community includes completing more than 200 community service hours in the past year; helping to serve 500 meals daily at the Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos during the pandemic, working on fundraisers to aid fellow clubs in Los Angeles that were impacted by recent wildfires, and partnering with other organizations to feed and clothe area residents in need. In 2020 he was one of an elite few selected for a special service trip to South Africa and had begun raising funds; however, it was postponed because of the pandemic. Jared looks forward to 2022 when the trip will be rescheduled.

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“The Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos has definitely become a significant part of my life, a place that has taught me how to grow as a person and how to become a success,” said Jared. “I’ve been lucky, fortunate, and blessed to be able to come to such an amazing place every day.

“Everybody is accepted here,” he continued. “No matter who you are or where you’re from, you’ll be loved.”

About Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos

Boys & Girls Club of San Marcos (BGCSM) is a nonprofit youth development organization whose mission is to inspire and enable all young people to become productive, responsible and caring citizens. The organization, which first opened its doors in 1979 at Woodland Park, serves youth ages 6 to 18 at its standalone branch and 12 extension sites at school campuses and affordable housing communities throughout San Marcos and neighboring communities. BGCSM offers youth programs, developed and run by trained youth development professionals that emphasize three priority outcome areas: academic success, good character and citizenship and healthy lifestyles. In response to COVID-19 the organization launched its Distance Learning Center program to support youth and families while local schools conduct virtual instruction. To learn more or support the Club, please visit www.boysgirlsclubsm.org

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