



December 28, 2017

Issue #1

Introducing our first quarterly Newsletter!
Happy Holidays from The SUHI Foundation!!

<p>Table of Contents</p> <p>Thank you 1</p> <p>Honoring Mrs. Peace 1</p> <p>2017 Has Been a Great Year 2</p> <p>Project Letterman 2</p> <p>Board Member Spotlight 3</p> <p>Have Time and Talent to Share? 3</p> <p>Words from our Scholars 4</p>	<p>Thank You for Making an Impact</p> <p>I would like to extend a special “thank you” to all who have invested in the education of our SUHI Scholars through donations or other contributions that have enabled us to award scholarships. With your help, this year The SUHI Foundation has also awarded a matching grant to the Red Devils Corps/Band, and jackets to Project Letterman recipients. You have made a lasting impact in the lives of our students, and they are forever changed!</p> <p>As we look forward to the new year, we have exciting plans to continue to expand the ways in which we support Sweetwater High School students - including a recently unveiled Mini-Grant Program. This new effort will provide much-needed funding for student- and staff-led programs and activities that enrich the Red Devil experience. In line with the Foundation’s mission, the impact of these grants will further motivate SUHI students to remain engaged and see their full potential. But, the Foundation exists merely as a vehicle fueled by your generosity. With just a few days left of 2017, we hope that you will consider The SUHI Foundation in your year-end giving. We appreciate your continuous support at any and every level!</p> <p>Wishing you the best as you welcome the new year.</p> <p>With gratitude,</p> <p>Martha Juarez Executive Director SUHI % 1995</p>
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Honoring Mrs. Peace

Former teacher “Mrs. Peace”, Pat Peace Browning (1929-2017) who taught at SUHI in the 1950’s and 1960’s, passed away last month. Her sons, Steve and Patrick Peace, have arranged a gathering in her honor scheduled for **Thursday, February 8th from 5:30pm to 7:30pm at the Bonita Golf Club**. It is open to all who knew her. Feel free to pass along the information to anyone in your circle of friends and family who may be interested in attending.

2017 Has Been a Great Year!

This past May, The SUHI Foundation was able to award a total of 19 scholarships to Sweetwater High's Class of 2017 - for a total of \$90,000! An additional \$160,000 was awarded by our close partner, the Morgan Family Foundation, to 20 more scholarship recipients, plus one full cost-of-attendance scholarship to the University of Colorado at Boulder. Since its creation in 2006, the Foundation has advocated for higher education by supporting university- and college-bound graduating SUHI seniors with scholarships - totaling over \$700,000. Most are renewable for 4 years and are awarded in the amount of \$500 to \$3,000 per year, to aide scholars in their pursuit of a Bachelor's degree.

Scholarships are made possible thanks to the support of individuals and groups of people who have a desire to help SUHI students reach their academic and career potential. Some are memorials as a tribute to a loved one who has passed, others are sponsored and named by a family or individual with some affiliation to SUHI, and others are the collective effort of a graduate class year. We hope to increase the number of scholarships offered every year. If you are interested in establishing a scholarship fund, please contact us!

To see full list of all the students we have supported and where they have headed, check out our website

<http://thesuhifoundation.org/celebrate/scholarship-recipients/>

PROJECT LETTERMAN

by Crisel Magyawawi*

SUHI Scholar % 2017, Point Loma Nazarene University

Project Letterman is one of the great programs introduced to Sweetwater by Mr. Paul Wapnowski and Ms. Kristina Campbell. In this program, free Letterman Jackets are given to athletes who are considered deserving. These jackets are funded through sponsors who willingly donate to the project. In order to apply for Project Letterman, an athlete must answer a series of questions and turn in their application along with two letters of recommendation from either coaches or teachers. The athlete must also commit to an academic or athletic goal that they will continue to work on after receiving a jacket. Although, to some people, a Letterman Jacket is simply a piece of clothing decorated with letters to keep you warm, this jacket means the world to athletes. A Letterman Jacket is symbolic of their athletic achievements. It is a symbol of the time and effort they have sacrificed for the sake of the sport(s) they love. In the average eye, this jacket is made of leather and other materials; but to the athletes who wear the jacket, it is made from the blood, sweat and tears they attained on the court or the field.

* Excerpt from The Devils' Advocate newspaper, October 2016 edition, with permission.



To date, 58 jackets have been awarded and they're not stopping there. Please help Project Letterman motivate more teens, and, ultimately, award them with a treasured keepsake of high school--- the coveted Letterman Jacket. We are still working to raise enough funds to award 20 jackets this school year. Read about the current Finalists at <https://www.facebook.com/projectletterman/>. If you would like to donate, please click on the "Donate" button on our website (<http://thesuhifoundation.org/donate>) and select the Project Letterman link from the donation webpage. Thank you!

Board Member Spotlight by Angelica Fontanilla



Mr. Jess Van Deventer

SUHI Scholar % 2017, UC Irvine

National City resident and Class of 1957 graduate of Sweetwater High School, Jess Van Deventer is a significant figure in the community. At a young age, his enthusiasm for race car driving followed him going into high school, where his experiences in auto shop class helped shape the person he is today. He specifically recalls that receiving a recognition from Bank of America for his achievements in auto shop class reinforced his belief that he had found his path and served as a great motivator. Upon graduating from Sweetwater, he continued his passion and became an entrepreneur and business owner in the areas of auto parts retailing, construction, and real estate investments. He also took interest in drag racing and was pronounced NHRA World Champion in 1961 and 1962, then was drafted into the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame in 2015.

Jess' success is rooted in his upbringing in National City, but has also been shaped through his civic and community engagement. Over the past 60 years, Jess has served on numerous boards and appointments. He shared that among them, one of the most memorable is serving on the board of the San Diego Holiday Bowl, where he was Chairman for several years. His involvement in The SUHI Foundation, as past President and current board member, has certainly been one of the most impactful. Giving back to his high school and staying committed to the community is one of Van Deventer's priorities. Jess affirms that his motivation to support the foundation is that, "giving back makes a world of a difference to the current students...for many, earning a scholarship literally decides whether or not they will attend a university." In 2012, he created the Jess and Sharon Van Deventer Scholarship for students studying business and since then, he has been sponsoring a \$4,000 scholarship to a SUHI senior heading to a four year university. Mr. Van Deventer has made the dreams of several Sweetwater students possible to attend college and pursue a continued education. He embodies the definition of a dedicated community member and a true Red Devil.

Have Time and Talent to Share?

If you are interested in contributing to The SUHI Foundation (i.e. working on an organizational project, sharing your experience(s) with our college students, and/or serving on the committee for the Foundation, etc.) please email us at info@thesuhifoundation.org. Thank you!

In Their Own Words: Messages from Our SUHI Scholars...

“If I were asked to share with you one of my greatest accomplishments this academic year, it would have to be my ability to talk to the faculty and staff on campus whom I am very fortunate to work with. I know all of the instructors in my department even those I have not taken a class with. They have all seen how hard I work, and recognize my position as the peer mentor for the major. After spring break, I would spend late nights in my department office or another study room available to students in order to help them study. One of the professors in my department would always check in on me and ensure I would go home at a reasonable hour and as well as ensure my safety in the office spaces provided to me.



I even built a relationship with the custodian who would also ensure that I was safe and would go home at a reasonable time. I would not have the guts to approach staff and faculty had it not been for my peer mentor position. I have developed many skills that have allowed me to build the courage and confidence to speak to my instructors.”

- Marilyn Villalba, SUHI % 2014, Humboldt State, Criminology and Justice Studies



“I would like to thank...The SUHI Foundation for believing in my potential to excel in higher-level education. Aside from alleviating a financial burden from me, this award amplifies a message of belief and entrustment from my community that my journey in higher education is worth it and that people believe in my success. As I have been conditioned since my high school involvement with MEChA: it takes a community to get us to the places that we go. I carry with me, not only my individual accomplishments, but also those of the community; I celebrate this constantly and represent our community with pride everywhere I go. I hope that one day, I am able to give back to those who gave so much to me by returning to the community and becoming involved in City Government.”

- Isaac Felix, SUHI % 2015, UCLA, Human Biology and Society & Chicax Studies