

Claremont Post

YOUR GUIDE TO CLAREMONT LIFE & EVENTS

LOCAL MOMS UNITE!

NEW RESOURCE CENTER
IN CLAREMONT

TURNING PAGES,
CHANGING LIVES

THE VOLUNTEERS HELPING
CLAREMONT STUDENTS
SUCCEED AFTER SCHOOL



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Mom's Morning: The Village I Didn't Know I Needed



When I was pregnant with my daughter, Catalina, I struggled with terrible morning sickness. At the same time, sales at our café were lower than normal. I was going through it mentally, physically, emotionally, and financially.

Every Friday, my team at Stein Team Realty meets to talk about the goals we set the week before—whether we achieved them, why or why not, and how we can hold ourselves accountable moving forward. One Friday, I completely broke down. Through tears, I admitted, "I don't know what I'm missing, but obviously something isn't working." What I was really craving wasn't just better sales—I was craving connection. I wanted to be around people who understood what I was going through.

One of our team members, Jojo, suggested I join a moms group. As I thought about it, I realized something: why couldn't I create a space that would not only bring local moms together but also introduce them to our café?

So I started reaching out. I posted on Facebook and invited moms to meet for coffee and conversation. Our first Mom's Morning was in October. Five moms came. It felt a little awkward—everyone was kind, but understandably hesitant because it was something new.

In November, three moms came.
In December, just one mom showed up.
That one mom changed my life.

Victoria arrived with her four-month-old baby expecting to meet other moms. Instead, it was just the two of us. She could have turned around after grabbing her free hot cocoa, but she didn't. Instead, we sat together and talked for more than two hours.

As a soon-to-be mom, I was welcomed with open arms. Victoria shared her postpartum journey, told me about other moms groups in the area, and spoke honestly about the joys and challenges of motherhood. She poured into me with encouragement, wisdom, and kindness that I'll never forget. That day in December will always hold a special place in my heart. Because of that conversation, I kept going.

Today, Mom's Morning welcomes around 25 moms each month. In April, I watched moms of children with special needs connect and share valuable resources with one another.

In May, I met Jourdan, a Claremont mom and the owner of Sunny Sunday Blooms, who generously created beautiful mini bouquets for every mom in honor of Mother's Day.

In June, I reconnected with a friend I hadn't seen since high school, and my neighbor joined us for her very first solo outing with her five-week-old baby. What started as an idea to help our café has become so much more.

Mom's Morning has blossomed into genuine friendships, meaningful conversations, support during difficult seasons, and a community where women show up for one another. It has become the village I didn't know I needed.

If you're a mom—or soon to be a mom—and you're looking for connection, we'd love to welcome you.

Mom's Morning meets every third Thursday from 9:00–11:00 a.m. at The Spot Cafe. I've also started an Instagram community called Motherhood, Unfiltered, where I share local mom meetups, community events, and opportunities for women and mothers to connect. Because motherhood wasn't meant to be done alone. Sometimes, all it takes is one conversation—and one person willing to stay—to change everything.



Written by **Devynn Stein**
909-237-8512 • devynn@steinteamrealty.com
www.SteinTeamRealty.com

Mom's Morning

at The Spot Cafe



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More Than a Storytime: Claremont's Read Me Program Helps Build a Lifelong Love of Reading



For nearly a quarter century, the Claremont Kiwanis Club's Read Me program has been quietly making a lasting difference in the lives of local children—one book, one classroom, and one volunteer at a time.

Since its launch in 2002, the program has placed more than 50,000 books into the hands of Claremont students, helping young readers build home libraries while fostering a lifelong love of reading. Today, approximately 1,500 books are distributed each year to transitional kindergarten and preschool students throughout the Claremont Unified School District.

The program is built on a simple but powerful idea. Throughout the school year, Kiwanis volunteers visit classrooms to read aloud to students, engage them in conversations about the stories, and then send each child home with a book of their own. Those books become treasured additions to family bookshelves, encouraging children and their parents to continue reading together long after the classroom visit ends.

As a member of the Claremont Kiwanis Club, I've had the privilege of reading each week to two transitional kindergarten classes during the 2025-2026 school year at Mountain View Elementary School. What began as a room full of energetic, wiggly children gradually transformed into a group of attentive listeners eager to predict what happens next, ask thoughtful questions, and share their excitement about books.

One of the greatest rewards comes outside the classroom. It's not uncommon to hear enthusiastic voices calling, "Hi, Miss JoJo!" while shopping at the Claremont Farmers Market or around town. Those unexpected moments are reminders that reading together builds more than literacy—it creates meaningful relationships and strengthens the sense of community that makes Claremont so special.

The impact extends beyond the students themselves. Parents frequently express their gratitude, sharing how excited their children are to bring books home and how reading together has become a cherished family activity. For many children, these books represent the beginning of a personal library and provide opportunities to practice reading in an environment where learning continues beyond the school day.

Programs like Read Me demonstrate how volunteers can make an extraordinary impact through consistent, simple acts of service. A half-hour spent sharing a story can spark curiosity, build confidence, and help nurture the next generation of readers.

As another successful school year comes to a close, the smiles, hugs, and excitement of the final classroom visit serve as a reminder that the greatest gifts often come wrapped in the pages of a good book.

The Read Me program continues to welcome volunteers and community support. Whether by contributing financially or spending time reading with students, there are many ways to help ensure that every child has the opportunity to discover the joy of reading.

To learn more about the Claremont Kiwanis Club's Read Me program or to make a donation, visit claremontkiwanis.org. Together, our community can continue turning pages—and changing lives—for years to come.



Written by **Jordana "JoJo" Treadwell**
909-519-1358 • jojo@steinteamrealty.com
www.SteinTeamRealty.com



CLAREMONT
Unified School District



— ♥ HELP SUPPORT THE ♥ — **CUSD STUDENT & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER**

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The CUSD Student & Family Resource Center is a welcoming space that connects Claremont Unified School District students and families with the resources they need to thrive.



OPENED
February 19, 2026

The Resource Center officially opened on February 19, 2026 at Oakmont Outdoor School, Claremont.

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- Poultry
- Eggs
- Beans

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- Pasta
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- Cereal

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- Tomato sauce
- Chips & pretzels
- Cookies & crackers
- Apple sauce, fruit cups
- Any healthy snacks



Thank you

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Together, we build a stronger community.**



CUSD STUDENT & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Oakmont Outdoor School
1420 E. 26th St., Claremont, CA 91711



Learn more about CUSD Family Resources:
www.cusd.claremont.edu/

**SCAN TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT THE RESOURCE CENTER
AND HOW YOU CAN HELP!**



Please call the CUSD Student and Family Resource Center (909) 398-0615 to schedule delivery of donations.
Resource Center Hours are Monday-Friday 9:00am-4:30pm by appointment.

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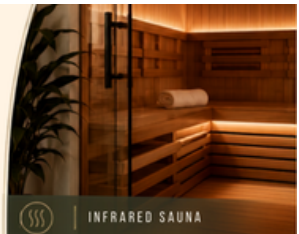
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Changing Lives After School: How CLASP Helps Claremont Students Succeed



Strong communities aren't built by homes alone—they're built by the people, schools, and organizations that invest in the next generation. One shining example is Claremont After-School Programs (CLASP), a nonprofit organization that has quietly transformed the lives of local students for more than 20 years.

CLASP provides free after-school tutoring and mentoring to elementary students in the Claremont Unified School District who need extra academic support. Students are referred by their teachers when they would benefit from the kind of individualized attention that simply isn't possible in a busy classroom. Through one-on-one tutoring, students receive help with reading, math, homework, organizational skills, and, perhaps most importantly, confidence in their own abilities.

Today, CLASP serves approximately 80 students each week at three community-based locations. While a small part-time staff oversees the program, its success depends on more than 100 dedicated volunteers who generously give their time each year.

The need for CLASP has never been greater. Many of the students entering the program are performing below grade level in reading and math, and more than 90 percent qualify for services because they are from socio-economically disadvantaged households, are English language learners, experiencing homelessness, or receive special education services.

The results speak for themselves. During the 2025-2026 school year, more than half of participating students improved by at least one grade level in math, while half showed similar gains in reading. Even more encouraging are the personal transformations that accompany those academic improvements. Graduating sixth graders consistently report feeling more confident, better prepared for school, and proud of what they have accomplished.

The experience of one sixth-grade student demonstrates how CLASP can change the course of a child's education. When he first joined the program, he struggled both academically and behaviorally. With the patience of his volunteer tutor, consistent encouragement, and the structure provided by the program, he made remarkable progress.

By the end of sixth grade, his reading skills had improved by nearly two grade levels, his math performance had significantly increased, and he had developed the confidence and maturity to approach school with an entirely different attitude. Stories like his remind us that caring adults can truly change the trajectory of a child's future.

Claremont Unified School District Superintendent Dr. James Elsasser perfectly summarizes the program's impact: "CLASP provides vital support for many of our under-achieving elementary school students, offering homework help and encouragement in developing organizational and social skills which lead to academic success. CLASP is an important member of our team and has become a valuable resource for teachers, parents, and students in our community."

CLASP's success depends on community involvement, and there are many ways to make a difference. If you've ever considered volunteering, this is a wonderful opportunity to positively impact a child's future. Volunteer tutors receive training and ongoing support, and the organization also welcomes individuals with skills in writing, publicity, social media, event planning, financial management, and fundraising. Financial contributions are always appreciated and help ensure these life-changing services remain free for local families.

You can help change the lives of these students. Whether you volunteer as a tutor, lend your professional skills behind the scenes, or make a financial contribution, your support makes a lasting difference. To learn more about becoming a volunteer or making a donation, visit www.clasp4kids.org. When a child gains confidence, improves in school, and begins to believe in themselves, our entire community benefits. Programs like CLASP remind us that sometimes the greatest investment we can make isn't in property—it's in people.

Editor's Note: My sincere thanks to CLASP Board Member Jack Mills for generously sharing the background information, program statistics, and student success stories that contributed to this article.



Written by **Jordana "JoJo" Treadwell**
909-519-1358 • jojo@steinteamrealty.com
www.SteinTeamRealty.com

Celebrating the People Behind CLASP's Success



Congresswoman Judy Chu recognizes tutors who have volunteered with CLASP for 15 or more years.

Standing, Left to Right: Bev Jack, Congresswoman Judy Chu, Cass Armstrong, CLASP Board President Jack Mills, Judi Pocock

Seated, Left to Right: Lissa Petersen, Ellen Hamilton, Chris Caenepeel, Barbara Rugeley

Learning Beyond the Classroom: California Botanical Garden Field Trip

CLASP students explored the California Botanical Garden on an enrichment field

trip, accompanied by (Left Rear): CLASP board members Harriett Archibald-Woodward and Bev Jack, and (Right Side): CLASP board member Carol Lee Marshall.



Tutor Spotlight: Ellen Hamilton & Student

Long-time CLASP tutor Ellen Hamilton is pictured with one of her students, reflecting the meaningful relationships and positive impact that dedicated volunteers make through personalized learning and mentorship.



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Monthly Must-Do Events

Moms Morning at The Spot Café – Third Thursdays

- Every third Thursday of the month, The Spot Café hosts a cozy morning just for moms and their little ones. Enjoy meaningful conversations with local moms while kiddos take part in a free craft and sip on complimentary hot cocoa or smoothies. It's a relaxed, welcoming space to connect, unwind, and build community.
- Every 3rd Thursday, 10 AM–12 PM.



Coffee Date with Scott and JoJo

- Join Scott & JoJo for a friendly Weekly coffee meetup! Catch up with friends, meet new people, and enjoy great conversation in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. Everyone is invited!
- Every Wednesday's at 10:30 AM | MUGS Coffee Roasters - La Verne, CA



Claremont Village Art Walk

- Experience the creativity of the Claremont Village Art Walk, a free community event held on the first Saturday of every month in the heart of the historic Claremont Village. Local galleries, museums, businesses, and artists open their doors for special exhibitions, artist receptions, and interactive experiences, transforming downtown into a vibrant celebration of the arts.
- Saturday, August 1, 2026 | 6:00–9:00 PM | Claremont Village



National Night Out

- Join the Claremont Police Department for National Night Out on Tuesday, August 5, at Joat Park! Enjoy community exhibits, games and prizes for kids, and a screening of Moana 2 at dusk. Donations of children's toys, school supplies, and non-perishable snacks for the Children's Advocacy Center will be accepted. Bring your family and celebrate community with CPD!
- Tuesday, August 05, 2025 | 06:30 PM - 08:30 PM | Joat Park, 1717 N. Indian Hill Boulevard, Claremont, CA, 91711



Claremont Farmers & Artisans Market – Every Sunday

- Every Sunday from 8 AM to 1 PM, the Claremont Village fills with fresh produce, handmade goods, flowers, and friendly faces – a place to shop local, connect with neighbors, and support small farms and businesses. Discover Claremont
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