As we approach the dramatic end of 2016, we are more thankful than ever before for your support. In standing with AHA!, you stand for social and emotional intelligence, diversity appreciation, social justice, and kindness.

AHA! is a movement that, with your help, will continue to promote a generation of leaders who practice not just random acts of kindness, but intentional and declared acts of kindness every day.

Although we have made enormous strides on all fronts of services, evidence-based research, and community impact, we are still challenged to meet our annual budget.

If ever there was a time to empower a generation to work for the highest good, it is now. If ever there were a time to make kindness the norm, it is now. Our journey is long, and we need your help to nourish and support our goals. Thank you for doing everything you possibly can to help AHA! become a household name and a fully funded movement.

From Sunnie Robertson, teacher at Santa Barbara High School, on the impact of AHA! in her classroom:

As a high school freshman teacher, I believe that AHA! is instrumental in the following ways: students have the opportunity to work with adults (of varying races, educations, experiences) without a “rubric”; students are able to meet weekly in whole group and small group where they learn to trust and be empathetic to others; students are asked to consider life skills that enable us to be better global citizens; and AHA! simply allows students to connect to one another. In today’s busy world, it is refreshing to see a program like AHA! that focuses more on the individual than the test score.

We have been blessed for seven years with the stellar leadership of Board President Beryl Kreisel and her husband Neil Kreisel. They are now moving on (Please see “Hats Off to Beryl,” below). As of January 1st, our new board president will be Marla McNally Phillips. We know she will bring incredible verve, commitment, and vision to the next era of AHA!. We are also thrilled to welcome Patricia Selbert, David Alameida, and Jim Peal as new board members.
IN 2016 AHA!:

- Served over 2,500 teens and their families directly and reached another 3000 in student-led Connection Circles
- Co-authored Prepare to Thrive, the first research-based manual on integrating social-emotional learning into teen after-school programs www.selpractices.org
- Participated in over a dozen national media outlet pieces on social and emotional learning, with Jennifer as a featured thought leader; Jennifer also was honored to be keynote speaker at CALM’s annual luncheon
- Co-led Stand Together, a project that introduced the AHA! Method for connection to hundreds of elementary school youth
- Led trainings in Social and Emotional Learning for hundreds of youth facilitators across 10 different organizations
- Sent leadership to give a keynote address at Michigan Conference for Youth Providers
- Trained over 35 youth to work with the school district as Restorative Approach facilitators
- Expanded its programming to private schools, including Laguna Blanca and Cate High School
- Received a gift from Kristin Kirby to sponsor its trauma counseling services for teens and families

HATS OFF TO BERYL!

In celebration of Beryl Kreisel — whom we fondly call “The Empress” — we are dedicating our end-of-the-year campaign to the establishment of the Empress Room at the AHA! offices. This room will be dedicated to the core competencies of social and emotional learning: Emotional Management and Empathy.

Every donor who participates between now and January 1st will be part of inaugurating this space for staff and youth alike to learn in a safe and inclusive mode that honors the character and kindness of our departing Board President. Those who give $1000 and above to this initiative will receive a custom AHA! hat and an adorable “onesie” for any future AHA! Peace Builders they might know! Email molly@ahasb.org if you would like to participate in honoring Beryl.

SING IT OUT 2017

Get ready to bring the house down as AHA!’s Sing It Out moves to the Lobero Theatre this year…

Save the date Sunday, April 30, 2017

Stay tuned for information about special guests and grand surprises!

Don’t miss it!

From Joanie Merrill, M.Ed., Teacher, San Marcos High School:

AHA! has been one of the best things to happen to my Freshman Seminar class and to the school district.
HIKE FOR AHA! 2016

Special thanks to all of you who helped make our Hike for AHA! the best it has ever been!

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL HIKE DONORS $500+

Ann Jackson Family Foundation  
Janice & Ross Bagdasarian  
Wendy & Larry Barels  
Lauren Barrack  
Robyn & Mike Bartling/  
Rincon Technologies  
Vanessa Bechtel  
Leslie Bhutani  
Bickett Family Foundation  
Celeste & Wendell Birkhofer, in Memory of Wiley Birkhofer & Joan Safajek  
Mary & John Blair  
Tracy Bollag  
Brittingham Family Foundation  
Gay Browne  
Elizabeth Burns  
Carrie Cooper & Rhino Griffith  
Deckers Brands  
Tiffany & Paul Doré  
Cheryl Doty & John Gerngross

Marilyn Ezzes  
Lisa Foley  
Bickett Family Foundation  
Carl & Jennifer Freed  
Jill Garcia  
Beth & Dodd Geiger  
Marilee & Stephen Gordon  
Rory Green  
Nancy Grinstein & Neal Rabin  
Deborah Gunther  
Nancy Hamilton  
Maren Hansen & Steve Aizenstat  
Gregory Huron  
Peggy Lamb  
Vivienne Leebosh  
Mary Leibman  
Brad Lemons/  
Brad Lemons Foundation  
Barbara Lindemnann  
Lisa Loiacono  
Uptown Lounge  
Michael Luzich  
Manchester Capital  
Jill Martin  
Nohl Martin  
Brett Matthews & Ginger Salazar  
Alecia & Elliot Mayrock  
Nora McNeely Hurley & Michael Hurley  
Phyllis Mozilla  
Brenda Nancarrow  
Nancy O’Connor  
Natalie Orfalea  
Michael Penzner

The Peterson Group  
Marla & Lee Phillips  
Procore  
Stacy & Ron Pulice  
Radius Realty  
Cyndi & Robert Richman  
Julia & JB Rodgers  
Rudi Schulte Family Foundation  
Ilene Sackler Lefcourt  
Patricia Selbert  
Simms/Mann Family Foundation  
Elizabeth Slaught  
Elizabeth Stegall  
Heather & Tom Sturgess  
Uptown Lounge  
Lynda Weinman  
Lisa Wolf  
Amal & Hani Zeini  
Leslie & Robert Zemeckis

IN-KIND DONORS

Babcock Winery & Vineyard  
Karen Bezuidenhout  
Baret Boisson  
C’est Cheese  
Crane Country Day School  
Gray Avenue Farm  
Kate Farms  
Kevita  
Mountain Spring Water  
Myriad Flowers International  
Pierre Lafond  
SB Smokehouse  
Sprouts  
Trader Joes  
Unitarian Society of SB  
Village Auto

From Mary Ziegler, Assistant Principal at Dos Pueblos High School:

The AHA! staff is professional and warm hearted. They bring Social and Emotional Learning (Emotion Management, Empathy, Teamwork, Responsibility, and Problem Solving) not only to DPHS, but to many students in the Santa Barbara Unified School District.
From Maggie Light, teacher at Santa Barbara High School:
*AHA! takes a multi-pronged approach in reducing the fears and insecurities of students...helping students to feel comfortable, planting seeds of valuable information, then practicing what they teach in small group discussions. My wish is to have AHA! all semester long, especially in a class with such a diverse group of students and in the transitional freshmen year. Freshman Seminar and AHA! provide a comprehensive approach to the development of students, learners, and people who know themselves and know they are part of a wider community.*

Dearest Supporters:

May you and yours be held close during this holidays season.

Let us be candles for each other, and never tire from lighting up the possibility of a more peaceful, loving, and equitable world in a young person’s heart.

Gratefully,

Jennifer Freed, Rendy Freedman, and the AHA! team

Let’s make our Santa Barbara a model of emotional and social equity and maturity.
Please contribute however you can: with time, financial contributions, love, or a combination.

www.ahasb.org/donate/