

City enters into new partnership with SOY to bring more recreation uses to Westside teens

On Tuesday June 15, the City Council unanimously approved an agreement with Save Our Youth (SOY) to offer joint recreational programming opportunities that will enhance the current recreation offerings to approximately 260 children ages 13-18 from Costa Mesa.

With many of the City's recreational programs being fee-based, teens from lower income households are often not able to take full advantage of the City's recreational programming and offerings.



By partnering with the City's Parks and Community Services Department, teens in the SOY program will be offered shared use of City staff, facilities and equipment.

"I am pleased that we have partnered with SOY, a great organization that has helped countless teens in Costa Mesa," Mayor John Stephens said. "This new venture will help fulfill the vision of Council Members Manuel Chavez and Arlis Reynolds and the Council to provide support to this community treasure."

District 4 Council Member Manuel Chavez and District 5 Council Member Arlis Reynolds were instrumental in advocating for this new partnership.

"I'm happy to see the City of Costa Mesa enter into an M.O.U. with SOY," said SOY alumni Council Member Chavez said. "It's an exciting opportunity for both of us to work together and provide the best services to Westside Costa Mesa students."

Council Member Reynolds agreed.

"Strong community-based organizations are critical for a thriving and resilient community, and they help our City teams better understand community assets and needs and align our services with those needs," Reynolds said. "This partnership with SOY is a great example and step forward for the partnerships we need to embrace to meet our mission of supporting a vibrant and inclusive city."

The agreement with SOY is for three years with an option for two additional years if both the City and SOY agree to continue. The \$42,000 in funding for the program will come from the City's contingency funds.

SOY was established in 1993 through the hard work and steadfast vision of parents on the Westside of Costa Mesa as a non-profit agency serving low-income youth that often lack opportunities due to limited economic means. The nonprofit

provides a productive and healthy environment where teens receive mentoring, tutoring, and college preparedness.