

Club Profile

"Each child is a winner in our eyes."

**Suburban Optimist Club
PO BOX 727
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**Club No: 15-815
Chartered 1968
Pacific Southeast District
Zone 1**

Board of Directors

President: Scott Iwamoto
Vice Pres: Gary Fukushima
Vice Pres: Ray Okazaki
Vice Pres: Eric Shishima
Secretary: Steve Okamura
Treasurer: Stan Enomoto
Srg At Arms: Mark Uyehara
Rice Paper: Mako Mizuki
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Directors: Alfonso Baez, Keith Higa, Bobby Iwashita, Don Miyada, Gene Murakami, Norm Nishizu, Tracy Okida
Foundation: Dan Fukushima

Chartered in February 1966, the Suburban Optimist Club of Buena Park ("SOC" for short) is comprised of community focused members dedicated to helping the youth of Southern California. Our mission is *"to provide the structure and leadership in support of the community through civic and youth oriented programs for families in Southern California and to provide the environment where tomorrow's leaders can build character, self-esteem and self-confidence"*. The Suburban Optimist Club provides its members the opportunity to play a major role in the development of tomorrow's future leaders through various youth programs.

Throughout the year SOC is busy supporting programs directed at boys and girls in Southern California. In support of our motto "Each child is a winner in our eyes" SOC sponsors events focusing on recognition of all participants rather than signaling out on just a few.

We also believe that all kids regardless of their situation should enjoy a memorable holiday season, and for over the past 15 years we have partnered with the Garden Grove Boys and Girls Club to host a Christmas party for less privileged families. This has become one of our most enjoyable events, carnival games are played, a hearty holiday dinner is served and to top off the evening, gifts for the kids are handed out by Santa Claus. For some of the invitees this is the only holiday celebration that they will have.

Recently, SOC received an award from the Orange County Board of Education for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Senior Recognition Night. The DHH program's graduating seniors are invited to a formal dinner hosted by SOC to showcase their amazing achievements. The club was nominated by John Levy, Principal of the DHH from University High in Irvine. One of our past presidents, Roy Oshiro originated the event over 27 years ago.

SOC also sponsors the Achievement awards program at Los Alamitos School District's Laurel High School and throughout the school year presents monetary rewards as encouragement for academic progress for "At Risk" students.

An annual event since 1966, SOC honors Southern California graduating High School seniors of Japanese ancestry. The seniors are invited to a semi-formal dinner and have an opportunity to listen to a relevant guest speaker. Each graduate is acknowledged for their scholastic achievements and community involvement and receives the Suburban Optimist's Youth Recognition Achievement Award that evening. Four to six scholarships are also presented to deserving applicants at the evening's event.

Arguably one of the club's greatest achievements, the original founders of SOC wanted to create a youth organization to provide an athletic, cultural and social environment for the children of Japanese ancestry. Thus, the South East Youth Organization (SEYO) was created. SEYO began the first year with five boy's baseball teams from ages 8 to 12. The first SOC Sports Group was started soon after as a coalition of SOC families solely focused on participation in SEYO activities. Now our SOC Sport Group is an integral part of the overall SOC organization. The Sports Group promotes and supports sports programs that encourages and facilitates the development of good character, citizenship and sportsmanship.

Each year the SOC organization strives to advance its mission of serving the youth and continuing to make a difference in the community. With the help and hard work of our members, we will continue to carry on the tradition of hosting community support and recognition programs set forth by the original club founders and Optimist International.

For additional "up to date" information go to: www.SuburbanOptimistClub.org

SOC is part of the Optimist International (OI) Organization - Meeting the needs of young people in communities worldwide; Optimist Clubs have been "Bringing Out the Best in Kids" since 1919. Optimist Clubs through its 2,900 member clubs conduct positive service projects aimed at providing a helping hand to youth. Club members are best known in their communities for their upbeat attitudes. By believing in young people and empowering them to be the best they can, Optimist volunteers continually make this world a better place to live.