



## **18<sup>th</sup> Annual Stars & Stripes Tournament Reels In Record-Setting \$2.7 Million for Orange County Youth Organizations**

*Since its inception in 1997, the annual Stars & Stripes fishing, golfing and music adventure has netted more than \$20 million, breaking national records for any U.S. fishing tournament*

**LAGUNA HILLS, Calif., July 11, 2014** —Although some anglers are prone to exaggeration, the organizers of the annual Stars & Stripes Tournament aren't telling a tall tale as they report raising a record-breaking amount of \$2.7 million during their 18<sup>th</sup> annual fishing, golf and music fundraiser in Mexico, pushing the figure of total funds raised since 1997 to more than \$20 million. No other tournament of its kind can claim this distinction, as its eclipsed national fundraising records for fishing tournaments benefiting children's charities.

An elected, volunteer board of directors, "The Knights," manages the event, which includes members Al Baldwin, chairman at Baldwin and Sons, Jeff Cunningham, senior vice president of Construction Management Services at Shea Properties, Larry Kirkenlager, senior vice president of pre-construction for Sasco Electric Inc., Charles Ruck, partner at Latham & Watkins LLP, Dick Gebhard, founder of Stars & Stripes, and Tim Ryan, CEO of the Honda Center and executive vice president of the Anaheim Ducks.

"Stars & Stripes has grown from a creative new idea to one of the most significant and innovative charity fundraisers in the country," said Stars & Stripes Board Member Tim Ryan, CEO of the Honda Center, executive vice president of the Anaheim Ducks, and a Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and Orangewood Children's Foundation Board Member. "I believe we've been so successful because we get together to have an awesome time while helping kids. Participants look forward to our adventure every year. Over our 18-year history, we've created lasting memories for the nonprofit organizations we assist as well as those participating in our event."

More than 600 people reeled and putted for youth charities during the four-day adventure, held June 26-29 at the Hilton Los Cabos Beach & Golf Resort in Mexico. At least 80 percent of participants hailed from Orange County, making the unique tournament a who's who among local business and community leaders. The charity fundraiser combined spectacular deep-sea fishing, golf and music on one of Mexico's finest courses with luxury accommodations and top-notch musical entertainment. Actor Gary Sinise & The Lt. Dan Band served as the Saturday night headliner this year, with speed painter Michael Israel and Super Diamond, a Neil Diamond tribute band, performed on other nights.

Named after the children it helps — the real stars of the tournament — and the striped marlin in the Sea of Cortez, Stars & Stripes began in 1997 as a fundraiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County. Dick Gebhard came up with the idea when he was a board member for the nonprofit organization, as he wanted to create a fundraiser unlike any other and combine fishing, golfing and music.

Beneficiaries include Orange County-based Orangewood Children's Foundation, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Orange County, Miracles for Kids and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County. In addition, Stars & Stripes gives a percentage to support children's charities in Mexico.

Significant event support included in 2007 when The Samueli Foundation pledged \$5,000,000 to match tournament event proceeds to benefit The Academy Charter High School, a community project of Orangewood Children's Foundation. Since 2008, The Samueli Foundation has matched event proceeds in excess of \$3,000,000.

### **About Stars & Stripes**

The Stars & Stripes tournament, benefiting youth charities since 1997, is a world-class charity fundraiser that combines spectacular deep-sea fishing and golf on Mexico's finest courses with beautiful accommodations and top-notch musical entertainment. The hugely popular event has raised and donated more than \$20 million to youth charities over its 18-year history, and creates lasting memories for the organizations it assists and those participating in the event each year. For more information, visit <http://www.starsandstripetournament.com>.

### **About Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County**

For more than 100 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters has operated under the belief that inherent in every child is the ability to succeed and thrive in life. Most children served by Big Brothers Big Sisters live in single-parent and low-income families, or households where a parent is incarcerated. As the nation's largest donor and volunteer supported mentoring network, Big Brothers Big Sisters makes meaningful, monitored matches between adult volunteers ("Bigs") and children ("Littles"). Providing a system of ongoing evaluation and support, Big Brothers Big Sisters is proven by independent studies to help families by improving the odds that "Littles" will perform better in school and avoid violence and illegal activities, and have stronger relationships with their parents and others. Headquartered in Philadelphia with a network of nearly 400 agencies across the country, Big Brothers Big Sisters serves a quarter million children annually. In 2013, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County served over 2,200 children. For more information, visit <http://www.bigbrooc.org/>.

### **About Orangewood Children's Foundation**

Orangewood Children's Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization. Founded in 1981, it is one of the leading providers of services to children in foster care. Through programs focused on education, employment, housing, life skills and basic needs, the Foundation gives children and teens the tools necessary for happy, productive lives. Last year alone Orangewood scholarships

helped 279 former foster children attend colleges and universities throughout the United States. Recognizing that nearly 50% of foster youth do not graduate from high school, in August 2013 the Foundation opened The Academy, a free charter high school in Santa Ana for community, underserved and foster teens. In its 33 year history Orangewood has helped over 76,000 kids find their wings and soar. Beyond the programs, for thousands of foster children Orangewood means “family,” “opportunity” and “hope.” Learn how you can help at [www.orangewoodfoundation.org](http://www.orangewoodfoundation.org) and [www.theacademyoc.org](http://www.theacademyoc.org).

### **About Miracles for Kids**

[Miracles for Kids](#) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving children with life-threatening illnesses and the families that care for them. By operating programs that provide financial aid, basic needs and wellness to patients and their families, Miracles for Kids creates stability when families are crumbling from the financial and emotional devastation of fighting for their child's life. Founded in 2002, Miracles for Kids operates in offices in Tustin and Santa Monica, CA.

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