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**PREVIEW DAY GUESTS AT
SOUTH COAST PLAZA'S
JEWEL COURT
ANGELITOS GARD BENEFIT
RAISES \$325,000 FOR CHARITY**



Photo by Ann Chatillon

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Society Scene

by
Kelly Bennett

Exclusively For The Newport News



ANGELITOS DE ORO RAISES OVER \$325,000 FOR BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Photos by Ann Chatillon

For the past 15 years, the Angelitos de Oro, a volunteer auxiliary that raises funds for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County, has an event that the ultimate fashionista/shop-a-holic yearns for – the Angelitos Card Week. In partnership with South Coast Plaza, the week-long shopping fundraiser offers cardholders 20 percent savings at stores not normally known for giving “sales” or discounts. This year, there were over 100 participating in the shopping extravaganza – from boutiques to name brand retailers; many shoppers were elated to see some of their favorites on the list.

The start of the shopping week, was the ultimate Preview Day Champagne reception, which was chaired by Natalie Pickup and Georgina Jacobson. It served as a kickoff to the week of shopping and was held in South Coast Plaza’s Jewel Court. It was attended by more than 200 cardholders; the event included a light lunch catered by Quattro Caffé and attendees sipped on exquisite champagne while eyeing the fashions that were on display.

Debra Gunn Downing, Executive Director of Marketing at South Coast Plaza, welcomed attendees and introduced Melissa Beck, CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters and Angelitos de Oro President Sherry Bilbeisi.

A highlight of the afternoon was a fashion presentation led by Downing that featured Preview Day stores including Bottega Veneta, Burberry, Coach, Escada, Intermix, Oscar de la Renta, REDValentino and St. John. Each boutique showcased seasonal looks and invited attendees to use their Angelitos Cards following the luncheon to receive 20 percent savings one day early.

This year, the group raised more than \$325,000. “Angelitos de Oro has made significant contributions to our agency over the last 55 years and 2016 is no exception,” says Melissa Beck, CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters. “We are incredibly grateful for the time and dedication that went into making this Angelitos Card Week an enormous success. Our agency provides more than 3,000 children annually with mentoring relationships, and support through fundraisers like this one allows us to continue expanding our program to change the lives of even more local youth.”

To date, Angelitos de Oro has raised nearly \$6,000,000 for Big Brothers Big Sisters, primarily through the sale of the Angelitos Shopping Card. It comes every year in October and folks drive from miles away to attend, purchase the card and jump on the savings.

Funds raised from the sale of cards, Golden Angel sponsorships and 10 percent of Preview Day proceeds donated by Preview Day boutiques will support the nonprofit’s programs that match an adult or qualified teen volunteer with a youth facing adversity. Big Brothers Big Sisters serves more than 3,000 children annually with three mentoring models to achieve impactful results, including a 99 percent graduation rate, 89 percent college enrollment and improved attitudes regarding success after high school.

Big Brothers Big Sisters believes that with the support of a caring mentor, every child has the ability to achieve his or her full potential. It is the nation’s largest donor- and volunteer-supported mentoring organization, serving a quarter-million children annually. Based in Santa Ana, the Orange County agency was incorporated in 1958 and works as a local extension of the national effort to make professionally supported, one-to-one matches between mentors (“Big’s”) and children (“Littles”) facing adversity. Together with the Inland Empire agency, which opened its doors in 2013, the local organization serves 3,000 children annually through programs that improve the odds of youth performing better in school and avoiding violence and illegal activities. Since its inception in 1961,

Since its inception in 1961, Angelitos de Oro (an auxiliary of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County), has raised more than \$6 million for Big Brothers Big Sisters, allowing thousands of children facing adversity to be matched with mentors. Angelitos Card Week, the auxiliary’s annual fashion fundraiser at South Coast Plaza. For more information, visit angelitosdeoro.org. For more information on Big Brothers Big Sisters, visit ocbigs.org.



Sherry Bilbeisi with Georgina Jacobson, Kathy Harrison, Natalie Pickup, and Naomi Edwards



Debra Gunn Downing (South Coast Plaza Executive Director, Marketing) with Mary Ailyn Dexter and Marilyn Wooten



Kehaulani Sanares models



Naomi Edwards (Angelitos Card Benefit Co-Chair)



Cassidy Berliner and Jocelyn Walker