



NEWS RELEASE

City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**RECREATION AND PARKS AND COUNCILMEMBER HUIZAR GIVE BOYLE HEIGHTS
TWO REASONS TO CELEBRATE**

***Community Invited to Cut Ribbon at New Evergreen Child Care Center
and Honor Revered Community Member***

LOS ANGELES, Calif. - The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks and Councilmember José Huizar joined the residents of Boyle Heights and friends and family of revered community member Willie Corona Monday to celebrate the newly constructed \$3.1 million Evergreen Child Care Center, located at 211 S. Evergreen Ave., in Boyle Heights.

The 4,150 square-foot child care center, which was completed late last year, consists of two classrooms, a technology room, snack room, ADA-compliant restrooms, laundry room, staff rooms and storage. The site also has a new children's playground area, parking lot, site landscaping and fences and gates. With its Mayan-architectural design and plaster façade, the facility is state-of-the art, incorporating the needs of the community, childcare requirements, the need for safety and security and addresses the priorities of center staff. The style and base colors of the building were intended to match those of the nearby recreation center and accentuated with vivid tones to invoke a colorful sense of play.

When Councilmember Huizar took office in 2005, the project was languishing and he vowed to complete it. He worked with the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Bureau of Engineering to access the funding required to begin construction on the \$3.1 million center. And during the recent state budget crisis, the Councilmember and the departments identified nearly \$500,000 in City funds to replace money frozen by the state to ensure the Evergreen Child Care Center was completed.

“This project came together because we decided it simply must be done and I am proud to have been a part of that,” said Councilmember José Huizar. “Children in Boyle Heights deserve to have access to the same top-quality child care services as any other neighborhood. The new state-of-the-art Evergreen Child Care Center and its excellent staff provide just that.”

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A second reason for celebration is the dedication of Evergreen Child Care Center's Willie Corona Multi-Purpose Room. Corona, a long-time resident of the community, will be recognized for his countless hours of selfless dedication towards making Evergreen Park a better place. With a passion for sports, he was always a positive influence on children and coaches alike, teaching the meaning of sportsmanship and the importance of being a team player. Whenever he learned a child was unable to afford a uniform, athletic shoes, or gloves, Corona was said to always open his wallet.

When he began the park's tennis program, he kept his community's financial hardships in mind and took it upon himself to buy all the necessary racquets, tennis balls and tennis shoes; he even taught the classes free of charge.

Corona also dedicated his time volunteering for the park's child care center (then located inside the gym), again using his own money to make it a safe and ideal environment.

Corona's primary concern was that the children of Evergreen Park have a fun experience, and he did whatever it took—from chalking fields to treating them to ice cream, sodas, hot dogs, or even some kind words after practice or a game. He was eventually hired by the department as a part-time recreation assistant at Evergreen, always working his shifts, always staying at the park long afterwards and always using his earnings on the children who used Evergreen as a place to play.

Indeed, it was Corona's love for Evergreen that kept him there, up until those last two months before he passed away in October 1997. He will be honored with a memorial plaque that will be placed on a wall inside of the multi-purpose room at the new facility, which now stands in the same location as Corona's beloved tennis courts.

For additional information about Department of Recreation and Parks' events, activities, programs, services, and facilities, go to www.laparks.org. For more information on Councilmember José Huizar, visit www.lacity.org/council/cd14/.

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