



Village Nurseries' Donation to Blind Children's Learning Center Helps Students "See" Nature

ORANGE, Calif., May 22, 2013 – Guided by a rail, children with visual impairments stepped from plant to plant, reading the Braille descriptions and touching the various textures. This sensory garden entry won first place for [Orange Coast College](#) (OCC) horticulture students at the 2012 Spring Garden Show.

According to Dr. John Kabashima, environmental horticulture advisor at the [University of California Cooperative Extension](#), the exhibit is usually taken down after its run, and the college sells all or parts of it to recoup costs. "It was such a waste," he said. "I thought someone must want this incredible exhibit." He then asked Jaimie Haver, a lease funding manager at [PacTrust Bank](#) and a former board member at the Santa Ana, Calif.-based Blind Children's Learning Center, if they wanted the garden. After talking to the executive director, Haver said yes, they would love to receive it.

However, they needed to move quickly. An annual walk—which raised funds for the Center—was fast approaching on Saturday, May 11. They wanted the sensory garden in place beforehand for current students, alum and the community to explore.

Dr. Kabashima immediately called David House, chief executive officer of [Village Nurseries](#), the Orange, Calif.-based wholesale nursery. After serving on several committees together, he knew House was committed to community service. "Time was short," said Dr. Kabashima. "If anybody could deliver the plants we needed, I knew Village Nurseries could. And they did."

On the Friday before the walk, Village Nurseries delivered the plants, the Orange County chapter of the California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers ([OC CANGC](#)) donated the soil and OCC supplied the gardeners.

When the walk began, the garden for the visually impaired was ready for visitors. “Watching the children walk through the garden moved everyone to tears,” Kabashima said.

Haver added, “As a parent of a blind child, I thought Village Nurseries’ donation was incredibly generous. It will positively impact hundreds of people they don’t even know, and for that I’m truly grateful.”

“We’re always looking to give back to our communities,” stated House. “In this instance it’s a double pleasure because we get to combine our love of plants with the joy of helping our neighbors at BCLC.”

About the Blind Children’s Learning Center

Blind Children’s Learning Center, a non-profit agency, provides services for children with visual impairments. Founded in 1962 by six adults who were blind, the organization was originally called “Services for the Blind Orange County.” The founders quickly discovered the key to helping a person with visual impairments was to start working with them at a very early age. Today the agency serves children and their families through Bright Visions Early Childhood Center (onsite preschool) and Outreach Services with the mission to provide early intervention, education and services for blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind children and their families to empower independence. For more information please visit www.blindkids.org.

About Village Nurseries

Founded in 1976, Village Nurseries currently has major wholesale sales offices in Orange and Sacramento, California and more than 700 acres under cultivation in growing facilities located strategically throughout Northern and Southern California. It serves markets throughout the western United States while maintaining four specialty [Landscape Center](#) locations to serve landscape professionals. For more information, visit <http://www.villagenurseries.com>.

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