

# VISION FOR THE NEW YEAR



A Message from David Benavides, Chief Executive Officer



## Announcing KidWorks' Two Main Growth Strategies for 2026 & Beyond

Do you remember your first day of school, perhaps in first or second grade? If you're like me, there was excitement about meeting your new teacher, seeing who your classmates would be, and maybe even a little apprehension about whether the homework would be too hard.

I felt that same exhilaration on a cool fall day this past October, when dozens of friends, neighbors, partners, and supporters gathered to celebrate the reopening of our Bishop Manor spoke center, located in an underserved and vulnerable neighborhood in central Santa Ana.

The reopening was cause for joy. It also marked the beginning of an exciting new chapter for KidWorks and the launch of our 2026 vision for growth. As we begin the new year, I'd like to share the two primary

strategies that will guide our expansion in 2026 and beyond.

### Growth Strategy #1: Expanding Our Network of Spoke Centers

Our first strategy is to serve more students, from preschool through post-secondary success, by establishing additional spoke centers in strategically selected neighborhoods with the greatest need. This approach builds on our proven Dan Donahue Center hub model and our three existing spoke centers.

Over the next four to five years, our goal is to open two additional spoke centers, deepening our presence where students and families need us most.

Expanding our spoke centers allows us to:

- Be deeply rooted in the life and culture of the neighborhoods we serve;
- Build trusted relationships that lead to sustainable impact and generational change;
- Provide safe, welcoming spaces for students to learn and grow; and
- Serve as a gathering space for community partners to collaborate on neighborhood transformation.



## Growth Strategy #2: Strengthening College & Career Success

Our second growth strategy focuses on strengthening and expanding our college and career success programming—preparing more young people to become competent, confident, and career-ready adults.

Key enhancements include:

- Additional support for our Transfer Program, which assists students who begin at community college and later transfer to four-year universities;
- A more robust Mentor Program; and
- Expanded workforce readiness programming that equips students with practical skills and a strong work ethic valued by employers.

Many of our students are the first in their families to pursue higher education. Over the years, alumni have gone on to successful careers in healthcare, engineering, law, industrial trades, the military, and more. These enhancements will allow us to multiply that impact.

## Your Return on Your Investment in KidWorks

These two growth strategies will guide our focus for the coming years. The KidWorks team and I are fully committed to this work because it strengthens outcomes and maximizes the return on your investment in our students, families, and community.

## Ways You Can Help Today

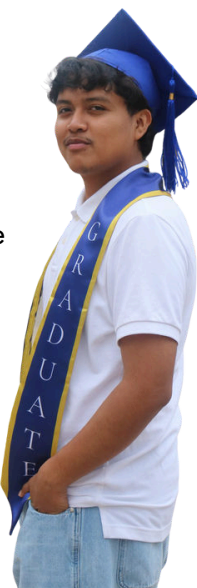
In addition to the critical role our volunteers and community partners play, KidWorks faces several important financial needs:

- Rising costs due to inflation, including the expense of maintaining four locations and offering fair, competitive wages to attract and retain high-quality staff.
- A real-time need for capital improvements to our 20-year-old Dan Donahue Center. We are grateful to be one of eight nonprofits to receive a generous grant from the Samueli Foundation, which will help fund and begin these capital improvements. Your generous financial gifts will supplement what the Samueli Foundation is making possible.

Your continued generosity allows KidWorks to serve more students at our existing sites and expand into additional neighborhoods where the need is great. Many of our students remain with us from preschool through their college or university years. I invite you to help make academic and career success possible for more students than we ever imagined.

Every gift, no matter the size, makes a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

- Learn more about volunteering at KidWorks and how to engage in other ways at: [kidworksoc.org/volunteer](http://kidworksoc.org/volunteer)
- Learn more about the many ways to provide financial support at: [kidworksoc.org/donate](http://kidworksoc.org/donate)



As we begin 2026, KidWorks enters its 33rd year of service. Our future is bright, just as it is for the hundreds of students and families you join with us to support.

With your partnership—through volunteering, financial gifts, or advocacy—KidWorks students excel academically, grow into leaders, and give back generously to their communities.

With gratitude,

David Benavides, KidWorks Executive Director/CEO