

# HANNA Hanna Boys Center Happenings



HANNA BOYS CENTER NEWS ■ SUMMER 2007

## Supporting Education for the Future

Join in as we talk with **Dennis Crandall**, the principal of Archbishop Hanna High School here at Hanna Boys Center.

***You normally have a theme for each school year. What is your theme for 2007/2008?***

Our theme is "GOOD CHARACTER – ALWAYS THE RIGHT CHOICE!" We will have a character trait we focus on each month. As an example, one month the focus may be on forgiveness and the following month could be teaching tolerance. I strongly believe that there is nothing more important in the development of our boys than a positive character.

***Looking towards the new school year, what are you really excited about?***

We are using a new software program that helps the boys to improve their reading abilities. Every classroom is equipped with computers, allowing the boys to take advantage of any downtime they may have in class to further develop their reading skills.

***Are there opportunities for community volunteers to help at Hanna High School?***

Yes! We could really use volunteers who are interested in working with our boys after school.

Our volunteer tutors are essential in helping the boys graduate from high school. Volunteers focus on the subjects we teach, depending on their interests. After volunteers go through a basic school screening process, we quickly put them to work!

***How many boys are taught at Hanna High per year?***

Last year we had 190 boys. Most of those students were part of the residential Hanna program, and we have boys who participate in our Day Scholar Program while they live at home. Even though these boys do not live at Hanna, they still benefit from the small class size and individualized education program we offer.



***Over the last four years you have been at Hanna, what are some of the successes you are most proud of?***

- We launched the "Read to Succeed Program," which provides individualized curriculum to

support the boys in reading. The program also provides additional instruction and resources for writing, arithmetic, study skills, and problem solving.

- Full high school accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in 2006.
- Establishment of our Graduation Committee. We will be focusing on creating a true and typical senior year experience for the students by attending the prom, having a Grad Night, and walking in a cap and

gown on graduation day. In addition, we want to focus on creating a unique pathway for each graduate, making sure he has the preparation and skills to move on to the next stage in his life. "Follow-on Care"

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# Then and Now

**R**obert and **Edmundo** are two of our alumni members who recently met with Hanna Boys Center's Scholarship Committee.

Hanna Boys Center's Sisters of St. Francis Scholarship Fund – named for the nuns who devoted over 50 years of service to Hanna youngsters – is supported entirely through



donations. It provides Hanna's alumni with educational opportunities at junior colleges, colleges, universities and trade schools.

Edmundo attended public schools through the 8th grade and struggled with a myriad of challenges, including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyslexia, depression and increasing frustration and anger. Late in the 8th grade, Edmundo lost the ability to cope with his day-to-day struggles, made some bad choices and had several scrapes with the law. His life was on a downward spiral when he reached out to Hanna for help.

Edmundo invested a year in Hanna's program and learned how to overcome many of the challenges related to his learning disabilities. Following his completion of Hanna's program, Edmundo worked in his community for seven years before seeking a scholarship to continue his education.

Edmundo, now 23, was recently accepted into Las Positas College in Livermore. "My dream is to be an artist. I saw a counselor at Las Positas and took a placement test

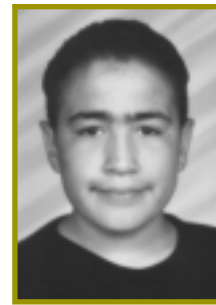
to determine my strengths – and my weaknesses. I have come to the conclusion that education is indeed as vital as water to functioning properly."

Edmundo has come a long way since his early days at Hanna. He has worked very hard to provide himself with the opportunity to attend college and fulfill his dream of becoming an artist.

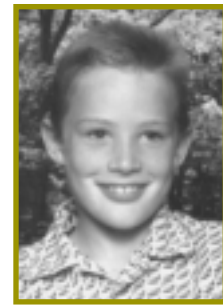
For Robert, there were many challenges in his family including substance abuse, personal difficulties and marital instability.

"Before I came to Hanna Boys Center I was failing in school. When teachers asked me to do something, and I didn't know how, I would try to ask for help but there were so many kids in my class that special help just wasn't available. I often felt like a failure and to cover that up, I would become very disruptive in class or just sit there and do nothing. It was not a good situation for me.

I've been in Hanna's program for six years. My whole life has



**Edmundo, 1999**



**Robert, 2001**

changed. Reading is something I now enjoy. I can tell you, I never thought those words would be coming out of my mouth.

In addition to reading, one of my biggest achievements in school is that I've learned to manage my time and make the most of it. I also learned how to study. Knowing how to study and manage my time has had a huge impact on my ability to succeed in school. I'm proud of that."

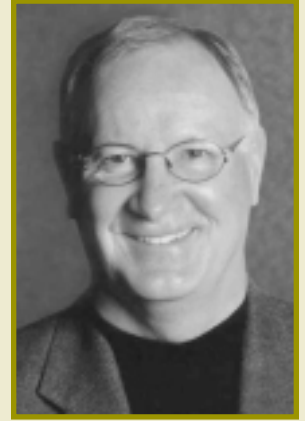
Robert applied for a scholarship from Hanna's Scholarship Fund and was recently accepted into Sonoma State University.

"I've thought a lot about continuing my education and I am really interested in the field of kinesiology. Sonoma State University has a great kinesiology program and that field provides for significant flexibility in the job market. I could be a physical therapist, a physical education teacher or even a sports trainer."

Because of the support that Hanna Boys Center receives from friends like you, boys like Robert and Edmundo have a chance to continue their education, thus enhancing their lives and their earning potential.

I know you join everyone at Hanna in celebrating Robert and Edmundo's successes and wish them well as they pursue their continuing education – and their dreams. ❖

# Thoughts From A Volunteer at Hanna



**D**uring their recent annual meeting, the Board of Directors at Hanna Boys Center elected **Don McPhail** as their new chair. “Being named chair of Hanna’s Board of Directors is one of my proudest moments – personally, or in my business career,” McPhail shared. “When I joined the board over ten years ago, it was the best thing that could have happened to me. I wanted to help make a difference in peoples’ lives, and Hanna makes that difference.” Here are more thoughts from Don about Hanna.

## ***You joined the Hanna board in 1998. What brought you to Hanna?***

When I visited the campus, I could see good things happening. First, when I met Father Crews I knew I was meeting a man who led by example. Interacting with boys, parents, staff or board members, he did not change. He was always calm, gentle yet firm in his beliefs and statements, unselfish, and a hero to the boys. As a priest, he is a devoted and spiritual man, who helps to understand life, to understand its mysteries. Then I met several boys. Their spontaneous reaction when we were introduced was always direct, looking me in the eye, and extremely positive. They reminded me of how I felt during my plebe year at Annapolis – proud, respectful and on a chosen path. These youngsters have faced family tragedies, alienation and personal failures before Hanna; I was amazed at their transformation. When I met the Hanna staff, it was clinched. Scott Singer, Monica Clark, Tim Norman, Bill Byrne and so many others – they were and are exceptional, dedicated people, fully committed to Hanna and the boys.

## ***As board chair, what are your priorities?***

In my view, our role is to maintain our successes and strengths while helping adjust to changing social, political and economic environments. As chair, my job is to maintain and enhance our assets. Our

primary assets are our boys and professional staff, and our spiritual base. Our donors and board members are also major assets, who help to maintain and increase our financial base. It’s my job to listen and observe, to provide quiet leadership, and to leave things better than I found them – knowing that, following great leaders like Caroline Simmons, Don Feehan and others – that I found them in very good shape.

## ***What changes have you seen since joining the board?***

We are serving more boys each year, with our current residential capacity at 107 boys. During the past two years, Hanna has earned accreditation as a four-year high school, Archbishop Hanna High School. Some good things that have not changed: We continue to expand our “Follow-on Care” program, staying in contact with Hanna boys and their families after they leave Hanna. We awarded over \$135,000 last year in scholarship money to Hanna boys for college, trade schools and ongoing education.

## ***What is Hanna’s success rate?***

It depends on how you measure success. For some boys, the fact that they are still alive is a miracle – a profound success. Many boys would be homeless or worse if it were not for Hanna. For others, like U.S. Army Major Noma Martini or businessperson Thom Chin, their visible accomplishments as leaders in highly competitive and demanding fields are successes, and their roles as parents and husbands in loving families are additional evidence. Truly, success is defined by the boy. They are motivated to succeed, or they would not be at Hanna. They acknowledge their need for help, and they come. ❖

## **Education for The Future**

*(Continued from page 1)*

is such a vital part of the Hanna experience, making sure we never lose touch with our graduates and continuing to offer assistance any way we can.

## ***Overall, how do you feel about the education program?***

We could not be more excited by the progress at Hanna High School. Last year we had 12 seniors graduate and this year we are expecting at least 19. It is working exceptionally

well! Getting our students to graduation is a culmination of many different aspects of their education. We pride ourselves on having individualized support for each boy at Hanna, and every staff and faculty member plays a vital role. ❖

## OPEN HOUSE and Craft Bazaar

❖  
December 2, 2007

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and sign up to receive the  
*Hanna Insider*, our new  
email newsletter that will  
keep you up-to-date with  
what's happening on campus.

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## Hanna Boys Center

17000 Arnold Drive • PO Box 100 • Sonoma, CA 95476-0100  
[www.hannacenter.org](http://www.hannacenter.org) • 707.996.6767

## Notes from Father Crews ...



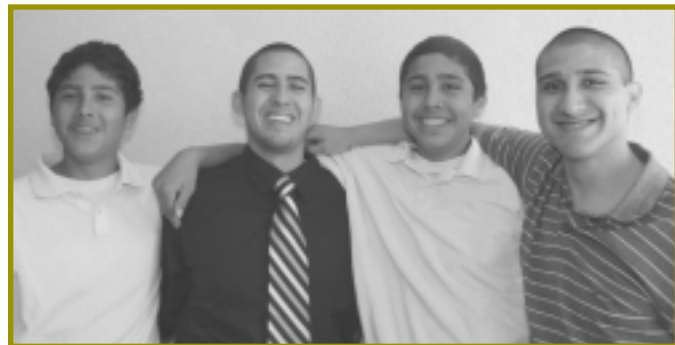
Dear Friends,

One of the greatest pleasures I have is hearing from alumni who credit Hanna with making a positive impact on their lives.

**Elias and Dillon** are brothers who graduated from Hanna in 2001. Thanks to Hanna's Scholarship Program, Elias is attending City College of San Francisco. "I'm going for my fire fighting certificate and my fire fighting degree. I'm also working on my EMT and Paramedic certificates. If you're a paramedic, the chances of getting into a fire company in San Francisco are really good." Elias' brother Dillon was also a successful student here

and is working with his dad in carpet installation.

**Miguel**, class of 2000, is the oldest of four brothers who have come to Hanna. He is in the top ten of his class at WYO Tech. "My goal is be an airplane mechanic. After graduation, I'll probably start working at a smaller shop and work my way up to the larger companies, like United." **Walter**, class of 2002, is currently in his final year at Sacramento State where he has majored in Public Relations. By the way, their twin brothers are currently at Hanna and are doing very well. They are now both in high school and have wanted to



**Linares brothers – Alex, Walter, David and Miguel.**

be at the Center since they were six years old. They are now fifteen.

As you can see, the Center is often a family affair, and we play an important role in helping raise families. What a gift we are able to offer, thanks to the generosity of many people like you.

Rev. John S. Crews, Ed.D.  
Executive Director