



OPTIMIST BLIND YOUTH ASSOCIATION, INC.

Dara Laski
President

February 2016

Marcia Laski
Vice President/
Secretary

Dear Friend,

Steve Duben
Treasurer

I'd like to tell you what I know about blind children. They are tall, short, bright, curious, courageous, ambitious, helpful and kind. And what does that say about blindness? That blind children are like all of us! And like for all of us, I believe that everything is possible. We should have high expectations, provide good training and education, and keep open the doors of opportunity for blind children. I know that blindness does not have to stop a child from accomplishing goals and fulfilling dreams.

Board of Directors

Jose De'Sosa
Wayne Geffen
Marla Gray
Hugh McDonald

That is why I am asking you to support the Optimist—Junior Blind Olympics, which I have been involved in for 33 years. The Olympics provide blind children the opportunity to make wishes come true, to go for the GOLD and complete with other young people their own age with similar physical challenges. They will participate in the 50-yard dash, archery, rowing, goal ball, rock wall climbing, tandem cycling, kayak racing, soccer, challenge track and obstacle course with little or no vision.

At the end of the Optimist—Junior Blind Olympics weekend, the children go home with more than medals and the volunteers and staff are left with full hearts. We all share in the amazing moments and memories, new friends and knowledge that blindness or visual impairment need not prevent children from living life fully and productively.

The 2016 Optimist—Junior Blind Olympics will be here before you know it. Please save the date, Saturday, May 7, 2016, on your calendars. We will host athletes from California, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and Texas, who are excited to participate in the games. Many of the athletes feel this is the best weekend of their year and work hard during the school year to be able to qualify for the trip. In addition to the Olympics, the children are treated to TheatreVision (descriptive movie for the visually impaired), a day at Magic Mountain, Santa Monica Pier Touch Aquarium, bowling and lodging for the long weekend. We will have more than 250 athletes participating this year!

This wonderful event is only possible with generous donations from our friends and community members. The weekend costs more than \$50,000 for the Olympics, housing, transportation, meals and entertainment for the children. Your contribution will assist our blind athletes in achieving new heights by helping to bring them here to participate in the games and activities. And while the day is filled with exhilarating challenge and competition, it is also a rich experience of warmth and camaraderie that they—and you—will never forget.

Please make your tax-deductible donation to the **Optimist Blind Youth Association (OBYA), P.O. Box 5208, West Hills, CA 91308**. If you have any questions or would like more information about the Optimist—Junior Blind Olympics, please call me at (818) 883-8996 or visit our website at <http://www.OptimistBlindYouth.org>.

The finish lines crossed today are the starting points for bright and positive tomorrows. Join us!

With gratitude,

Dara Laski,
President - Optimist Blind Youth Association