



**PRESS RELEASE: April 15, 2017**

## **Easter Celebration Proves to be a Big Hit for Kids and Adults**

On April 2, Community Outreach Ministry together with Builders of Faith Ministries hosted an Easter Celebration at the Temecula Community Center. The “Angel Tree” children, those girls and boys assisted by the ministry – and their family members were honored as the special guests for one of many holiday-oriented events coordinated by the ministry.

To help serve these children who have one or both parents in prison, the Community Outreach Ministry worked together with Builders of Faith Ministries, a bible teaching ministry based in LOCATION to give the children of one or more incarcerated parents the opportunity to learn skills in financial literacy. Youngsters teamed up during a financial literacy workshop to have fun playing Jenga, a game utilized as a tool to educate the players. Wells Fargo Branch Manager Jonay Cordeiro and Misty Elms of the Central Avenue bank branch, Lake Elsinore, served as team leaders. Children strategically removed block(s) and read multiple choice and/or true or false questions. Through team-building skills, the children consulted with fellow team members before answering any questions. Correct answers earned team members age-appropriate gifts.

Lake Elsinore middle school students Jacori and Jaelin Neal brought in high technology robots and conducted a show and tell robot workshop. The Neal brothers -- who have benefited from services provided by the Community Outreach Ministry such as tutoring assistance and participation in the ministry’s seasonal summer camps -- assisted other children at the Easter event. Their robots were programed to talk, came with lights, were capable of responding to voice commands and even performed the dance the Tango! The Neal brothers then challenged the kids to jump in and build robots. Participants had to read directions and review schematics. They used screwdrivers and inserted batteries to get their robots moving. These skills taught the youth to think collaboratively as they also benefited from a more hands-on education utilizing science, technology, engineering, arts and math, also known as STEM education.

In honor of the Easter holiday, the Neal brothers Jacori and Jaelin sang “The Prayer.” Together, the Neal brothers lead the children in singing and signing (for the deaf) to the lyrics of the following songs: “This Little Light of Mine,” “If You’re Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands,” “I Got The Joy,” and “Deep and Wide.” Other activities included storytelling by volunteer Lainey Norton who read “The Easter Story” and the children in teams had to join forces to come up with team responses. All of the children received chocolate bunny treats and picked candy to take home from the large Easter basket on display at the event. Jaelin Neal said the event was “funner” than Disneyland Park.

The caregivers, the adult men and women caring for the children, also attended the event and participated in a workshop. The workshop provided them with resource lists to aid in finding local services and/or government assistance for the children of incarcerated parents as well as the caregivers and the incarcerated parent or parents. Part of the mission of the Community Outreach Ministry is to help educate and inform the caregivers using the ministry's *Breaking the Cycle of Incarceration* model written by Dr. Mona Davies and her husband, Bob, who founded the ministry nearly 20 years ago. Some of the incarcerated parents are already receiving support services outlined in the ministry's model, but not all of the caregivers have been able to secure various types of assistance; an issue the Davies continually focus on so that everyone affected by the problems that arise when a child's mother or father is in prison can be minimized.



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