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Former LA County Supervisor Don Knabe Creates Scholarship Fund for Safely Surrendered Infants at LBCF

First Cohort of Eligible Children Are Off to College Next Fall

LONG BEACH, CA – The Long Beach Community Foundation announced the activation of the Don Knabe Safe Surrender Scholarship Fund, providing scholarships to college-bound students who are surrendered at Los Angeles County hospitals, police and fire stations within 72 hours of birth with no signs of physical abuse. The Safe Surrender Program, whose motto is “No Name, No Shame, No Blame,” was successfully adopted in Los Angeles in 2001, making the first cohort of 10 children old enough to attend college beginning in 2020.

“Every child deserves a chance,” said Former LA County Supervisor Don Knabe. “These children have already beaten the odds once in their life - I want to see them beat the odds again. These scholarships will help provide resources to pursue an education at a vocational or trade school, a community college, or university.”

The scholarship fund, administered through the Long Beach Community Foundation, was established in 2014 while Knabe served as County Supervisor with the foresight that the fund would grow over time and benefit a countless number of individuals. Upon Supervisor Knabe’s retirement, many individuals and organizations acknowledged his service to the community and passion for this cause through generous gifts to the scholarship fund. LA County employees also make contributions to the fund through pre-tax payroll deductions.

“I am overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from the community for these children and believe this cause is worthy of everyone’s support,” said Knabe. “The parents who adopted infants who were abandoned have made an incredible commitment and I’m thrilled that we can help assist them as they guide these children into the next phase of their lives.”

All children safely surrendered in LA County are eligible for a scholarship within three years from the time they turn 17 to apply for the scholarship administered at the Long Beach Community Foundation. The scholarship application is available at www.longbeachcf.org/scholarships.

“Our staff has been greatly anticipating the implementation of this scholarship,” said LBCF President & CEO Marcelle Epley. “The adoptive families of these children were notified about the scholarship availability when the fund was created and have been reaching out to LBCF to learn more about the details of the scholarship ever since. Often their children are just toddlers when they contact us but are thrilled to learn about the opportunity for their child – even if it is still years away for them.”

Contributions to the Don Knabe Safe Surrender Scholarship Fund can be made at www.longbeachcf.org/donate.

About the Los Angeles County Safe Surrender Program

A California state law was created in January 2001 that allows an infant to be safely surrendered voluntarily to a police, fire, or hospital facility, by a parent or person with lawful custody, within 72 hours of the birth. Despite the passage of this law, Don Knabe was alarmed by the number of infants that continued to be abandoned in dumpsters and other unsafe places. As an LA County Supervisor, he took steps to direct several Los Angeles County agencies to provide recommendations on how to improve the program. In 2002, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the implementation of 12 recommendations to improve and promote the program. Since the Safely Surrendered Baby Law went into effect, 160 babies have been safely surrendered in Los Angeles County and welcomed into loving homes. For more information, please visit: www.babysafela.org

About the Long Beach Community Foundation

The Long Beach Community Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, public organization with more than \$54 million in assets and 176 charitable funds. It was established in 1996 to make strategic grants to nonprofits, and assist individual donors with their philanthropic goals today and through planned giving. Fees charged to manage charitable funds at the Foundation are invested directly back into the community. LBCF's mission is to initiate positive change for Long Beach through charitable giving, stewardship, and strategic grant making with a vision of being the preeminent steward of endowments serving the needs of Long Beach in perpetuity.

LBCF operations are led by President & CEO Marcelle Epley and oversight is provided by Board Chair Gary DeLong, Vice Chair Robert Stemler, and Board members Blake Christian, Michele Dobson, Bob Foster, Tony Gales, Mark Guillen, Donita Joseph, Annette Kashiwabara, Steve Keesal, Frank Newell, Suzanne Nosworthy, and Judy Ross.

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