

VIP 305

Interview with Ethan Malka
Passion for Cinema

VIP Principal:
8th Annual VIP Summer Camp Service Project

Moms behind VIP Volunteers

Birthday Baskets in memory of Lucas Osuna

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1. You graduated from high school with impressive achievements in filmmaking. Looking back, what moment made you realize that cinema was truly your passion?

Well, I think ever since I first stepped into a cinema and experienced the magic that happens when the screen lights up, and the crowd reacts together, I have always known I had a deep interest in it. But it wasn't until school, when I started making films and collaborating with other talented artists, that I truly realized this was my passion. Going through that entire process of imagination and creativity made me feel something I had never felt before. It made me genuinely happy, and that's when I knew this was what I wanted to pursue.

2. Balancing school, personal life, and film productions is not easy. What was the hardest part about managing everything during high school?

I think the hardest part was balancing the artistry with the academics. It's not very common these days to be both a student and an artist at a high level, so it was unfamiliar territory for a lot of us. The great thing about Dreyfoos is that it really fosters an environment that teaches you how to navigate high-level academics while also developing as an artist. That balance is what makes the school so unique.

3. Many young people dream about creating films but feel intimidated to start. What advice would you give to students who want to enter the film industry at a young age?

I've told this to so many people, but as cliché as it sounds, just start. The hardest part of anything is taking that first step. When I first got into filmmaking, it was the creative process that made me fall in love with it. I loved chasing the vision that would suddenly pop into my head and turning it into something real. All you need is a couple of people, a camera, and the freedom to let your imagination run wild. Then it's all about trial and error — creating, learning, improving, and repeating that process over and over again.

4. Your productions have already received recognition and awards. Which project has impacted you the most personally, and why?

I think the project that has impacted me the most personally is ENCORE, which was a finalist in the Screenplay category at the Student Showcase of Films. Technically, it's a film that hasn't been made yet — it's a script I've been working on bringing to life for over a year now. It's one of my biggest passion projects, and it's been a long journey securing the financial support needed to make it happen because it's such an ambitious project. But we finally got our start, and I'm incredibly excited to say that we're officially going into production on what I consider my dream film.

5. As a young filmmaker, where do you see yourself in the next five or ten years? Is there a dream director, actor, or studio you would love to work with one day?

I think any young filmmaker dreams of working with A24 because they're one of the studios that truly support unique and talented young directors. We're even seeing that now with Kane Parsons and Backrooms — something that started as an online concept he created on YouTube as a kid, and now he's directing a feature film at only 20 years old. That's incredibly inspiring to me. Studios like A24, Neon, Focus Features, and IFC are definitely at the top of the list for me.

6. Storytelling through film can inspire people emotionally. What kinds of stories are you most passionate about telling through your work?

I want to tell a mix of stories — films that tackle social issues while also celebrating art, music, love, and the things the world needs to feel more passionate about. I think we live in a very divided time, and one of the most beautiful things about cinema is that it brings people together. When everyone is sitting in the same room watching the same story unfold, it should be something that inspires them, transports them to another world, and introduces them to stories they've never experienced before. I want to create films with that kind of wonder and impact, like Singin' in the Rain, La La Land, or Forrest Gump.

7. Social media has changed the entertainment industry completely. How do you think platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram influence the future of filmmaking?

I think platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram are incredible tools for marketing and for helping young filmmakers grow their audience. I'm constantly seeing short films and creative projects blow up on TikTok and gain real recognition, and it always reminds me how powerful these platforms are as a way to promote independent work. For young directors, especially, social media has made it possible to reach audiences in ways that weren't possible before.

8. Behind every successful young person, there is usually a strong support system. How important has your family been throughout your journey?

I'm very lucky to have parents who always supported me and advocated for the arts. My mom instilled in me a hunger for success and the drive to pursue my goals, while my dad gave me a love and appreciation for the arts — whether it was music, movies, or creativity in general. I'm forever grateful to both of them for helping shape me into the person I am today.

9. Your mother has built a successful career in media, public relations, and the entertainment industry. How has growing up around that creative environment influenced the way you see storytelling and filmmaking?

From a young age, I was surrounded by so many moving parts that connect directly to filmmaking. Being around my mom while she worked introduced me to the world of communications and gave me an early understanding of how the media works as a whole. It also introduced me to many incredible people in the industry, including Telemundo actors Alexis Vanegas and Christopher Millan, whom I looked up to ever since meeting them when I was five years old. Now it feels like everything has come full circle because they're starring as the lead actors in my upcoming film Stake, which releases May 29th.

10. Having a mother who understands both the artistic world and the challenges behind it must be very unique. In what ways has your mom inspired or guided you throughout your journey as a young filmmaker?

My mom has played a huge role in guiding me throughout my filmmaking journey because she understands the business and marketing side of the industry so well. She's truly a marketing genius, and she's always been the perfect person to turn to when it comes to exposure and communications, which are such important parts of filmmaking today. I think I got more of my artistic passion from my dad because he was always watching movies and playing piano and guitar. One day as a kid, something just clicked for me, and I completely fell in love with all of it.

11. What does success truly mean to you — awards, recognition, impact, or something else?

To me, success is really about having the opportunity to make an impact on people and inspire them. My goal has always been to contribute to the growth of art and storytelling. I want my work to connect with people emotionally and creatively. Even the possibility of changing someone's perspective or having them deeply understand and connect with my art reinvigorates my passion and reminds me of my purpose.

12. This special edition celebrates mothers. What would you like to thank your mom for the most as you begin this exciting new chapter of your life and career?

I'd love to thank my mom for always being my number one supporter and for constantly uplifting me creatively. Because of her, I understand how communications and marketing work, and I've been able to integrate those skills into my filmmaking in a way that really sets me apart. Not only do I have an amazing mom, but I also have someone who has always been in my corner, teaching me lessons that I'll carry with me for the rest of my life. It truly means everything to me.



ETHAN MALKA

Get to know more about Ethan Malka at:

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This year, we proudly celebrate the 8th edition of our VIP Summer Camp — a milestone that fills our hearts with gratitude, excitement, and hope for everything still to come.

It almost feels unbelievable to look back and remember how this journey began. What started as a small dream with only three girls registered — and at one point even more counselors than campers — has now grown into a beautiful community that continues to impact so many families throughout South Florida. Watching this camp evolve year after year has been one of the greatest blessings for our foundation.

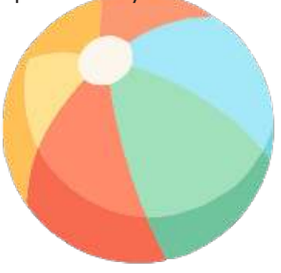
This summer is especially meaningful for us because, for the very first time, we will have the opportunity to welcome our friends with special needs into our brand-new therapy and activity space. This new classroom includes a larger handicap-accessible bathroom specifically designed to provide a safer, more comfortable, and more adapted environment for all of our participants. Creating an inclusive space where everyone feels supported, valued, and cared for has always been part of our mission, and seeing this dream finally become a reality is truly emotional for our entire team.

The excitement for this summer has been overwhelming in the best possible way. Many of our camp weeks are already reaching maximum capacity, and the incredible response from families reminds us why we continue working so hard every year to create meaningful experiences for our campers and volunteers.

Our camp is more than just a summer program — it is a place where friendships are formed, confidence grows, service becomes a lifestyle, and unforgettable memories are created. Through volunteering, community service activities, leadership experiences, and inclusive interactions, our campers leave with lessons that stay with them far beyond the summer months.

We are thrilled to share this year's camp dates and invite everyone to stay connected through our social media pages as we prepare for what promises to be an unforgettable summer filled with joy, purpose, friendship, and impact.

And as always, if you would like to support our mission in any way, our foundation welcomes every helping hand with open arms. Whether through sponsorships, donations, volunteering, partnerships, or community support, every contribution helps us continue creating opportunities and safe spaces for youth and individuals with special needs.



The Moms Behind VIP

As we celebrate Mother's Day, we want to recognize the incredible moms who are at the heart of the VIP community.

For the past eight years, we've had the privilege of welcoming families into our programs—from weeklong summer camps to events throughout the year. And whether it's that first camp drop-off or showing up to support an event, one thing has always remained constant: the presence and support of our moms.

Camp drop-off day is always a special moment. It's filled with excitement, a few nerves, and lots of hugs. It's where new memories begin. But behind every one of those moments is a mom who has chosen to trust us with her child—to let them grow, step out of their comfort zone, and experience something new.





That trust means everything to us.







Beyond camp, we see that same support all year long. From moms who volunteer their time, to those who show up to cheer on their children, to those who continue to say yes to new opportunities with VIP—you are a constant part of what makes this community so special.

This page is a look back at those moments over the last eight years—moms and their children at camp drop-off, at events, and everywhere in between. Each photo tells a story of support, love, and the quiet strength that makes these experiences possible.

To all of our VIP moms, thank you. Thank you for trusting us, for supporting your children, and for being such an important part of everything we do.

Happy Mother's Day.

Leadership That Creates Change

The Heart Behind Jayden Valdes' Service

When Jayden Valdes first visited our foundation during Christopher Columbus High School's Junior Service Day, he noticed something many of us would have never recognized ourselves. While walking around our property, Jayden quickly identified several trees that had become unsafe over time, something we knew very little about before meeting him and his family.

At our foundation, we welcome many vulnerable communities, organizations, families, and children throughout the year. Our property is also home to several animals that are part of the environment we've worked so hard to create. Because of this, maintaining a safe outdoor space is incredibly important, especially in Miami where storms, strong winds, and heavy rain are so common.

What stood out most to us wasn't only that Jayden noticed the issue — it was that he immediately wanted to help.

Without hesitation, Jayden introduced himself and shared that he works alongside his father, Luis, in landscaping and truly enjoys it. He explained that he would love to help make our foundation safer and better for everyone who visits.





For us, it was incredibly refreshing to see someone so young take initiative so naturally. He wasn't looking for recognition or praise - he simply saw something that could be improved and wanted to help however he could.

After speaking with his parents, Luis and Jennifer, it became very clear where Jayden gets his kindness and values from. Their family carries such a genuine spirit of generosity and service, and they offered their support simply because they cared and wanted to help our community.

What may seem like a simple act of service has already made a meaningful impact on our foundation. More importantly, it reminded us that there are still young people willing to lead with compassion, humility, and action.

Stories like Jayden's deserve to be shared because they inspire others to step up and make a difference in their communities, no matter their age. In a world where many wait for someone else to take the first step, Jayden chose to act.

This summer, we are incredibly excited to welcome Jayden to our VIP Summer Camp family. We already know he will bring positivity, leadership, and a servant heart everywhere he goes.

Young people like Jayden remind us that making a difference does not come from age or recognition — it comes from having the heart to serve others.

VIP Announces Its 2nd Annual Gala

September 19, 2026
at Trump National Doral



Continuing a Night of Purpose, Inclusion, and Community

After the unforgettable success of our first VIP Gala on May 10, 2025, Very Important Purpose (VIP) is proud to officially announce that our 2nd Annual VIP Gala will take place on September 19, 2026.

Last year's gala marked a major milestone for our foundation and became one of the most meaningful nights in VIP's journey so far. After years of dreaming about hosting an event that could bring together our community in support of inclusion and vulnerable populations, that dream finally became a reality.

The evening was filled with joy, emotion, celebration, and purpose. Community leaders, volunteers, students, families, sponsors, and supporters all came together for a night dedicated to love, inclusion, and making a difference in the lives of individuals with special needs and underserved communities.

One of the most special parts of the evening was seeing so many people united by the same mission — creating a more compassionate and inclusive world for others. The gala also gave us the opportunity to honor students and volunteers who have dedicated years of service to helping our community and supporting VIP's mission.

Beyond the celebration, the gala served a much greater purpose. Through the generosity and support of everyone involved, we continued raising awareness for accessibility, inclusion, and future projects that will allow our foundation to better serve families, children, and organizations throughout Miami.

The success of our first gala reminded us just how powerful a community can be when people come together with purpose and heart.

Now, as VIP continues growing, we are incredibly excited to begin preparing for our second gala this coming September. Over the past year, our foundation has continued expanding through monthly service opportunities, educational initiatives, outreach events, wellness programs, and our growing VIP Summer Camp, which welcomed nearly 160 campers this past year.

With this growth, we hope this year's gala will be even bigger and even more impactful. Our goal is not only to celebrate how far VIP has come, but also to continue building a future where every individual feels welcomed, supported, and included.

We are looking forward to another unforgettable night surrounded by the people who continue believing in our mission and helping us make a difference every single day.

To everyone who supported our first gala and everyone planning to join us for our second: thank you for being part of the VIP family. We cannot wait to celebrate together again on September 19, 2026.











Lourdes Care Club Spreads Kindness at Ronald McDonald House



Members of Our Lady of Lourdes Academy's Care Club recently spent an afternoon volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House, bringing joy and companionship to families staying there during difficult times.

Through games, activities, and meaningful conversations, Lourdes students created a warm and welcoming environment for children and families. The visit allowed students to connect with others through simple acts of kindness while offering support to those facing medical challenges and long hospital stays.

Students participated in arts and crafts, group activities, and quality time with the children, helping create moments of laughter and positivity throughout the afternoon. The experience reflected Lourdes Academy's commitment to service, compassion, and community involvement.

For many students, the visit served as a reminder of the importance of showing up for others and making a difference through even the smallest gestures. The event highlighted how service can strengthen connections and bring comfort to families who need it most.

By continuing to participate in outreach opportunities like this, Lourdes students demonstrate the school's mission of leadership, empathy, and faith in action while making a positive impact in the local community.







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MORE THAN A GAME

Belen Jesuit Basketball Hosts Inclusive Matchup with Great Heights Academy

Belen Jesuit's Varsity Wolverines recently faced off against the Great Heights Academy Eagles in a basketball game that focused on much more than competition. The event celebrated service, inclusion, and community while reflecting the school's Jesuit value of being "Men for Others."

Students, coaches, families, and athletes came together for an uplifting afternoon centered on teamwork and respect. Players from both schools shared the court in an atmosphere filled with encouragement, sportsmanship, and school spirit. Throughout the game, the Wolverines demonstrated leadership and compassion while creating meaningful connections with the Eagles athletes.



Photos from the event captured students celebrating together after the game, highlighting the sense of unity and positivity that made the matchup special. For many students, the experience served as a reminder that sports can bring people together and create opportunities to support and uplift others.

The event reflected Belen Jesuit's commitment to building community both on and off the court, proving that the impact of athletics goes far beyond the final score.

CONCHITA ESPINOSA ACADEMY'S MARIA BONITA DRIVE

On April 16, we had the honor of partnering with Conchita Espinosa Academy and their students for a meaningful initiative—the Maria Bonita Drive.

Through this effort, the school community came together to collect toiletry items along with new and gently used purses, all to be donated to women in need. The response was incredible. Thanks to the generosity of students, families, and faculty, an overwhelming number of items were collected, each one contributing to something truly impactful.

What made the experience even more special was the hands-on involvement of the students. They worked together to sort through all of the donations, organizing items by category and carefully filling each purse to ensure that every woman receiving one would have the essentials she needs. It was thoughtful, intentional, and truly driven by the students themselves.

Beyond the donations, this initiative served as a powerful lesson in gratitude. It was a reminder of how much we have and how meaningful it is to give back in a way that directly supports others.

We extend our sincere thanks to the students of Conchita Espinosa Academy, as well as their faculty and families, for their generosity and commitment. You are making a difference and leading in the right direction.

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Archbishop Carroll Celebrates the Class of 2026 at Senior Awards Night

Archbishop Coleman F. Carroll High School recently celebrated the achievements and dedication of the Class of 2026 during this year's Senior Awards Night. The special event recognized students for their hard work, leadership, academic excellence, and contributions to the school community throughout their high school journey.



The ceremony served as more than just an awards presentation — it reflected the commitment, perseverance, and growth shown by the graduating class over the years. Students were recognized for the countless hours they dedicated both inside and outside the classroom while continuing to represent the values and spirit of Archbishop Carroll.

Senior Awards Night also highlighted the strong sense of community at the school, where students are encouraged to lead, serve, and support one another throughout their high school experience. The event marked an important milestone for the Class of 2026 as graduation approaches and seniors prepare to begin the next chapter of their lives.

Seniors were honored for accomplishments in academics, service, leadership, athletics, and extracurricular involvement. One of the highlights of the evening was the announcement of the school's Valedictorian and Salutatorian, recognizing students who demonstrated exceptional dedication and achievement during their four years at Carroll.



As the Bulldogs look ahead toward college and future opportunities, the evening served as a reminder of how much they have accomplished and the lasting impact they leave behind at Archbishop Carroll.

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Our hormone optimization therapy is designed to restore energy, improve mood, enhance mental clarity, and increase your libido. By using personalized treatments, we help you feel like the best version of yourself at any age.

Sexual Vitality

Revitalize your passion and confidence with our sexual vitality treatments. With a personalized, evidence-based approach, we tackle hormonal imbalances, boost blood flow, and enhance overall wellness to elevate libido, performance, and satisfaction.

Regenerative Aesthetic Treatments

Our regenerative aesthetic treatments rebuild collagen and restore skin elasticity using advanced techniques like PRF, peptides, PDGRF, and bio-stimulators. These treatments enhance skin quality for a natural, youthful look and long-lasting rejuvenation.

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We offer a range of treatments, including targeted peptides, powerful metabolic boosters, and customized nutrition plans, all tailored to your unique body, lifestyle, and goals. With expert guidance every step of the way, we track your progress, and provide continuous support to help you lose weight safely and sustainably, because your success is our priority.

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Carrollton Students Promote Sustainability Through Green Fair

Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart recently brought environmental awareness to campus through this year's Green Fair, where students in grades 7 and 8 organized hands-on activities for Lower School students focused on sustainability and caring for the environment.

The event encouraged younger students to learn about the importance of protecting the planet through interactive games, outdoor projects, and educational activities. Throughout the day, students explored ways small actions can make a positive impact on the environment when communities work together.

From sorting activities for recycling awareness, the Green Fair created an engaging and meaningful experience that allowed older students to take on leadership roles while teaching younger students about sustainability in a fun and creative way. The event also gave students the opportunity to connect outside the classroom and work together toward a common goal.

By combining education, teamwork, and environmental responsibility, the Green Fair reflected Carrollton's commitment to forming socially conscious students who understand the importance of caring for both their community and the world around them.

The event served as a reminder that even small efforts — when done together — can create lasting change.

A New Generation of Purpose-Driven Leadership

Simon Aljure-Jauregui



1. After returning to Colombia for your second community project, how did this experience feel different from your first trip?

2. What inspired you to continue building homes and helping families in Colombia through this new project?

Even though I have undertaken several events toward benefiting those in need, I always look to my faith as the inspiration to my continued involvement in projects like this. I am most inspired by my faith in my Lord Jesus Christ; acting the way he would propels me to do as much good and benefit as many people as I can. I often reflect on the story of His miraculous multiplication of the five loaves of bread and two fish that fed the multitude of 5,000 people. Jesus could very well have fed a small group of people with the minuscule amount of food He had available to him, yet He chose to multiply the seemingly small amount of food to be able to feed a large amount of people. Having this in mind, I never lose sight of the fact that there will always be more people and more communities in need, regardless of how many I have already helped.

3. Even though you grew up in the United States, how important is it for you to stay connected to your Colombian roots and culture?

While I was born and raised in the United States, my Colombian roots remain the most important aspect of both the personal and professional sides of my life. Growing up surrounded by Colombia's rich culture and traditions has taught me that there are differing realities than what I am accustomed to in the United States; while I sit comfortably at home, there will always be a struggling Colombian family wondering when their next meal will be. This notion has always kept me in tune with the common theme of widespread poverty throughout the country and has motivated me to better Colombia through my communitarian efforts in any way possible.

4. During this trip, what was the most impactful moment that stayed in your heart?

Throughout this trip, there were many moments that remained in my heart, yet one stood out above all. Throughout the construction of the home, some members of the receiving family helped us out with heavy lifting and carrying materials that were needed. Among them was the father, a hardened man who did not show much emotion.. At the day's conclusion, it was my job to give the family the keys to their new home. Before I could, the father was the first one to speak up and for the very first time displayed true emotion, visibly tearing up while saying, "Gracias a Dios y gracias a ustedes por su ayuda, especialmente a este jovén Simon." He thanked us for our work and was deeply appreciative of the future that the new home gave his family.

5. Was there anything difficult or emotional that you witnessed during your experience helping these communities?

This experience showed me many difficult realities in the impoverished communities of Colombia. Houses were often made of planks of wood and metal scraps put together, some toilets simply did not flush, and families were cramped into tight living spaces meant for one or two people. Despite this, these families still found ways to push forward and remain grateful for the things they had. Children found ways to have fun with what was available to them, not allowing their social situation to deter them from being children and enjoying their childhood. To me, this was the greatest demonstration of humility a human could have and impacted me beyond words.

6. What have you learned personally from serving others and giving back to people in need?

Serving others and giving back to those in need has taught me many valuable lessons. For one, it has taught me to show humility with the things God has blessed me with and appreciate even the smallest details, for those are often the ones with the greatest and most lasting impact. Lastly, I have learned to persevere in the face of adversity with the many issues that we (the volunteer team) have overcome in the process of building a home.

7. Many young people want to help their communities but don't know where to start. What advice would you give them?

I believe young people can help their communities in many different ways. It does not need to be on the grandest of scales to be considered impactful, but so much as one act of kindness can change somebody's entire life. Simply identifying and following through on one problem to exploit can spiral into something beyond your wildest dreams, similar to how I never could have pictured Manos for Homes to be what it is today. To be successful in helping your community, all it takes is one person and an initiative to change the world.

8. How important has the support of your family been throughout this journey and your community projects?

My family has been the consistent backbone of this journey. The values my parents have instilled in me from a young age propel me to further my impact and seek a lasting connection with those in need. My family has always been greatly supportive of my communitarian efforts and has been nothing short of amazing in their contributions in this journey.

9. Your mom has been an important part of your growth and mission. What role has she played in supporting and inspiring you to continue helping others?

My mom has always been the gold standard for what a person can be. She never hesitates to lend a helping hand and is consistently willing to sacrifice her own benefit for the general wellbeing of others. Her leadership and dedication to her craft sets the precedent for my own dedication and commitment to Manos for Homes, and her unshakeable determination inspires me to push through any challenges I may face along the path to helping my community.

10. Since this edition is a Mother's Day special, what message or words would you like to dedicate to your mom during this special month celebrating mothers?

I'd like for my mom to know that she is the most amazing individual God could have blessed me with and that the values she exemplifies on a daily basis have impacted my life in immeasurable ways. I'd like her to know that I love her to the moon and back and would do absolutely anything for her. She is an angel sent from God and somebody He can truly be proud of.

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Andina Driving School has proudly served the Miami-Dade community since 1991 as a family-owned business dedicated to safe, supportive, and confidence-building driver education.

In 2015, Carlo Monzon, son of the founder, took over the school and introduced a modern, personalized approach to instruction. Carlo holds an MBA in Healthcare Management and brings a structured, student-focused philosophy that emphasizes safety, patience, and individual learning needs.

Carlo works alongside his sister, Kattya Monzon, a certified driving instructor and third-party administrator. Kattya leads the Driving Skills Test program and plays a key role in overseeing instruction for students who benefit from additional guidance. Together, Carlo and Kattya share a passion for teaching and a commitment to treating every student with respect, empathy, and care.

With 28 certified instructors and more than 15,000 hours of teaching experience, Andina Driving School has successfully graduated over 25,000 students. The school offers comprehensive programs for minors, adults, and students with learning differences, including anxiety, ADHD, and Asperger's. Instruction covers every step of the driving process—from in-person preparation for the knowledge test and behind-the-wheel training to refresher programs and the official DMV Driving Skills Test, which is offered on site with vehicles provided.

Rooted in family values and a deep commitment to safety and accessibility, Andina Driving School continues to help students of all ages and abilities gain confidence, independence, and lifelong safe driving skills on Miami-Dade roads.



FAREWELL TO THE CLASS OF 2026



Today, we celebrate the Class of 2026 — a group that has left a meaningful mark through their journey, their growth, and the moments they have shared over the past four years.

High school represents a unique chapter in life — a time of transformation, discovery, and transition. It is a period where challenges shape character, where questions lead to growth, and where each experience becomes part of a greater story.

The Class of 2026 stands as a reflection of resilience, dedication, and potential. As they take their next steps into new academic paths and opportunities, each university they have chosen becomes a new space for learning, purpose, and personal growth.

Wherever this journey leads, one thing remains constant — the values and foundations that have shaped them. The support of their families, the guidance of their schools, and the strength of their community will always be part of who they are.

May they continue to walk with faith, guided by purpose and grounded in the principles that have brought them this far. May they never lose sight of the importance of giving back, of staying connected to their roots, and of making a positive impact wherever they go.



The future ahead is full of possibilities. And with every step forward, there is an opportunity to inspire, to lead, and to continue building a legacy of kindness, service, and community.

From all of us at VIP 305 and Very Important Purpose, this will always be a place you can call home. The door remains open for you to return, to contribute, and to continue creating meaningful change in the world.

Congratulations, Class of 2026. Your journey is just beginning.







VIP RODEO WITH A PURPOSE





This past March, we had the joy of celebrating our very first VIP Rodeo Party at El Escondite, and it truly became an unforgettable experience for everyone who joined us for this incredible day.

We enjoyed great music, lots of laughter, and an amazing line dancing class led with so much energy and passion by our talented instructor, Paula (@zumbarella305), who had all of our volunteers, families, and special guests dancing and having fun together.





One of the highlights of the event was the exciting mechanical bull, where our wonderful friends from @Thepartyneverstopstemals helped make sure our friends with special needs were safe, comfortable, and fully able to enjoy every moment of the experience.

We also want to give a very special thank you to our dear friend Sheridan (@sheridancortazar), who generously brought her beautiful white horse, Nebraska, to make this event even more magical and memorable for everyone. Seeing our participants interact with such a stunning horse created truly heartwarming moments that we will never forget.





We would like to sincerely thank our sponsors, volunteers, and special families who always show up with love and enthusiasm, helping us create unforgettable memories and meaningful experiences for our community. Events like these remind us how important it is to build inclusive spaces where everyone feels welcomed, celebrated, and part of one big family.

And although the photos captured beautiful moments, they truly cannot show just how much fun we all had throughout this spectacular celebration.





If you would like to be part of our future events, support us as a volunteer or sponsor, or simply share unforgettable moments with our special needs families and volunteers, we invite you to contact us and become part of this mission filled with inclusion, joy, and love.

BIRTHDAY BASKETS FROM LUCAS: HONORING A LIFE THROUGH SERVICE



On April 17, friends, family, and volunteers came together to honor the life of Lucas Osuna through kindness, friendship, and giving back.

Just days after what would have been Lucas's birthday, his best friends from Christopher Columbus High School, John Figueras and Evan Alonso-Villarruel, partnered with VIP to create "Birthday Baskets from Lucas," an initiative dedicated to helping families in hospitals and low-income communities celebrate birthdays in a simple but meaningful way.

Each basket included cake mix, frosting, Sprite, and candles, creating an easy and joyful birthday cake kit for families in need.

The event became more than a service project—it was a celebration of Lucas's life and the impact he had on those around him. With the support of Lucas's mom, Jeanette, Evan's mom, Susie, and many volunteers, the day was filled with love, unity, and purpose.

What started as an idea between friends has now become a tradition that will continue honoring Lucas's memory through service and community.

Below, we are honored to share a heartfelt letter Lucas's mother sent for all of our readers. We feel deeply grateful for her beautiful words and for the trust she placed in our magazine to help share Lucas's story and legacy.

Being Lucas' mom has been the most beautiful gift from God! Seeing Lucas' light shining through the lives he touched and through every act of kindness done in his name moves me. I will always feel the loss of my son, but there is such a deep sense of peace and fulfillment in knowing that his life continues to make a difference.

I am beyond humbled that his legacy of love, generosity, and service will continue through these Birthday Boxes. Seeing so many come together to donate, serve, and honor him filled my heart with overwhelming gratitude and reminded me that love never ends. Every box prepared and every smile created is a reminder that Lucas' spirit is still present among us.

Lucas had such a big heart, especially for the less fortunate. He loved making sandwiches at VIP305 and serving those in need without hesitation or recognition. Knowing that he will continue serving others through this mission is such a blessing as a mother. I pray that every family touched by these packages feels, not only celebrated, but also the love of God and the beautiful spirit of Lucas shining through them.

Thank you to everyone involved. Thank you to John and Evan, their beautiful moms- Liz and Susie (my best friends), VIP 305 and all the giving people that made this event possible. God bless you all! "Give, and it will be given to you." Luke 6:38

LONG LIVE LUCAS













STUDENT-LED IMPACT:

MIAMI ARTS STUDIO'S MONTHLY SANDWICH DRIVE

At Miami Arts Studio, service has become more than just an activity—it's a monthly commitment, led by one dedicated student who continues to make a meaningful impact.

Eighth grader Madelyn Ojeda has taken the initiative to organize and lead monthly sandwich-making events, bringing together fellow students to give back to the community. From coordinating volunteers to planning each event, Madelyn has consistently gone above and beyond, turning a simple idea into something powerful.

Each month, students come together to prepare sandwiches for those in need, and every time, the results exceed expectations. What started as an effort to help has grown into a reliable act of service, fueled by teamwork, leadership, and genuine care for others.

Madelyn's dedication is a reminder of the difference one person can make. Through her leadership, she has not only created opportunities for others to serve but has also built a culture of giving within her school community.

We extend a sincere thank you to the students of Miami Arts Studio for showing up month after month and making a real difference. Your commitment to helping others does not go unnoticed, and your impact continues to reach far beyond each event.



Serving with Heart: Feed the Need & A Plate of Kindness

Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, our community has come together twice a month with one shared purpose—to serve others with consistency, compassion, and care.

After school, volunteers gather for our Feed the Need Lunchbags initiative, where simple acts make a meaningful impact. Students work side by side to prepare lunch bags filled with sandwiches, snacks, and beverages. Each bag is thoughtfully put together before being donated to Saint Agatha Church's Hope 4 the Homeless ministry, which distributes them to individuals in need every Wednesday we host.







In addition to these efforts, our A Plate of Kindness events bring volunteers directly into the community. Together, we prepare and deliver hot meals to Hermanos de la Calle, where they are shared with families experiencing homelessness. These moments go beyond service—they create connection, understanding, and a reminder of the importance of showing up for others.

What makes these initiatives so special is the consistency and dedication of our volunteers. Week after week, they give their time after school, showing that even small actions, when done together, can have a lasting impact.

To all of our volunteers who participated throughout the 2025–2026 school year, thank you. Your commitment, your energy, and your willingness to serve have made a real difference in the lives of so many.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL

With great excitement and enthusiasm, the parents of the future Class of 2030 at Christopher Columbus High School organized a wonderful welcome picnic for the students who will soon be representing this new generation of Explorers.

It was an afternoon filled with games, laughter, fun, and memorable moments where students and their families had the opportunity to begin building friendships, creating connections, and sharing the excitement of this new chapter that officially begins in August. Through activities, conversations, and many smiles, the spirit of brotherhood and community that defines the Columbus family was already beginning to shine.

For some students, this will be their very first time becoming part of the Explorers family, while others continue a family tradition, arriving at Columbus with older siblings — and even parents — who also graduated from Christopher Columbus High School. This makes the beginning of their journey even more meaningful and special.

The Class of 2030 is already beginning to write its own story, one filled with dreams, goals, unforgettable memories, and experiences that will shape the next four years.

We wish all future Explorers a successful school year, personal growth, lasting friendships, and an incredible experience as they begin this exciting new stage of their lives. Welcome to Columbus, Class of 2030!



CLASS OF 2030

























Reconnecting What Matters Most:

A Mother & Son Experience

In the middle of our busy lives, it's easy to feel like time with our sons is passing by faster than we ever imagined.

Between school, activities, responsibilities, and the constant presence of technology, meaningful moments to truly connect can become less frequent. And yet, these are the years when our presence, our conversations, and our connection matter the most.

That idea was at the heart of Re-Connected: A Mother & Son Experience, held on Saturday, April 18 at VIP Foundation in partnership with Seres Felices.

The event brought together seven mother and son duos for a day that was intentionally simple in structure, but meaningful in impact. It wasn't designed to feel like a lecture or something forced. Instead, it created a space where connection could happen naturally—through shared activities, conversation, and time spent together without distractions.

Led by Libden Sanchez, founder of Seres Felices, the experience moved through different moments of reflection, interaction, and collaboration. With over 20 years of experience working with families and youth, she guided the group in a way that felt approachable and real, allowing both mothers and sons to participate at their own pace.

Throughout the day, there was a mix of emotions. Some moments were quiet and reflective, where conversations went a little deeper than usual. Others were light and full of laughter. There were times when participants opened up, and others where they simply enjoyed being together.

What stood out most was how quickly the group settled in. Any initial hesitation faded, and the space became one where people felt comfortable being themselves. You could see connections strengthening in small ways—through listening, through shared experiences, and through simply being present.

By the end of the day, the feedback from participants was consistent. They had a good time, they felt closer, and they appreciated having the opportunity to step away from their routine and focus on their relationship.

It was a reminder that connection doesn't always require something complicated. Sometimes it just takes intention, the right environment, and a willingness to show up.

VIP Foundation continues to create experiences like this, focused on strengthening families and creating Wmoments that carry beyond a single day.













Beyond Labels: Creating Space for Connection and Inclusion

At VIP, some of our most meaningful moments come from the spaces where everyone feels seen, included, and empowered—and that is exactly what Beyond Labels is all about.

Three to four times a month, we have the opportunity to host Beyond Labels at our locations in Homestead, Westchester, and Doral. These gatherings bring together individuals with special needs and our volunteers for afternoons filled with creativity, connection, and fun.

Each session is different, but the goal is always the same: to create an environment where everyone can participate, express themselves, and enjoy the experience. From designing and printing their own merchandise to take home, to baking classes, making cake pops, playing board games, and simply spending time socializing—there is always something happening.









What makes Beyond Labels so special is not just the activities, but the relationships that are built along the way. Volunteers and participants work side by side, learning from one another, sharing laughs, and creating a sense of community that goes far beyond the event itself.

These afternoons are a reminder that inclusion is not just about being present—it's about creating opportunities where everyone feels valued and involved.

We are incredibly grateful for the groups who join us and for the volunteers who show up ready to connect, support, and make each experience meaningful. It is truly an honor to host Beyond Labels and to continue growing this space where everyone belongs.











New Faces, Meaningful Connections:

WELCOMING DIVINE SAVIOR SCHOOL

Divine Savior SCHOOL







One of the most special parts of what we do at VIP is the people we meet along the way. There is always someone new, a new group, a new story—and every time, it reminds us why we love what we do.

Recently, we had the honor of welcoming a truly special group from Divine Savior School. This group of adults with special needs has been visiting us twice a month in the mornings at the VIP office, and each visit has quickly become something we all look forward to.

During their time with us, they've had the opportunity to gain hands-on work experience through our printing activities. From creating tumblers, t-shirts, tote bags, and baking mats, to learning new skills along the way, they've brought enthusiasm and positivity into everything they do.

But beyond the work, it's been the moments in between that have meant just as much—especially the many (and very competitive) rounds of Connect 4 that have filled the room with laughter.

These visits have become more than just field trips. They've created a space for connection, growth, and shared experiences. Their energy, kindness, and joy have left a lasting impression on all of us.

We are so grateful to have met these six incredible individuals and look forward to many more mornings together throughout the year.





Editorial: Growing with Purpose

By Amarette Suarez & Yessika Siles





















At Very Important Purpose (VIP), our mission has always been about more than providing services — it's about inspiring and empowering the next generation to discover their purpose and make a positive impact in their communities. Through our events and initiatives, we aim to show our youth that helping others is one of the most meaningful ways to live with intention.

From our humble beginnings, VIP has become a dynamic force for change, offering countless opportunities for hands-on community engagement. Each month, we host 10-15 service opportunities, ranging from Sandwich Events for the Homeless to Direct Distribution Field Trips and CPR/First Aid Classes. Our monthly events, including Dream Board Creations, bring together organizations like The WOW Center and Ronald McDonald House Charities to create meaningful collaborations and lasting impact.

Our holiday events, such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Valentine's Day, serve low-income families, foster children, and individuals with special needs. These celebrations continue to grow each year, and we have exciting projects planned to further expand our outreach, including mental health, wellness, and educational initiatives.

One of the pillars of our foundation is the Annual Summer Camp Service Project, which has grown beyond our expectations since it began in 2019. What started with just 10 campers in one summer has grown to nearly 115 this past year. Many of our campers return year after year, and our dedicated volunteers inspire us with their ongoing commitment to serve.

As we continue this journey of growth, purpose, and community, we remain inspired by all who join us in making a difference. Together, we are building a brighter future for those in need.

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