



Kids Included Together

Event News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

Adriana Herrera, adriana@kitonline.org (619) 756-7593

Kids Included Together receives a major contribution from QUALCOMM to help children with disabilities

National Training Center closer to becoming a reality because of QUALCOMM's gift

San Diego, CA: QUALCOMM's commitment to strengthening the San Diego community continued in a big way recently when it granted Kids Included Together (KIT) \$250,000 to help them get one giant step closer to opening a National Training Center on Inclusion (NTCI) at Point Loma's NTC Promenade at Liberty Station. Translating the philosophy of inclusion into reality is a process that requires collaboration, flexibility and a willingness to take risks.

QUALCOMM supports organizations that "serve the well being of our entire community," said Susan Laun, vice president of human resources and corporate giving for QUALCOMM. "KIT is an organization that reflects QUALCOMM's dedication to inclusion and diversity, and is a natural partner that embodies and embraces these important qualities."

Only 20 percent of recreational, child and youth development programs are accepting and serving children with disabilities. QUALCOMM's donation is making a significant investment into the lives of the 115,000 children with disabilities in San Diego and is beginning to open doors for children with disabilities across the country. Recognizing the need to see children with disabilities as children first, QUALCOMM has committed to assisting KIT in removing barriers to inclusion.

"The impact of QUALCOMM's investment on behalf of children with disabilities cannot be understated," said Jan Giacinti, executive director for KIT. "A gift of this magnitude truly puts the National Training Center within our reach, paving the way for more and more children with disabilities to be welcomed in community programs."

For more than eight years, KIT has supported the inclusion of children with disabilities and other special needs in programs that occur during non-school hours. KIT accomplishes this by creating four-year affiliations with community-based organizations, such as Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, aquatic programs, etc.

KIT provides training, technical assistance, site-specific training and child-specific consultations. The end result is an organization that has embraced the philosophy of inclusion and is ready and willing to accept all children, regardless of their abilities, into their programs.

The National Training Center on Inclusion, scheduled to open in December, will benefit typically developing children, families and the community as a whole. NTCI will act as a working lab to further develop KIT's eLearning initiative and training materials as well as provide a space to build a public resource library. Additionally, providers will learn to respect differences, to make accommodations that will allow children to be successful, to focus on the abilities within each child and to model appropriate behavior so that all children learn from their example. At the same time, children with disabilities learn skills from their typically developing peers as they play and interact in an inclusive environment.

"It was so nice to see that he felt like a part of the community right away," said a father of a boy who was born with a disability. "He was included into the everyday activities and was excited everyday about getting up and going to see kids that were his new friends. He was the kid that was never supposed to walk or talk and there he was, talking about going to play baseball with his friends. That's pretty special."

As providers from across the nation visit and learn at NTCI, they will return to their communities with the values of inclusion and act as catalysts for change that will open doors to children with disabilities and allow them to participate in everything childhood has to offer.

QUALCOMM's investment will continue to generate communities where diversity is embraced and children with disabilities are valued for their abilities and the contributions they make for many years to come.

To find out how you can help KIT reach their goal of creating the Center, please call 858-320-2050 or visit KIT on line at www.kitonline.org.



Pictured from left to right: Brian Trotier, VP Kelly Capital & KIT Board 1st Vice President, Jan Giacinti, KIT Executive Director, and Susan Laun, QUALCOMM, Vice President Human Resources & Corporate Giving

Kids Included Together (KIT), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, provides training and technical support to help community service organizations, such as youth development facilities, child care programs, youth clubs, and recreation facilities to include children with disabilities in their existing programs.

The mission of KIT is to support recreational, child development and youth development programs that include children with and without disabilities. KIT's goals are to enrich the lives of all who participate and to increase understanding and acceptance of disabilities as a natural part of life.

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