SIGNATURE PROJECTS

One of the four pillars of Kiwanis International’s strategic plan—the I-Plan—is for clubs to perform meaningful service. In one word: Impact. And one of the strategies of that goal is to encourage the development of a signature project in each club.

A signature project is a fundraiser or act of service that addresses a need so effectively that it establishes Kiwanis’ reputation in the community. It answers the question, “What is Kiwanis?” Clubs of all sizes can have signature projects. Just choose one that makes a difference—a significant difference.

A by-product of being an agent of community change is stronger membership. People want to be part of great, effective, meaningful service.

making your mark

On these pages are examples of Kiwanis signature projects that are improving Kiwanis signature projects while also strengthening clubs’ membership. They are reported here not as projects to be copied, but to inspire Kiwanis members to find signature projects that best fit their communities.

Does your club have a signature project? Email details to shareyourstory@kiwanis.org.

Project: Kiwanis Safety Town
Club Name: Kiwanis Club of Hudson, Ohio
Important Info: Hudson Kiwanians recently led a community effort to revitalize Safety Town, which teaches children about bike, fire, electrical, weather, water and animal safety.
Impact: “The Hudson Kiwanis Club is looked at as a leader (in the community),” says member Grant Aungst, who also is director of Hudson Community Education & Recreation, which operates the program. “We are an organization that can do, that changes and grows with the community.”
Read more about Safety Town at http://kwn.is/OHsignature.
Project: Kiwanis Kids’ Day Football
Club Name: Kiwanis Club of Springdale, Arkansas
Important Info: The people of Springdale love football, and every August, first- through sixth-grade youngsters suit up for their first gridiron experience at Kids’ Day Football, where they learn football fundamentals and sportsmanship.
Impact: “People know what Kiwanis is,” says project Chairman Jim Ed Reed. “We’re heavily involved in the school district, not just with the football program, but in many ways. We’re a strong club and have well-respected members of our community in the club.”
Read more about Kids’ Day Football at http://kwn.is/ARfootball.

Project: River Walk Fiesta
Club Name: Kiwanis Club of Alamo, San Antonio, Texas
Important Info: Fiesta Noche del Río is a multicultural singing and dancing revue featuring the music of Mexico, Spain, Argentina, the Caribbean and the US. Over the past 58 years, it has raised more than US$2.5 million for children’s charities.
Impact: “Because of our lengthy presence on the River Walk each summer and the requirement that each of our members volunteer for at least three work shifts during run of the show, the community is exposed to our members and our message of helping those less fortunate,” says 2014 Fiesta Chairman Harry Balling. “The fact that we are providing positive role models creates an excellent image for the club.”
Read more about Fiesta at http://kwn.is/TXfiesta.
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Project: Horse Show  
Club Name: Kiwanis Club of Brecksville, Ohio  
Important Info: One of Brecksville’s great traditions, the Kiwanis Horse Show is an end-of-summer gathering for horse lovers. In addition to jumping competitions, a carriage candlelight parade and English and Western riders, there are special activities for children, such as a stick pony event where every broom-handle rider receives a ribbon.  
Impact: “People are familiar with Kiwanis and often say, ‘Oh yes, I’ve been to the horse show many times,’” reports club Secretary Kevin Brusk. “As an organization, we hope that this event will continue to foster our bond with the community for many years to come.”  
Read more about the horse show at http://kwn.is/OHhorse.

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Project: Playgrounds  
Club Name: Kiwanis Club of Napa, California  
Important Info: Over the past 16 years, the Napa Kiwanis Club has built 60 playgrounds for schools, park departments and various other organizations, including a secret home for battered women and their children. Without the club and its commitment to serve children, many of these playgrounds might never have been built.  
Impact: “Many of our members joined our club because of this one project,” says member Jim Roberts. “Our club consistently attracts folks who want to be a part of us and thus contribute to their community in so many, many ways.”  
Read more about this playground project at http://kwn.is/CAplayground.
**Project:** Christmas Parade  
**Club Name:** Kiwanis Club of Cortana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
**Important Info:** More than 75,000 people attend the annual Christmas Parade, which features marching bands, floats, dancers, troops and local celebs. The parade, which involves other area Kiwanis clubs, raises funds for many charities, including children’s hospitals, food banks and a domestic violence center.  
**Impact:** “The volunteer opportunities that the Christmas Parade generates for Cortana Kiwanis helps the club attract and recruit new members,” says parade Chairwoman Heather Folks. “Not only are there opportunities to get involved with the parade’s logistics, but because of the funds the parade generates, the club can contribute time and resources to philanthropic projects throughout the year.”  
Read more about the parade at http://kwn.is/LAparade.

**Project:** Baby Shower  
**Club Name:** Kiwanis Club of Titusville, Florida  
**Important Info:** For the past 18 years, the World’s Greatest Baby Shower has been teaching expectant moms how to be moms, with educational classes on car-seat safety, feeding, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and more. The most popular class invites parents to ask questions of a panel that includes a pediatrician, dentist, anesthesiologist, obstetrician and nurse.  
**Impact:** “This really shows the community that Kiwanis cares about kids and wants the best for them,” says club Secretary Kari Bollinger. “Education for mothers is where that starts.”  
Read more about the baby shower at http://kwn.is/FLshower.
**Signature Projects**

**Project:** Food Bank Gardens  
**Club Name:** Kiwanis Club of Olympia, Washington  
**Important Info:** Three gardens, totaling 1½ acres, produce an average of 28,000 pounds of fresh vegetables per year, and it’s all donated to the Thurston County Food Bank. “The long-term health benefits to those who do not have access to healthy foods cannot be overstated," says food bank Director Robert Coit.  
**Impact:** "We were invited to use a half acre on the State Capitol Campus, where we teach gardening to youth and community volunteers, demonstrate to visitors the impact of community gardens and serve our community in partnership with the Thurston County Food Bank," says Olympia Kiwanian Derek Valley.  
Read more about the gardens at http://kwn.is/WAgardens.

**Project:** Chocolate Walk  
**Club Name:** Kiwanis Club of Lititz Area, Pennsylvania  
**Important Info:** The Chocolate Walk consistently raises more than US$50,000 for a variety of charities by bringing together more than 25 artisans to create chocolate treats for 2,000 ticket-bearing customers to sample.  
**Impact:** “While we have always been small—about 25 members—many of our new members over the past 13 years have come to us because of the Chocolate Walk, either as retailers who have seen the benefit the walk brings to the town and their business or because they want to be part of the organization that puts on such a successful event," says walk Chairman Mark Freeman.  
Read more about the walk at http://kwn.is/PAwalk.