

Upcoming Events:

The Säjai Foundation offices will be closed Dec. 19–Jan. 3, 2010, resuming regular hours on Jan. 4. Happy New Year!

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Learn Live Lead

On October 29, the Säjai Foundation held its first-ever awareness-raising and fundraising event: the Learn Live Lead event.

Our hard-working table captain volunteers united to invite more than 200 people. They were so successful that the day of the event, we were worried that some people would have to stand—a wonderful problem to have for our first event!

Guests had the opportunity to learn more about the work the Foundation does, starting from the dream Barb King had of actively fighting childhood obesity to the programs developed by the

Foundation. Alicia McConnell and Betsy Montgomery, program leaders from the Town of Leesburg, VA, talked about why they love the Wise Kids program, and children read excerpts from essays provided by Wise Kids participants. A video which showcased



The centerpiece from the Learn Live Lead event.

our work was a major highlight of the day.

Our thanks to the Minneapolis Golf Club, which donated the event space; to Ron London, London & Bullard, Little & Co., and Landscape Structures, Inc., for their sponsorship; and for the incredibly hard-working volunteers before, during, and after the event—it never would have happened without all of your generous help!

The NRF/NRPA Grant Programs

This summer, 49 communities were given grants from the National Recreation Foundation and the National Recreation and Parks Association to bring Wise Kids programs into their communities. That means that nearly 3,800 children had the opportunity to participate in a Wise Kids program.

It was especially heartening to see some of the results from the program surveys. For example, Ft. Lauderdale saw a 6% gain over the course of the program in kids who agreed with the statement “I like to eat fruits and vegetables,” and a more than 15% gain in an understanding of the concept of energy balance, what food labels

tell us, and the key differences between healthy and junk foods—all very important ideas!

Congratulations to all the programs that successfully completed Wise Kids this summer, and applause for the NRF and NRPA for awarding and administering the grant that made it all happen.

From the President

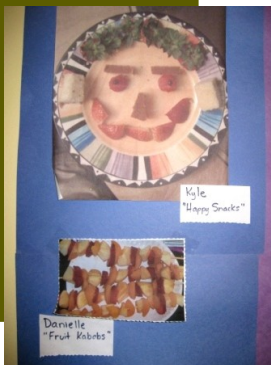


St. Paul kids tried rock climbing with Wise Kids Outdoors

“The kit that you sent to us was well laid out by the experts and the materials were easy to understand and very user friendly. “

—Sue McAllister, Community Program Supervisor, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Give children room for creativity, and they'll create happy, healthy snacks!



2009 has been a tremendous year for the Sājai® Foundation, a year filled with growth, change and opportunity. We served nearly 5000 children this year through 80 community partners across the country. We learned the power of grant funding to ensure sponsorships are provided to youth agencies is amazing in delivering magic for children and leaders alike. Seeing the photos and receiving thank you cards, essays and stories of the new change that has been ignited through our Wise

Kids programs is rewarding beyond belief and builds momentum for us to drive future growth.

And, our networking with potential partners, supporters and funders is turning over all sorts of new ideas and opportunities, giving us an exciting pipeline of activities for 2010. Most importantly, the support that our volunteers and communities have shown fuels our passion for doing more to teach children why to value and how to lead healthier lives. During

this season of celebration and thankfulness, we want to thank you, our supporters for making what we do possible and so rewarding.

Thank you!

—Melissa Hanson, CEO/President

Did You Know?

- The American Academy of Neurology reported in the Nov. 2009 issue of *Neurology* that teenage girls who are obese may be more than twice as likely to develop multiple sclerosis.
- The state of Tennessee, which has a childhood overweight/obesity rate of 38%, mandated in 2008 that all schools must offer at least 90 minutes of physical activity each week, and school lunchrooms must offer more healthy food options. In addition,

many elementary schools have implemented the “Take 10” program, which teaches classroom leaders how to add physical activity into regular classroom instruction (such as jumping jacks during math). Congrats to Tennessee for taking action for its kids!

News from the Field



Some of the children in this summer's Wise Kids programs wrote essays about what they learned. Here's what a few had to say:

"Before I thought healthy stuff wasn't good but when I came to Wise Kids I changed and I eat more healthy stuff. My favorite thing we did was when we went outside and caught bugs. The new thing I learned was that the earth needs to be in balance. And now I'm going to be outside in the sun and get my vitamin D."

"I told my grandparents and aunt that a lot of sugar is bad for you and I learned that

water is really good for you. It has no sugar. But some of the sodas have a lot of sugar. And I learned that I should eat my fruits and vegetables because they are healthy and I can drink milk too because that's healthy and it has a lot of calcium."

"Before Wise Kids, I was never thinking about the outdoors."

"We're learning just as much as the kids, and it's really proven to be a great experience."

Wise Kids® in Action

Jordanne Stark of St. John's County, FL, was one of the program leaders working with the Wise Kids Outdoors program for the first time this summer after receiving an NRF/NRPA grant (see page 1 for more information). Here's what she had to say about her experience: "[We]

love this program. We're learning just as much as the kids, and it's proven to be a great experience. The kids came up with great activities as an extension of the missions in the book. For example, on the recycling mission, they turned the activity into a relay race. It's amazing how

much they're retaining."

Kudos to Jordanne and her fellow staffers for letting kids be kids—anytime the children want to improvise, they'll learn even more!

How You Can Help

Our annual campaign is vital to raising funds so we can continue our work with children and youth leaders around the country. To date, we are only at 25% of our goal. For those of you who have contributed, we thank you for

your help. If you have not yet donated, please consider a year-end contribution to the Säjai Foundation. We want to award even more sponsorships to youth-serving agencies so they can use our Wise Kids programs with children in

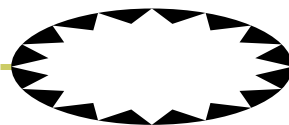
2010. And we need to invest in technology so that we can better report impact and begin advocacy efforts for the importance of preventative wellness and outdoor education for children. With your help, we can accomplish this

Please visit our website to make a tax-deductible donation so together, we can give all children an opportunity to learn about and to practice healthy living!



The Säjai® Foundation

P.O. Box 320
Hamel, MN 55340



Who We Are

The Säjai® Foundation's staff:

President: Melissa Hanson

Senior Marketing Manager:
Carrie Stolar

Communications Coordinator: Amy Rea

Accountant: Joan TerMaat

Board of Directors:

Robert Ashcraft, Ph.D.

Corly Brooke, Ph.D.

Melissa Hanson, MBA

Erin King

Steve King, FASLA

Eric O'Brien

Kathy Spangler, CAE, CPRP

Joseph Wynns, MS, CPRP

Contact Us

Phone: 952-288-3364

Fax: 952-934-6287

Email:
amy@sajaifoundation.org

Website:
www.sajaifoundation.org