

## Soroptimist Sponsors Leadership Camp Participants

By Alyson Stiles and Susan Whitesell



*Pictured from left to right: Fallon Garrett, Fisher Lyon, Josie Preston, Zack McLean, Alyson Stiles (teacher), Josh Dewhurst (CASL Board Member), Spencer Emigh and Pete Rossi.*

A traditional summer vacation for Rio Vista kids might involve a family camping trip, visiting out of town family, or perhaps a stay in town with visits to the library or pool. But for six Riverview students this summer included a 3-day trip to UC Santa Barbara to attend the California Association of Director of Activities (CADA) and California Association of Student Leaders (CASL) middle school camp. Their trip was sponsored by Soroptimist Project Heart & Sole, which focuses on the Cross Country Program at Riverview and promotes leadership and character education.

On Thursday, July 25, Riverview students Josie Preston, Fallon Garrett, Fisher Lyon, Zack McLean, Pete Rossi, Spencer Emigh, and their teacher Alyson Stiles, loaded up in a van for the 6 hour drive to UCSB unsure what to expect out of camp. After a long day of travel, and a late night arrival, the kids settle into their dorms still anxious about the days to come.

The camp theme was University U: Ministerium Per Se which translates to “Service Above Self,” a core idea behind student leadership. The camp highlighted the need for students to return to their campus and practice student leadership and to reach out to all students to provide positive experiences that engage and allow all to feel welcome and part of the school environment.

Campers were organized into councils, separating the students from their school-mates. Curriculum, led by credentialed CADA staff members and assisted by CASL student board members, focused on various leadership topics. Campers also participated in teambuilding workshops and attended interest session workshops. All campers rotated through three workshops focused on individual leadership skills: giving presentations, personality types, and risk levels for student participation.

Keynote speakers gave empowering, inspirational presentations. Hoan Do, American Ninja Warrior contestant, used his, “That is Whack!” campaign to encourage students to make their own choices and not

let the perceptions or opinions of others drive their decisions. Jessie Funk, singer and psychologist, gave a powerful presentation on her three keys to success; confidence, avoiding toxic people, and forgiveness.

All of the students had an amazing time at the camp. They are excited to start school next month and put what they've learned into action.



*Fallon Garrett said about camp, "I learned about planning by the Me, Myself, and I method. Me means what effect will the activity I'm planning do to me; myself means can I do it myself or will I need help; I means believe in it."*



*Josie Preston commented, "I loved the spirit of the CASL councilors, and we need to go back to school with that same energy. If we don't then people won't get as excited about stuff."*



*Fisher Lyon, pictured center, enthused, "I really have so many ideas for next year now, but my favorite part of camp was making friends. It was cool that we got to meet so many new people."*



*Spencer Emigh, Fisher Lyon and Pete Rossi, were all "green" personality types. They need explanations and answers, value insight, fairness and justice, and are natural problem solvers.*

A special thanks, to Soroptimist International of Rio Vista and Project Heart & Sole who sponsored these students to attend this camp.

If you enjoy giving back to your community with projects such as these and improving the lives of women and girls, consider becoming a Soroptimist member! Contact Teri Malkin at 374-5168 or [terimalkin@yahoo.com](mailto:terimalkin@yahoo.com).