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## One Eagle Scout's reflection on helping others

Submitted by Ana Ramirez



Julian Ramirez delivers backpacks to UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland. Photo provided

Julian Emmanuel Ramirez joined cub scouts Pack 54 in Moraga when he was 6 years old. "In fifth grade I earned my Arrow of Light rank and was promoted to become a Boy Scout, joining Troop 234," he said.

The way he has grown in scouting from being a 6-year-old to now a 17-year-old junior at Campolindo High School, he says, has been a fantastic experience. "I have a giving a spirit; I strongly believe I got that from my parents who are always volunteering their time and helping others." Ramirez says teachers, family and friends would describe him as an introvert "because I am pretty quiet guy and keep to myself," he says. But he also enjoys politics and debate and is currently in Youth and Government. He's also been a member of a Dragon Boat Rowing Team since eighth grade.

For his Eagle Project, Ramirez wanted to "do a project that would directly benefit children in need and help make someone's day a little brighter." He contacted UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland and made a proposal: to put together backpacks with school supplies for the children who are hospitalized long-term.

The idea was born from personal experience. When he was 13 years old, Ramirez developed a disorder called ITP in which his immune system destroyed a large amount of his platelets and he was hospitalized.

"I know being cooped up in a hospital room for too many days can be boring. I also know that being in the hospital is not cheap because parents often have to pay high co-payments," he says. "I wanted my Eagle project to lessen the burden of buying school supplies for kids whose parents were already in distress over their ill child. After getting the OK from Children's Hospital I began to draft a plan and a budget on how I would accomplish my goal."

Ramirez's initial goal was to donate 40 backpacks. With the help of Minuteman Press in Lafayette, which donated 400 flyers for his project, Ramirez, along with some of his fellow Scouts, distributed all 400 flyers in his neighborhood asking for donations using the model of scouting for food.

"I also spread the word through social media and through word of mouth. I surpassed my goal of 40 backpacks and was able to assemble 103 backpacks with school supplies," he says.

The backpacks were delivered to Children's Hospital Oakland on Oct. 19. "My Eagle Project was a total success exceeding my expectations."

While in scouting Ramirez earned over 57 merit badges which, he says, taught him many skills such as CPR, wilderness survivorship, finances and he served in many leadership positions. "I was also selected to 'Order of the Arrow,' which is the Honor Society of Scouting.

"Scouting has taught me a lot about responsibility, respect, compassion, and kindness. I want to express my deepest gratitude to Troop 234 and the volunteers who have mentored me throughout the years, to my community, family and friends for supporting me through the many fundraisers and to my parents Ana and Jose Ramirez for being my No. 1 mentors and for your unconditional love and support in this great life scouting adventure."

Ramirez wanted to give a special thank you to Patricia Hernandez of Lulu's Printing for the embroidery on the backpacks and to Minuteman Press in Lafayette for printing the flyers for his project.

What's next for Ramirez? "Getting ready for my SATs, attending college in fall of 2019 and pursuing a career in law with an emphasis in civil rights work."

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