



## Executive Director's **Message**

*Chris Burns*  
*Executive Director*

Legislation and regulation have had a greater influence on the agency over the past year. AB 403 and AB 1997 are bills drafted by Assemblyman Stone that seek to bring sweeping change in the vision, mission and focus of the child welfare system in California. Boys Republic has had to work within these mandates to evolve while steadfastly holding to the principles and programs that have yielded outcomes for our youth that are unmatched in the industry.

One of the first steps in this process was the pursuit and attainment of accreditation. Boys Republic was awarded full international accreditation by CARF (Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) in the fall of 2015. It provided us an excellent opportunity to learn from some best practices related to policy development and continuous quality improvement. Additionally, considerable attention was given by the reviewers to the variety of offerings at Boys Republic that don't exist anywhere else in the Country.

With all forms of audit, monitoring and oversight, we appreciate the opportunity to sharpen aspects of our program with the fresh perspective of an outside evaluator. The CARF review process was validating in many ways as evaluators showed tremendous respect and appreciation for the historical emphasis and commitment on proven interventions whether they were part of a government mandate or not.

The truest example of this has been the focus on vocational preparation and the attainment of employability skills that has been a cornerstone at Boys Republic since its founding. Personal responsibility and individual accountability are reflected so completely in a young person's ability to attain work and provide support for him or herself.

This past year we launched the latest extension of this commitment with the Kitchen Replacement Campaign. While modernizing our aging facility is certainly a goal, the greater thrust is in the extension of the tremendously successful teaching Bakery and the culmination of our chef's dream after so many years of culinary instruction on the existing dining room tables. The new kitchen will include a true culinary classroom designed to facilitate learning of a much broader array of skills and a Bistro that will host events designed to give the students the greatest possible preparation for the job environments awaiting them. This significant undertaking will occur over a three year period as this will be the largest fundraising effort the agency has undertaken.

The architectural and planning process has taken on a distinct style truly fitting of the "Republic." The firm, Architecture for Education (A4E) has been retained and incorporated student, staff and chef input in a manner that reflects the way the students and staff govern the daily operations of



the entire treatment program. The end result will bring the thinking of some of the best consultants in the industry merged with the ingenuity of our students and food service staff to create an environment where our students can flourish and provide the foundation for their future success. When the Boone Family Foundation contributed to the Teaching Bakery and wanted it named for our recently retired Executive Director, I wonder if they already envisioned the future Max Scott Center for

the Culinary Arts that is soon to be unveiled. What is clear is that the existence of these life-changing programs would not be possible without this type of generosity that has nurtured program development at Boys Republic from the very beginning.

### Max Scott Center for the Culinary Arts



**Realistic Training:** *The Kitchen Replacement Project will transform an aging food services building into a modern training facility in the culinary arts, capable of providing disadvantaged teenagers with the kind of real-world work experience necessary to obtain an entry-level job.*

**Illustration:** Architecture for Education, Inc.