



Boys Republic

Annual Report For Fiscal Year 2019

President's **Message**

Larry Walker
Board President

As I consider my words for this year's greeting, I think of something I've said to my sons many times over the years – "Don't look back, unless it's to look ahead". We can sometimes be tempted to remember the good times, congratulate ourselves on our accomplishments, and relax, basking in the glow of memories and trophies. We lose sight of the goals still ahead. On the other hand, it's easy to think we see more accurately in hindsight, and it's tempting to second-guess our decisions, believing we now see where the good path was to be found. Neither of those approaches is likely to contribute much to future growth or accomplishment.

Still, as your outgoing President completing two years as President of Boys Republic's Board of Directors, it seems appropriate to reflect on the significance of what goes on here – past, present and future. We are built on a great foundation, from the care given to Boys Republic by founder Margaret Fowler and her friends, to a solid financial footing established by the generosity of many who have become aware of the work done here. I have often wondered why somebody has not attempted to duplicate Boys Republic elsewhere in California. In fact, that's what Mrs. Fowler did here, modeling the California Junior Republic (as we were first known) after an earlier organization in New York.

Building on that foundation, Boys Republic's success has largely been

accomplished through the work of a highly talented and dedicated staff. This group is the life blood of Boys Republic, and they are both skilled in their professions and dedicated to the growth and progress of the young citizens in their care. Our Board of Directors has on many occasions expressed appreciation for the substantial years of experience represented by our employees, and we have endeavored to design and adopt policies that will encourage long-term employment at Boys Republic as a constructive and mutually beneficial relationship for all.

Building the physical facilities that house Boys Republic programs and activities is a never-ending project. In recent years, cottages have been renovated, the gym has been refurbished, and other similar projects developed. This year marked the near completion of the Max Scott Culinary Arts Facility. The project had its beginnings in a cooking class that started almost experimentally, then grew rapidly as it proved popular among BR students and effective in improving the employability of program participants. We have a new Bistro, a refurbished dining hall, and the best (I'm not exaggerating) restaurant kitchen for miles around. The great cooking program was the start, and the facility grew out of that effort.

The Steve McQueen Car and Motorcycle Show had another great run this year. It has become a

mainstay at Boys Republic as both an enjoyable series of activities and as a major part of the fundraising that supports the campus. Finally, don't forget to get those Della Robbia wreaths ordered. Like the car show, they are enjoyable in and of themselves, but they also help make BR financially strong.

Don't look back, except to look ahead. As great as the Car Show and other activities are, I would echo the recent words of one of our board members – "If you ever get a chance to go to the awards ceremony, that's the best event of the year". At that event, Boys Republic's resident citizens are honored for their progress in whatever behavioral issues brought them to BR, and for their accomplishments here in fields they might never have dreamed of in any other world.

Looking ahead, we can see Boys Republic many years from now, still located on this beautiful campus, still selling Della Robbia wreaths, still holding the Steve McQueen Car Show, and also doing things we have not yet thought of. But BR will still be about giving young people an opportunity to build a beneficial life they might have otherwise missed, and all the rest will ultimately be to support that purpose. On behalf of the 2018-19 Board of Directors of Boys Republic, thank you for your part in the work that is done every day to make that future happen each day.