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The Sacramento Bee Book of Dreams and Theresa Foundation Support the Future of Children with Autism

UCP of Sacramento and Northern California's Autism Center for Excellence (ACE) and ACE Camp for children with autism receive funding for new technology and camp scholarships.

SACRAMENTO, CA – UCP of Sacramento and Northern California is honored to announce that [The Sacramento Bee Book of Dreams](#) has awarded \$2,665 in funding for UCP's Autism Center for Excellence (ACE), and the [Theresa Foundation](#) has awarded \$3,000 to fund ACE Camp.

The [ACE program](#) is an after school program for children ages 4-18 with autism that focuses on Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy and social skills building. The funding awarded to ACE by Sacramento Bee Book of Dreams will be used to purchase electronic gaming devices and programs, which studies have shown to be beneficial for children with autism in improving physical coordination and reducing repetitive behaviors,¹ as well as in building confidence in social interactions.² The skills that children with autism learn at ACE help them to be more successful at school and in the community.

[ACE Camp](#) is open to children ages 8-12 participating in the ACE program, and provides an opportunity to practice skills learned at ACE during the school year. The funding awarded by the Theresa Foundation will provide scholarships to low income families of children with autism to attend ACE Camp.

"UCP's ACE Camp is a summer camp experience for children with autism, who are often excluded from extracurricular activities that their peers participate in. Without supporters like the Theresa Foundation, we wouldn't be able to provide this unique experience to our young clients. Because health care insurance and government program funding do not pay for summer camp, this program is totally dependent on public funding," said Doug Bergman, President and CEO, UCP of Sacramento and Northern California.

An increased cost of care for their children is a reality that [many UCP client families face](#). Lifetime support for a person with autism can cost millions of dollars.³ Today, 54% of UCP's clients are from low or no income households.

Cofounder of the Theresa Foundation, Susan Russo, describes it as a 'fill in the cracks' organization that strives to touch the lives of special needs children through its support of workshops and programs of enrichment and therapy.

The Sacramento Bee Book of Dreams has helped people and organizations in the Sacramento community realize their dreams for more than 30 years, meeting needs such as cribs for babies, healthy food for cancer patients, or kennels to house dogs being trained to assist veterans.

For more information about UCP of Sacramento and Northern California, please visit <http://www.ucpsacto.org>.

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About UCP

UCP was started in Sacramento in 1955 by a group of concerned parents who believed children with development disabilities deserved to be included in home and community life rather than state institutional care. Over sixty years later, UCP now serves children and adults with over 20 types of developmental disabilities, 51% have autism, 28% intellectual disability, 11% Down syndrome & epilepsy, and 10% cerebral palsy.

Each month, UCP of Sacramento and Northern California serves 6,004 children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families in eight counties. [Programs](#) include the Saddle Pals adaptive horseback riding program, UCP's Autism Center for Excellence, adult day programs, independent living services, transportation and in-home respite care for families.

1. Anderson-Hanley C., Tureck K., Schneiderman R.L. Autism and exergaming: effects on repetitive behaviors and cognition. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*. 2011; 4: 129–137. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3218790/>
2. Gillespie A., Heasman B. Neurodivergent intersubjectivity: Distinctive features of how autistic people create shared understanding. *Autism*. August 2018. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1362361318785172>
3. Ganz, M. L. (2007). The lifetime distribution of the incremental societal costs of autism. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*. 2007; 161(4), 343-349. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17404130>