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Local Boxing Club KOs Gang Influence

■ Honda Santa Ana
Contributes Gear,
Vehicle, Moral Support

In a small building on the corner of Fourth and Garfield Streets in Santa Ana, there's a club aimed at keeping kids off the street and away from the possibility of becoming affiliated with two high-profile gangs in the local area. This athletic facility, the Santa Ana Boxing Club, offers youth a chance to learn the fundamentals and skills of boxing while enforcing the importance of education and Christianity.

Anthony Serrano, boxing program director for the Orange County Youth Commission, says the Club gets an average of 35 kids per day. This is, in essence, an increase from two kids who were originally at the club seven years ago when Serrano stepped in. Serrano says that when he first walked into the Club and saw the students practicing, he decided to accept the job as Boxing Club director. He says he realized

that the kids who came to the Boxing Club could not afford to go the gym to work out and take classes.

The Club, which has been around for over 30 years, was on the verge of closing because it did not have the funding to stay open, but this changed through the interest of a generous man at Honda Santa Ana. Ryan Busnardo, general manager of Honda Santa Ana, says he first heard about the Boxing Club while watching the news about two years ago. He saw that the Boxing Club was on the verge of going out of business because it didn't have enough money to stay open, and decided that he'd like to help by contributing to them financially.

"I have a strong belief in what Anthony Serrano does at the Boxing Club," Busnardo says. "I know that the funds and equipment I supply go to benefit the kids."

Serrano, the dedicated director, says Honda Santa Ana has contributed so much to the Boxing Club. He just makes a list of any equipment



that he needs for the Club and Busnardo reviews it and sends supplies to him in a timely manner. Some of the gifts the Boxing Club has received from Honda Santa Ana include: a Honda Odyssey van, several riding bikes, safety equipment, boxing gloves, punching bags, ring equipment, and uniforms. Busnardo says the Odyssey was one of the most amazing gifts they received because they are now able to transport the kids from place to place without having to divide them up.

santaanachamber.com.

The Boxing Club has also received some computers and educational equipment from Honda Santa Ana. Serrano says the Club is not only a place where kids can learn how to box, it's also a place that they can come to do their homework and receive tutoring help from the two tutors on staff. Serrano says he won't let the kids train in boxing until they finish their homework and keep up their grades.

This month, the Boxing Club will send five kids to the Amateur World Championship

Tour. This tour will begin in San Diego and if the kids win, will continue in the Coachella Valley. Serrano says the Boxing Club serves kids from ages 9-18. The youngest competitor for the Championship is just 9 years old. "The Boxing Club is like a big family," Serrano says. "The kids who come here feel comfortable and are glad to be here."

For more info about the Santa Ana Boxing Club, call 714-835-6525. For more information about Honda Santa Ana, call 714-547-3555.