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## **“Mayor’s Cup of Joe” Column 5: The City Cares for Residents Young and Old**

With schools back in session, the topic of educating and preparing our young people is on many people’s minds. This subject is dear to my heart, and it’s for that reason that I am proud to say that the City of South Pasadena is committed to finding opportunities to help train and develop the skills of young people in our community.

One such opportunity is the ongoing partnership with the Foothill Workforce Investment Board (FWIB) for a Youth Worker program. Each summer, the FWIB recruits, hires and trains a group of high school age teens to work in City offices. The program has seven workers in six of our departments this year. Senior Management Analyst Jeannie Chiu, who manages the program, finds it beneficial for local teens: “We provide the youth workers in our community the opportunity to develop positive work habits, attitudes and office skills. We mentor and help the program participants to develop the skills necessary to work in a professional environment... the youth workers take their job seriously and really enjoy doing their assignments.”

And the teens aren’t the only ones who benefit. Many city staffers report their departments benefit from the young workers’ enthusiasm. When asked about the teen assigned to the Public Library, City Librarian Steve Fjeldsted stated, “He’s really bright and motivated and a hard worker...my wife Peggy says [he] is the most enthusiastic library employee. She thought I was kidding when I told her that he will be a senior in high school and that he’d only been with us a few days.”

The City also has other means for developing our young people, the Public Library. The Library is already known for its sizable collection of books and movies with approximately 125,000 titles in its collection. Plans are underway to enhance access to electronic resources via a major broadband network that will make available at the

California community colleges, the California State University system, private universities, and the University of California system. The Library also intends to increase its Wi-Fi coverage, add computer workstations and tablets, and increase collections of electronic databases, e-books, and other digital media so students and other residents have the tools and skills to thrive in 21<sup>st</sup> Century educational institutions and workplaces. These and other much needed upgrades will be possible with continued use of the Measure L, Library parcel tax funds.

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In closing, I'd like to thank Police Chief Arthur Miller and his officers in working with the property owner at 904 Mission Street to get a reliable operator at the facility. Chief Miller's persistence, determination and care for the community of South Pasadena is helping to make our community a better place for our most vulnerable residents. As always, feel free to email me at: [rjoe@southpasadenaca.gov](mailto:rjoe@southpasadenaca.gov).

-Robert Joe, Mayor of South Pasadena