

LOCAL

# Mentors needed for GANAS Mentoring Program's 11th Season

FALLBROOK – The Fallbrook Citizens Crime Prevention Committee (FCCPC) is in need of mentors for its GANAS Mentoring Program and invites anyone interested in volunteering to join them anytime between 4 and 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 15 for their Mentor Recruiting Event at Scoreboard Pizzeria, 1125 S. Mission Road, (Albertson's Shopping Center).

Mentoring brings lasting benefits to volunteers and this community. Recognized and valued nationwide by many law enforcement agencies and community organizers as an effective crime prevention tool, mentoring helps steer underserved children away from gangs, drugs, and crime.

These negative influences do exist in the Fallbrook area.

"We can overcome them and turn crime around, one child at a time, if enough residents get involved and volunteer. Helping children by mentoring, seeing them redirected and blossom, can enrich one's own personal life," said GANAS founder Pat Braendel.

In 2005, the FCCPC created the GANAS Mentoring Program. GANAS stands for guide, advise, nurture, and support. It also started TEEN (together everyone encourages neighbors) GANAS. The success of the GANAS Mentoring Program is dependent on the small sacrifice people make by becoming a volunteer mentor.

GANAS reaches children, ages 9 to 18, in local apartment communities. Often these youth



North County Fire fighters Leo Espinoza, Ben Lian, Matt Anderson, Eric Ayers, and Ben's dog Ruby, present a program on a different type of fire truck each year to help Ganas mentees understand what it takes to be a fireman.

Courtesy photo

have no one who will listen to them. By volunteering to become

a GANAS mentor, residents can choose to give a gift of personal

time and commitment.

Mentoring is one of the most important community outreach programs. It creates a "safe zone" in the apartment complexes where many of these children live. The FCCPC believes that mentors are invaluable role models for the children in the program. These relationships provide an important foundation, by encouraging the children to create lifelong goals, and become contributing and successful members of the community.

The GANAS Mentoring

Program currently holds sessions during the school year at six sites and needs 12 mentors right now. There are usually 10 to 12 children, and if there are enough volunteers, two to four mentors per site. At the beginning of the school year, all mentors attend a training session and go through a screening procedure which includes fingerprinting. Individual support for the mentors is always available throughout the year.

For more information, call Braendel at (760) 731-9127.