



In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights

IN OUR GLOBAL VILLAGE:
BOYLE HEIGHTS
THROUGH THE EYES OF ITS YOUTH



BY THE 2010 SENIOR CLASS OF ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL
SCHOOL OF LAW AND GOVERNMENT
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

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PREFACE

The pages you are about to read were conceived in seven different Roosevelt High School English classrooms, and woven together by more than 100 senior writers. This project originated when our seniors (Class of 2010) were introduced to the In Our Global Village program (see page 111). Soon, within our classrooms, we began discussing their lives in Boyle Heights. With a strong sense of community and cultural pride, and the conviction to leave a written legacy, our seniors started their maiden voyage into the unknown world of publishing. In small groups they took ownership of specific topics and began exploring, researching, drafting, and photographing their individual chapters. The book offers a quick overview of Boyle Heights, the commonalities in the current experiences of the people who live here, and their colorful cultural contributions.

One thing that emerges upon reading this book is our seniors' appreciation for their community and its vibrant uniqueness. The book enables individual readers to determine for themselves what it means to be an active member of the community. Through their chapters and photos, the students tackle the much needed examination of culture and ethnicity within Boyle Heights. Above all, their culture and their experiences are acknowledged, valued, and used as important sources of their educational journey.

To the seniors that participated in this monumental project, we hope you remember all the drafts, the presentations and quick photography lessons, the photos that weren't the right size, the homeroom meetings, the frustrations, and the victories. We hope you remember your English classes and pass down this book with pride.

*- Monica Yoo, Jeffrey Matsumura, Steve Mereu
Roosevelt High School, Los Angeles, California
May 2010*

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights

HISTORY OF BOYLE HEIGHTS



Andrew A. Boyle

OUR COMMUNITY OF BOYLE HEIGHTS got its name in 1876 in the memory of Andrew A. Boyle. William H. Workman, the son of the elder William Workman, gave the area its name. The elder William Workman had a lot of money and owned a vineyard here. He wanted to show it off, so he invited his friend Andrew A. Boyle to take a visit. Andrew A. Boyle lived in San Francisco and was also quite well off. Boyle had heard many good things about this area east of Los Angeles. When he saw our beautiful land, he was so astonished he decided to buy a big piece of it for 25 cents an acre. He built his house among

Mexicans and some Native Americans on what is now the intersection of Boyle and Third St. Boyle died in 1871. Five years later, the son of Boyle's friend, who was mayor of Los Angeles, named the area Boyle Heights in memory of its largest landowner.

Many ethnically diverse people including Mexicans, Jews, Japanese, African Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics, have lived in



Early Boyle Heights

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Fickett Street Colony

Boyle Heights over the years. They all came to live here because they were pretty much forced to. The Jewish community arrived from Eastern Europe in the early 1900s. By the 1920s, much of the Los Angeles Jewish community had moved to Boyle Heights. They were not satisfied with the society in Los Angeles and decided they wanted a separate cemetery. They later decided to move out of Boyle Heights to places like the San Fernando Valley, Westchester, the West Side,

Monterey Park, and other towns on the East Side. Most of the Japanese people left Boyle Heights during World War Two when the United States government forced them to live in internment camps until the war ended. After the war, some returned to Boyle Heights, but others, who had lost their homes, went to live elsewhere. Many Mexican people arrived during the 1950s and 1960s. They loved our community very much, and today Boyle Heights is almost 100% Hispanic, mostly Mexican.

What brings people here are the affordable houses and land. Boyle Heights has always been and always will be a place with many ethnicities and religious diversity. They come to Los Angeles for jobs, a warm climate, and healthy surroundings. People who visit love our community and decide to move here since it's a good place to start off their new lives.

Eventually, many of the residents and communities of Boyle Heights move on to other places. People decide to leave when they have acquired enough money to move to more prestigious areas. In the meantime, they enjoy our community as much as possible and think of it as the most comfortable and perfect way to



Boyle Heights Streetcar

History of Boyle Heights



Ford Blvd. near Brooklyn Ave.

start their lives.

Today, Boyle Heights is what it is thanks to all the ethnicities and their religions and cultures. All the people who lived here previously left many good stories and the historical places that we enjoy today. For example, Hollenbeck Park was built under Mayor William H. Workman in memory of John E. Hollenbeck, a very wealthy man that came to visit Boyle Heights and fell in love with our area. He decided to permanently live here and also bought a big piece of land. He

built his home here, which still stands right across from the park. We also have the Breed Street Shul, located on Breed Street and Cesar Chavez. The Shul carried out the Jewish tradition of charity. There is also Brooklyn Street, which is now called Cesar Chavez. This street was the heart of the Jewish community. The people who made Brooklyn Street a special place came here because they were forced to leave their country. They came here in search of a better life. Today the Hispanics who walk the sidewalks of Cesar Chavez have similar reasons for being here and similar dreams as the Jews of a century ago.



Roosevelt High School Entrance

ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL

THE ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE brings excitement and knowledge to many people. The experiences that we have in our school prepare us for the world outside. Join us on a journey of our school in order to become familiar with our second home.

Traveling through our hallways, we recall many fond memories of years past. Our school



has gone through many changes over the years. Our school size has grown to over 5,000 students. The ethnicity in our school has indeed changed to a mostly Hispanic population. Even though our student size has grown, we are still close like a family. Roosevelt has been divided into design teams; each building is a tiny school with its own main office and services.

Though we consist of seven different schools because of overcrowding, we are still close together. Students that attend the different schools can join our school clubs like S.H.O.U.T., Bible Club, and Book Club. Many Roosevelt students feel close to our school through sports.

We have many enjoyable sports at our school like American football, baseball, basketball, softball, soccer, water polo, tennis, golf, volleyball, cheerleading, and drill team. Sports will always be an effective way to keep us on task with our school work and out of trouble. Each sport has students with a lot of heart and dedication. Physical Ed brings out our skills and makes some of us stand out and shine. That is how the lost get

Roosevelt High School

found. Many people associate Roosevelt with the Classic, the main sporting event that we regularly attend every year and watch as our mighty Rough Riders fight on. The Classic, a football game between Roosevelt and Garfield High School, takes place every November at East Los Angeles College. We first have a spirit week during which we do something different on each day to show our school spirit. On the last day of spirit week, we have a pep rally to pump up our football team. Alongside our mascot, the Teddy, we cheer on our school team. In recent years, our Riders have been strong against the Garfield Bulldogs. Our Riders have been playing at the East LA College for the past 75 years.



We, the students of Roosevelt High, bring out our spirit the most at school dances. We all want to go formal and be the center of attention.



The dances that we attend consist of Homecoming, Winter Formal, the Sweethearts, and the Sadie Hawkins dance. Also, for seniors, we have the last dance of our senior year, the Prom. The school dances keep us motivated and make us want to know more about our school. We sometimes seem to think that we know all about Roosevelt, but in reality we don't. We think that school dances make our school a bit more interesting and bring felicity to

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our students. That's one of the reasons why we organize school dances.

At Roosevelt Senior High School, many things go on throughout the year. Our school represents accomplishment when we set our goals and make progress. Here at Roosevelt we proudly wear our school colors of cardinal, gold, and royal blue. Each color stands for something different. The cardinal represents loyalty and courage, the gold symbolizes our values and accomplishments, and the royal blue

stands for the truth. Between the lines of these colors, we have spirit to succeed and be a better Rough Rider.

Even though our school has changed since it was founded in 1922, we have spirit and we have pride. We believe that culture makes an impact in everyone's life because it shows the importance of every human living. Culture surrounds our school and community,



greatly affecting the way that we view our school as a whole. Just like we are close to our families, we are also close to our school. Thus, we call Roosevelt Senior High School our second home. The great former president after whom our school is named would be proud that Roosevelt is named after him. As his famous quote says, "Don't flinch, don't foul, hit the line hard."

LANGUAGE

WHILE WALKING DOWN THE STREETS OF BOYLE HEIGHTS, we greet each other with “Hello” or “Hola.” In our community, we see our neighbors communicating in different languages. Although we may not understand every word that we hear throughout our day, we enjoy learning new words and communicating in new languages. This mixture of different languages shapes our community, from the names of buildings and streets to the conversations we hear in our neighborhood.

Languages, without a doubt, have left a mark in our rich and colorful history. Our community reflects a vibrant mixture of cultures. We see traces of these different cultures through the languages found on the buildings, murals, and businesses we see each day.

On a typical stroll through any main street in Boyle Heights, we see numerous languages. Most of the business signs we see each day are in Spanish. Stores greet us with the familiar “WELCOME FRIENDS” or “BIENVENIDOS AMIGOS.” However, we also come across signs in Hebrew and Japanese. These signs may be incomprehensible, yet we get a sense of the type of friendly owner that runs the store. Whether the owner speaks Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Hebrew, or simply English, we come in contact with new languages and dialects.



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Here in Boyle Heights, we may hear a Spanish word that we might not have known existed before, from classmates, co-workers, or neighbors from diverse backgrounds. We come from different regions of Latin America, and we constantly laugh and learn from each other that a certain word in Spanish has two different meanings. Dialects create a unique atmosphere in our community and

they serve as a constant reminder that we can always learn from each other.

Whether we need help planning our bus route, getting to new places, or simply purchasing goods, we can always find someone in our community that will help us, no matter what language they speak. Although we may speak different languages, this hardly creates a barrier for us to communicate. The friendly people that compose Boyle Heights constantly find new ways to communicate through gestures or by learning a new language together. We know that language reflects our backgrounds, and we also use language to expand the number of friends we have.



Language



<u>English</u>	<u>Spanish</u>	<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Hebrew</u>
Hello	Hola	こんにちは	הלו
How are you?	¿Cómo estás?	お元気ですか？	כיצד אתה?
Good bye	Adiós	さようなら	תראה
Nice to meet you	Encantado de conocerle	はじめまして	שמח להיכר
What is your name?	¿Cómo te llamas?	あなたのお名前は何ですか？	מה שםך?
I'm sorry	Lo siento	ごめんね	עצמנו
I love you	Te amo	愛しています	אתה אוהב אותי
Thank you	Gracias	ありがとうございました	תודה
Please	Por favor	どうぞ	נא
See you later	Hasta luego	また後で	נראה מאוחר יותר

EL MERCADITO

AS WE WALK DOWN 1ST STREET close to Indiana in Boyle Heights, we see a painting of a mariachi at the top. We have found El Mercadito. El Mercadito is a shopping and entertainment center based on traditional Mercados in Mexico. Shoppers here find clothes, CDs, ethnic foods, general grocery items, traditional candy, piñatas, and restaurants.



In El Mercadito we find great vendor stalls selling “*antojitos*” (snacks) such as *churros*, *raspados* (shaved ice), *elotes* (roasted or boiled corn on a cob), *bionicos* (fresh fruit with cream), *aguas frescas* (fresh fruit beverage), cut fruit with *chile* and *limon*, and *pan dulce* (sweet bread). The majority of our consumers are Latinos who are attracted to these snacks. Most of these are deserts from Mexico that we all enjoy once in a while. These snacks

are at a great price that people can afford. Our personal favorite snacks are the *elotes* and the *raspados*. In summer, people go for the raspados because they are cold and sweet or sometimes spicy. Raspados are shaved ice with a sweet flavor and fruits inside. In winter, people prefer the elotes because they are nice and warm. Elotes are corn on the cob with mayonnaise, cheese, and *chile*.

At El Mercadito, we also buy the cooking ingredients that we Latinos use to cook

El Mercadito

delicious, special Mexican dishes. We find all kinds of chiles that people use, such as *chile seco*, *chile chipotle*, *chile pasilla*, *chile mulato*, *chile negro*, and *chile japonés*. We also find spices like *ajonjolí*, *cacahuaté*, and *mole en pasta* (spicy sauce). With these ingredients we make delicious dishes that bring back good memories and take us back to our regional cultures. When we make our food with these delicious spices, it makes our food have a better taste. Latinos like it nice and spicy. Not only we Latinos use these ingredients, people from all over the world use them too.

As well as selling snacks and ingredients, El Mercadito also sells cooking utensils such as *molcajetes*, *comales*, tamale pots, and tortilla pressers. A *molcajete* is a hard pot made of rock used to break the chile and make salsa. This helps the chile have a better taste and makes our food spicy. Most of the Latinos who use these utensils are ladies who come from Mexico. Other people are not used to using *el molcajete*. El Mercadito also has a *tortillería* factory and a meat market where you can buy warm tortillas and fresh meat. We use *comales* to heat up tortillas. Many restaurants use these utensils to make their cooking taste better.

El Mercadito is also the best place to find toys that cannot be found in other toy stores. We find all kinds of toys from Latin America and Mexico, including dolls, cars, and balls. Many grown ups buy toys like *matracas*, *el trompo*, and *baleros*. These are toys that have existed for a long time. *Matracas* is a toy that you spin to make a noise that gets people excited at sports games. We Latinos use them to cheer up our team and to give the game more excitement. A *balero* is an interesting toy to play with. It consists of a stick and an oval attached with a string. You have to put the oval inside the stick as you flip it. It can be dangerous, but really fun to play.



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As we pass by the market and the snacks, we keep walking until we see little stores where they sell *sombreros* and *botas*. Sombreros and botas are hats and boots that cowboys use. But that's not the only thing they sell. For Latino cultural celebrations, we have Cinco de Mayo dresses. Cinco de Mayo is the day that Puebla declared independence and for that we celebrate with a dance for which girls wear dresses with red, green, and white to represent the Mexican flag. In El

Mercadito, we can find everything we want for celebrations, special occasions, and for the traditions that Latinos love.

On the third floor of El Mercadito, there are restaurants serving Mexican food and seafood with live *norteno* and mariachi music. The bands play throughout the week and on weekends they play from noon until after midnight. People have fun all day long and especially at night they dance for hours. The main dishes found here include *gorditas*, *chiles rellenos*, *flautas*, *tortas*, and *tacos*. A favorite dish is enchiladas with salsa *verde/roja* (red/green). Most of the people who go to El Mercadito know the ingredients and spices they use. In El Mercadito they find more authentic Mexican dishes than anywhere else around.

In addition to shopping here, we celebrate our Mexican holidays at this market center. On November 1st we celebrate *Dia de los Muertos*. On this day, many Mexicans put an *ofrenda* (offering) with *pan de muerto* (bread), food, and flowers to our loved ones who have passed away. On December 12, we celebrate el *Dia de la Virgen de Guadalupe*, the day of the Virgin Mary. On that day we make a rosary and sing happy birthday with mariachi and *banda*. We also eat *tamales* and *champurado* (hot chocolate). From

El Mercadito

December 15-25, we celebrate *Posadas*. *Posadas* are days when we do a rosary and sing Christmas carols to welcome baby Jesus. Children break *piñatas*, eat *tamales*, and drink *champurado*. This takes place every night during the eleven days leading up to Christmas.

In El Mercadito, we find all sorts of equipment, food, apparel, and cookware. Here we celebrate many historical cultural traditions. Families get together at El Mercadito and have fun with one another. Can you imagine and feel the festive ambiance? When you get to El Mercadito, expect a big line to enter. With cars everywhere, and honking all around the parking lot, it's chaos to go in. But in the end, you will be happy that you enjoyed El Mercadito, a place where everyone is welcomed!



RELIGION

OUR COMMUNITY OF BOYLE HEIGHTS is known as a highly religious community. All types of religions are practiced here. In fact, most of our values and manners are based on our religions.

The majority of people here practice Catholicism. St. Mary's Church was built in the year 1897 and is one of the many Catholic churches that exist within our community. St.



Catholic Church

Mary' Church offers three masses a day, Monday through Friday, one in English and two in Spanish. On Saturday and Sunday, St. Mary's Church offers six masses throughout the day, two in English and four in Spanish. On Saturdays and Sundays, approximately 600 people attend these masses throughout the day. The Catholic people in Boyle Heights believe in different saints, such as the Virgin Mary and San Judas Tadeo. Although Catholics worship Jesus Christ (son of God), most of our families also worship the other saints. Throughout the

year, we engage in sacrament preparations such as baptisms, marriages, confirmations, Quinceañeras, and much more. Quinceañeras, which consist of a mass in a church and a festivity, celebrate a 14 year old girl becoming a 15 year old woman. As Catholics, we

Religion

are expected to meet certain values such as honesty and respect. Most of our beliefs are taught from the Bible. We show our faith in many ways. Many of us wear crosses around our necks as symbols of our faith and our devotion to God. Others have statues or paintings of the Virgin Mary in their homes.

After Catholicism, other forms of Christianity are the second most practiced religion in our community.

Alcance Victoria was established in the year 1995 in order to provide a church for their rising faith. Alcance Victoria is open every day, but only offers one service every

Friday in Spanish and two every Sunday, in English and Spanish. With approximately 800 members, they offer several programs for teens and adults, such as rehab sessions for individuals with alcohol and drug problems. Christians in our community worship only Jesus Christ because they believe that Jesus Christ died for them. They frequently go on trips together. They also celebrate certain holidays in their church like a big happy family.



Christian Church



Buddhist Temple

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Buddhism has small number of followers in our community. The approximately 150 member families of the Rissho Kosei-Kai temple come from various neighborhoods.



Religious display in a private home

This temple was established in 1959 in Boyle Heights. It offers services to the community every Saturday and Sunday. Rissho Kosei-Kai is considered to be a lay Buddhist Church, which means it practices everyday Buddhism for lay people. Rissho Kosei-Kai also holds special annual events like celebrations for New Year and Buddha's birthday. Buddhist people study dharma which consists of the teachings of Buddha. This helps them reach balance in their physical and spiritual lives.

Standing on the streets, Jehovah Witnesses offer their magazines to pedestrians passing by. They also knock on people's doors to speak briefly with residents about their

belief that the Bible is God's word. In their own way, Jehovah Witnesses here in our community are dedicated to doing God's will.

Boyle Heights also hosts other religions, including a small number of Mormons and Muslims.

Our community is highly religious. The teens of Boyle Heights have different ideas. Some are extremely religious, others are somewhat religious, and some teens don't follow any religion at all.

HOLIDAYS

THE HOLIDAYS OF CINCO DE MAYO, Dia De Los Muertos , The Virgen De Guadalupe, and Christmas symbolize a great deal about our community's religion, history and culture. This generation did not make up these holidays. Each one has a history that has been passed down from generation to generation.



Cinco De Mayo

The tender and rich smell of meat being cooked fills the air, while in the background we hear the beat of Mariachi music. Cinco De Mayo is a day of fun, food, and festivities. Mexican families celebrate Mexico's 1861 victory over France and other European countries on Cinco De Mayo, the 5th of May. When we were in elementary school, the students had an assembly and teamed up with others of the same grade level to create a cultural tribute for Cinco de Mayo.

For instance, all the first graders would team up and create a dance for everyone in the school. Parents came and joined the celebration as well. We all dressed up in the Mexican flag colors of red, white, and green. Once the assembly finished, the school had a carnival for the students and their families with games, mariachi music, and food like tacos, nachos, rice, beans, soda, Jamaica, and orchota. For us children, the best

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Día De Los Muertos

part was that our parents took us out of school early so we could stay at the carnival once our dance was over, while other students stayed inside doing work.

“Welcome back” would be the phrase we say for the days of November 1st and 2nd, *Días De Los Muertos*, the Days of the Dead. On these days, we celebrate the family members and friends who have passed away. November 1 is the day to honor the children who have passed before us and November 2 is the day to honor the deceased adults. November 1 is also known as All Saints Day, while the day of the adults is known as All Souls Day. On these two days, people make interesting preparations to welcome the deceased. We clean out our homes and build altars that usually have a picture of the deceased, or a Christian cross for the religious folks. We decorate

our homes with pictures of the dead, lay out their favorite offerings, and light candles. Once the home is prepared, we have to get ready. In the past, women wore celebration dresses and men put on their formal wear. However, not many people stick to that tradition any more. Instead, we choose to do simpler things like dressing up as the deceased or attaching sea shells to our clothing so that when we dance we can wake up the dead. At the cemetery, we decorate our family members’ and friends’ tombs with their pictures, their



Holidays

favorite sweets, bread of the dead, favorite toys for the children, flowers, and sugar skull candies for everyone to eat. Usually, a Mariachi plays music for the dead and for everyone else at the cemetery. Many families love to hang out with their deceased family members. When we are at the cemetery, we feel like they are alive again because we reminisce about the good and the bad times we had with them, and just laugh. Now in our generation, many young people paint their whole face white with all kinds of colors, and outline it in black like a skeleton, the symbol we use to represent the dead. Many people get tattooed with a skeleton or with a picture of a deceased family member. This tradition started in Mexico, and when Mexicans started immigrating to the United States, they brought the tradition to Boyle Heights. Our generation continues to evolve these traditions.

Another holiday we celebrate here in Boyle Heights is the day of the Virgin Mary, El Dia de la Virgen de Guadalupe. We celebrate her birthday and honor her because she represents love and nurturing. Many of us see her as the universal mother. We also celebrate her known miracles, such as the day when she miraculously appeared on the cloth of Juan Diego, an indigenous peasant. This occurred on the hill of Tepeyac in Mexico City, on December 12, 1531, a date now recognized as the day of the Virgin Mary. Most of those who celebrate this day are Catholic, although some just want to show respect to her. This tradition also comes from Mexico. Here in Boyle Heights many people gather near murals and join serenades played by a mariachi or simply by the people of the neighborhood. El Dia de la Virgen de Guadalupe is a big deal in Boyle Heights. Catholics arrange a mass in her honor at the two popular churches of Boyle Heights, Saint Mary's and Saint Isabel's. These masses differ from the usual Sunday



El Dia De La Virgen De Guadalupe

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masses. They have a great significance because the churchgoers pray for her, sing to her, and thank her for everything she has done for them. The mariachi who play her music usually start with “Las Mananitas” and then continue with the La Guadalupana song. We can hear this music on the main streets of Boyle Heights like Cesar Chavez, Soto, and many small blocks like Boulder Street or Cornwell Street. This happens at midnight, and sometimes very early in the morning at 6:00 a.m. People hand out flyers inviting others to join them for the prayer of the rosary. Before midnight hits, we eat delicious food, mostly tamales or champurrado, or simply a Mexican bread called conchas. Many people put flowers at the feet of the murals painted in her honor. Sometimes we put on a play telling her story to show why she is important to Catholics, and to illustrate the wishes they say she has granted them. That’s why we celebrate her.

The colder days and wintry nights of the month of December are when we celebrate the religious holiday of Christmas.



December 25th was the day when Jesus Christ, the son of the Catholic and Christian god, was born. Many people in Boyle Heights celebrate Christmas in a religious way. They have a special party called a “Posada”, which is a small gathering of family and friends who walk and pray together, going door to door in the cold evenings with a lit candle. The Posada starts on December 12 and ends on Christmas Day. The American Christmas focuses on Santa Claus, a made up jolly old

man with a big white beard dressed in a red and white jumpsuit. According to the story, this man lives at the North Pole and on the night before Christmas travels around the world with a sleigh of flying reindeers to give gifts to the children who were good for the whole year. On the morning of December 25, children jump out of bed to open their gifts. During the day, their families have a big feast. The religious Latino celebrations

Holidays

and the American Christmas traditions have a lot in common. For instance, we follow both by decorating our homes with objects such as colorful bright lights and all kinds of ornaments. In our homes, we put up a traditional Christmas tree, which the family decorates with bright lights, decorative ornaments, and a big bright star placed on top so Saint Nicholas (Santa Claus) knows where to leave the gifts. However, at midnight on Christmas Eve, many of us who are religious go to mass and then come home to open our gifts. On the other hand, the American way is to open the gifts at midnight or to just open one gift on Christmas Eve and the rest on Christmas day. Either way, Christmas is a special holiday celebrated by almost everyone.

QUINCEAÑERAS

QUINCEAÑERA, A HISPANIC CELEBRATION, means a lot to a girl because it celebrates her growing up to become a young lady, and leaving her childhood behind. This is a big step for her, and it means more responsibility. She also gets excited about her party. Although she tries not to have too many expectations, she hopes that everything comes out just the way she wants.



The history of quinceañeras dates back to the Aztecs around 500 BC. By the age of 15, boys were expected to become warriors and fulfill their fathers' expectations. For girls it was much different. It was the time in life when a girl would be introduced by her family to the community as a young lady and given the responsibilities of womanhood.

Latinos celebrate quinceañeras a bit differently. We have a mass of thanksgiving. The mass is a reaffirmation of the baptismal vows made by the girl's parents. Some people see it as gratitude and as preparation for the new challenges facing the girl, who is close to becoming a young lady. Nevertheless, nothing matches the emotional moment when a bouquet of flowers is delivered to the altar of the Virgin Mary, also known as "La Virgen de Guadalupe."

Quinceañeras

In order for everything to come out perfect, the way the quinceañera expects, she has to start preparing and thinking about the theme of her party three or four months before the big day. The most important decisions include selecting or making the puffy dress, decorating the hall, preparing the food, and arranging everything with the chamberlains and godparents. First, the quinceañera starts looking for the puffy princess looking dress and chooses the one she likes the most.

Then she decides what color she wants or, as most girls do, matches the color of the dress to the hall and church decorations. Also, once she has chosen the hall and the church, the quinceañera must have done her first communion and confirmation in order to have a mass. Lastly, she starts looking for the chamberlains and maids of honor (which most girls decide to have). After she makes her choices, they start practicing the famous

and most important dance of the night, the waltz, at least two months before the party. Most of the time, the quinceañera decides to also do a second dance, which is called “el baile sorpresa,” or “surprise dance.”

The quinceañera arrives to the mass in a very fancy way, almost like a red carpet arrival at an awards ceremony, pulling up in a limousine accompanied by her chamberlains and



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Receiving the last doll and switching to high heels

maids of honor. Everyone is dressed up formally, with the fifteen year old girl wearing a puffy dress that makes her stand out from everyone else. At this mass, the quinceañera is accompanied by the head chamberlain (chambelan), several other chamberlains, the maids of honor (damas), her parents, and her godparents (padrinos). The quinceañera, chamberlains, and maids are all dressed in formal attire. With the quinceañera uniquely dressed, the chamberlains and maids wear matching

attire. Sometimes the head chamberlain is dressed uniquely as well to distinguish him from the rest of the chamberlains. At the mass, the quinceañera, along with her family and friends, thank God for all their blessings.

A feast usually follows after the mass at either the family's home or at a banquet hall. At the feast, everyone eats and dances. The guests receive special party favors (recuerdos)

to remember this special event. Also during the feast, the quinceañera, the chamberlains, and maids of honor perform a special choreographed waltz as a celebration dance. A portion of this waltz customarily symbolizes the transition from childhood to womanhood. The quinceañera dedicates another part of this special dance to her father and other relatives. At this point, the quinceañera's parents



The surprise dance

Quinceañeras

come to the stage to dance with her. For the quinceañera, this is very important dance because her parents whisper in her ear how much they love her and how important she is to them. Once everyone has finished dancing, the quinceañera changes her clothes to dance the surprise dance.

The best part of having a quinceañera is that the fifteen year old girl gets to have a special party in her honor. For example, some girls might ask a favorite artist to perform at her party or arrange for something unique. Some girls receive presents and money, and some might even get a car. Since the reality is that they are becoming young adults, girls have the father-daughter dance. They also receive their last doll, which represents the last toy they get from their parents. With this special event, they leave their childhoods behind. Last, but not least, they switch their shoes to high heels, symbolizing their becoming young ladies.

In the new millennium, just as it was in the fifth century BC, the quinceañera lives on as a special day to cherish forever in young women's memories.

FAMILIES



FAMILY. To many people this word has so much significance for many different reasons. When you think of the families from all over the world, what kinds of things come to mind? And, let us ask you this, when you think of the families that reside in Boyle Heights, what things come to mind? For many people who live outside of Boyle Heights, when they hear about the families that live here, they think of gangs, violence,

low income, and abusive relationships, but there is just so much more here than what meets the eye. What if we said that people residing in our beautiful home known as Boyle Heights have just as much respect, and just as much loyalty, love, commitment, importance, and trust as do the other families that surround our community, our city, our state, or our country? Would you believe us? Here in Boyle Heights we build our families upon the three virtues of culture, family growth, and unity.

Culture influences a huge part of what makes families unique here in Boyle Heights. We see many different faces walking down our streets every single day. However, to truly understand just how important our families are here in Boyle Heights, you have to be able to take a close look at the people in our surroundings. Take, for example, our Catholic, Christian, and even Buddhist, churches that we have here. In one way or another, our

Families



families take the time off from their daily lives to come together in a spiritual way with the other families in our community. Religion plays a huge part within our households, but it's when we all come together to express our spirituality that we actually get a chance to see what most of our families are made of.

Although most of the population within Boyle Heights is Hispanic, it doesn't mean that families of different races are not important. Here, we experience

Hispanic culture and even Black, Indian, Asian, and Caucasian cultures cannot escape Hispanic customs. Take, for example, our family parties and gatherings. Let us take you into our huge celebrations. We wake up early in the morning to clean out the yard, set up the tables and balloons, and get our music ready to play. Then our huge families join together to enjoy the night as one. You can hear the loud buzzing conversations, the people laughing, and taste the amazingly delicious food.

Now, don't get us wrong, our culture doesn't only consist of going to church, throwing huge fiestas, and eating tacos. It's what all these things as a whole represent to us as a community. Without our culture here in Boyle Heights, we wouldn't have as much of an amazing place to live in as we do. The murals painted around our neighborhoods, the



In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights



Family Gathering

fiestas, the celebrations, the religion, and the unity are what characterize the families we have here. Expressing our culture with each other helps our unity grow along with our families.

Here in Boyle Heights, we have many different types of families when it comes to color, traditions, and especially growth. As you walk down the crowded streets with our beautiful homes, you see just how big

most of the families are. We have the gift of being able to have such great huge families! Some of us even adopt to create an even bigger family, in contrast to countries that may only allow for a family to consist of three people. Having a large family isn't always easy, but imagine growing up with four brothers or sisters. Do you think you would ever feel lonely? We don't think so. Many times kids around our community get so close with other children to the point where they almost become like family, even though they aren't related in any way. As we mentioned earlier, having a bigger family is often tough and filled with struggles, but at the end of the day, the unity that grows within our families is what makes the difference in our community.

Paying the bills is a struggle that every one of us must deal with all over the world. People who live in Boyle Heights are no exception. With the recent job losses, many of our families have been struggling. Now you would figure that times like these may cause families to grow apart or to distance themselves from the world and each other, but we would be lying if we told you that this is the case. The struggles that our families, especially the larger families, face on a daily basis may seem very difficult. Struggles are inevitable. No matter whom you are or what you do, you will always be thrown that curve ball to throw you off base, but you have to be willing to face and fight it. That is exactly what our families here in Boyle Heights do. We do not sit around and wait for a miracle. We go out and search for that miracle. Every day you see people out looking for

Families

jobs and trying to get ahead. Even though at times they get discouraged, they do not give up. Our families here are united through whatever situation may be put in their way. The unity in our families and our homes is what makes Boyle Heights such a stable and reliable place.

Our families are simply a tiny part of the beautiful things that make up Boyle Heights, but they are one of the most important, not only because of the things we do or say, but also because of what we represent. We represent the unity between nations. We represent the unity that everyone around the world should have. The families here in Boyle Heights build themselves up by their culture, growth, and struggles. No matter what may be thrown in our direction, we can guarantee that our families will not go down without a fight.



CHILDREN

FOR CHILDREN, BOYLE HEIGHTS IS A LARGE PLAYGROUND; children are always playing in the streets. From red light green light, to freeze tag, to cops and robbers, kids always find ways to entertain themselves. The children in Boyle Heights are very brave, they face many obstacles, yet they face them with a smile on their faces.



All of the Elementary Schools in Boyle Heights have a mission statement stating that all the students should be above basic in academic achievement. For example, Bridge, Malabar, Breed, 2nd Street, and Utah elementary schools all state in their mission statements that they foster a safe environment so that students can be academically prepared to compete in a diverse society to solve problems, and respect themselves and their peers. Elementary schools in Boyle Heights also have standards from the State of California, which many schools have been meeting in recent years. Utah Street Elementary School in Boyle Heights has been consistently meeting these standards. Its students have scored very well on state tests, even showing improvement in all subject areas, especially English, from one year to the next.

All the elementary schools in Boyle Heights have something in common -- the goal of making helping their students become high achievers.

Children



Life outside of school is different for the children of Boyle Heights. We may seem happy in school, but few people really know what we have to go through outside of school on a daily basis. Out on the streets we have to be careful of the dangers that exist within our community. Each child faces different problems, and some face more than others. Our obstacles include problems at home and the gang violence that surrounds us on the

streets of Boyle Heights.

Boyle Heights has unfortunately suffered from gang violence for many years. The violence makes it hard for parents to let their kids out to play, so instead many make their children stay at home all day long. Many kids are influenced by the violence, and end up joining a gang when they get older. Although gang violence here in Boyle Heights doesn't usually take children's lives, it puts them in constant danger and gives them the option of joining a gang when they become teenagers.

The children of Boyle Heights not only face problems outside on the streets, many also have to deal with problems within their homes. Some children have divorced parents while others have the misfortune of living with only a single parent. At home, some children are physically abused by their parents. Being physically abused makes it harder for the children



In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights

to concentrate in school. They sometimes have bad influences at home, from alcoholic parents to gang related siblings! These people can induce an innocent child to make the wrong turn in life.

The majority of Boyle Heights is comprised of Hispanic immigrants who have come here to look for a better life, but end up neglecting their children to work long hours. Neglect is a feeling that no child ever wants to feel, but unfortunately many kids in Boyle Heights do. The love and affection of their parents is what a child truly needs to succeed in life no matter where they live, including here in Boyle Heights. But when a child has to grow up with a single parent, usually the mother, it means that the mother has to work even harder and ends up neglecting the child.



We the children of Boyle Heights face many challenges, yet we are a brave bunch. At a young age, children of Boyle Heights begin to shape their futures through many obstacles. Most of us demonstrate that a child can overcome these obstacles to succeed. Through it all, our children usually keep a smile on their faces.

Luckily, Boyle Heights also offers its children places to be safe, such as clubs and recreational programs.

These programs and groups in our community help meet the needs of children and bring us hope. Organizations such as LA's Best, the Boys and Girls Club, and sports programs in local parks help keep children off the streets and away from gangs. All these groups contribute to improving the lives of our children.

Many working parents think of LA's Best as an excellent after school program. Most parents who sign their children up for LA's Best work long hours and often cannot pick

Children



up their children from school at the end of the day. LA's Best lets parents rest easy knowing that their children are being looked after. The organization helps children with their homework as well providing kids with other activities such as science, seasonal sports, arts and crafts, and health and fitness activities. It has something for everyone. Children can play sports such as basketball, soccer, and football, or even join the drill team. In addition to these activities and homework services, LA's Best students also go on field trips. LA's Best can be found in almost any elementary school in Boyle Heights, including Bridge Street, Sheridan, 2nd Street, and Utah Elementary.

For our older kids, we have the Variety Boys and Girls Club, which offers children free tutoring, snacks, entertainment, mentors, scholarships, rewards, field trips, college seminars, arts and crafts, gym, and leadership groups. The Boys and Girls Club has a lot to offer, it even gives us the chance to give back to the community by allowing us to volunteer. In this way we can stay off the streets and give back to Boyle Heights.

Parks in Boyle Heights, including Evergreen Park and Hollenbeck Park, have created small sports teams for children. Children in the area can sign up for little league baseball, softball, and soccer.

Thanks to these programs our children are kept off the streets and introduced to new experiences. They are taught to try new things and to be leaders. Parents in Boyle Heights can rest easy knowing that their children are safe in any of these programs.

FRIENDS

FRIENDS ARE PEOPLE WHO WE CAN BE OURSELVES AROUND, who are there for us, and who will always have our backs. When we hear the word “friend,” we think of a person who cares about us, and who we can trust, someone that you know has always been there for us, someone trustworthy. There are friends who don’t understand us as well as others and might turn out to be different than who we thought they were.



But not all friends will do you wrong; any one of us can be the lucky person that finds that friendship that will never be forgotten.

Some friends have known each other for a long time. In Spanish, we call this kind of friend an “hermano del alma,” which means “soul brother.” Many of us care for our friends like family. Some friends know each other because they were born and raised together, went to kindergarten together, and are still very close friends. Others might have just met as teenagers, but what really matters is not how long we have known each other,

but what we have been through together. Having a strong friendship in Boyle Heights can take us far and help us not fall in with the wrong crowd. There are many bad influences

Friends

around and only true friends will advise us to stay away from them.

There are so many things friends can do here in Boyle Heights. Most of the time friends eat together. The food stands around school areas are very common places where friends hang out. Sometimes we hang out at a friend's porch. This is a great way to just relax and talk together. People have different ways of having fun with friends. There are many beautiful parks in Boyle Heights where friends go play basketball, soccer, and other sports. There are many stores around the area, and shopping is a great way to bond with friends while we talk about guys and girls.

Friday and Saturday nights are known as the party nights. Teenagers party with friends, where we dance and sometimes spend the whole night together. Spending the night at a party is very common these days. Every weekend you can hear people's loud music. There



Texting a friend

are many different kind of parties us friends go to, as well as clubs, house parties, or just “kickbacks,” which means hanging out at someone's house. At a kickback we can just relax and listen to the music. Every weekend here in Boyle Heights you can find something different to do with your friends.

Although friends are mostly represented by what we do together,

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how we communicate with each other is also very important. There are several common ways we communicate and keep in touch with each other. One of the most popular is texting. Everyone texts nowadays, even our parents. It is amazing how the ways of communication have changed throughout time. Letters or telephone used to be widely used. Although talking on the phone is still common, instead of writing letters to each other, today we text because it is an easier and faster way to keep in touch with those good old

friends. Texting can also affect us in negative ways, however. Many teenagers do it too much and it can be dangerous, addictive, and hard to resist.



FAMOUS STREETS

WE CAN SEE HUGE OLD TREES that, when in bloom, emit a sweet scent that looms on Boyle Avenue. We can tell it's one of the oldest streets in Boyle Heights. Boyle Avenue is a mixture of old and new houses; a museum of its past glory. Andrew Boyle lived on this street. We notice many Queen Anne houses that are over 100 years old, still standing to this day, now converted into four apartment complexes. Then we pass a couple of Japanese styled houses and apartments. Together, these structures make up most of Boyle Avenue's buildings.

Boyle Avenue is not only comprised of warehouses and homes, it is home to many historical buildings, places, and community institutions where we gather. At Boyle and 1st Street alone, there are three landmarks. One of them is the Mariachi Hotel, a rundown building in which many Mariachi musicians live. Across the street is the Mariachi Plaza, where Mariachi musicians gather in hopes of getting hired to play their vibrant music on weekends. The plaza is also a place where we hang out. Right

next to Mariachi Plaza is the newest modern addition to the area, the Gold Line Subway entrance. Behind these three landmarks we notice the new buildings of White Memorial



Boyle Avenue

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights



Boyle Avenue house

they grow too old for us to take care of them properly. The Neighborhood Music School is where some of us go to learn wind or string instruments.

Cesar E. Chavez Avenue was formerly known as Brooklyn, but was renamed after Cesar Estrada Chavez, a Mexican-American activist who co-founded the United Farm Workers and inspired empowerment and social justice for Mexican-Americans. Until his death in 1993, he fought for every farm worker and wanted them to have fair rights.

This street is very unique because many ethnicities lived here, especially Jews, Japanese, and now us Hispanics. As we walk down Cesar E.

Hospital. Crossing Whittier Boulevard, we only see factories, warehouses, and the newest multi-apartment complexes. Looming at the end of Boyle Avenue is the Sears Tower, an ancient building that once was a functioning megastore, now reduced to a common department store.

The community institutions in the area include Hollenbeck Home of the Elderly, Neighborhood Music School, and White Memorial Hospital, where many of us were born. Hollenbeck Home of the Elderly is where some of our grandparents go to live when



Chavez Avenue

Famous Streets

Chavez we can still see some of the history that Jewish people left behind. For example, there are many old temples to remember the history of this main street.

As we walk down Chavez Avenue and Breed Street we see an old temple where Jews would go and practice their religion, but now this street has become populated by Hispanics. There are many local stores on Cesar E. Chavez where we go shopping for groceries,

take care of our health, go eat, or just hang out. Since most of us live near Chavez we end up meeting up with friends there to hang out, have fun, or shop.

When we go shopping at Happy Fashion, The Boa, or Payless for Shoes we get great deals since many of these stores have great bargains. We get our clothes from these stores because they have the latest styles and they are cheap. We continue down Chavez and we see stores left and right. Everyone is shopping, trying to find their fashion statement. After shopping for clothes we hang out and eat. Down Cesar E. Chavez we go eat at many restaurants like King Taco, Jack in the Box, La Parrilla, George's Burgers, and many other small restaurants.

Soto Street was named after a man named Phil Soto. He was a role model for living Latino politicians because he was one of the first Latinos elected to the State legislature. Soto fought for civil rights and unions just as Cesar Chavez did, which led him to march with Cesar Chavez.

In the morning we hear kids talking and walking to school, or waiting at the bus stop. On Soto Street we see fast food restaurants, clinics, and local stores. Soto Street is a quieter street and not as busy as other main streets. As we walk down Soto Street we notice where it transitions from calm and quiet to a busy street.



Chavez Avenue

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While we walk near Soto Street and First Street we come across a newsstand that has been there for a long time. We go there to buy the newspaper to get informed about what's going on in our community. We also get magazines and other material to read. We like to go there because it provides good information and the owner is respectful to everyone. In front of the newsstand there is a music store where we go to buy CDs. This place has been there for a long time too.

Another way for us to entertain ourselves or just hang around with our friends is by going to fast food restaurants. Some nearby fast food restaurants include McDonalds, KFC, and Taco Bell. These restaurants have good food and it's fun to hang around with our friends there. There are also fast food restaurants that are farther away so we have to take the bus to get to them. The more distant fast food restaurants include Burger King, Jack in the Box, and Carl's Jr. We take the 251 or 252 buses to go to those restaurants to eat.

MURALS

MURALS REPRESENT THE HISTORY, dreams, and culture of our Boyle Heights. The murals in our neighborhood are drawn by inspiration. Using colors, they are painted and reflected on our walls, with the beauty of a rainbow. We use murals in many ways. The pictures drawn come out of our minds' imagination and our hearts' passion; we draw these murals to show our emotions and make our demands.

Mott Street Historical Mural

Mural artists interpret our history with images on walls know as “murals.” Each mural in Boyle Heights has its own story. This is certainly true of the mural on Mott



Street behind Roosevelt High School.

There is a lot to know about our history. As years pass, many of us forget where Mexican, Central American, and South American people come from. Yet, knowing our history is an important part of our culture. Luckily, we have murals that represent our history as part of our culture. The mural on Mott Street behind Roosevelt High

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School shows how our people have grown in number and how we spread out leading up to our generation. In years past, Mexicans divided their land into nations. Then, troops and ships from the United States deployed to take over parts of Mexico to make them part of the United States. Mexico lost a large section of land. This is why Mexican people and names exist in the American territory. People with low incomes try to move to places where money is easier to earn. Many people from Mexico and Central America have moved north because the United States is an economically prosperous nation, where we have the opportunity to achieve our goals and dreams. Most immigrants stay to live in the United States for the rest of their lives because we know that this land belonged to Mexico before the United States troops came and explored the American land.



Murals

Moctezuma by Manuel Cruz, 1980

In the mural of Moctezuma we see a fierce battle between Moctezuma's men and armed soldiers. It also shows the care that the Native soldiers of the past received from the loving hearts of women. When asked about his opinion of the mural, one individual from the community responded that, "I enjoy seeing the beautiful colors and seeing such a historical piece of our culture be well represented in art." This is the same feeling expressed throughout our entire community towards this mural, as well as toward others. This mural was painted on the side of a convenience store just like many others. We are filled with inspiration to see our culture being represented in such a beautiful manner.

Street Wise

Located near the corner of 1st Street and St. Louis right in front of the police station behind St. Louis Pharmacy, this mural demonstrates two great life decisions here in Los Angeles: whether to stay in

school so you can have an education and a better life, or stay on the streets and sell drugs. When choosing the wrong path, most people end up in jail or make drastic mistakes. However, by going down the path of education people will have a better future and a stable life. On the top left of the mural, we see a man graduating from school and on the opposing right side, another man stands



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holding a gun on the side that says, “What are you shooting for?” Right behind him there is a bull’s eye. In the middle left we see a skull, while right next to it there is a woman explaining or trying to figure out a quote on a blackboard that says, “The hands that destroy can also create”. On the bottom right we find a pregnant woman with an image of a baby in her belly. Next to her it says, “Self Esteem”. The mural says that if you stay in school you get a good chance in life, and get to create your future. If you choose to stay on the streets to sell drugs, you live a life of crime and murder, slowly destroying your life and your future.

Roosevelt Mural (Avenue of the Athletes)

Murals on our campus represent the students of Roosevelt High School. One of the best murals is located by the basketball gym. It sends out a message saying that if one day we want to become a professional athlete, we have to try really hard in the sport we’re in,



Murals

and pursue our dreams. This painting motivates the students to become better people and ignore all the negative things in life. A student with an “R”, which stands for Roosevelt, on his shirt, is seen running at the Coliseum. The image inspires students to one day run in the Coliseum themselves. Similarly, one student stands with a Dodgers baseball uniform, while another stands ready to box. This shows what we could become if we dream big. The mural of athletes keeps students from dropping out and on the road to education. The mural’s message states that we can be whatever we want to be, whether it’s a boxer, a football player, or baseball player, but we should never forget our “roots”.

Conclusion

Some murals are not drawn by professional artists but by regular people with a heart and a big imagination. One thing all the murals have in common is that they mean a lot to our community and we share a strong bond with them. When an artist has no words to speak with, he draws them into beautiful artwork. We see many stories, legends, and times in history in the murals around our community. We only hope to share these murals with the whole world to enjoy them. These paintings mean much to our community and to the people who live in our neighborhoods.



ARCHITECTURE

HAVE YOU EVER STOPPED TO LOOK and see your surroundings? Our surroundings are not just about light posts or recreational parks, nor are our buildings just “blocks.” Our architecture has history and culture behind it. Our modern architecture has a story that unfolds and traces back to our early ancestors who migrated



Boyle Heights mansion

and left a bit of their culture here in Boyle Heights. Our community has a long history of different peoples and cultures that have lived in these parts and our architecture and buildings show us this.

Around Boyle Heights we see mansions and large homes from generations past. They reveal a once wealthy neighborhood. However, today these old houses are now separated by walls inside and are used as apartments, but on the outside they remain the same.

Around our community we see the influences of the Jewish and Japanese people that lived here before us. In Boyle Heights, Japanese architecture influenced the houses and apartments that still stand to this day. Some of their characteristics can be distinguished by the low height of the roof and smaller size of the windows, as well as their gates. Jewish people left behind magnificent

Architecture

Synagogues which can be distinguished by the Star of David. The Breed Street Shul, one of the oldest Synagogues in the western part of the United States, which was built in 1923, is located here in Boyle Heights. Today these buildings are hardly used; some of them are even abandoned or closed to the public.

Our present community is mostly Hispanic, so it's not a surprise to find architecture influenced by Latin America. One such building is La Casa Del Mexicano. This building can be seen on top of Blueberry Hill with its square shape and a dome on the roof. Another place where you can see our Hispanic culture is the gazebo on the Mariachi Plaza.

The LAC/USC Medical Center, known to us as the General Hospital, founded in 1878, is mostly made out of concrete.

The General Hospital is one of the most famous buildings, not just in Boyle Heights, but in the whole Los Angeles area. The General Hospital is also one of the nation's largest hospitals; it is as big as the Pentagon. The General Hospital is famous for many things, including being the birthplace of Marilyn Monroe, and appearing in movies such as *City of Los Angeles* and in the TV series of "The Terminator".



Breed Street Shul



LAC/USC Medical Center

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Sears Tower

The Boyle Heights Sears Tower is located at the intersection of Soto and Olympic Boulevard. Built in 1927, it stands 226 feet tall with a Sears sign on the top, on eleven acres of land. The tower was built in only 146 working days. Our Sears Tower is a landmark in Boyle Heights and many of us use it as a way of knowing that we are going home when we're driving on the freeway after a long day's work.

The Sixth Street Viaduct, or the Sixth Street Bridge, is a bridge that allows

access to and from Boyle Heights. The bridge itself is composed of three separate structures. One of the structures is the central arch segment which goes over the Los Angeles River. The other two structures consist of the east and west segments of reinforced concrete. The Sixth Street Bridge is also famous for appearing in many commercials, movies such as *Grease* and *Terminator 2*, and music videos by Madonna and System of a Down.

The architecture of Boyle Heights' buildings shows us the history of our community in many ways. We think we know it all but our walls have stories to tell after years of silence. Have you ever stopped to look at your house or building's designs? Have you ever thought of digging deep to search and find out who belonged there long before you? If only, if only our walls could speak...every coat of paint, every ceiling, every floorboard.



Mariachi Plaza

HOUSING

IF YOU WALK THROUGH ANY NEIGHBORHOOD IN BOYLE HEIGHTS you will notice the various types of homes we have here. Many of these homes are massive apartment buildings that house numerous families, others are beautiful original houses from many years ago, or you just might run into the affordable government housing projects. Over the years, Boyle Heights has gone through many changes. Real estate development is one of the most noticeable. Due to our close proximity to Downtown Los Angeles, our community is



Apartment/Hotel building

valuable. The ongoing gentrification, along with the current economic problems, has resulted in many natives having to face losing their homes to their lenders, making it difficult for many of us to remain in our beloved community of Boyle Heights.

Apartments and hotels in Boyle Heights come in all shapes, sizes, and monthly rents. The rent for a cozy apartment is around \$750-\$1150, while hotels range from \$200-\$550 depending on the interior size and the neighborhood. Today, hotels are used as homes. What used to be hotel rooms are now long-term apartments. Although they are small, they can house up to four people. It's not a family's dream house, but they try to make it feel as "home sweet home" as possible.

In Boyle Height we have as many houses as we do apartments. We have single family homes, investment homes, public housing, and retirement homes. Price ranges from

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights



Government subsidized homes

\$200,000 – \$900,000. Many people move into Boyle Heights because of the low cost for homes and rents compared to other places. Rent for a house can range from \$1,000 - \$2,000. We also have homes in which the government pays a certain percentage of the rent to help those with low income. We are not just full of small houses; we also have some really nice big houses. Some have just a bedroom, a bathroom, and a kitchen, while others have up to five bedrooms, 2½ bathrooms, a garage, a backyard, and a basement.

Many homes have a touch of our culture. For example, we might see a Virgin Mary statue or a lovely rose garden. Some homes have tagging on them. We still try our best to make our homes feel safe and make them feel welcoming. Many homes in Boyle Heights have homemade things such as swings that a father made for his kids, dog houses, and pots in which people like to grow beautiful flowers.

We also have retirement homes such as Keiro Retirement Home, the largest healthcare provider serving Japanese-Americans, and Hollenbeck Palms, which provides independent residential living with skilled nursing service.

Many apartments are not much larger, but they fit three more people than a hotel room. The interior of hotels have one or two bedrooms, and are large enough to fit a bed, a television, and a dresser. The interior of apartments consist of one to three bedrooms, one or two bathrooms, a living room, a kitchen, and, with luck, a laundry room. Some of these apartments are even bigger than houses.

The greatest attributes of our cozy apartments or hotels are the architectural detail and the surroundings offered by our community. These features give each apartment building its own unique style. We also have some apartments that are even bigger than houses.

Housing

Some of them are by parks and shopping centers. Their front or back yards have gardens, religious statues, and even speakers that play the residents' favorite types of music. Most of the apartments and hotels that were built around Boyle Heights were once inhabited by Whites, Jews, and Japanese. Now mostly Mexicans and African-Americans live here. These apartments and hotels provide housing for our community and although some of us struggle to pay the next rent we are still rich as a community and as a family.

In Boyle Heights there are many low-income people and for these struggling families the government has an agency called Housing and Urban Development (HUD). One of HUD's primary missions is to create a suitable living environment for all Americans by



Mansion converted into apartments

developing and improving the country's communities and enforcing fair housing laws. The government helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for their homes. The assistance comes in the form of rental subsidies, lowering the monthly rent payment. The government also has an organization called the Public Housing Agency (PHA). PHA seeks to make more new housing units that are affordable for low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. The government runs housing projects, big

property spaces where the government has built many little buildings like apartments. There are some projects here in Boyle Heights. They are very well known, especially the 8th Street projects. Our projects are nice and out in the open, not all are fenced in. They are a nice place where many families would like to live. However, at night it is a whole different story because the gangs come out at night. Many crimes have occurred at or near the projects, but now things are starting to change little by little. The government is remodeling and making it safer in the projects. At some, they are creating playgrounds with security cameras or with

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights

an official security there. The projects on 1st and Mission, called the Pueblo del Sol apartments, are nicely painted and also in the open, with security that leaves the people feeling safe.

Rehab homes are homes owned by either a church or the government that are open for the homeless, drug addicts, convicts, or anyone with a need.

Rehabilitation homes are meant to give their residents a new start. When no one else wants you and you don't have a place to go they provide shelter where

anyone can get clothing, food, and the other necessities that aid one's recovery. The courts send addicts to live at a Rehab home for anywhere from three months to a year while they complete an addiction program. Most of the time people sign themselves up to live there. The people who are sent from the court cannot leave until they complete the program, but those who came voluntarily are free to leave anytime they want. Pastor Raul Martinez, a rehab leader and pastor in our community for more than a decade, says that, "The Rehab home is a great place for anyone who needs a second chance, for people who feel there is no more hope". Some of these homes are single sex, either for men or women. Regardless, they give people a chance at a new start.

Many people see Boyle Heights' homes as broken down, ugly, minority-ridden homes. Although our homes do not always look the friendliest, the people who live here are members of a strong and united community, willing to do anything to make our homes as safe and comfortable as possible. Our homes are not great but they provide a second chance or a new beginning. Each home in this community provides something special for someone. Everyone has something special to contribute, so we as a community all say, "Our doors are open to you".



Private house

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION IS A VERY IMPORTANT PART of any community, and ours isn't any different because we need to move from place to place.

In Boyle Heights we have many methods of transportation, with the most popular being cars. We like getting around in cars more than with any other form of



transportation. Cars are fast but require the assistance of adults. We teenagers usually have our mom and dad take us to places we need to get to. Most of us don't get our driving license until we reach the age of 18, and that's usually when we get out of high school. So until then we have to rely on our parents to drive us around. The adults are the ones that need the transportation the most. They need a

way to get to work and get to the other places where they have to go. Sometimes they use cars for social reasons but most of the time they use them for important, necessary things. The teenagers who have cars use them more for social reasons. We use them to go to the movies, parties, the beach, and the mall, or just to hang out with friends somewhere. We also use cars to drive to school when we have to. But in Boyle Heights most teenagers start getting their cars when they go off to college because we think that's when they are most necessary. Some students get a car when they graduate from high school, and until then we just get rides from our parents who drive us where we have to go.

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Two other methods of transportation used in our Boyle Heights community are Metro trains and Metro buses, which are fast and convenient if you don't have a vehicle of your own. Other than private vehicles, these are the two main forms of transportation that are fast and can take you longer distances.

We use buses to get around here in Boyle Heights and to go to other parts of the city. People who don't have a car are usually the ones riding on the bus. The bus is a lot like going in a car. The difference between cars and buses is that if you ride the bus it will most likely take longer than going in a car. But the bus can take you and drop you off at a lot of places. Many teenagers use the bus each and every day.

The youth of Boyle Heights use the Metro Train because it takes us to many parts of Los Angeles. The train moves fast and it can take us to interesting places. The Metro Train can be taken by anyone since it doesn't cost much and is accessible to everyone. We use it to go to school in the morning or to go to work depending on our age

Transportation

and what we need it for. We use it in the afternoon to go home after an exhausting day of learning or working hard. The Metro Train is very comfortable. Not all of us have vehicles to travel in, so we use it to move around the city. Also, the Metro Train doesn't pollute like a car since it uses electricity. Many of us like it since we can't or don't like to drive.

Some of our Boyle Heights supermarkets and grocery stores offer assistance to their customers by providing free shuttles if they have made a certain purchase amount. We have yellow school buses provided by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) that take grade school students to school.



Riding a skateboard

These buses are usually for students who do not live in our community. There are also smaller forms of transportation used in our community that do not require gasoline or electricity such as bicycles, skateboards, and scooters.

Although many types of transportation are operated using gasoline or electricity, we also have bicycles, skateboards, and scooters that can be used for shorter distances, and are operated using movement and the force of our legs. These devices are used for traveling, entertainment, and sometimes just to play. We mostly see children riding scooters at parks and on sidewalks. Since these devices require plenty of leg motion and energy, they are used mainly by young people, but occasionally you will see adults



In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights

using them. Bicycles and skateboards are more common because they have been around for a longer period of time compared to scooters. Here in Boyle Heights we use them just about any time as long as we don't pass our curfew. We can be out late with a parent if we have not yet reached the age of eighteen, which is when we are considered adults here in Boyle Heights. Many of us loved to ride scooters when we were children, but as young adults we mostly prefer to use bicycles because they are fast, reliable, and better meet our transportation needs.



COMMUNITY CLUBS

THE COMMUNITY CLUBS IN BOYLE HEIGHTS are small recreation centers for children and teenagers. Many young people consider these clubs their second home for many reasons. Sometimes we get to learn things and have experiences we can't have at home. We also get help with our education while also creating life-long memories.



We have many types of clubs here in our community, including the Variety Boys and Girls Club, Hollenbeck Youth Center, Salesian Boys and Girls Club, and the Salesian Youth Center.

The Variety Boys and Girls Club offers many special programs and facilities such as arts and crafts, computer learning, library services, physical education, social recreation, a swimming pool, Tomorrow's Leaders, Boy and Girl of the Month, and much more.

Hundreds of kids and teenagers find this club very historical because famous people have come here in the past, including basketball player Kobe Bryant, who is a very popular player with the Los Angeles Lakers.

The Boys and Girls Club programs have plenty of activities for members between 7 and 18 years of age. The arts and crafts directors provide a wide choice of media, and also drawing, plastics, furniture repair, model building, school projects, mask making, pine wood derby racing, and special monthly projects.

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This organization's programs provide many benefits for the youth in our community of Boyle Heights. It keeps us out of trouble because instead of being outside on the streets, we get to learn in a social environment which makes everything extra exciting. We learn in a fun way, especially when we have our close friends around us. The club also helps us do better in school by teaching us how to use new and effective strategies that might help us learn better and faster.

Next, we have the Hollenbeck Youth Center. The Hollenbeck Youth Center is a club that supports teens like us who wish to become physically and mentally stronger. Many young people who went on to become great athletes, students, and professionals participated in this youth center.

The Hollenbeck Youth Center helps kids like us gain confidence and focus on positive behaviors that will come in handy in the future. Many of us go there to finish homework and sometimes just to have some fun with friends and hangout after school. The staff members are very outgoing and fun to be around. They are so much fun that every now and then they even play with us!

In addition, the center offers many programs, such as the girls' and boys' basketball swoosh league, and lessons



Community Clubs

in boxing and karate. The Hollenbeck Youth Center is very special and unique. Although there are other clubs, programs, and events in Boyle Heights, we still find the Hollenbeck Youth Center to be one of a kind because of the difference it has made in so many lives. Many of us turned out good in life as a result of coming here.

Another community club we have here in Boyle Heights is the Salesian Boys and Girls Club. The Salesian Boys and Girls Club provides another example for us to demonstrate that Boyle Heights is a unique and enjoyable community. Like the other community clubs, this club has age limits. Here the ages range from 7 to 17 years of age.

These clubs show that our own community has many creative minds. We use these community clubs to release our inner creativity that wants to come out in whatever form that may take for each of us. Our Salesian Boys and Girls Club plays a role in providing us with whatever we need in order to express ourselves in our own unique way. They provide us with daily activities such as soccer, basketball, kickball, and even board games! And for those who really enjoy playing competitively, they also sponsor traveling teams that we can join. These include teams in the sports of soccer and basketball. By joining these teams, we have the privilege of not only playing against other clubs in our community, but also against those from other cities.



We find this community club appealing for numerous reasons. These reasons have everything to do with why this club was started in the first place -- to inspire us and to provide many opportunities to the young people in East Los Angeles to recognize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens who will support their families and themselves.

Another club we have here in Boyle Heights is the Salesian Youth Center. Over the

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years, the Salesian Youth Center has helped out many children and teens of all ages in Boyle Heights and at schools such as Roosevelt High School, Oscar de la Hoya High School, Hollenbeck Middle School, Breed Street Elementary, and other neighboring schools inside the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Many young people that go to this club find it a relief and a safe place to have fun. One thing is for sure, we all walk out with big smiles. Not only this, the Salesian Youth Center also provides us with holiday events and other activities we can enjoy.

The Salesian Youth Center has brought about tremendous changes in children's and teens' lives. For this reason, this club has been recognized throughout the years. They have always done their best to bring along the young people of Boyle Heights. Even though there are many other clubs around this area, we consider The Salesian Youth Center to be one of the most important clubs within Boyle Heights for its outstanding work and achievement on behalf of kids and teens like us.

PARKS & RECREATION

THERE ARE MANY BEAUTIFUL PARKS in Boyle Heights. One of our most popular is Hollenbeck Park. On the weekends it is visited by many people. If you look closely, you will see that many families that visit the park have members of up to three generations. We come here with our parents and grandparents. Hollenbeck is visited for its wonderful lake where fish and ducks swim. The park is a beautiful place where people go to take pictures for their friends' Quinceañeras (celebrating girls' 15th birthday) and weddings. The park features a beautiful fountain and bridge. People can pose close to the water fountain and the Lake Bridge to take amazing photographs. Among the many sounds, you can hear the sizzling of meat on the barbeque grill and the excitement of young and old shooting some hoops on the basketball courts. You can often find people running on the jogging path and enjoying the fresh cooked meat at the picnic tables. Among the clubs and the programs found at the park are aerobics, arts and crafts, day camp, pre-school, LA Kids, and during the summer there is a lunch program.



Another park located here in Boyle Heights is Pecan Park. This park is a very quiet, peaceful park. The noise you do hear is that of laughter and excitement made by the little kids playing there. People of all ages go to this park. This park has a lit basketball

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court and little play areas for the kids, and handball courts where it gets very competitive, especially between friends and older gentlemen. We also have access to volleyball courts where girls and boys can show off their skills. Soccer, golf, softball, t-ball, and hockey are also played at Pecan Park. The swimming pool is another addition that everyone loves, especially during the hot Los Angeles summer. You might also recognize this park because it was

featured in a music video by the artist Chris Brown.

Evergreen Recreation Center is where we go to play soccer on holidays. It is one of the biggest parks in Boyle Heights. They recently added child care to keep all the little kids out of trouble and away from the streets. All kinds of people go there such as athletes, young people, and even seniors, who hang out at the picnic tables playing dominos and cards. This park is the most sport active of all and is home to a baseball league by night. We also play a lot of soccer there because the field is divided in two, so twice as many people can play. The park also offers preschool for our little brothers and sisters, a winter travel camp, and LA Kids.

State Street Recreation Center is another of the many beautiful parks in Boyle Heights. It features an auditorium, a children's playroom, and a community



Parks & Recreation

room. We also have a kitchen and an indoor stage where many plays have been put on. We have the fundamental sports like soccer, basketball, and baseball, and also other amazing sports like gymnastics and karate. State Street Recreation Center offers many programs that keep us entertained during the day, but we also have dance and game night, a music class, and a senior club.

Boyle Heights Park, better known as “El Hoyo”, which means “the hole” in Spanish, is located between four downhill, which make it look like a big hole. The programs offered by this recreation center include school programs, childcare, and preschool.

This park has barbeque pits which we use when we are in the park playing soccer or hitting a homerun while playing baseball. The park has a jogging path surrounded with beautiful trees and people. “El Hoyo” has just been renovated and gated. It is the only park in Boyle Heights that has a synthetic grass field, which is used on the weekends for soccer, baseball, and football leagues.



A very amazing park that we have here in Boyle Heights is Wabash Park. It is located behind Evergreen Elementary School and adjacent to Malabar Library, which is a very good thing if you just finished reading a book and you want to go next door to

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights



play some soccer or basketball. This park has an outdoor basketball court where we play basketball by day and “futbol rapido” (“fast soccer”) by night. Many kids enjoy the two sand boxes that are located in the park where they can play on the swings and slide, but be careful because you might get your shoes full of sand if you do not watch your step.

These six parks mean a lot to the Boyle Heights community. These are where many teenagers hang out. It is also where many of us played our first sports or met someone special. Our parks are some of the most beautiful parks in the city not only for their amazing landscapes, but also for the people we meet when we go to them. So if you want, come play a sport, have a barbeque, or just relax at one of our parks.

ENTERTAINMENT

HERE IN BOYLE HEIGHTS we teens have many ways to entertain ourselves with a variety of activities and places to go. On beautiful days we go to the park for fun and for picnics, or we go out to eat at one of our local restaurants. We have many different kinds of restaurants such as King Taco (Mexican food), Jack in the Box (American food), and we also have Chinese food.

After a delicious meal, we go to the shopping plaza located on Cesar Chavez to buy clothes, shoes, and other things. While walking around we run into cafes like Starbucks or the Arctic Hot Spot. There are also places where we can rent computers for one or two dollars an hour. We get to do what we like on the internet like chat, play video games, and do homework, among other things.

Many teens go to their friends' homes to watch television and play games. When the weather changes and it rains, we stay at home and play board games, or watch movies with the family and drink hot chocolate.

Students also have entertainment at our school like school dances, and sports events like football and basketball games.

There are times where we have to exit our community of Boyle Heights and go to



In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights



other places. If we want to go to the movies, the nearest theater is about twenty minutes away. To go to the beach, we have to drive 25-30 minutes away by highway to get to the cities of Santa Monica or Long Beach.

Here in Boyle Heights we all like to celebrate holidays such as Christmas, Thanksgiving, Halloween, and Easter. Most of us celebrate the same holidays

but some do not because of our different religions.

Most teens in Boyle Heights really enjoy listening to music, dancing, having fun with friends, and meeting new people who do the same thing. Many of us like to go to parties just to have fun. Our weekends start on Friday night, so on this night many people put events together such as house dance parties and underground parties. These kinds of parties may all sound similar, and in a way they are, but each has something unique to offer. For example, most house parties have food and all types of music for people to dance to. At underground parties you just dance all night long.

The people who organize the parties post up bulletins with information about them that tells us where and when they are happening. Often, the organizers put a flyer on the internet to give us a preview of what the party will be like. Other people pass out flyers advertising parties and at times we might be lucky enough to get a discount to the party. Some house dance



Underground party

Entertainment

parties and underground parties take place in back yards that are big enough to fit many people, while others are held in big empty lots. The more people the better at these parties. The lights they use are amazing, and capture everyone's attention! The music makes the partygoers dance. The music played at the parties includes hip hop, electro, techno, and dance music.

Since our community has no movie theaters, there are many places where we can rent movies to watch at home to

entertain ourselves. Also, some people prefer to rent a movie for \$2 instead of paying \$15 to see a movie at the theater. The people in our community go to Blockbuster, the Game Stop, and other similar places to rent movies. At the smaller shops, they also sell movies for less money than at the large ones. For example, if you can buy a movie for \$20 at a place like Blockbuster, you can buy it used at another rental shop for only \$10.

Many of the movie rental shops also rent and sell our favorite video games. These games are for platforms such as PSP, X-Box, and Nintendo DS.

We, the people of Boyle Heights, want you to know that whenever you would like to come and visit us, we will be glad to have you and your family in our community. We will help you experience our history, events, murals, stores, restaurants, and the many other things we have here in Boyle Heights.



MUSIC

MMUSIC IS A WAY OF LIFE here in Boyle Heights. People listen to music on hot sunny days and on cold gray nights. Music is all around Boyle Heights: on the streets, in the stores, in cars, in houses, and in parks. Many people listen to music on their iPods, radios, and CD players, or they stop and listen to performers on the streets of Boyle Heights. Some of the most common genres of music that people listen to are Mariachi, Corridos, Techno, Rock, Hip-hop, and Rap.



Mariachi, one of the most loved types of music here in Boyle Heights, is very emotional. Mariachi songs are usually about love, and most Mariachi songs are dedications to loved ones. “Las Mañanitas”, one of the most famous Mariachi songs, is usually played on birthdays and on Mother’s Day. People who sing Mariachi

Music

have strong vocals and sing beautifully. Most of the time there are only one or two vocalists in the group and the rest play instruments and occasionally join in on vocals. Violin, guitarón, guitar de golpe, viola, guitar, and trumpet are the instruments played in a Mariachi group. Adults usually play in Mariachi groups but some of us teenagers play in them, too. The main group of people who listen to Mariachi music are Latinos. Mariachi music is important here in Boyle Heights because people feel a sense of pride when they hear Mariachi music.

Corridos, also popular here in Boyle Heights, are similar to Mariachi in sound. However, Corridos talk about different things, usually about the struggle of Latinos and usually about the life of the singer. Corridos are like books. A song starts with a “hello” from the singer, then the song goes on to tell the story of the singer’s life, before ending with a conclusion to the story and a farewell from the singer. Corridos also talk about crossing the border, life here in the United States, love and breakups, and lost loves, friends, and family. Corridos go very deeply into a person’s feelings. Many people can relate to the songs and they feel like someone understands them. Corridos bring out that Latino spirit inside of people. Both Corridos and Mariachi are often played at big parties or festivals.

Techno, a form of electronic dance music, is loved by many teenagers in Boyle Heights. Techno is all about good beats and rhythm. It’s about having fun and moving to the music. Techno takes people into another world and they lose themselves in it. When we go to a techno concert or “rave” (dance parties that often last all night) we see lights flashing everywhere and people with glow sticks dancing with them. Glow sticks are little sticks that glow in the dark. Green, orange, yellow, and pink are the most common colors. We dance to Techno in many different



Shuffling

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights



Student wearing a band t-shirt

ways. The Melbourne Shuffle is a fast sideways heel-toe movement on one foot twisting at the ankle. Spins, arm pumps, and kicks can be added. It is the most common way to dance. Techno is a party must have! Techno is important here in Boyle Heights because it makes people feel more alive.

Rock is a type of music that evokes many moods. Anger, rebellion, love loss, love gain, pain, partying, hope, and politics are some of the many topics Rock music talks about. There are many forms of Rock music: Metal, Pop Rock, Glam Rock, Punk Rock, Heavy Metal, Metalcore, and Alternative Rock. Rock is known for its volume and fashion. Many people think that Rock is evil music, that it's just people screaming into a microphone, and that there is nothing good about Rock music, but that is not true. Rock, to many teenagers here in Boyle Heights, is like therapy. In these times, many of us feel a lot of pain and anger because of the problems that we are going through, and when we

listen to Rock music we feel like somebody understands us, and we don't feel as alone. So when people hear Rock music they want to say, "Yes!" People at Rock concerts like to bang their heads up and down and wave their hands in the air. People do this because they feel the music and they agree with what the singer is saying.

Hip-hop and Rap are commonly mistaken to be the same, but they are different. Hip-hop has vocals and dancing beats, while Rap is more like a poem to a beat with hardly any singing. Hip-hop used to be known for smooth, soothing beats; intelligent, sincere rhymes; and a solid representation of urban life. Rap is like a story about the hard life and what people had to do to survive in this life. Hip-hop now is less about representing the urban life but more about fun, love, dancing, and feelings. Rap is interesting because the

Music



rappers talk about their lives and the struggles they have faced and will face, similar to Corridos. Hip-hop and Rap are important because most songs talk about mistakes that the singers/rappers have made and how they try to better themselves.

Music is very important in Boyle Heights. Without music we would just be locked up inside ourselves with no way out. Music helps us express our feelings and thoughts and helps us cope with life.

STYLES & FASHION

IN BOYLE HEIGHTS, WE HAVE DIFFERENT STYLES that most of the time cannot be reproduced. Style and fashion express a big part of who we are because they show the world just how creative we can be at innovating new and better ways of standing out from the crowd. Everyone loves to be different and hates to be the same. In general, style and fashion are a way to be free as an individual in our community and to feel unique within our family -- “La Familia,” “La Raza.”

As we walk around Boyle Heights, we find constant changes of style at every corner of the streets we walk on. Whether it is hair or clothing, our styles depend on our personalities and what we feel comfortable wearing. In this lively community, styles diverge and change constantly among our youth. We see Scene Kids and Skaters, Jocks and Shufflers, and everything in between. By our appearance, we represent what we love and show where we come from without uttering a single word.

New forms of electronic music have hit Boyle



Shufflers

Styles & Fashion

Heights like a perfect storm. This party scene has given rise to a number of different styles and with it a new form of dancing. Party-goers, also known as shufflers, mostly listen to techno, trance, dance, and electro music. Most commonly, the party-goers wear bright clothes, while others sport flannels and tight jeans, accessorizing with bracelets and necklaces symbolizing their love for the party life. One feature of this particular style is that it can range from casual to exotic with the blink of an eye. Now, how's that for transitioning? No one really looks the same, so new fashions are always on the rise in this scene. One thing is for certain, however – the styles cannot be replicated, but they seem to last forever until the bass stops thumping.

The skating style in Boyle Heights will never stop or be forgotten. Skaters in Boyle Heights come in all ages, from older to younger, and they come from many different backgrounds. Although skaters usually have long hair and wear different types of skateboard branded shirts like Volcom, element, Emerica, and Krew, the best part of being a skater involves personalizing one's style to any way the individual sees fit. Not all skaters have long hair, and clothing doesn't always have to be tight. In fact, some skaters prefer to wear loose fitting clothes so they do not feel limited in their moves. However, the most important equipment for a skater is their skateboard. It represents who they are because the choice of board is a hard and grueling task that has a lot to do with the skater's taste and individual style.



Skater

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights



Jocks

What do you think when you hear the word jocks? Someone who plays a sport, right? Jocks are usually role models on campus because they juggle sports and school, often putting in late hours. Their style is like no other. Most students wake up an hour before school starts in order to fix themselves up to get ready for school. However, the mentality of a jock is different. He or she knows that the effort of getting fixed up for school is not worth it because they are going to sweat and be uncomfortable in tighter clothes. Jocks usually wake up and shower, and just put on whatever they find to wear. They tend to wear sweats, sandals, big sweaters, shorts, and t-shirts. Their hair is the only part of their appearance that gets any attention. Their style is one nobody else would dream of having because they cannot wear it like jocks do, or have the attitude jocks have of not caring what they look like.

Among the many types of styles, there is one style that is becoming very popular.

“Pretty Boys” are guys who take great care of the way they look. From their hair to their shoes, they want it all. Many of them pluck their eyebrows, and get clean hairstyles with thin sideburns. They worry a lot about their shoes, making sure that they are clean and neat. They also worry about the jeans and the shirts they wear, and make sure that they look the best they can. If they get a smudge on their shoes they make it seem like it’s

Styles & Fashion

the end of the world. Bright shirts are an easy way to stand out, and Pretty Boys want attention. They want to be known for what they wear and for how they look. Pretty Boys wear expensively stylish brands like Hollister, American Eagle, Lacoste, and Anchor Blue. More and more teens are catching on to this style because it shows off their neatness and good looks. This style is steadily growing in our community.

All these styles, taken together, represent our community of Boyle Heights. We are interesting, diverse, and always creative.

FAMOUS PEOPLE

OVER THE YEARS there have been many people who have gained fame and who have gone to school in Boyle Heights. They are from different nationalities, testifying to the diversity that has been a characteristic of Boyle Heights over the years. These famous people have made a name for themselves in many different fields and occupations, including sports, entertainment, politics, business, and law. Famous athletes from our community include Genaro Hernandez, Willie Davis, Mike Garrett, and Oscar De La Hoya. Donald Sterling achieved success as an attorney and then as the owner of a sports team. Wallace Tashima became a federal District judge, and Jose Huizar an important local politician. We could include countless more individuals to this chapter but our aim is simply to give a sample of the variety of people who have made us proud in Boyle Heights.

Genaro Hernandez and Oscar De La Hoya

Genaro Hernandez was born on May 10, 1966. He is a former boxer who graduated from Roosevelt High School. Hernandez, a Mexican-American, held titles as both WBA Super Featherweight Champion and WBC Super Featherweight Champion during the 1990s. He retired in 1998, with a record of 38 wins, 2 losses and 1 draw, with 17 wins by knockout. Another famous boxer that has made Boyle Heights proud by contributing to the community is Oscar De La Hoya, who was born in East Los Angeles. A retired boxer of Mexican descent, De La Hoya has held many boxing titles. He is well



Oscar De La Hoya

Famous People

known throughout the world. The Cecilia Gonzalez De La Hoya Cancer Center at White Memorial in Boyle Heights, named after his mother, was donated by Oscar. Oscar also donated the Oscar de la Hoya Labor and Delivery center. Hoya Animo Charter High School was established after a donation from Oscar himself.

Willie Davis

William Henry Davis was born April 15, 1940. He is a former major league baseball center fielder who played most of his career for the Los Angeles Dodgers. Davis was a multisport standout at Roosevelt High School. He once ran a 9.5-second 100-yard dash, and he set a city record in the long jump of 25 feet 5 inches, which stands to this day. After high school Davis became a star baseball player. He joined the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1960 and was considered one of the league's fastest players during his career. Sadly, Davis passed away in March 2010 while we were writing this book.



Willie Davis



Mike Garrett

Mike Garrett

Mike Garrett was born on April 12, 1944 in Los Angeles, California and attended Roosevelt High School as well as the University of Southern California. He was a star football player at USC and later with the Kansas City Chiefs and San Diego Chargers. He was awarded the Heisman Trophy as the outstanding college football player in the country in 1965. After his professional football career he became a director of business development and worked in the district attorney's office. Since 1993 he has been USC's Athletic Director.

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights



Donald Sterling

Donald T. Sterling

Donald Tokowitz was born in 1933 in Chicago, Illinois. As an adult, he changed his last name to Sterling. He and his family moved to Boyle Heights where he attended Roosevelt High School. He then attended California State University, Los Angeles and Southwestern University School of Law. In 1961, he started his career as a divorce and personal injury attorney. Twenty years later, Sterling bought the San Diego Clippers basketball team, which he still owns.

A. Wallace Tashima

A. Wallace Tashima was born in 1934 in Santa Maria, California. He is Nisei Japanese American. He lived in Boyle Heights and attended Roosevelt High School. Tashima served in the United States Marine Corps and was discharged with the rank of Sergeant. President Jimmy Carter nominated Tashima to a seat on the United States District Court for the Central District of California in 1980. Tashima served for fifteen years on the District Court until President Bill Clinton selected him to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in 1996.



Lou Adler

Lou Adler

Lou Adler was born in Chicago, Illinois on December 13, 1933. Adler grew up in a mixed Jewish and Mexican family. He graduated from Roosevelt High School. Adler founded and co-owned Dunhill Records. He was President of the label as well as the chief record producer. He was the manager of many singers and musicians including Sam Cooke, The

Famous People

Mamas & the Papas, Johnny Rivers, Barry McGuire, Scott McKenzie, The Grass Roots, Spirit, and Carole King. He also managed Cheech and Chong, and produced the movies “Up In Smoke” and “The Rocky Horror Picture Show.” He won two Grammy Awards in 1972 for producing records by Carole King.

Jose Huizar

Jose Huizar served on the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education for four years until being elected to the 14th District of the Los Angeles City Council in 2005. He was born in Zacatecas, Mexico, and is the first immigrant elected to the Los Angeles City Council. He has contributed to Boyle Heights by working to reform the district’s high schools by ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, had access to the A-G courses required by four-year universities. Huizar championed the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension and the Broadway Corridor, including the restoration of twelve historic theaters and returning streetcars to the downtown historic core of Los Angeles.



Jose Huizar and family

Many people from our community have been successful after making the effort to finish high school and either continuing their education or working hard at their chosen field. Let’s realize that someday in the future, maybe some of us will gain fame, represent Boyle Heights, and make everyone proud. Many of us want to succeed and bring honor to our community.

GANG LIFE & VIOLENCE

GUNSHOTS. GRAFFITI. GANGSTERS. This is what life is like in Boyle Heights. Regardless of whether we are a part of a gang or not, gang violence still has a profound effect on us. It's all around us, permeating the air, swarming into our lives. To residents of



Boyle Heights, the word “gang” doesn’t mean a friendly group of people; it has a slightly different meaning. The word has lost all the connotations it was meant to have. To us, it brings fear. But it’s also normal. And that is probably the scariest part of all.

Boyle Heights is affected by gang violence in many ways. Even if we have not experienced gang violence first-hand, we still live in a state of paranoia, fearing that one day we *will* experience it and that it will creep out of the corner it was lurking in. Gang violence is carried out in several ways, including shootings, arguments, aggressive fights, home robberies, and muggings. It runs rampant in the streets of Boyle Heights. Certain streets like Winter Street and Fresno Street stand out as streets that are constantly targeted by gangs. In these areas, there are small stores that are run by gang members, and many residents fear shopping in these stores for this reason. We students also fear staying too late at school because this means that we must walk home in the evening when gangsters are roaming the streets, asking, “Where are

Gang Life & Violence



you from?” to victims, based simply on how we are dressed. This question, commonly used by gang members, asks the victim to state which gang or part of town they live in. The gang member asking the question wants to know if he and the victim are from gangs that get along or from rival gangs.

While it obviously has its downside, gang violence has also forced our community to come together and unite against a common enemy.

Gang violence has encouraged the creation of Homeboy Industries, an organization that rehabilitates former gang members who desire another lifestyle away from gangs. This organization works with the community to help former gang members train for and find jobs, gain work experience to build their resume, and provide a better life for their families and themselves. Homeboys Industries is essential to Boyle Heights because it links a dangerous past with a rehabilitated future. Many gang members wish to be free of their lifestyle but don't know where to turn. Homeboys Industries gives them the help that they need and the second chance that they deserve.

Another positive aspect of gang violence is the opportunity it gives people to show their generous side. Father Greg Boyle works closely with Homeboy Industries. He is a mentor for many of the former gang members who participate in the program. In



In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights

1988, Father Greg began a program called “Jobs For a Future” (JFF), which focused on the Boyle Heights youth. He successfully established a daycare program, an elementary school, and he helped the young residents of Boyle Heights find jobs that prevented their involvement with gangs. JFF, which later became Homeboy Industries, has served as a model program for other communities that suffer from gang violence and wish to start a similar program. None of this would have been possible without the efforts of Father Greg Boyle, a kind and simple man looking to bring a positive change to his community.

Outsiders have a picture in their heads that all of the people in Boyle Heights are “gangsters” and that we are all constantly fighting amongst ourselves because of our “gang rivalries”, but this is certainly not true. Boyle Heights is a melting pot saturated with rich culture, unique beauty, and kind fraternity, but even the most beautiful things can have ugly features. Gang violence, although not something that we particularly want in our community, has given us an incentive to make Boyle Heights a better place and to be better people ourselves.



TEEN ISSUES

IN BOYLE HEIGHTS, TEENS HAVE TO DEAL with many issues. Many of us start having problems in high school, but for others it begins even earlier. Students start to drop out for many reasons: lack of motivation, lack of family support, drugs and



Student with baby at school

alcohol abuse, and due to one of the biggest problems, teen pregnancy. These issues not only affect us personally, but as a community as well. Many young girls get pregnant at a young age, which leads them to have more concern for their newborn than for their education. Teens get pregnant at such a young age because they are not informed enough and because parents make the mistake of not having the “talk” with their teens. The “talk” is a conversation between parents and teens about sexual intercourse. It makes both the parent and the teen feel awkward, which is why oftentimes they avoid this conversation, but this avoidance leads to misunderstandings, recklessness, and consequences like having a baby.

Once teens become parents they have to support their baby, which can prevent them from focusing on school. One positive solution Roosevelt High School has provided is an infant center and a preschool located on the campus.

They take care of students’ infants while the teen moms go to school. Thanks to these programs teen moms don’t have to worry about who is going to take care of their baby,

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or leave their home schools, allowing them to continue pursuing their education.

Our community is a small, densely populated neighborhood that has been greatly impacted by the challenges everywhere in education. Budget cuts, the loss of programs at our schools, and not having enough supplies are all factors in our school's low graduation rates. As a result of giving up halfway through the semester or by deciding not to continue due to personal problems, many start failing classes. Others get in trouble and are mostly in the dean's office. Some typical problems include ditching classes, tagging, and getting into fights. The best way to improve our

academic achievement would be by strengthening parent involvement, motivating the students enthusiastically, and providing a common ground. Most parents don't give their attention and their time to their kids. Once we have reached the middle of high school, parents stop coming to parent-student activities on campus. Many of us teens feel lonely, as if we don't have someone to depend on.

Financial struggles are another common issue in our community. Many teens have to start working at a young age. The reasons why teens need to work seem obvious to us but they may not be to others. Many of our parents are unemployed due to the economic struggles occurring today. Though it has become an issue around the world, it seems the economic crisis has hit Boyle Heights deeply. Most of the parents of these students aren't citizens and have trouble obtaining a well paid job. Parents of these students have to provide for their children but have difficulty coming up with even basic necessities. Money becomes tightly budgeted so it can't be spent on anything frivolous. In these circumstances, teens often find themselves in need and at a stage in life where they are forced to help financially around the house. Teens obtain part-time jobs such as working at a day care, at markets, or at brand stores. They work to help out with the rent, food,

Teen Issues

supplies, and other family expenses. Teens begin to manage their money and soon, with even minimum wage pay checks, they settle into a life with school in the background.

Parties are a way for us teens to have fun and forget about our problems, but they also lead us to drugs and alcohol. At times this happens under peer pressure, as in “everyone is doing it, why not me?” At other times it’s just the thing to do because fitting in is a must in the social scene. Nowadays at parties teens are either drunk, on drugs, or on some type of high. Sadly, finding a sober person at a party is rare. People have forgotten the real meaning of having fun. Our parties are like a “chemical madness,” when you want to be a part of society at any price, and not be an outcast. As teens we want everything without thinking of the consequences. We want to be a part of the newest scene, “the it and now,” without thinking about tomorrow.

The community of Boyle Heights has been known as a tough community to grow up in. Even though many of us have to go through these struggles, we try to overcome them and head to a good path, a path that leads us to college.

IMMIGRATION

SINCE 1870, OUR NEIGHBORHOOD, BOYLE HEIGHTS, has been standing like a house with open doors and a doormat saying “welcome” to every immigrant who comes into the United States, young and old. Over the years, like waves from the ocean, immigrants from Mexico, Japan, England, Germany, Russia and many other countries



have settled and left their marks.

We are a neighborhood built by immigrants, and most of us have stories to tell about how we came here. All of them have a similar goal: the American dream.

Our diverse cultures have impacted and shaped Boyle Heights, and one can see it throughout the community. From the beautiful Japanese garden at Roosevelt High School to the Mariachi Plaza, we can still see the special landmarks that our immigrant

ancestors have left behind. Every landmark has its own history, even the beautiful murals throughout the community. Food can be seen as another type of landmark, one whose recipes have been passed down from generation to generation to be shared with everyone in the community. Many street names are named after famous immigrants. For example, Pedro Infante Ave. is named after a famous and much admired actor and singer. We also see our cultural diversity in the churches of many different religions and our multicultural

Immigration

holidays. Even the name of our community comes from a famous Irish immigrant named Andrew A. Boyle. All of these examples of cultural diversity are cherished by all in the community.

In order to accomplish a dream one has to make sacrifices. Many of us immigrants have sacrificed our education, not because we do not want to learn, but because we have to support our loved ones financially. Even for those who do have an education from their country of birth, it may not be very valuable in the United States. Many misunderstand our unfortunate situation as immigrants and characterize us as lazy and ignorant, but they are wrong. The reality is that we have great potential to work as hard, if not even stronger than an educated person. This is a great obstacle that many of our immigrant families in the community have to face, but it is all worth it for the next generation to have a better education, be happy, and have a great life.

Most of the immigrants came with nothing but the clothes on their backs and a dream to have a better future for themselves, and most of all for their families. They left everything and risked everything to come to a place of opportunity far away from their homes in search of the American dream. The cultures they brought combined in one place: Boyle Heights. So when we think of Boyle Heights it should not be just about Mexicans or gangs, but of multicultural groups of immigrants. They are the face, backbone, and legs of Boyle Heights: the legs that keep Boyle Heights standing, the backbone which keeps our head held high, and the face which keeps Boyle Heights looking forward for a brighter tomorrow.



MOM & POP STORES

BOYLE HEIGHTS IS A NEIGHBORHOOD FULL OF CULTURE, with welcoming stores left and right. What makes this community so thrilling are the mom and pop stores successfully owned and operated in a few locations. As you walk down the streets of Boyle Heights, its welcoming stream of stores highlights our culture filled neighborhood. They bring meaning to the lives of their customers and neighbors. Although the rapid increase of huge chain companies has reduced business for mom and pop stores, many of the local stores in Boyle Heights continue to operate and even thrive in today's economy. They offer a shopping alternative to customers who wish to deal with businesses native to Boyle Heights and most of whose owners are members of the community.

Tepa Barber Shop

Located on 4th and Grande Vista, Tepa Barber Shop is well-known here in Boyle Heights. This family-run business by “Fingers” and his wife opened about ten years ago. Tepa originated at another location but ended up relocating to our community. The other beauty salons located on the same street as Tepa have competed for customers with this rising business, but today Tepa’s owners feel confident and



Mom & Pop Stores

successful. Granted that Tepa is near the local schools and parks, helping the business have a steady flow of regular customers. Magnificent sharp haircuts and loyal customers are the strength that keeps them going.

Blakk Braine

There are various stores located on Cesar Chavez Ave., but a store that stands out to many people of the community is Blakk Braine, located on Cesar Chavez and Mathews Street. Known for its rock t-shirts, jewelry, body piercings, and most of all for their specialty tattoos, this small tattoo

parlor began as a dream of its owners. Coming across the money and being able to invest in a shop where he could do what he loves seemed like a dream to Luis, but now his business is a well known store in our community. Blakk Braine gives this community something different and out of the ordinary to be proud of. The youth use this store as a way to find accessories to fit their styles and personalities. Blakk Braine is located on a main street where a strip of stores runs for blocks. Schools,



restaurants, and party halls surround Blakk Braine, so any passerby is welcome to step into the store and check it out. BB, as it is known by some, has many customers from the surrounding schools and neighborhood, so as word of mouth gets around more people begin to discover what it has to offer. Both Luis and Giovanni tattoo the customers. Whether they desire a simple star or a complicated portrait, rest assured that Luis and Giovanni will get the job done. Tattooing is the backbone of the business, keeping the store running day in and day out.



Al and Bea's

The mom and pop restaurant located on First and St. Louis, Al & Bea's, is distinguished as one of the most recognized restaurants owned by a family in Boyle Heights. The current owner of the business didn't start this business. In fact, his grandfather bought the property in 1966 and came up with the idea of starting a restaurant. One of their obstacles to success time and time again has been street repairs. This has caused them parking issues, which makes them

lose customers, but their food's delicious taste has helped them overcome those parking problems, which have not stopped the customers from buying. Their food attracts people from all over and keeps them coming back. Many even come from downtown to enjoy a great meal, bringing along their friends and families to share the gift of this restaurant. Al and Bea's are best known for their combo burrito, which is made of beef, rice and beans, onion, and hot sauce, if preferred. Their business is so successful because they consistently use fresh food, every day. Satisfying their customers, who are usually neighbors, is very significant to them.

Don Manuel I and II

A very well known raspado place is Raspados Don Manuel I and II. Don Manuel I and II are two branches of the same mom and pop store, two blocks apart. One is located on Fourth Street and Mott and the other further down the street, on Fourth Street and Evergreen. Raspados Don Manuel is known for their delicious raspados, which are slushy type snow cones, and diablitos, which are spicy flavored raspados with chopped

Mom & Pop Stores

fruit. This business started by selling these products from a cart, walking down the streets of Boyle Heights. They sold so well that the business continued to grow as they built a supportive clientele. After eight years, their dreams came true with the opening of the first Don Manuel. The business did not face any grand obstacles, except on opening day. There were hardly any sales at the beginning and this instilled fear in the owners, but business soon picked up. One of the most significant reasons for this mom and pop store's consistent success is our community's teens, children and parents who live and go to school at close range to its location across the street from Roosevelt High School and Evergreen Park. There is no competition when it comes to their products. They are simply the best at what they do.



Boa

On Cesar Chavez and right in the center of Soto and Breed, stands Boa, the popular and successful clothing store. Started only about five years ago, the store opened after the owners finally collected enough money to make their dreams come true. Boa attracts customers from all over the community because of its fashionable clothing, great and

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convenient prices, and its welcoming customer service. The always helpful employees are ready to lend a hand when you are in need. Being located on Cesar Chavez can both benefit and be detrimental to this store. The many customers keep their business going, but there is a great deal of competition from the many other nearby clothing shops. Boa remains confident that its quality clothing will outshine the other stores, which they clearly do. Women are their best customers, although they have recently added men's clothing to their store. They are known for their up-to-date fashionable clothes for women.

ABC Gifts

This gift shop, located on Cesar Chavez and Soto Street, has been around for about twenty years. The owners started off with a simple idea of gift selling and over the years their business became popular in Boyle Heights. Some people even know it as “The Hello Kitty Store” because of the surplus selection of Hello Kitty products, yet their merchandise does not limit itself to just that. Their products range from school supplies to teddy bears, and when school is about to start you can even find the store flooded with Jan Sport backpacks that sell outrageously quick! Loyal customers keep their business going, especially adults who bring their children. This bright little store cannot be overlooked on your way down Cesar Chavez. It attracts everyone and once you step inside you feel welcomed and at home. Their biggest obstacle is that there are many other gift shops located on Cesar Chavez, yet this small gift shop is undoubtedly the best.

The successful mom and pop stores in Boyle Heights are not limited to the ones mentioned in this chapter. There are endless clothing stores, restaurants, shoe stores, and other locally owned shops in this community. These businesses succeed here because of our community's strong culture and spirit. We support one another by purchasing and living off these stores. We respect the owners for their success and they respect us for our business. Boyle Heights' splendid array of mom and pop stores makes this community successful and, above all, instills pride in all of us.

STREET VENDORS

WHETHER WE WANT TO BUY SOME FOOD, clothes, or other necessities, we find street vendors on the streets of Boyle Heights.

Ordinary residents wake up early in the morning and begin to set up their products on the main streets, to attract numerous consumers. Early in the morning while adults go to work, and kids go to school, we stop every now and then to buy some delicious tamales, champurrado, rice puddings, and orange juice. The list of food sold by the street vendors varies. We can buy hot dogs, corn on a cob, fruit, tacos, quesadillas, churros, chips, soda, and raspados among other goods.

Late at night, we see more taco stands and loncheras being set up. After dark, the streets of Boyle Heights are alive. We form long lines, waiting to get a tasty meal.

Besides selling food, street vendors also sell clothes, jewelry and other small accessories. In the winter we buy gloves, scarves, and beanies. In the summer we buy sunglasses and simple jewelry that shine with the sun.

Rain or shine, the street vendors of Boyle Heights commit to their job. Compared to other shops and stores, street vendors' prices benefit the residents. Also, the experience we gain from buying off of the street vendors becomes personal. We make conversation with them and make a close



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connection, depending on how often we buy from them.

Dora Regalado makes a living selling socks and clothes. She has been selling these products for over twenty years and says that she will continue to do so until she can get a better job. Dora only makes about \$60 a day. As we walk further down the block we are lured by the smell of hotdogs and bacon. Amado is a street vendor who sells hot dogs and drinks. He has been working on the streets for nine years now. Amado makes about \$60 a day selling his goods. Right next to him

is Cuauhtémoc Rivera, keeping Amado company while they both work. Cuauhtémoc is a jewelry and accessory maker. He became enthralled with the Aztec culture and has embraced it. He works every day and makes about \$30 a day. On Saturdays he has the most clientele; he is able to make around \$200 on a good day.

When talking to these vendors we find similarities in their backgrounds and their lives. The majority of these vendors are undocumented people. They work not only because they like to interact with people, but because of necessity. Money is scarce in our community and we depend on



Street Vendors

our street vendors as much as they depend on us. These people depend on their sales to manage payments and their families. They are ordinary people trying to make a living. As a community we have embraced them because they are hard working citizens and friends who we will continue to support.



JOBS

WHETHER ONE WORKS IN AN INDOOR OFFICE or out on the streets, having a job in Boyle Heights is one of the most important things on everyone's mind on a daily basis. Whether one does something they love, or works to simply put food on the table and feed their children, or to buy necessities and keep a roof overhead, a job is the main source of income for families throughout Boyle Heights. People are willing to work by any means necessary. Some work shifts from early morning to night, others have overnight jobs, and some take on two shifts every day. Often, there aren't enough jobs for people *in* Boyle heights, so the residents here travel elsewhere as part of their everyday routine.



The most common jobs are construction workers, which are often located outside this area, retail, street selling, factory work, or working at one's own businesses, such as making clothing and blankets or selling food. The majority of workers wake up at five in the morning to catch two buses in order to arrive at their work destinations on time. Some people work in Vernon, Downtown Los Angeles, and on Whittier Boulevard.

Other jobs that Boyle Heights residents have include working at fast food restaurants, such as McDonald's, Jack in the Box, and King Taco. People also tend to work in the

Jobs

shops located on Cesar Chavez and at the liquor stores found on almost every corner.

Some people have their own businesses, including corn vendors (eloteros), raspado vendors, tamale vendors, tow truck owners, and flower shop and beauty salon owners.

People in other communities don't have businesses such as ours. That is one reason why we are such a very loveable and unique community. Our community is fortunate to have street vendors, because not everybody has this. Whether selling hot or cold food, the vendors are always struggling to make money. We, the buyers, find them irresistible, and cannot live without them. Every morning and evening we hear them honk their little horns continuously. By honking, they



are letting us know that they are near and that their merchandise is up for sale. The street vendors carry their merchandise in cars or in little market carts.

There are also other types of jobs available in our beautiful community of Boyle Heights. Garcia's Towing is one of the most popular tow truck services in Boyle Heights. Mr. Garcia currently lives in Boyle Heights and is thrilled to be surrounded by the Hispanic culture and murals. He is thankful for having his own business, and adores his people. Mr. Garcia exclaims that he likes to help out people by picking up their cars and taking them back to their homes, safe and sound. He earns less than he thought he would when he started, due to taxes and the need to continually change the oil and parts of his tow trucks.

Those who own their own businesses give up much of their earnings to taxes and to the necessary expenses of running their enterprises. However, most business owners accept these costs, as long as they still earn enough money to support their families and

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themselves.

Even for those who have a job, life is not always that easy. Many residents do not have “documents” giving them legal residency, and this causes it to require much more effort to find work. When they do find one, they get paid “under the table,” which means



in cash. No checks are distributed, and neither signatures nor the government is involved. With this kind of payment, often workers receive less than the standard minimum wage of \$8.00 per hour. Due to their inability to get a standard job, they are compelled to accept lower standards and cooperate with the boss. Not everyone receives benefits and insurance one expects with a job.

There are many different organizations and people in Boyle Heights that specialize in assisting others in finding a job. Homeboy Industries, for instance, is an organization run by Father Greg Boyle, which works with local businesses. These businesses agree to hire ex-felons, and give them another chance at redemption. They also hire at-risk teens to prevent them from ruining their lives. Homeboy Industries offers hope for the future by providing its clients with free services and programs such as case management, education, job training, mental health counseling, pre-release/transitional counseling and tattoo removal. Homeboy Industries is a small business that helps individuals learn how to build a resume and gain work experience.

In addition to this, places such as the Dodger Stadium have huge job fairs, where many go who are urgently seeking a job. There are also job fairs especially for youth. L.A Youth has job fairs where young people ages 18-24 look for a job, and receive certificates for completing mock job interviews, basic math tests, and customer service workshops.

Jobs

Here in Boyle Heights, we are dedicated to maintaining cultural traditions. Often families hand down businesses such as mom and pop stores and street vendor businesses (“eloteros”, raspados, and ice cream trucks) to the next generation. Not



only businesses are handed down; so are family traditions. One common and culturally popular job is being a member of a mariachi band or music group. Families start their own groups and perform at all types of venues. Most of the time, we don't refer to being a mariachi as a job. It is a passion, something we love and enjoy doing.

However, our community isn't only about street vendors and business owners. We also have careers. Many of our parents are immigrants and as their children, we are motivated to be educated and go on to college. Many of our second generations have become successful as teachers, nurses, and police officers. Some have gone back to our home high school (Theodore Roosevelt High School) to teach their friends' children and motivate them to look for more in their lives.

The jobs in our community have been around for years and generations. Many of our people have struggled to earn a living but, thanks to them, our children are getting a good education and aspire to go on to college. Likewise, Homeboy Industries and Dodger Stadium have also been here to help our community find jobs and get a second chance at life. Boyle Heights is our home, we live to love it, and work to live here.

OUR HOPES & DREAMS

Yoana Acevedo: *I hope one day Boyle Heights is going to be better place to live. Peace and love in Boyle Heights.*

Jennifer Aguilar: *“It’s my life, and it’s now or never, I’m not going to live forever, so I just want to live while I’m alive” – Jon Bon Jovi*

Oswaldo Aguilar: *I hope the best for Boyle Heights and have pride for who we are.*

Alejandra Aguirre: *My dream is to become a social worker to ensure the safety of kids in Boyle Heights. I want to give back to my community by doing something effective and promoting higher education.*

Octavio Aguilera: *I hope for all of us to learn as much as we can. What counts is not the number of hours you put in, but how much you put in the hours.*

Hugo Alquicira: *I want people to follow their dreams and not other people’s dreams.*

Terry Andrade: *My hopes and dreams are to make a positive difference for the environment.*

Erik Arellano: *My dream is to become a Hollywood film director and to be successful in life.*

Salvador Arellano: *Don’t stop what you started, finish it off... If you read in between the lines, you’ll be successful.*

Angel Barrera: *My hope is that whatever is meant to be, will find its way back.*

Mario Bloomfield: *I hope to one day be someone and have my name stand out. I hope to be happy and successful.*

Andrea Carrillo: *My hopes and dreams are to become an LAPD Officer and contribute to my community to make it a better place for future generations.*

Jennifer Cerceda: *Prove to those who don’t believe that anything can happen if you*

Our Hopes & Dreams

believe.

Beba Cortez: *My family, my friends, my home, my community, my pride, my Boyle Heights, Class of 2010.*

Luigi Cortez: *Think before your actions, because your actions will make you think.*

Michelle Dena: *Wanting is power.*

Karina Diaz: *My hope is to be successful. I wish that my uncle Juan will attend my graduation.*

Christian Dillarza: *To be a better father.*

Wendy Duran: *You can accomplish and reach your dreams if you devote yourself.*

Francisco Esquivel: *Find yourself and you'll find a meaning to life.*

Lilliana Ezparsa: *My hopes and dreams for the future are to succeed in life and be happy. We only live once so we have to enjoy life no matter what happens.*

Carlos A. Flores: *I hope to be different and make a difference in life rather than be an imitation of another.*

Leonela Flores: *I wish the best for our community and the best for my peers at Roosevelt High School. The only dream I have for the rest of my life is to live, laugh, and love peacefully.*

Maria Flores: *My dreams are to be a tattoo artist and an art teacher. I want peace in our community.*

Michelle Flores: *I dream of graduating from college and ultimately coming back to Boyle Heights to improve my community.*

Angelica Franco: *Look forward to the future, not the past, because the future holds the secrets to your life.*

Jennifer Funes: *I hope to one day become a nurse and help my community.*

Estefania Garcia: *What I want to achieve in the future is to have my dream career and have a good job, so I could help my parents like they helped me make my dreams come true.*

Isabel Gil: *I dream to travel around the world.*

Brian Gomez: *When we keep our eyes on the vision it is easy to steer in that direction.*

Alfredo Gonzalez: *Congratulations on your many achievements. Have a good one.*

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Christian Gonzalez: *My dream is to become a firefighter who is successful in life.*

Fabian Gonzalez: *I hope to someday make life easier for others.*

Melissa Gonzalez: *I hope to graduate from UCLA and pursue my dream of becoming a nurse. I want to live in a small house with a huge yard, and I want to have four children.*

Rosa Gonzalez: *I dream to become a successful woman in life who makes a difference.*

Zaira Gonzalez: *To keep tradition in Boyle Heights and make it better.*

Jose Gonzalez-Hernandez: *I hope to be a professional mechanic who owns my own shop.*

Liliana Guerrero: *I hope to be able to stay in Berkeley for the next 4 or 5 years. I hope to never STOP dreaming.*

Emily Guevara: *My hopes and dreams for the future are for everyone to be treated equally.*

Alberto Gutierrez: *My dream is to become an NBA player.*

Manuel Guzman: *My dream is to become a cop and do good things for other people out there on the streets.*

Jenny A. Hernandez: *Dream, but not only dream, make those dreams become your goals in life, and always keep dreaming.*

Jessica Hernandez: *I wish to be a neurosurgeon who will come back to East Los Angeles and volunteer.*

Ruben Hernandez: *“Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that can no longer fly”. –Lanston Hughes*

Judy Huato: *I hope to come back to my community and be a role model for future generations. My dream is to become a nurse and make a difference.*

Michelle Juarez: *Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one’s definition of your life. Define yourself.*

Sandra Limas: *My dream is to follow my heart down to my goal.*

William Linares: *Change your ways of thinking, and you’ll change your way of living.*

Kimberly Llamas: *My dream is to prove to others that I can be successful in life and become an independent person.*

Jose C. Lopez: *Past is what you need to forget and future is what you need to think to succeed. I see my future, do you?*

Our Hopes & Dreams

Jose J. Lopez: *We cannot be sure of having something to live for unless we are willing to die for it.*

Kevin Lopez: *I hope to become an author, writing romance and horror stories and I also plan to write screenplays to encourage people to make a movie. My dream is to graduate from college and support my family.*

Cristobal Lozano: *Our greatest glory is not in falling, but in getting up every time we do. Our greatest ability is that we can choose.*

Elizabeth Machorro: *Sometimes you have to quit following your heart and stop living in a dream. Follow your mind and do what's right.*

Mayra Madrigal: *I hope to become a better person and to become a bartender.*

Angelica Maldonado: *I hope the best of luck for class of 2010 Design Team 1.*

Miguel Manzano: *My hopes and dreams are to succeed in life and help the people who struggle because everyone needs an extra help.*

Saul Manzo: *"Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life."- Proverbs 4:23*

Miriam Mares: *My dream is to become a better person out of myself.*

Christopher Martinez: *My hopes are to graduate from high school and attend college. My dream is to be an engineer and change the world every year by making cool buildings.*

Georgina Martinez: *I hope that one day my voice will be heard, I dream that my actions will make an impact on the lives of others.*

Roberto Martinez: *I hope that this world could be a better world. I believe one day people can stop fighting each other and in this way the world could be better with peace and love.*

Emily Medina: *My dream is to be a very successful person in life.*

Marlyene Mejia: *My dream is to marry a good man and have a happy family.*

Mitzy Mendoza: *I wish the best of luck to class of 2010.*

Eliseo Morales: *My hopes and dreams are for East LA to become a better city and well known. Also, I want us not to be judged for the color of our skin, everyone has to be treated equally.*

Gladys Morales: *I hope to become involved in law in order to promote social justice*

In Our Global Village: Boyle Heights

through education. Giving back to my community is my priority to ensure that everyone's rights are protected.

Ramon Morales: *To protect the city, I hope to become a police officer. I dream of making my parents proud.*

Beatris Navarro: *Love who you are, love where you're from, because that is your foundation.*

Heydee Navarro: *I hope to become someone important in the future and I plan "to live life as it comes".*

Jessica Nevarez: *"I still find each day too short for all the thoughts I want to think, all the walks I want to take, all the books I want to read, and all the friends I want to see"-John Burroughs. I hope for my future to be worth living and value my time on earth.*

Marissa Orozco: *I wish I could see my dad again and graduate from college.*

Anabel Monique Ortega: *I hope to one day become an astronaut and discover something worthwhile.*

Caritina Ortega: *My hope is for the community and everything to get better. My dream is to one day be able to make a difference.*

Maria Palafox: *My dream is to go to college and be a successful person in life.*

Sofia Paredes: *I want to become a police officer, and become the best of the best.*

Andrea Perez: *I hope to grow up as a person and become a better human.*

Armando Perez: *My dream is to make it big in my life.*

Pedro Perez: *I hope to further my life by having a successful career.*

Gilbert Perez-Aguilar: *I dream of creating art, waking up, and working for the Discovery Channel.*

Daisy Pineda: *I wish to come back and help out the teens that feel they can't overcome their obstacles.*

Maria Elena Polanco: *To be an educational advocate in the future and protect the rights of minorities.*

Vanessa Polanco: *I want to earn my bachelor's degree in business management. I plan to run my family business.*

Our Hopes & Dreams

Jesus Quevedo: *I hope to have the best things in life.*

Kimberly Ramirez: *I hope to be someone better in life. My dream is to become a police officer and to improve my basketball skills.*

Stephanie Ramirez: *I hope to become a successful person who lives a simple life.*

Sandra Rangel: *I hope to be an obstetrician and to come back to my community to help. I would love to volunteer at local hospitals and schools.*

Javier Rodriguez: *My dream is to make Boyle Heights a better place and improve my life.*

Jessica Rodriguez: *You can't face the world if you're not being you. My hope is we all find ourselves.*

Michael Rodriguez: *I hope to be successful in life and to be happy. My dream is to live a fulfilling life.*

Camilo Rojas: *My dream is to one day get into medical school and become a surgeon. I hope to live in peace and harmony and always be healthy.*

Christian Romero: *I hope to graduate high school. I dream for the world to live in peace and have equal rights.*

Alan Rosas: *I don't hope or dream. I see the day "Carpe Diem."*

Ismael Salazar: *I hope that one day segregation between social classes and race will disappear and we can all live in harmony.*

Elia Sanchez: *Hopes and dreams can be accomplished by living life with a strong, bold smile.*

Jessie Sanchez: *My hopes and dreams are for me and my community to succeed.*

Julio Segura: *I wish to graduate from high school, go to college, and have a job.*

Jose Simental: *Through effort, determination, and never giving up one can accomplish all.*

Alejandro Solis: *My dream is to graduate from college and have a career that allows me to come back and serve my community.*

Linda Solis: *My dreams are to be a culinary arts professional and a physical therapist.*

Edgar Soto: *Is there anything worse than blindness? Oh, yes! A person with sight and no vision but, I have a vision.*

Raul Iran Tirado: *My hopes and dreams are to travel the world and discover new places,*

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and succeed in life.

Elizabeth Torres: *I want to be an architect because it's something I like and because I want to make a big profit out of it so that I may go to law school and protect women's rights.*

Natalie Torres: *I hope to be successful in life. My dream is to major in sociology and obtain a masters degree. I hope by achieving these goals I will have made my mom proud.*

Jose Uribe: *My dream is to attend UCLA and major in pre-med.*

Ana Vela: *My hopes and dreams are to be healthy and make my dreams come true. I want to travel the world and be with my family the rest of my life.*

Virginia Villalobos: *I want to do a lot in my life but my dream is to have a career in medicine and make the world a better place for the next generation.*

Ruby Villarruel: *When you feel like giving up, remember why you held on so long in the first place.*

CREDITS



*Front row: Caritina Ortega, Francisco Esquivel, William Linares, Jessie Sanchez
Middle row: Ismael Salazar, Michelle Dena, Ruby Villarruel, Luigi Cortez, Mitzy Mendoza, Alfred Gonzales, Yanet Cortez, Gerardo Sanchez
Back row: Elia Sanchez, Daisy Pineda, Jenny Hernandez, Angelica Franco, Angelica Maldonado, Beatriz Navarro*

*Front row: Sofia Paredes, Rosa Gonzalez, Camilo Rojas, Alejandra Aguirre, Maria Polanco, Anabel Ortega, Zaira Garcia
Middle row: Karina Diaz, Sandra Rangel, Elizabeth Torres, Judy Huato, Stephanie Ramirez, Gladys Morales, Georgina Martinez, Andrea Carrillo
Back row: Jessica Hernandez, Gilbert Perez-Aguilar, Fabian Gonzalez, Michael Rodriguez, Alejandro Solis, Gerardo Flores*



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*Front row: Leonela Flores, Ana Vela, Emily Guevara, Lilly Esparza, Andrea Carrillo, Christian Romero
Back row: Raul Tirado, Oswaldo Aguilar, Miguel Manzano, Eliseo Morales, Alan Rosas, Christopher Martinez, Carlos Flores*

*Front row: Kimberly Lamas, Natalie Torres, Ramon Morales, Christian Gonzalez
Middle row: Pedro Perez, Vanessa Polanco, Kimberly Ramirez
Last row: Javier Rodriguez, Jesus Quevedo, Jennifer Funes, Mario Bloomfield, Mayra Madrigal*



*Front row: Jose Gonzalez, Emily Medina, Isabel Gil, Maria Flores, Linda Solis, Jose Uribe
Middle row: Cristobal Lozano, Terry Andrade, Virginia Villalobos, Jose Lopez
Back row: Miriam Marez, Javier Sanchez, Hugo Alquicira, Maria Palafox, Julio Segura*



Credits



Front row: Jose Lopez, Angel Barrera, Brian Gomez, Jessica Marie Nevarez, Salvador Arellano, Christian Dillarza

Back row: Kevin Lopez, Ruben Hernandez, Christian Michelle Juarez, Jessica Rodriguez-Cerezo, Jennifer Cerceda, Elizabeth Machorro, Jennifer Aguilar, Yoana Acevedo, Roberto Martinez, Saul Manzo, Edgar Soto

Front row: Carlos Gonzalez, Marissa Orozco, Marlyne Mejia

Back row: Manuel Guzman, Alberto Gutierrez, Justin Castillo, Sandra Limas-Valdez, Estefania Garcia-Rivera



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This book is part of In Our Global Village (IOGV), a global service learning program, an invitation for student participation in a collaborative exchange of local stories to a worldwide community. Initiated in response to In Our Village, a book written by students of Awet Secondary School in Kambi ya Simba, Tanzania, IOGV was founded as a partnership between Cathryn Berger Kaye, CBK Associates, and Barbara Cervone, What Kids Can Do.

For more information, to join the In Our Global Village process, and to see books written by students in countries all over the world, please visit www.inourvillage.org. Click on the In Our Global Village Project link.

We also invite you to learn more about each of our partners:

CBK Associates at www.abcdbooks.org

What Kids Can Do at www.whatkidscando.org

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