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## **Tech-Savvy Bonita Unified Students Connect with Elders Through Silver Surfers Tech Club**

**SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE** – San Dimas High School senior Emily Moore was on a cross-country trip, driving through Utah with her grandmother, when suddenly the music stopped. The pair’s meticulously curated playlist mysteriously disappeared into a data cloud, starting a conversation between the two about the hit-and-miss nature of modern technology, and how most senior citizens are at a loss to understand it.

The conversation had an immediate impact. After returning home, Moore began laying the groundwork for a student community service club that would connect with local senior citizens and try to resolve their tech issues. With the assistance of several of her classmates, Moore created the Silver Surfers Tech Club, which debuted during the 2023-24 school year.

The Silver Surfers Tech Club serves a dual purpose for Moore, who established the service club as her Girl Scout Gold Award project. Silver Surfers has also been recognized by the La Verne/San Dimas Educational Foundation, which presented Moore with its Act of Kindness Award last April.

“This is a growing issue for senior citizens, who have trouble navigating the technology and also become frustrated at the poor quality of customer service provided by big tech and phone providers,” Moore said. “With the Silver Surfers we hope to bridge that technology gap and make elderly users feel like they are in control of their devices. It also helps connect young and old for a common purpose.”

The Silver Surfers Tech Club picked up where they left off last school year when they set up shop at the San Dimas Senior Center on the final Friday in August, where several San Dimas High students sat chatting with a group of seniors, answering questions, and conducting short tutorials about a variety of tech issues and hardware, including smart phones, laptops, email, photos, security, and social media.

Silver Surfers bring a wealth of expertise to their presentations and one-on-one support, and include specialists who can provide solutions and clarifications for even the least tech-savvy client. Clients are asked to complete surveys to gauge how effective the assistance was, and to see what type of tech support will be needed in the future.

“It really is service with a smile,” Moore said.

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Moore's grandmother, Kris Mendolia, has served as her Girl Scout troop leader since she joined in kindergarten. Mendolia attends all Silver Surfers meetings to offer her support and see first-hand the difference Moore's Gold Award project has made in the lives of local community members.

"Emily was quite inspired by our road trip and was determined to do this project because of the positive impact it could make," Mendolia said. "I'm so proud of her. With seniors, some of us know tech, but there is no one to teach us. This is what makes Silver Surfers such a special group."

Moore is no stranger to community service. As San Dimas High's Key Club president, Moore organizes fundraisers and works with local service organizations like the Glendora Kiwanianes, assisting with events such as Designer Bag Bingo and a sock drive to support the nonprofit Shoes That Fit.

Moore is also a member of Link Crew, which helps incoming freshmen transition from middle to high school, and is an academic leader at San Dimas High, taking several Advanced Placement courses, as well as taking a dual enrollment English course at Mt. SAC. She plans to attend a four-year university and pursue a degree in engineering, with a focus on aerospace and mechanical engineering, and a goal of working on projects related to engine dynamics and sustainable energy.

"By providing this much needed service to our senior community, Emily Moore and the Silver Surfers Tech Club are establishing connections and bonds that can transform lives, as they work to narrow the technology gap," San Dimas High Principal Omar Mayen said. "Emily is a true Saint, a campus leader and an inspiration for those who wish to give back to their community."

Silver Surfers tech help is available for all senior citizens between 4:30 and 6 p.m. at the San Dimas Senior Center, located at 201 E. Bonita Ave., San Dimas. Sessions are scheduled for Sept. 27, Oct. 25, Nov. 22, and Dec. 20.

### PHOTOS:

**BUSD\_SILVERSURFERS1:** San Dimas High School senior Emily Moore and her grandmother, Kris Mendolia, attend a Silver Surfers Tech Club meeting at the San Dimas Senior Center in August.

**BUSD\_SILVERSURFERS2:** San Dimas High School's Silver Surfers Tech Club, which meets at the San Dimas Senior Center on the last Friday of each month, is a service organization with a goal of bridging the technology gap and allowing elderly users to gain control of their devices.

**BUSD\_SILVERSURFERS3:** San Dimas High School's Silver Surfers Tech Club helps senior citizens better understand modern technology by answering questions and conducting short tutorials on a variety of tech issues and hardware, including smart phones, laptops, email, photos, security, and social media.

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