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San Clemente communities win \$30,000 grant

By Brittany Levine

Two San Clemente communities won a \$30,000 grant to increase intergenerational programming. San Clemente is the first California city to win the money, which is provided by the Community For All Ages program based at [Temple University](#).

Orange County Human Relations, a nonprofit focused on conflict resolutions, will handle distribution of the money and match the funds with another \$30,000. The group soon will begin meeting with community members in Los Mares and Central San Clemente to decide how to use the grant.

One possibility may be a community garden. Others could be increasing homework clubs and senior-care volunteering opportunities in affordable-housing areas.

"The good thing is that San Clemente has a lot of support. City officials all want to improve the area," said Edgar Medina, Orange County Human Relations supervisor of San Clemente projects. "They are ready to support people in the community; they're just waiting for residents to feel included."

Community For All Ages has handed out money to groups in New Jersey, Mississippi and other states but chose to award the grant to San Clemente this year to expand its work on the West Coast. Other communities have used the money to turn an abandoned elementary school into a community center and to offer leadership classes.

Medina said he hopes to keep the projects going beyond the grant's two-year life span.

"It takes three to five years to start seeing changes in a community, for people to really feel empowered," he said. The point is to encourage residents of all ages to become community leaders, he added.