



CDD

A Movie Premiere

CDD's youth program in the Valley creates, premieres a movie.

Story by Nick Bocanegra, CDD; Photos by Melanie William, CDD

CDD's Youth Opportunity Movement-Valley (LAYOM) premiered *CAN* at the Landmark Theatre in Westwood June 26. The Youth Opportunity Movement primarily works with out-of-school youths, helping them to get back into school and work toward their high school diploma or GED. The program also assists youths ages 14 to 21 find full-time and part-time employment.

Its Arts and Media project is just one of the many other program activities offered at the center. The program provides an avenue for youths to express themselves artistically, open doors of opportunities to further develop their skills and create a platform for them to showcase their talents.

Youth and Arts

LAYOM Valley has been serving predominantly the northeast San Fernando Valley since 2003. One of the center's emerging departments is its arts and media program, which started back in 2005. After the center had obtained cameras and computers to do video projects, somebody broke in and stole everything. The kids went into rebuilding mode and started all over again. LAYOM Valley's arts and media had a story based on their life experiences, and their goal was to get it on the big screen.

CAN, a fictional narrative, centers around a 12-year-old boy named Diego, raised by a single parent, his alcoholic father. Diego innocently finds himself involved in the dangerous world of the local drug dealers.

On June 26, 276 people attended the screening. For the youths, lessons learned were perseverance and a belief in themselves.

Said David, a producer/editor on the film: "Working on this project was simply an awesome experience. I knew it would be difficult, but the deeper I got into the project the more demanding it became of me. This project really gave me the confidence to challenge myself and attempt things many would shy away from, and now I apply the same approach to almost everything I do."

Said Steve, a production assistant: "Being on set really opened my eyes to the reality of the industry, to the work that is required, to the dedication and passion you need to really succeed in this field. I thank the Arts & Media program. They have been prepping me for this. [This project] really let me know that this is something that I want to do. This is my passion."

Congratulations to all the youths and leaders at CDD's Youth Opportunity Movement-Valley for a job well done!



At the premiere of *CAN*, produced by CDD's Youth Opportunity Movement-Valley program.

ZOO

Meet the Beetles... And a Hippo

Zoo introduces new diving beetles and a hippo.



A diving beetle at the Zoo.



Meet Adhama, the Zoo's new hippo.

Story courtesy Zoo; Photos by Ian Recchio and Tad Motoyama, Zoo

The Zoo is pleased to announce the arrival of two aquatic species – a hippopotamus and more than 40 diving beetles.

The hippo, a young male named Adhama, arrived at the Zoo in mid-June. Adhama was born Jan. 26, 2011 at the San Diego Zoo. His father, Otis, is on loan to the San Diego Zoo from the Los Angeles Zoo. Otis was a resident of the L.A. Zoo for more than 30 years before he moved to San Diego Zoo in early 2009 to breed with their female, Funami. Zoo visitors can view Adhama daily in his habitat adjacent to the Indian rhino and Sumatran tigers.

The word "hippo" is derived from the ancient Greek word meaning river horse. Hippos are native to the waterways of east, central and southern Africa. They tend to spend most of the day in water and then come out on land at night to feed. Despite their rotund appearance, hippos are quite dangerous and are responsible for more human fatalities each year in Africa than any other animal. They are herbivores but

are very territorial and can easily outpace a human on land. They naturally secrete a red substance on their bodies that looks like blood, but it actually protects their skin from sunburn.

Also, a new habitat has been added to the LAIR (Living Amphibians, Invertebrates and Reptiles) for sunburst diving beetles. The sunburst diving beetles are native to Arizona, New Mexico and the Sonoran regions of Mexico. They can fly, crawl or live in water. These colorful beetles have a black carapace with bright yellow or golden spots. They are always found near or in water, where they feed on mosquito larvae. At the L.A. Zoo, visitors can see them up close diving in their aquarium inside the LAIR.

The Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens is in Griffith Park at the junction of the Ventura (134) and Golden State (5) freeways. Admission is \$17 for adults and \$12 for children ages 2 to 12. The Zoo is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. For information, call (323) 644-4200 or visit the L.A. Zoo Website at www.lazoo.org.

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