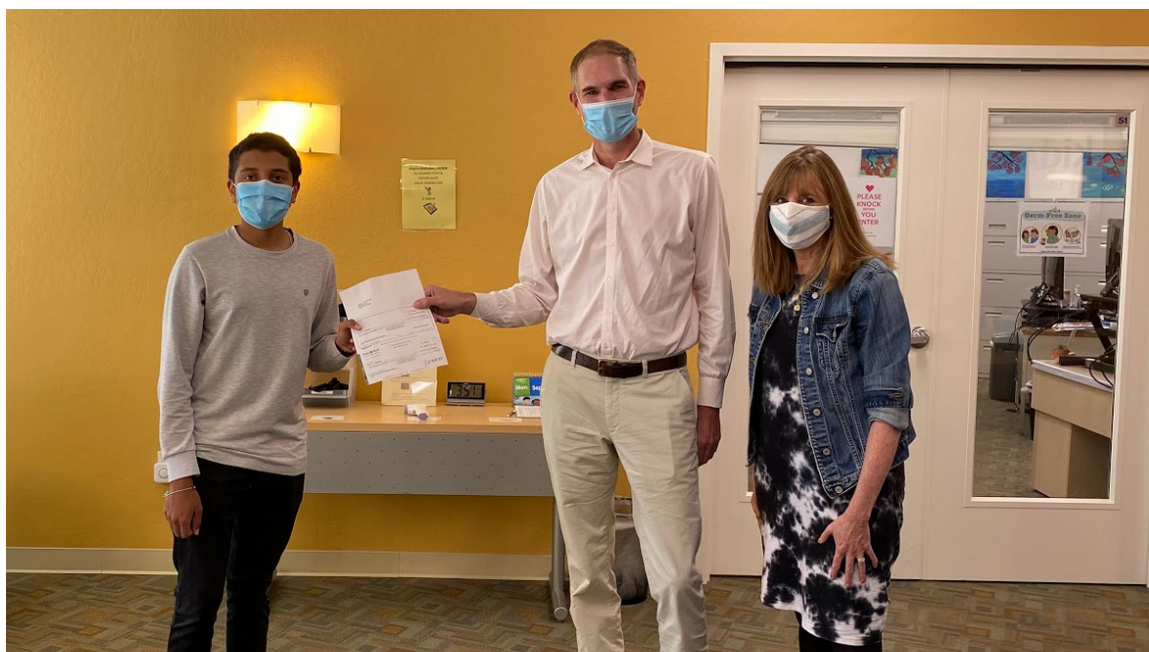


Fremont High School Student Changing Lives Through Chess

11th Grader raises \$4,000 to help his immediate community



Rithwik Narendra with Kidango CEO, Scott Moore and Director of Early Intervention Services, Jennifer Boyden

FREMONT, Calif. (Dec. 7, 2021) – One teen's dedication to community and mastery of his passion has transformed the lives of Bay Area babies and young children facing developmental delays. When the pandemic struck, Rithwik Narendra, a senior at Irvington High School in Fremont, came up with an innovative way to volunteer and give back. As one of the top 100 U.S. chess players in his age category, Rithwik used his passion for chess to support the next generation of learners.

As an 11th grader, Rithwik was in the midst of his SATs, ACTs, and AP exams. Despite these pressures, Rithwik started building a successful online chess classroom by creating lesson plans and customizing software to teach his favorite game to children and seniors. He charged a nominal fee of \$8/session to those who could pay and offered free classes to others so all could participate. He decided to donate his earnings to a worthy program benefiting children.

Over the next 6-8 months, Rithwik spent about 325 to 350 hours preparing his software, creating lesson plans, and conducting sessions. Rithwik's classes spread and soon he had students spanning the country and the globe, including Texas and India! Juggling sessions, time zones, and his studies was not easy, but Rithwik was

able to manage them all through planning and organization. Motivated by his commitment, Rithwik's family and friends matched his earnings and he raised \$4,000 to benefit the young children with special needs receiving Kidango's early intervention and inclusion services!

Rithwik chose to donate to Kidango after learning that the agency served children in his local community through a variety of programs and services. Kidango, who's mental health services were [recently highlighted by the New York Times](#), has set a goal of raising \$65,000 this holiday season to purchase 500 play therapy kits for children affected by trauma. The kits provide young children in need of extra love and support, with the resources they need to develop healthy coping skills and relationships.

As the pandemic continues to impact communities across the Bay Area, Rithwik shows that even when social distancing norms put a damper on volunteering, motivated individuals can still make a big impact in the community in unique and innovative ways. Whether through a passion for chess, or through monetary donations, everyone can take part in helping someone in need.

To learn more about how you can support Kidango's Play Therapy Kits holiday fundraiser and how Kidango is supporting our families during this challenging time, please visit kidango.org/heartfelt.

About Kidango

Kidango is an early learning nonprofit committed to setting every child on a path to thrive in kindergarten and in life. We believe that every child has unlimited potential if we support our children, families, and communities with the right opportunities and resources. As the largest child care provider in the San Francisco Bay Area, we provide 4,000 children with safe, healthy, nurturing environments and relationships, so that every child has the social, emotional, and academic skills they need to learn, grow and realize their potential. For more information, visit www.kidango.org.

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