

FRIENDS IN DEED *



Dear Friend,

Without skipping a beat, we're already through the first month of 2021! We have been busy behind the scenes as well as out in the community with all of our programs and services, but also with Board Leadership transitions and expanding our staff to keep up with our growing community. You have already been introduced to and heard from our new Board Chair, Bret Schaefer, and now I'd like to take the opportunity for you to get to know our new Director of Development, Merria Velasco, who is just wrapping up her first official week with Friends in Deed!

Coming to us from more than 5,000 feet up, Merria Velasco (pictured below) was most recently the Associate Director, Annual Giving and Events at the mountaintop campus of Idyllwild Arts. During her four year tenure, she oversaw dozens of live and virtual events hosting thousands of participants, advised the National Honor Society on service projects, and worked as part of a team to raise over ten million dollars to support student artists, scholarships and programs.



Born and raised in the San Fernando Valley, Merria is the youngest of seven kids and attended Catholic schools throughout her

educational journey. She attended Saint Mary's College of California in the East Bay town of Moraga to earn a bachelor's degree in Accounting.

After a brief time in corporate audit for KPMG, Merria found her passion in the nonprofit world: first in schools, then with the arts, and now with Friends in Deed! During her career, she also worked at The Buckley School in Sherman Oaks and St. Genevieve High School in Panorama City, which led her through the worlds of nonprofit finance, development, and even high school admissions before driving a couple hours east to settle in Idyllwild. For several years she immersed herself in small town life, chaired the Idyllwild Community Fund board, volunteered at the local middle school, and even became a Jazzercise instructor.

Merria says this about joining Friends in Deed:

My college had a motto 'Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve' and this ignited a passion for me to always approach life with the mindset of giving back and helping those in need. I can think of no better opportunity to serve others than here at Friends in Deed. The commitment of the leadership, staff, and volunteers is truly admirable, and I can't wait to meet more members of this incredible community. I am excited about moving back to the LA area, and am ready to bring with me loads of energy, a positive attitude, and the will to work as hard for this organization as FID does for its community. I truly look forward to the day where we can gather together and celebrate our resilience through these trying times, along with the amazing work Friends in Deed has accomplished through it all!

Welcome to the Friends in Deed family, Merria!

Blessings, have a safe and lovely weekend,

Rabbi Joshua



We can only operate with your help!

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WEATHER**

Supplies

CLOTHING:

gloves
hats
jackets/sweatshirts
socks
waterproof clothing
shoes

PPE:

masks
hand sanitizer

SUPPLIES:

ponchos
hand & foot warmers
umbrellas
blankets
tarps
backpacks/suitcases



INTERESTED IN DONATING?

Email Lindsey at bws2@friendsindeedpas.org.



A weekly produce shop from Restaurant Depot for our Food Pantry distributions. We'll distribute around 2,000 lbs of fresh fruits and vegetables every week!



Many thanks to Stars for a generous donation of 15,000 disposable facemasks. Such a useful gift!

**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**