

AbilityFirst Announces New Board Chair

Local resident David Saeta has been elected as the new board chair at AbilityFirst, the Pasadena-based non-profit organization has announced.

Saeta, executive vice president with IDS Real Estate Group, takes over the position formerly held by Wendy Lees.

AbilityFirst's new executive committee includes Saeta as chair, Kathryn Sanders Platnick as vice chair, Randy Repp as treasurer, Will Craig as secretary and Willan Johnson as member-at-large. The board's other directors are Steve Brockmeyer, Joseph Brumfield, Mike Dokmanovich, Richard R. Frank, Lauren Hom, John Kelly, Joanne Kim, Anita Lawler, Wendy Lees, Dr. Francisco Navarro, Mary Spellman, Louis Teran, Harlan Thompson and Patricia Vick.

Saeta is a third-generation South Pasadena resident who studied human biology at Stanford University and went on to receive his MBA at UCLA. He is a former South Pasadena mayor, councilmember and planning commissioner, "an avid golfer and is passionate about volleyball," according to an AbilityFirst spokesperson. He began his professional career as a national director for the NCAA Volunteers for Youth program and has spent the last 30 years with IDS Real Estate



David Saeta

Group. "My support for AbilityFirst started when I organized a high school all-star volleyball match that included a public service experience for the athletes. The all-stars conducted a skills clinic for the AbilityFirst participants and it touched my heart to see these two groups working together," Saeta said. "Today I am excited to continue to

support AbilityFirst CEO Lori Gangemi and the entire team, supporting individuals with developmental disabilities."

AbilityFirst provides a variety of programs that help people with disabilities realize their full potential throughout their lives. As the organization celebrates more than 96 years of service, it is focusing its efforts on programs that "are proven to have the greatest impact on a person's success: basic life-skills enhancement through our children's and adult programs; higher education and employment readiness; and independent living and social and recreational programming," a spokesperson said. "AbilityFirst looks beyond disabilities, focuses on the capabilities of each individual and breaks through any preconceived limitations, opening up a world of possibilities."

To learn more, visit abilityfirst.org.

Committee Campaigns for Library Special Tax



Photo courtesy Sally Kilby

A committee to campaign for the renewal of the Library Special Tax has kicked off its efforts by opening an account at Priority One Credit Union in South Pasadena. The tax, which is expected to appear for renewal on the Nov. 8 general election ballot, provides funding for about 20% of the South Pasadena Public Library's budget. Committee members include co-chair Ed Donnelly, Treasurer Margaret Lee and former Mayor Robert Joe, with President/CEO Charles Wiggington Sr. (second, from right) of Priority One Credit Union.

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