



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 18, 2019

Contact:

Phil Pitchford

Public Information Officer

951-826-5975

ppitchford@riversideca.gov

“Our Kids: Narrowing the Opportunity Gap” Free Viewing Wednesday, Thursday

Documentary on efforts to assist youth in Riverside to be shown at Fox Performing Arts Center

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The public is invited to free showings of a public television program that first aired in April highlighting efforts around the U.S. to help young people, including a youth judo program in Riverside that is renowned for its work with low-income and developmentally disabled students.

“Our Kids: Narrowing the Opportunity Gap” is a four-part series that features the Riverside Youth Judo Club, started by Riverside Police Detective Brian Money, as well as Kids In Konflikt, Project Moving Forward, and Come Back Kids.

The free showings at the Fox Performing Arts Center are scheduled for 5-7 p.m. on Wednesday, June 19, and Thursday, June 20. The Fox is located at 3801 Mission Inn Avenue in downtown Riverside.

The showings will be followed by a question and answer session with Dr. Robert Putnam, who has written extensively on the issues facing disadvantaged young people in America, and experts from the programs featured on the show, which previously aired on PBS stations on consecutive Wednesdays, starting April 10.

The showings are part of a two-day Solutions Forum at UC Riverside that focuses on strategies and best practices that are working to narrow the opportunity gap. That forum is scheduled for 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursday, June 20, and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, June 21. Registration is \$75.

The Solutions Forum will include a keynote address by Dr. Putnam and break-out sessions led by the programs featured in the series. Topics will include: national data trends, supportive parenting and health strategies, second chances and on-ramps to student success, and more.

“Our young people in Riverside are very fortunate to have such incredible organizations working on their behalf,” said Mayor Rusty Bailey, who will deliver a welcome address at 5 p.m. Wednesday. “We’ve seen their good works here locally, and now the whole country knows what special work they are doing on behalf of our youth.”

The show explores efforts by government, education, non-profit organizations and others to ensure that all young people have opportunities to succeed in life. It emanates from the work of Dr. Putnam, a Harvard Professor of Public Policy whose book, “Our Kids,” was the basis for the series.

Putnam argues that an opportunity gap among children of disparate backgrounds has widened during the past 40 years. Without changes, Putnam argues, the U.S. is in danger of becoming a nation of “haves” and “have nots.” The series explores ways that communities are trying to reduce such disparities.

“These local programs, including the Judo Club, are a blessing to our young people,” Mayor Pro Tem Mike Soubirous said. “If you haven’t had a chance to see the program that documents their good works, it’s definitely worth seeing.”

Information about the series can be found at: <http://www.ourkidsseries.org/>