

The Los Angeles Business Journal presents

# Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Awards 2012

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

## GUMBALL FOUNDATION



**T**HE Gumball Foundation's mission is to foster the next generation of creative social entrepreneurs. The Foundation achieves its mission through an innovative program that helps students gain access to college by helping them start their own small-scale vending machine business. Upon graduation, they walk away from the Foundation program with a business skill set, \$10,000-\$20,000 in matching funds, and an acceptance letter to a university. The Foundation strives to instill in its students a sense of integrity, social responsibility, and respect for themselves and their community.

The Foundation's core is middle and high school students attending LAUSD schools in low income communities. Students are excited to earn money for their college education and even more interested when they learn that it will not interfere with their school schedule and is done with a minimal time commit-

ment. Parents view the Gumball program as a way to engage their children academically while teaching them business skills they may otherwise not learn in their community. It also gives parents who would like to finance their child's education a sense of relief to know that there is a savings account set aside for their child's college education.

In middle school, students receive their first gumball machine to install in a local business. To stay in business, students must provide proof of good grades to the business owner and the Foundation. In high school, the students accept more responsibility and an opportunity to earn more money for college by managing a refreshment or snack machine installed in a corporate office.

When students leave the program, the majority of the vending machines are recycled back into the program for the new incoming students.