WHERE THERE'S HOPE, THERE'S A WAY!

(Carlsbad, CA – February 14, 2018) While growing up with a family friend that was diagnosed with autism, Ethan Hope saw first hand the hardships his friend went through on a daily basis.

Ethan decided he wanted to do something to help other kids on the spectrum. “My baseball coach, Butch Smith, would always tell us to be grateful for what we have in life, and to not take things for granted,” says Ethan. “There are so many kids with disorders like autism that have the desire to do things that typically developing kids do, and I decided to do something to help them out.”

Now a sophomore at Sage Creek High, Ethan formed “Bobcat Buddies,” a club whose primary purpose is to provide teenagers who have autism with fun sports-related events in an environment where they can learn, grow, and interact with others.

One of the first events Bobcat Buddies wanted to host was a game-filled afternoon. Ethan approached the administration of Sage Creek High School to reserve the gym, but was told he would have to pay $120 for just one session. “I was devastated; our Club just didn’t have any fundraising capabilities.”

Not one to take “no” for an answer, Ethan brainstormed other possible sites. He reached out to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Carlsbad, and to his surprise they offered up their gym free of charge. “I was so extremely happy, I was almost crying when I heard this great news,” says Ethan. On the afternoon of February 11, his dream was realized when nearly 30 teens gathered for a fun afternoon playing basketball, duck duck goose, and other games. Camaraderie was the emphasis of the afternoon, and a great time was had by all. The Bobcat Buddies are already hard at work planning their next activity, and hope even more teens will join them.

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Carlsbad is to provide activities and experiences that enrich the lives of young people, inspiring and enabling them to reach their full potential.