



# December Hero Profile 2018

**Children's Bill of Rights #12:** As the children and youth of San Luis Obispo County, may we each be encouraged to dream big, to grow through challenge and mistakes, and to always live with hope and aspiration.

**DECEMBER'S HERO**  
**Spencer Claxton**

**PASSION**  
**Giving struggling youth hope for their futures**

**ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE SPENCER**  
**Determined**

**NOMINATED BY**  
**The Community Foundation  
San Luis Obispo County**



**Spencer Claxton is a champion for children, proving that with hope and perseverance-- it's possible to overcome adversity and forge the right path for a successful future.**

In the concerted effort to clear hurdles and crush obstacles, Spencer applied for and was accepted to the Grizzly Youth Academy (GYA), a partnership between the California National Guard and the Grizzly Challenge Charter School. The program provides 24/7 structure for youth who've had difficulties in school due to academic and social problems. GYA's core components are academic excellence, health and hygiene, job skills, leadership/followership, life-coping skills, physical fitness, responsible citizenship and service to community.

Spencer credits GYA for giving him the knowledge needed to prosper on both a personal and professional level. He says his experience there was a time of huge growth—that he was able to see dramatic changes in his behavior, attitude and outlook. Spencer learned many invaluable lessons, including self-discipline, communication, cooperation and the importance of participation and team work. And he wants to share his wisdom with others facing similar circumstances. Spencer tries to go

back to Grizzly to speak to current cadets, talking to them about the road to reintegrating themselves back into society.

GYA instructors say Spencer, now 20, is a bright light for students who have also struggled and made mistakes, giving them encouragement and inspiration with his message of "If I can do it, you can do it!" That message is backed up by the strides he has made since completing GYA, as Spencer is now on his way toward a certification to pursue a career in the IT field of cyber security.

**Thank you, Spencer.  
You are a true Hands-On Hero.**

*Look for more on all of our Hands-On Heroes on COE-TV channel 19!*



Hands-On Heroes is a special recognition of dedicated individuals who believe in and support the Children's Bill of Rights, an achievable vision that our children grow up with healthy minds, bodies and spirits that enable them to maximize their potential. This program is coordinated by First 5 San Luis Obispo County in collaboration with local organizations that make a difference in the lives of children in our community. To find out more about First 5 and the Children's Bill of Rights, please visit [first5slo.org](http://first5slo.org).



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