



ACCION Helps Fill the Treasure Box

Thirty-five years ago a friend gave Barbara Tibbits a piece of depression glass that she fell in love with, and ever since Barbara has been involved with antiques. She worked as an antique dealer for close to thirty years before retiring from her career and taking a job as an antique store manager. Barbara became a proprietor when she had the chance to buy her store from the former owner, and today, the Treasure Box is thriving in the La Mesa Village.

Barbara was referred to ACCION by another client, David Russell, who owns a carpet cleaning service. ACCION was able to help Barbara despite her low credit score that came as a result of a debt consolidation company making late payments on her bills. Barbara is currently on her second loan from ACCION and has used the money to update her business equipment, increase her inventory, and advertise in various publications.

Barbara has also helped form the La Mesa Antique Association, which is trying to make the La Mesa Village a tourist and antique hunter destination. There are more than ten different antique stores on La Mesa Boulevard, which means there is a lot of competition, but all of the business owners are working together to increase foot traffic and boost business.

Once a year, the Association holds the Antique Street Fair, which the city has asked them to host twice a year because of its success in attracting more people to the area.

The Treasure Box houses the wares of dealers who specialize in all different types of antiques including toys, furniture, and items from the 70s. Barbara gets her products from a variety of sources including garage sales and individuals who inherit antiques, but do not have room for them. Barbara mentioned the antique business is in a bit of a downturn because of the internet and current state of the economy, but the industry is flourishing in the La Mesa Village and because of loans from ACCION, the Treasure Box is too.



Barbara in her antique shop, the Treasure Box, which is part of the historic La Mesa Village.

ACCION Says Goodbye



**AmeriCorps*VISTA,
Christian Flores.**

After a year of volunteer service through the AmeriCorps*VISTA program, Christian Flores is leaving ACCION San Diego in early August and will be greatly missed by the entire organization. A graduate of Cornell University with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, Christian is a native of Ecuador who immigrated to New York in his youth. During his year of service, Christian has held many positions within the company and has assisted in nearly every facet of ACCION's business. With his background in information technology, Christian has been the in-house computer expert, including his final project of implementing the new loan management system TEA, which replaced GMS on July 18th. Christian served as a loan officer in Orange County in September and October of 2004, and has also worked in community development, marketing, and outreach. Christian plans to stay in the San Diego area to live and work.

"Christian has been an outstanding contributor to our organization over the last year. His dedication to our mission and vision for the future of ACCION San Diego served as an inspiration to the entire staff," says President and CEO Patti Mason.

TEA Conversion

On July 18, 2005, ACCION San Diego began using The Exceptional Assistant (TEA) as its database for all client and loan information, replacing the outdated GMS system that has been used the last ten years. TEA is a product of Common Goals Software and has already been adopted by ACCION offices in Texas and New Mexico. The system has complete Client Relationship Management features which will allow ACCION to easily manipulate data and communicate with clients. TEA will also help with reporting and tracking of data, which will improve ACCION's applications for funding. The TEA system has many complex features which will accommodate the growth phase of ACCION's current client database, therefore enhancing service to ACCION clientele.

