



YOUNG BURN VICTIM FUNDRAISER: HUGE SUCCESS

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WALNUT CREEK -- A fundraiser for a family with many needs was held Wednesday night at a Walnut Creek restaurant.

Four days before this past Christmas, a fire killed a five-year-old boy and badly burned his twin brother. The fire also destroyed the Richmond home of the Argueta-Rodriguez family. Young Julian suffered severe burns to 70 per cent of his body. He's already had extensive medical treatment and faces years more of costly care. The family also lost most of its belongings and what wasn't burned was stolen by looters.

Every day and every moment is a struggle for 5-year old Julian Zaragoza. The young boy has undergone numerous surgeries and countless hours of rehabilitation at San Jose's Valley Medical Center.

Their plight has become well-known throughout the Bay Area because of news coverage of the fatal fire and Julian's remarkable recovery since the tragic incident. Speaking about young Julian, fundraiser organizer Dina Ramaha said, "I couldn't stop thinking about him and his family reading that they were having a hard time paying their rent and that can't happen."

Tony Dudum of the 1515 Restaurant in Walnut Creek knew he had to pitch in as well. "I couldn't imagine that happening to me. And I couldn't imagine the family going through that. And I couldn't imagine as a father going through that . So I said sure, we got to do something. We've got to help them out."

Dudum decided to donate 100 percent of the proceeds from Wednesday night's dinner.

To help raise more money, there was a silent auction. The grand total for the fundraiser was more than \$25,000. The family also received a new silver Dodge Caravan. But there are many short-term and lifelong obstacles left for Julian and his family.