

Recap: Ivymax Center San Diego Event  
By Kevin Chapman

A couple weeks ago, the Ivymax Center in San Diego hosted an event where, alongside a speech about college rankings, we raised awareness of issues in Kenya and gave people info about Wildlife Without Borders. Of those who listened to our talks, many were prospective members and people who plan to attend the upcoming service trip to Kenya. Four of us took part in the function: Charles Wen, our founder; Thomas Tong, our secretary of human resources; Kaden Chang; and myself.

The first talk actually wasn't about Wildlife Without Borders at all. Instead, Dr. Yu, an Ivymax college counselor, gave a presentation about a recent shift in US News' college ranking system and how the change will affect the priorities of many top universities. After Dr. Yu's talk, Charles Wen and Thomas Tong took the stage to share some of the experiences they had on a trip to Kenya that many of us took over the summer. Charles spoke about how they learned about important issues affecting Kenya's rural population, such as a lack of access to potable water and Wi-Fi. On the other hand, Thomas' bit was more environmentally focused. He related his impressions regarding the prevalence of animals such as monkeys cohabiting human spaces. Such sights led him to better appreciate the role nature plays in our lives. Later on, Charles, Thomas, and I were invited to go up and talk about Wildlife Without Borders. We spoke about our current projects and our mission for the organization.

The highlight of the event was a heartfelt and inspiring speech given by Simba, a wildlife conservationist in Kenya. He talked about how, in order to make substantial improvements to the world, teenagers like us must harbor dreams that are broader in scope than our own day-to-day problems and desires. Instead, our hopes should relate to global issues for any change to be made in the world. To illustrate his point, Simba said that although Africa is far from California, we as humans all breathe the same air that flows around the Earth. Every part of our planet is interconnected, so we should work to benefit people and animals around the world. His talk was met with a lengthy round of applause.

When Simba finished, his daughter took the floor as the final speaker. She related her wildlife conservation efforts in Kenya with her father. While she was mainly there for fun on her first trips, she recently began to help Simba by recording and organizing data. After the event ended, Charles, Thomas, Kaden and I filmed a short video promoting Wildlife Without Borders, which you can view on our social media platforms.