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Phillip Walton photos

Bo Tennant gets some shooting tips from UCP Hoops founder Doug Senz, right, and Northgate High girls basketball player Keani Iosefa during a camp at NorCal Courts on July 22.

Partnership materializes into a home for special needs hoops players

By **CHACE BRYSON** | Editor

Doug Senz was a frustrated dad. "I have a son with Cerebral Palsy and I was really struggling to find the right involvement for him," Senz said. "I searched for sports programs, specifically basketball programs, that catered to kids with special needs and there just wasn't much out there."

In venting his frustration, he finally got some advice from a trusted friend — long-time Miramonte boys basketball coach Tom Blackwood.

"Tom told me one day, 'You're probably going to need to just start (a program) for yourself,'" Senz said.

That's what happened.

After connecting with United Cerebral Palsy of the Golden Gate, Senz built the framework for UCP Hoops. Then began the search to find courts for his camp, and volunteers, and funding for space rental and t-shirts and so on so forth.

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Northgate High School girls basketball coach Dan Middleton has been assisting disabled athletes since his high school days in Pennsylvania.

He began working with Special Olympics athletes as a sophomore in the Pittsburgh area. He continued volunteering through college, and when he moved out to the Bay Area with his own kids, he began looking for places to help and impress upon his own kids the importance of the service.

In 2010, that search led him to a UCP Hoops camps at an

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