

CURRENTS

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The newsletter of Youth Service California

Service Learning and School-to-Work Readiness: Making the Connection

By Andrew Furco,

University of California at Berkeley

In recent years, much attention has been focused on two federal initiatives encouraging students to explore learning opportunities outside the classroom: The National and Community Service Trust Act and the School to Work Opportunities Act. Both acts are based on similar educational philosophies, principles, and pedagogy, suggesting that the two reforms can work synergistically to establish powerful and exciting school programs.

Over the past decade, career development programs have sought to remove the long-standing "lower track" stigma vocational education programs have endured. The recently passed School to Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) supports educational systems that provide all students, regardless of their post-high school intentions, with a common core of academic and technical skills that prepare them for employment *and* future education (American Vocational Association, 1994). The act helps schools assess which combination of 154 federally sponsored job training programs can best provide maximum career entry and exit options for productive and rewarding careers. Regardless of their individual local designs, all school-to-work systems are comprised of three basic program components: school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities.

The National and Community Service Act was passed by Congress in 1990 and reauthorized in 1993 to become the National and Community Service Trust Act (NACSTA). The Act seeks to reinvigorate the American public service ethic by supporting programs that promote and encourage service to one's community. The Act's Learn and Serve America program provides states with federal assistance for

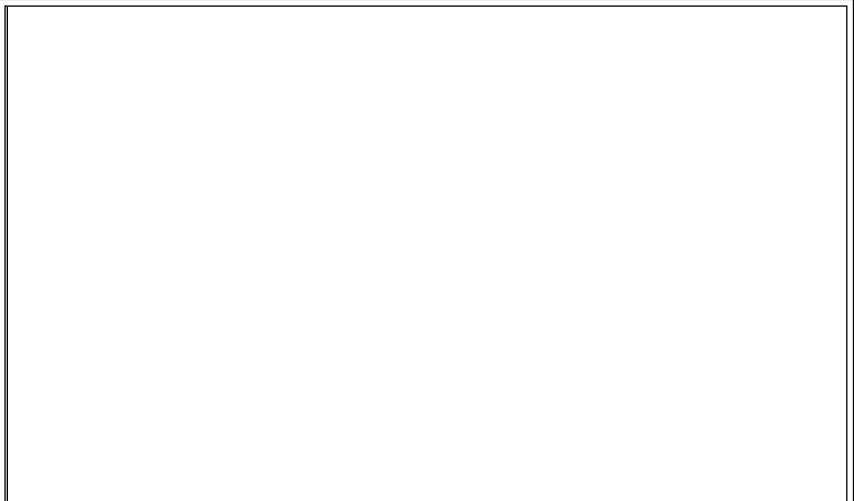


Photo complements of Megan Swezey Fogarty

On June 14-15, the CA Commission convened over 40 California program representatives for their Symposium on AmeriCorps. The Tomales Bay gathering included lively discussion on the tension between soft and hard data collection, what to measure/quantify in AmeriCorps programs, how to legitimize the efforts to build collaboration and community relationships, how to link more closely with research as a base of knowledge for what to get done in priority areas, and more.

school-based programs that utilize service learning pedagogical strategy. Service learning is a teaching strategy, integrating community service into academics, to address real issues in local communities.

STWOA and NACSTA target all students, regardless of ability, age, or ambition, and are based on the experiential education philosophy that learners learn best when actively engaged in hands-on, meaningful activities. Both service learning and school-to-work programs involve students activities that bring context and meaning to classroom learning.

The two reforms see students as providers of resources and producers of knowledge, no longer passive learners behind their desks as teachers deliver lessons. Students become active learners who make things happen by using their talents and capabilities to assist and work with others. With this paradigm as a foundation, both reforms rely on the same pedagogical strategies by expanding teaching and learning beyond the classroom. Both

school-to-work and service learning utilize contextual learning, the application of knowledge to real situations, multi-disciplinary teaching, and cooperative learning as the primary approaches to teaching.

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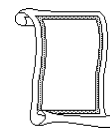
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Youth Service California

Founded in 1990 Youth Service California is a state-wide collaboration of public and private organizations that promotes youth service and provides information and assistance to local programs. It is made possible by YSCal grants from The James Irvine Foundation, William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, and affiliate and Steering Committee contributions.

YSCal Provides:

- information and technical assistance
- Currents newsletter
- a state conference
- co-sponsorship of YouthCAN, the state youth service council
- an affiliates program

YSCal Steering Committee

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Youth Service California Update



In our fifth year, Youth Service California (YSCal) continues to grow and respond to the needs and interests of California's diverse youth service field. We rely on you to shape our direction.

Call us any time (415-723-3803) with ideas for our work with community based organizations, schools, colleges/universities, corps, and state agencies to make service part of every young person's experience in California. Some summer news:

• Non-profit: YSCal is in the final stretch of obtaining non-profit status, meaning staff changes and perhaps a move. Long-range planning continued at the YSCal Steering Committee retreat in July. We extend our deep appreciation to the Constitutional Rights Foundation, Los Angeles and the Haas Center for Public Service at Stanford University that have served as YSCal hosts since 1990.

• Research: This spring, YSCal partnered with The James Irvine Foundation, The Charles A. Dana Foundation, and IBM Corporation on a national research project examining the benefits of National Service. Kormendi/Gardner partners in Washington, DC led a research team of economists from University of Iowa and University of Michigan. By applying a benefit measurement methodology to three representative AmeriCorps programs, they found that \$1.60-\$2.60 is the return to society for every \$1.00 in federal outlay; however, our ability to measure total program benefits necessitates further research. Call YSCal to receive an executive summary or the full research report.

• Contracts: This fall YSCal will continue to work on supporting regional networks (see page 4). The California Department of Education-CalServe and the State Commission are pooling funds to provide additional resources to networks. Working with the National Service Learning Clearinghouse in Minnesota, YSCal will also continue to collect information on California programs, training, and people. Call us if you or your program would like to be listed or you seek database information.

• Affiliates Program: With close to 350 organizational and individual affiliates,

YSCal is exploring ways for affiliates to receive youth service information from national organizations. New affiliates plan to come in the fall! Dues will go up in 1996, so join now (see back page)!

• Policy: Work on the YSCal 1995 Policy Recommendations, describing opportunities for policy makers, state agencies, and others to expand youth service in our state, have been completed. Consultant Mike MacCrystall is also researching and compiling public funding opportunities for youth service programs. Finally, several YSCal Steering Committee members attended the national meeting signing the proclamation to advance service learning as an element of school improvement (see page 6). Please call us to receive a copy of any of these documents.

• Technical Assistance Project: This summer YSCal Consultant Arlene Stepputat worked with Service Learning 2000 to coordinate focus groups of first year AmeriCorps program staff and members in order to develop a document on first year implementation. She is also enhancing and enlarging our database of technical assistance providers, planning orientations for technical assistance providers, and more. She can be reached at (805) 565-0834 or through the YSCal office.

• Youth CAN, the State Youth Service Council, selected members for 1995-96 during their meeting in Los Angeles (see p.5). We are extremely pleased that YES Ambassador Jenny Girard has agreed to stay on next year to continue work with youth voice.

• State Conference on Service and Volunteerism: Plans are underway for the 1996 state conference in late February or early March. The conference will be held in either Sacramento or Oakland! Call us in August for details, and presenter applications.

Correction: Please note: In the Spring *Currents* front page article, "VISTA Service Program Turns 30!" We reported that more than 10,000 men and women have served since VISTA's start. **The correct number is 100,000.** We apologize for the misprint and congratulate AmeriCorps-VISTA on its success.



Health Reform: Youth Service in Hospitals

By J. R. London

"I would like people to know that we are not typical candy strippers, like the old image of the candy stripper. We are more than that. We don't go to the hospital for college resumes. We go to help people and provide meaningful service."

- Kristi Somers, student
Leigh High School, San Jose

Each week throughout California about 30,000 high school students volunteer in over 540 hospitals. Named "candy strippers" by their red and white striped uniforms, youth volunteers were once limited to delivering flowers, running errands, and stuffing envelopes. Today's high school volunteers are participating in a wide array of service activities and exploring future medical careers, usually in anything but a striped uniform. From working with unit based services such as Pharmacy and Pediatrics, to providing entertainment to long-term patients, to staffing the Patient Admittance and Information desk, teens are discovering the rewards of medical service.

At Good Samaritan Hospital in San Jose, 180 volunteers ages 14 to 19, represent 17 San Jose area high schools. Some students come seeking exposure to the medical community, others want to be part of something worthwhile or to help a patient get well. The Good Samaritan program's unique approach to high school programming, including training, services, activities and leadership, sets it apart.

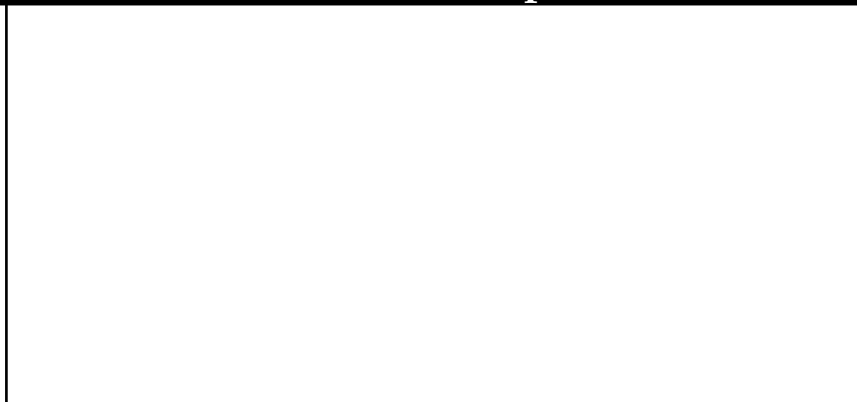


Photo compliments of J.R. London
The dedicated volunteers of the Good Samaritan Hospital program take service learning to the medical field. Top: Kristi Somers and Samir Pradhan. Bottom: Stella Huang, Amit Apte, Erica Stuart, and Angela Tognoni.

The expansive curriculum covers such items as hospital history, mission statements, patient rights, infection control, hazardous chemicals, and wheelchair procedures.

Good Samaritan's program provides young people the option to take on leadership roles, such as "shift leader." With responsibilities such as attendance monitoring, holding staff meetings, student training, and shift operations, the position teaches youth professionalism and peer management. One student captured the lessons of her role: "Being a shift leader helped me learn how to delegate responsibility. It has taught me that I have to be firm and assertive with my peers...I am always going to be in positions of leadership where I will have to take action...I might not be popular but that's my responsibility. With responsibility you gain further respect."

Many teens continue serving long after their work at the hospital. For some volunteers the opportunity to work with patients and doctors creates a life-long desire to serve. One 3-year volunteer will be attending UC Berkeley and "plans on looking for another hospital to continue my service. I've been doing it for so long it's part of my life."

What makes Good Samaritan Hospital a model program?

A few basic elements:

• **Accessible Program Coordinator** - The program coordinator is experienced with youth leadership development, and accessible to volunteers often working evening and weekend hours.

• **Hands-on service opportunities** - Although legal and ethical issues prevent youth from taking duties assigned to a paid and trained staff member, student volunteers can provide support in new upcoming services or can shadow staff members in existing projects.

• **Supportive Service Managers who enjoy working with youth** - Often the quality of a service program is not defined by the activities or program components, but by the quality of interaction between those who work together. Young people operate best in a caring environment.

• **Fun Activities** - Barbecues, holiday dinners, and other social events allow students to celebrate their success and receive acknowledgment for individual and collective efforts. Such activities keep interest in service high, help to maintain high motivation levels, and bring a sense of community to the program.



Strengthening Leadership with the PLC

By Michael MacCrystall

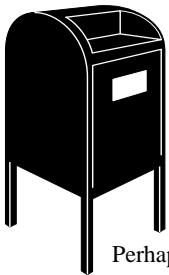
The country's newest National Park, The Presidio of San Francisco, is buzzing with activity as non-profits take up residence. One of the first residents is a new initiative of the Corporation for National Service, The Presidio Leadership Center (PLC). The PLC was created to strengthen the leadership of national service organizations across the country by equipping them with proven management tools to increase their personal and organizational effectiveness. "We are convinced that the best predictor of success for an organization is the quality of its leadership," says Catherine Milton, executive director. Milton points out that the PLC offers a brand of management training otherwise not available to service professionals, and without charging tuition.

The PLC has four main components:

- 1) The **National Service Executive Program** offers intensive management training six times a year to senior managers of service organizations.
- 2) The PLC hosts a series of **National Service Seminars** with national policy leaders, funders, and service professionals as participants.
- 3) The PLC acts as a **Research and Development** location for the Corporation, exploring and piloting innovative ideas for AmeriCorps programs and members.
- 4) The **Center of Excellence** provides training and technical assistance to service organizations working in the environmental fields.

For more information, call the PLC at (415) 561-5950

For information call J.R. London, Volunteer Services, Good Samaritan Hospital, 408-559-2346.



Letters to the Editor

What is your vision of youth service in California and what needs to be accomplished to make that vision a reality?

Perhaps service is the means for addressing and/or solving the problems and issues that pertain to youth. People under the age of 21 are often stereotyped as lazy, irresponsible, disrespectful and generally uncaring. The stereotype contributes to the actions and attitudes of particular youth. Many youth feel they have no voice, no role and no significance. Service allows youth to feel that unspeakable joy that one receives when he or she unconditionally gives to someone or something. When youth serve, they acknowledge and demonstrate their importance. The ultimate result is that youth set their own standards and values.



Service allows youth to take responsibility for their thoughts, actions and environment. Service can be a means to ending stereotypes and it can change youth into people who are better qualified to lead the state, nation and themselves.

— **Aleia Carr**, Youth CAN Member
Age 16; East Palo Alto, CA

The younger generation is often referred to as “Generation X.” We are stereotyped by the media. “Generation X,” means irresponsible, troubled, confused and unambitious. We will prove them wrong. To me “Generation X” should mean excellent,

So how does one go about implementing service? One controversial way is to mandate service in schools. Another route is to integrate service into the curriculum (service-learning) where service and volunteerism becomes a real, tangible part of a variety of grades and subjects. Youth can get involved through school, church, community-based organizations, corps, etc. I believe service learning is the best method because every young person goes to school at some point in their life. My goal is to get people to stop complaining and start doing. It is easy to talk about the problems, but it takes great people to do something.

extraordinary and exceptional. Youth need the opportunity to be heard. It is said that we are the leaders of tomorrow. We are also today’s leaders. Youth involvement in service is crucial. Youth need to be recognized for our efforts to better communities. Although youth involvement in service has come far, there is still room for improvement. Youth representation needs to be considered for every committee, program, conference or service project. Youth service in California is a reality.

— **Allison Sobek**, Youth CAN Member
Age 15; San Diego, CA

Have You Connected With Your Closest Regional Network Yet?

California has fourteen regional networks state-wide. Individuals from diverse organizations active in the youth service field come together quarterly to exchange information and plan joint training and events. Networks are coordinated by volunteers in regions throughout the state with support from Youth Service California, CDE-CalServe, and the State Commission. In 1995-96, the State Commission and CDE-CalServe will pool their funds to provide greater support for networks. Special thanks to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and CDE-CalServe for supporting regional networks in 1995. For the next regional network meeting in your area see Page 11 or call Youth Service California at (415) 723-3803.

California Regional Youth Service Networks include:

Eureka Area (*Top of the State*), Sacramento, Delta Sierra, Sonoma County, San Francisco, East Bay, South Bay/Peninsula, Central Coast, Central San Joaquin Valley, Fresno, Greater Los Angeles, Orange County, Inland Empire, San Diego.

News from the Central Coast Regional Network and Sam Lutrin, Regional Network Coordinator.:

Some feared that Central Coast Regional Network members might drift apart once the San Luis Obispo County AmeriCorps collaborative grant was funded, but that’s not the case. It’s exciting to be a network as things begin to take off!

Perhaps the most significant challenge the group has taken on is the formation of a volunteer center to serve San Luis Obispo county. A task force is being formed and the goal is to put the program into operation within eighteen months! The second major goal of the region is to provide a full or half day K-12 service learning workshop this fall or winter.

Other important news from the Central Coast is the passage of a Cal Poly State University student referendum in which students agreed to assess themselves \$1 per quarter to support the campus voluntary community service program. This means that the annual budget of this student-run program will jump from the \$6,500 to nearly \$50,000! The student service leaders are eager to develop new and innovative service opportunities and the region is looking forward to some exciting efforts on the part of Cal Poly students.

For more information contact Sam Lutrin, Coordinator of the Central Coast Regional Network, at 805-756-5839.

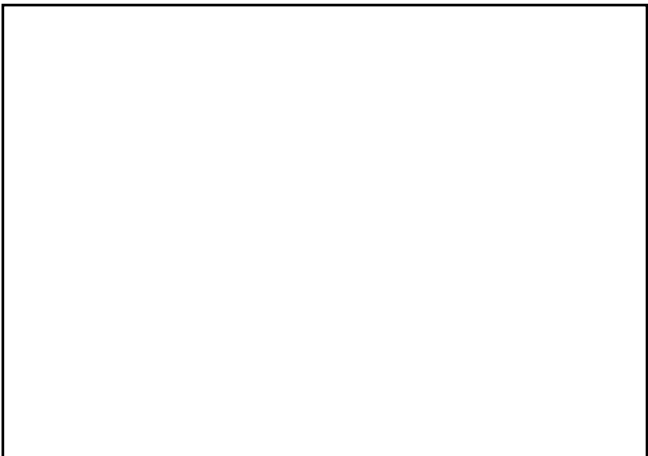


Photo: Megan Swezey Fogarty

Fresno Regional Network members chat after their meeting on June 8th. Chris Fiorentino, Cal State Fresno, and Jeanine Werner, Fresno Unified School District hosted the meeting which brought together over 40 youth and staff from community based, higher education, K-12, and conservation corps organizations.

Youth Service America Starts Fund for Social Entrepreneurs

By Manish Tripathi, Community Service Writer, Stanford University

Seven young people out of over four hundred nationwide, were recently selected as the first class of the Youth Service America Fund for Social Entrepreneurs. Youth Service America (YSA), a national non-profit in Washington, D.C., selected individuals who displayed leadership and initiative by founding community service organizations. Below are the stories of Ann E. Kletz and Kenny Rogers, two entrepreneurs from California.

SportsBridge

In 1994 Ann E. Kletz created "SportsBridge," an organization in San Francisco where female athletes act as mentors for junior high school girls. Ann's project involves 20 low-income 7th and 8th grade girls, mentored by collegiate, Olympic, and professional women athletes once a week over a 10-month period.

The idea came from Ann's own childhood in the Bay Area. She was interested in sports, especially soccer, and realized that there were few women role models accessible to her. She developed SportsBridge so others could be guided and encouraged by older female athletes. SportsBridge is the only organization of its kind in the United States. The Social Entrepreneurs award enabled Ann to purchase a computer to use in training programs, and she says the benefits are "amazing." For more information about SportsBridge call (415) 861-1934.

College Kids

Kenny Rogers created "College Kids," to keep low-income students on track to college through the active involvement of mentors, parents, after-school tutors, and community service projects. The program targets low income Latino and African-American



Photo: Youth Service America

Ann E. Kletz and Kenny Rogers, two recipients of the Social Entrepreneurs Award discuss their programs with Senator Diane Feinstein.

communities, starting with kids in third grade and following them through high school.

College Kids began as Kenny's thesis at Harvard University and now operates at three separate centers. The original, in Boyle Heights in Los Angeles, is in its third year with 72 students. The second, in San Mateo, just finished its first semester with 24 students. The third, in San Diego, started with the help of the Social Entrepreneurs award, and expects 24 students. For more information on College Kids call (415) 824-8777.

Congratulations to Anne and Kenny, California young people who are making a difference. For more information on the Social Entrepreneurs Program call Jason Klugman at Youth Service America, (202) 296-2992 X11.



Youth CAN (California Action Network) News

By Jenny Girard, Youth Engaged in Service Ambassador



A round of applause goes out to all Youth CAN members for their dedication, inspiration and commitment to service this year. As summer begins, it is important to celebrate the accomplishments and activities of this lively group of young leaders! Besides their incredible enthusiasm and service spirit, the members of this state youth service council have been involved in the following projects:

The California Conference : Members presented youth-focused workshops and coordinated youth activities throughout the conference! Thanks especially to Jeff Bosch, Allison Sobek and Dominic Poynter, our San Diego hosts and hostess!

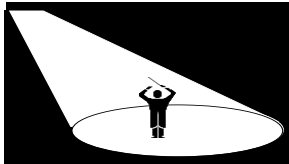
Youth Advisory Council to the California Commission: Members led efforts to create a 16 person advisory group to the Commission to begin in the fall of 1995!! Thanks to Eddie Aguero at the Commission for assisting with the process!

Summer Training Session: Members participated in a leadership development weekend from June 23-25 in Los Angeles. On June 24, Youth CAN partnered with the Volunteer Center of Los Angeles to provide assistance with painting and gardening at McBride Elementary School in Mar Vista. A gorgeous mural was completed and the playground was groomed for the 250 students at the school for severely disabled youth. Thank you to California Campus Compact for providing training space all weekend.

Youth CAN Recruitment and Selection

Working to bring on new members for the 1995-1996 year, 52 applications are under consideration for 15 new Youth CAN member slots to be announced mid-July. Youth CAN looks forward to an exciting year of action, training and community building. For questions or to be on the Youth CAN mailing list, contact Jenny Girard, YSCal, (415) 723-3803.

Youth CAN Sends Good-byes to departing members on to new projects, programs, schools and states!! Dylan Morris, Jeff Bosch, Aleia Carr and Dominic Poynter, we will miss all of you! Keep In Touch and Keep The Peace!!!!



K-12 Service Learning Spotlight

Service Learning at Westwood Charter Elementary School

By Kara Imm

It began as a three month service learning project in Ms. Sarah Boulton's fourth and fifth grade classroom at Westwood Charter Elementary school in Los Angeles. To learn about the issues of hunger, homelessness and poverty in America, they developed the **Children's CARE** (Caring and Respecting Everyone) **Network**. The students involved wanted "to communicate with people from different states...[to understand] the real lives of people who are homeless and how this happens to people." Through letter writing, faxing and e-mail the class connected with five partner schools around the country, collecting factual information about homelessness and sharing project ideas.

On the local level students packed an extra, nutritional lunch one day a week to give to women of a homeless shelter, providing 2593 lunches in the first 9 weeks. Representatives from a local shelter were invited to speak to the class. Students read and reviewed relevant fiction and non-fiction books, and many kept journals of their thoughts and feelings in a reflective format. In fact, the curriculum revolved around the questions of the students, not on teacher objectives. While the project started as a teacher organized endeavor, it has remained student-centered. Sarah Boulton believes that "if service learning is going to be part of your ongoing curriculum, it must be managed by the children and not the teacher."

Service learning has now blossomed into a school-wide effort. Cathryn Berger Kaye, a parent and national service learning consultant who led the first of many service learning workshops at Westwood, remarked that "it served as an effective introduction to service learning for the rest of the school." First and second-graders wrote and produced their own original books to read to preschoolers and the elderly. Third and fourth graders studied African-American art and literature, eventually creating two quilts in honor of African-American contributions. The quilts were later displayed in the community. Fourth and fifth graders created and now maintain a school garden, the produce from which is donated to the local food bank.

To create such projects and to integrate them with a whole school approach, it became necessary for teachers to consult with an expert on service learning. Teachers wanted to approach their projects in different ways: some wanted to start from an existing curriculum, designing projects and lessons which bring service and reflection to the curriculum; others sought to create a specific unit such as endangered species, oceanography, or African-American history; and still others approached the idea with specific skills they wished to develop. Cathryn Berger Kaye recommended that teachers start from existing curriculum objectives, weaving service into their own classroom goals.

"The Children's CARE Network confirmed my understanding that service learning can be an effective educational strategy, and that it is a process to introduce a school to this methodology. You can't rush these processes, there needs to be a systemic way of educating teachers through in-service training, and introducing the ideology in the classroom. We've learned that these kinds of experiences will take time to grow."

- Cathryn Berger Kaye
National Service Learning Consultant

Service learning initiatives have taken root in various parts of the Westwood community. Many families were moved by their children's experiences. Parental liaison groups have formed to connect with teachers, and to develop other service avenues. This year every teacher agreed to use service learning as a strategy for achieving the goals of the classroom and develop plans for the coming year.

Woven into the language of the school charter, service learning is central in Westwood's ideology. Now it has come alive in the day-to-day school culture as well. For more information on this model school, please contact Principal Michelle Bennett at (310) 474-7788 or Consultant Cathryn Berger Kaye at (310) 397-0070.

Lessons learned at Westwood

- Transform feelings of sympathy and pity to ones of empathy, efficacy and agency by providing a range of opportunities. For the Children's CARE Network, this meant showing videos profiling people who are homeless, compiling book reviews, going to the Westside food bank, and using journals and artwork to capture feelings and thoughts. It remains important to diversify the curriculum as students identify with different activities.
- Create language that treats the community being served as part of "us," avoiding terms like "them" and "other." Specific terminology was developed at Westwood to refer to homeless individuals as "people who are homeless" or "people who are hungry" and not "the homeless."
- Give social issues a human face. At the opening session, two representatives from local shelters (one previously homeless herself) spoke to the class making homelessness "real."
- Use child-to-child strategies to teach young people. A video entitled Shelter Boy presented a powerful real life story of a young boy who lived in a shelter in San Francisco. "It became obvious that homelessness was a circumstantial condition...that is, the story of 'shelter boy' could have been any one of the student's story," said Cathryn Berger Kaye.
- Let students contribute using existing talents and interests, and magnify other skills as the program continues. When the Children's CARE Network began some students were skilled with the technology of fax machines and computers; others possessed good phone skills; and many loved to write book reviews or do art projects. Initially, it is more important for a child to find an opportunity to be a part of the project than to work on broadening their skills.
- Remember that students will take initiative and responsibility if given the chance to do so. Many of the students in the original project have become student leaders. With the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma, two such students initiated a school-wide collection for the victims. Clearly the motivation to serve reaches beyond the specified projects.

Service Learning: It's More Than "Elementary" in Upland!

By Molly Capron

First graders at Magnolia Elementary School became parents to hundreds of animals this year. The class added a new twist to their usual study of pets by adopting a local animal shelter. Each day, the students brought their wagon around the school, collecting cans of dog and cat food for their new "family," then created huge wall coverings with graphs of their results. A representative from the animal shelter advised the children about proper pet care, as they eagerly presented him with their donation. This project highlights only one of many success stories of Upland Unified School District's new comprehensive service-learning program, Upland Connections.



Photo compliments of: Leanne Kerchner
The third grade class of Luan Ezra at Valencia Elementary in Upland, California, created a quilt to share their concern and caring with other children in Oklahoma City.

Upland Connections began this year with a CalServe grant from the California Department of Education. According to Dr. Leanne Kerchner, program coordinator, several service learning projects had been underway before the grant, but they were not labeled as service-learning and there was no coordination or communication between different teachers and schools. "We heard about the program and thought, this is exactly what Upland wants. This is what we believe in, and now we can take it further, we can spread it."

The main goal of Upland Connections is to involve all 11,400 students in the district in at least one service-learning project per year within three years. At the end of the first year, over 7,000 students have already participated. The program was initiated during fall In-Service Training for elementary school teachers. All 217 teachers from ten schools worked individually and in grade-level teams to develop at least one project that would fit in with their existing curriculum plans. Dr. Kerchner was pleased

by the enthusiastic response the program received from these teachers: "All of the elementary school teachers were excited. We didn't have to work very hard to convince them that this is a good program, because as soon as they tried it they saw the benefits - increased student involvement and more learning."

Service-learning programs have been especially successful at Hillside, Upland's continuation high school. Gary Cisco, a Hillside teacher, teaches an environmental science class that is entirely service-learning based. Students serve as trail teachers at Chapman Ranch at Mt. Baldy and work with the U.S. Forest Service to grow seedlings for reforestation projects. To celebrate Arbor Day, they instruct fourth graders in planting trees (donated by the Rotary club). They also work with several elementary schools on gardening projects. In recognition of his efforts, Mr. Cisco was recently named Environmental Science Teacher of the Year for the Inland Empire Region.

Hillside students have also served the homeless. The district approached a homeless shelter in town to learn their needs. The shelter's response included 1) parents who need baby-sitters to watch their children while they are out looking for work and, 2) residents who need bicycles because they have no transportation. After their informal needs assessment, a PTA member visited Hillside, showed the film "Shelter Boy" and lead a discussion about homeless shelters. From their classroom discussion, over seventy students volunteered to serve at the shelter. These students now repair donated bicycles, tutor children, and baby-sit. Dr. Kerchner cited the important effects service has for these students, who have not been successful in the regular classroom. Service gives them an opportunity to succeed and raises their self-confidence.

For more information, contact Dr. Leanne Kerchner, Upland Unified School District, (909) 985-1864.

Linking Community Service with Character Development in Pasadena

By Seth Schapiro

Service learning is alive and well at Field Elementary School in Pasadena, thanks to a new school program integrating community service with learning critical character skills. WiseSkills is a new elementary and middle school program that trains parents to arrange service-learning projects for their children, building important personal character skills. Perseverance, honesty, tolerance, and self-control are developed, with general communication and conflict resolution skills.

The program includes a Wise Quotes curriculum, featuring lessons and discussions of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Teresa, Helen Keller, Desmond Tutu and others. Students are exposed to the words and lives of a diverse historical group.

Field students get excited about their communities while serving in Pasadena. Classes of second and fifth graders have planted flowers at local parks; one sixth grade class has worked with elderly residents of a retirement home, another painted over graffiti; and a third grade class has performed

for a local convalescent home. One mother, who accompanied her son to a flower-planting project remarked, "If I am concerned about the community, he is more concerned."

Overall, the WiseSkills program integrates service projects with a comprehensive character-building curriculum for elementary and middle schools. One student summarized it well: "Field is becoming a Wise School!"

For more information, contact Seth Schapiro, Wise Skills, Legacy Learning, (818) 441-7944.

America's Youth Compete for \$100,000 Almond Angel Award

Kids today have their own "Contract with America." Taking action on homelessness, environmental problems, violence and substance abuse are the top priorities on their agenda, according to nearly 10,000 kids in kindergarten through ninth grade who entered a national school competition for "little ideas to make the world a lot better," sponsored by the California Almond Industry.

Actress Jennie Garth, star of FOX-TV's "Beverly Hills, 90210," and Richard Rominger, deputy secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture attended the June 7th ceremony to announce the winning idea. There Scott Krenitski, age 7, from Towaco, New Jersey was named the nation's Almond Angel Award winner. Inspired when his four-year-old friend died from cancer, Scott developed "Take a Treat," an idea to "take a treat to hospitalized children on Halloween and other holidays when they feel especially alone and sad."

Five of the ten finalists reside in California. They are: Tiffany Gearhart, age 9 of Oxnard; Jennifer Ryan Marty, age 10 of Clovis; Joshua Soros, age 11, of Soquel; and Katie Rodriguez, age 13 of Anaheim Hills. Congratulations finalists! Keep implementing those great service ideas!

article continued from Page 1

To be effective, both reforms require collaborative and inclusive partnerships with agencies outside the school that help define and establish appropriate learning experiences for students. By engaging students in activities away from school, they encounter similar programmatic issues such as providing safe transportation to and from field sites, ensuring liability issues are properly addressed, and developing effective classroom reflection strategies for linking students' field experiences with class work. Perhaps most important, they are "educational reform" efforts that require teachers to reexamine the way they teach.

A number of California schools districts have successfully linked the two reforms, such as John Marshall High School in Los Angeles and a number of high schools in Kern County. In Marshall High's Health Academy, students receive a rigorous academic curriculum focused on health and health-related issues and then work closely

Thirteen Orange County high school students received \$1,000 scholarships from Orange County Target Stores. Each recipient was selected for his or her outstanding community service activities and achievements and will be able to use their scholarships for future education. Thanks to Target, a corporation that understands the power of youth service! Recipients are: Tricia Michels, Eriko Wada, Michelle Bernal, Sheryl Chariton, Gloria Lee, Christine Ko Hsieh, Scott Roby, Katie Emily Bayer, August Joseph Maggio III, David Cleveland Fitzgerald, David Sanchez, Skorn Ponrartana, and Betty Limon.



YSCal Salutes Local Champions

• **Thanks** to local champions Craig Reid and Judy Ryan in Fresno for their innovative class on "Volunteerism" at Fresno City College. Their class involves 12-16 committed students who each serve a community organization for a semester. As Craig put it best, "There are 17,000-18,000 students at Fresno City College and there is no way to reach them all. We aim to take a handful of students and help them grow into leaders, and for those who already possess leadership skills, we wish to further improve their skills" For more information on the class contact Craig Reid, at (209) 265-5711.

• **Congratulations** to the East Bay Conservation Corps' AmeriCorps Health Team for receiving the 1995 Public Health Partner Award in the category of Initiative, Collaboration or Project. Thank you for your work to create and maintain a healthy Alameda County.

• **Thank you** to Farid Senzai, program officer, State Commission, for his speech representing youth of the world at the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations on June 25. Thanks for your service to our state.

with nurses and lab technicians at local hospitals and health clinics. Students take the skills learned at work sites and apply them to addressing a need in the community through a service project, then reflect on experiences by writing critical papers in English class or exploring the history of health education in public schools.

• **Thanks** to Christy Langan with the Volunteer Center of United Way, San Diego. Christy is a tireless supporter of youth service in our state coordinating the SAVY program in San Diego, the San Diego Regional Network and more! She is always willing to be part of state planning and respond to young people. Thanks Christy!

• **Thanks** to Janis Van Dreal at Kern High School District for her tireless belief in service learning. Janis works with Habitat for Humanity, works to infuse service learning into teacher education at Cal State University Bakersfield, runs a CalServe program called Kern Serve, is director of special activities at West High School and still finds time to work with YSCal, CDE-CalServe, and NSEE.

**YOU ARE ALL LOCAL
CHAMPIONS BUILDING THE
YOUTH SERVICE MOVEMENT
AND WE THANK YOU!**

Please submit your thanks to local champions for the next issue of Currents.

Given the ongoing budgetary concerns for education, combining service learning and school-to-work efforts enhances leverage for school program funding and streamlines school reform efforts by bringing together students who otherwise might never interact.

This paper is part of collection of YSCal papers written by California experts to show the connection between service learning and other school and community efforts. For a complete copy of Andrew Furco's paper, contact YSCal at 415-723-3803.

The Watershed Stewards Project: Service to be Felt for Years to Come

By
Molly
Capron

AmeriCorps members are working at seventeen sites to restore and preserve watersheds. They hope to avert environmental problems that would threaten the fish, wildlife, people, and economy of the area. In addition to working with the streams, program members hope to educate a broad spectrum of the community about watershed preservation, getting surrounding areas to come together to address some of nature's crucial needs.

An overwhelming percentage of Northern California's watershed lands are privately owned and current land use practices often disturb watersheds and prevent salmon from spawning. In 1988, the California Advisory Committee on Salmon and Steelhead Trout reported that salmon populations had dwindled to 20% of their former size. In the past, communities have relied on various agencies to monitor resource use in watershed areas. According to Michelle Rose-Hendricks, project coordinator of the Watershed Stewards Project, community involvement is essential. "AmeriCorps was

so timely," she said. "The Watershed Stewards Project is based on another project, but the component that project lacked was community outreach." AmeriCorps is a federal program that involves 20,000 people ages 17 and up nationwide who serve their communities full or part-time in exchange for a stipend and education award.

With resource professionals from various organizations and seven different state and federal agencies, the Watershed AmeriCorps team performs surveys and analyses, then distributes their findings to community landowners. The program gives members experience that will help them in the job market, but coordinator Michelle Rose-Hendricks explained that in choosing AmeriCorps members, they sought people who wanted more than just the work experience. "We looked for people who were out of school or taking time off, who really wanted to do service."

Each member is required to perform 100 hours of public presentation, much of which is done in cooperation with 40 elementary school teachers. Members have designed and implemented innovative curriculum to educate children about watersheds. One program, "Incubators in the Classroom," teaches students about the life cycle of the

salmon. A classroom is equipped with an incubator and some salmon eggs, and once a week an AmeriCorps member visits the class to talk about what is happening in the salmon's life cycle. Once the eggs have hatched and the salmon are old enough, they are released into the same stream from which the eggs were trapped.

The Watershed Stewards Project has been well-received by the communities, with members presenting material to over 7000 community members in the past six months. The AmeriCorps team has earned the support of private industry, a crucial factor to surveying these privately-owned lands, and to date, there have been six symposiums allowing residents in various communities to see what the project does and learn about safe land use.

The Watershed Stewards Project AmeriCorps members are doing their part state-wide to enrich communities and the environment through service. Their dedication and efforts are making a difference and their involvement in reversing natural destruction is invaluable.

For more information about the Watershed Stewards Project, contact Michelle Rose-Hendricks, Project Coordinator, (707)725-8601.



YSCal Technical Assistance Corner

Contributions by
Arlene Stepputat

Planning a Successful Site Visit

June 5-6, National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC) sponsored a structured site visit for crew-based AmeriCorps programs. From California to New York, twenty individuals attended the two day meeting, hosted by the San Francisco Conservation Corps (SFCC). For programs considering this form of peer exchange, the following are some observations from the NASCC site visit:

- Emilio Williams, NASCC deputy director, and Ann Cochran, SFCC executive director, worked closely to plan activities that would best expose visitors to the total program.
- All participants convened on the first evening for a two hour "meet and greet" and were introduced to the two-day agenda. Components included attending: corps projects and internships; corps member development sessions; and sessions on administration, operations, and funds.
- A built-in check-in period during day two

was successful to receive general feedback and insure the visit was serving the attendee needs. This way, plans were able to be amended.

- Front-line staff were involved in the planning and preparation and offered an enthusiastic welcome. Several staff members hosted participants for the two days providing a sense of continuity. Each staff member was well prepared with materials, shared openly from their own experience, and allowed time for questions. They seized the opportunity to showcase the organization's good work.
- By limiting the participant number to a manageable size and breaking into smaller groups as needed, participants received personal attention and stayed engaged.
- Informal refreshment breaks allowed conversation and networking to continue. We even had individual opportunities to play at the new computer lab with a staff member as a technological guide.
- Finally, time was built into the agenda to

say thank you and good-bye. A plaque was presented to Ann by Emilio. Photos were taken, T-Shirts received, cards swapped, and final words exchanged. The experience was informative, full and fun.

Next Step Mini-grants for AmeriCorps and Learn & Serve Grantees

With support from The James Irvine Foundation, YSCal is providing mini-grants for programs taking specific actions to assist local collaborations in program improvement. *Next Step Mini-Grants* up to \$500 may be used to fund a technical assistance provider, plan a peer exchange, purchase critical material, or for an idea the program determines is key for long-term sustainability. Call YSCal, (415) 723-3803, or Consultant Arlene Stepputat, (805) 565-0834 for the brochure and simple application. The deadline is October 1st.

In June, service learning was advanced as an essential element of school improvement. The United States Department of Education and the Corporation for National Service convened over 300 people representing more than 30 states' teams. Educators, administrators, students and policymakers were on hand for the signing of a joint proclamation on service learning as a critical component of education (see below). This historic gathering included keynote speeches by the Secretary of Education, Richard Riley, and Corporation for National Service CEO, Eli Segal. U.S. Senator, James Jefford and Deputy Secretary of Education, Madeleine Kunin, followed, addressing the conference on behalf of service learning as a school strategy.

Proclamation

IMPROVING OUR SCHOOLS AND THE CHALLENGE OF CITIZENSHIP: A Declaration of Principles

Ours is a nation blessed with unmatched resources, and an inspiring tradition of self-government. As we face the rising of a new century—indeed a new era—perhaps no single issue demands more attention than how we shall go about assuring the highest quality education for all Americans. The challenge of citizenship in a democratic society demands from each of us our very best.

What efforts must we make to develop the leadership and skills that it will take for our children not simply to survive but to thrive in the 21st Century.

Education is the key to honoring America's promise. Our schools are indeed the crucible of our democracy. Their quality and constant improvement—a daily obligation, a daily rediscovery—is very much the measure by which our success as a nation depends. That is a daunting standard, but its achievement is within our grasp.

That is why we believe it is important to emphasize the common enterprise of school improvement and the national service movement. Service learning is the bridge. Travelers in both directions know how much each depends on the other, and how each contributes to the greater good of our schools and indeed our public life. Working together, the U.S. Department of Education and the Corporation for National and Community Service seek to honor and to support the many thousands of teachers, parents and students who each day continue to make distinctive contributions to the quality of learning and life in their many communities across the country.

Six principles declare our shared commitment to school improvement and what's best in our American tradition of self-help and community spirit. Each is a partner to the other; neither stands alone. Achievements across the country already demonstrate that there are many effective ways to advance the goal of school improvement, and many models to praise and follow. No single formula for school improvement will fit every local community's needs, but **innovative service learning is invariably a key feature of local school success.** A remarkable symmetry of both purpose and pedagogy illustrates the partnership we seek to advance:

- I. **All children can achieve higher levels of academic success while learning to serve others** if they are set challenging standards and given the opportunity to reach them. Demand the most from young people, and they will confidently exceed your best expectations. Not only do students learn more by serving their communities, but their communities prosper as their students learn.
- II. **By solving real-life problems, students engaged in service learning are challenged to exercise leadership and responsibility.** Citizenship is something we learn, not something we merely inherit. Contributing extraordinary hours of productive service each year, hundreds of thousands of young people everywhere are getting things done for America's communities.
- III. School improvement and service learning require **career-long teaching and professional development.** Successful service learning programs invariably find innovative curriculum development. That's the kinds of partnership at the local level that will improve the quality of learning for all our children.
- IV. Improving our schools requires **parental and community involvement.** Service learning provides both teachers and parents with significant roles in helping students bridge the academic skills of the classroom and the responsibilities of daily life.
- V. Improving our schools requires the **participation of the private sector and the full range of every community's resources.** Businesses, community organizations, places of worship, recreational centers, institutions of higher education and training: each has a distinctive role to play in strengthening the partnership between community service and the improvement of our schools. Partnerships of this kind **underscore the fundamentally local and community-based tradition of American public education.**
- VI. Ours is **a nation of diverse cultures.** Yet we are one people. Service learning is a vital factor in the movement to improve our schools. Their partnership is essential to helping our children **to understand and to respect each other,** and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

Unflinching devotion to the highest academic standards and expectations of community responsibility are the cornerstones of genuine education reform and national service. We invite and anticipate the support of every American.

Richard W. Riley

Eli J. Segal

Organizations interested in endorsing the proclamation should fax their endorsement to Nancy Murphy, at The Corporation for National Service, (202) 565-2781.

Don't miss the creative instructional video just released, "Service Learning: Transforming Education." Profiling three K-12 service learning projects in San Francisco public schools, this 30-minute video demonstrates the essential elements needed to create an effective project.

From *Planning* and *Building Partnerships*, to *Preparation* and *Training*, *Reflection* and *Evaluation*... Walk through the various stages of a project, meet the teachers, and see service learning in action!

Linking San Francisco is a project of the San Francisco Unified School District and a State of California Leadership program in service learning. The Linking San Francisco mission is to transform the way students learn, teachers teach and schools connect to their community.

For your copy, send a check or purchase order for \$15 (made out to "Volunteer Center of SF") to

Linking San Francisco
2550-25th Avenue, Room 22
San Francisco, CA 94116

Call (415) 759-2882
FAX (415) 759-2903

Youth Shine on National Youth Service Day in Oakland

By Rita Bregman, East Bay Conservation Corps

It was 9 a.m. under an incredibly cloudless sky, and if we had tried we couldn't have ordered a more perfect day for our "National Youth Service Day" celebration. The weather gods were smiling down upon the East Bay Conservation Corps at our Oakland, California headquarters. Some 200 volunteers, middle school to adult of every sector, came together for a day of community service.

Our offices, loading dock, and parking lots were alive with activity for which preparations had begun weeks before. Trucks of tools, wood, fencing material, snacks, and coolers piled high with drinks were poised for those registered and t-shirted by volunteer staff members. Oakland Assemblywoman Barbara Lee gave a spirited welcome and thanked the group for their impressive turnout and volunteer work that made a marked difference in Oakland neighborhoods. Lee joined in warm-up exercises in the Corps parking lot, and by 9:30 a.m. the volunteers were off to one of four work sites. Their minds were fixed on one thing - working hard to celebrate our country's young people and the contributions they make to communities.

Some volunteers participated in clean-ups such as litter abatement, spreading mulch, and collecting recyclables at Oakland's Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline and Oyster Bay Parks; others weeded, mulched, reseeded, relocated raised garden beds, and built garden boxes at the Berkeley Youth Alternatives' community garden; and still others planted trees and installed protective tree cages on MacArthur Boulevard in Oakland.

With unbelievable energy, the group was amazing and certainly unstoppable. After a half-day of grueling but exhilarating work, the



Photo: Ginger Huang
Development Assistant Susan Kamprath with young volunteer at MacArthur Blvd. tree planting project during the East Bay Conservation Corps' "Youth Service Day" celebration on April 22nd.

volunteers returned to EBCC headquarters tired and slightly sunburned, ready for a well-earned "thank you" barbecue prepared by a dedicated Project YES staff.

The East Bay Conservation Corps has many to thank for this wonderful day of community service; all living proof that there is a multitude of dedicated people of all ages ready to volunteer their time and energies to make a difference. We salute our friends and the community-minded youth of America of whom we can all be proud.

On April 25, 1995 thousands of young people nationwide celebrated National Youth Service Day. In California projects and rallies were held in Santa Ana, San Diego, Stockton, Fresno, Eureka, Pomona, Los Angeles, Sacramento and San Francisco-to name but a few of the communities supporting youth service action. Next year, National Youth Service Day will be held on April 23rd. Let YSCal know about your plans so we can feature them in Currents!

Counting on Teens for Change

Teens Count is an innovative service partnership working towards healthy youth in a healthy environment. In one of its projects this April, approximately 2,000 students from Santa Rosa's high schools conducted a street tree inventory with Sonoma ReLeaf.

Dedicated 9th and 10th grade students strived toward the following goals and others, and gave the residents of Santa Rosa a healthier and brighter living space.

- To give high school students a hands-on experience of trees and the urban environment.
- To give youth an opportunity to work in partnership with other schools in a service program which has a tangible result for the environment and the community.
- To give the community a chance to see teens working together in a constructive project, thereby balancing the negative images of youth today.



August

- 8 CalServe Service Learning Institute; Stanford University, Stanford. Info: CDE-CalServe, 916-657-5442.
- 14 San Diego Youth Services Regional Network Meeting; United Volunteer Center, San Diego. Info: Darcy Agatep, 619-636-4129.
- 15 Meeting the Curriculum Challenges of Service Learning; Riverside County Office of Education, Riverside. Info: Barbara Clarence, 909-788-6529.
- 16 CalServe Service Learning Institute; Claremont College. Info: CDE-CalServe, 916-657-5442.
- 24 California Commission Meeting. Info: Suzanne Fisher, 916-323-7646.
- 24 Orange County Youth Services Regional Network Meeting; Volunteer Center of Greater Orange County, Santa Ana. Info: Cynthia Lanois, 714-953-5757.
- 29 AmeriCorps Programs - Training & Orientation; Cal Poly Pomona, Pomona. Info: Eddie Aguero, 916-323-7646.

September

- 11 San Diego Youth Services Regional Network Meeting; United Volunteer Center, San Diego. Info: Darcy Agatep, 619-636-4129.
- 14 Fresno Area Youth Services Regional Network Meeting; CSU-Fresno, Fresno. Info: Chris Fiorentino, 209-278-7079.

October

- 18 SuperConference '95; Washington D.C. Info: 202-296-2992.
- 22 Make A Difference Day. Info: 703-276-6432.



BECOME A YOUTH SERVICE CALIFORNIA AFFILIATE...

The Youth Service California (YSCal) Affiliates Program meets the needs of the growing network of individuals and organizations promoting youth service in California. Affiliate fees are used to print this newsletter and to support communication. To all affiliates, YSCal offers:

- Currents Newsletter three times per year.
- Bi-monthly updates of late-breaking news on funding opportunities and policy developments.
- Reduced conference fees (10%) discount.
- Eligibility for the YSCal Steering Committee.
- Featured publicity on your program.

YES, I WANT TO BECOME A YOUTHSERVICE CALIFORNIA AFFILIATE (check one):

- ___ Organization (five members of your group enjoy privileges) \$150 per year
- ___ Individual \$35 per year
- ___ Youth (up to age 23) \$10 per year

Name/Organization: _____

If you are becoming an organizational affiliate, please attach a list with five names.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Yes, add me to the closest Regional Network mailing list.

Please make checks payable and return to:
Youth Service California, Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford University, 558 Salvatierra Walkway, Stanford, CA 94305. Call: (415)723-3803. Email: cr.mas@forsythe.stanford.edu
YSCal maintains a **database** of CA events. For updates call (415) 723-3803.



YOUTH SERVICE CALIFORNIA

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