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VOLUNTEER CENTER ORANGE COUNTY

July 2007

July/August/September Newsletter

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New and Improved

Please check out our new website at www.volunteercenter.org. This website lists all the current service opportunities available through the Volunteer Center Orange County and allows you to sign up for them on the spot!

Quick Links...

- [Youth Service California](#)
- [California Department of Education](#)
- [National Service Learning Clearing House](#)
- [National Youth Leadership](#)

Greetings!

Welcome to our online newsletter!

Volunteer Center Orange County is pleased to offer its new online newsletter. We look forward to offering the same quality service learning information in this new environmentally friendly format.

Using Service Learning to Understand Poverty



adapted from a piece by Jeff Qualey

It's not often that Jeff Qualey's 4th grade classroom is forced to eat rice off of a banana leaf. However, in the interest of learning about global poverty, his classroom did just that. As a service

learning project, Andersen Elementary School teamed up with a group of high school students at Corona Del Mar High

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School (CDM) to study the pervasiveness of poverty worldwide, and its relationship to hunger and poverty in Orange County. The Anthro Club at CDM is a service based organization and saw the opportunity to teach fourth graders about those less fortunate than themselves as perfect fit to their mission. Thus, a project is born.

To start, Qualey's classroom focused on Cesar Chavez, a civil rights activist devoted to improving the conditions of the migrant community in California. His work depicts the prevalence of underpaid and overworked laborers, and acts as a perfect segue between the locally and internationally disadvantaged. Anderson students first learned about local agriculture, studying the involvement of farm laborers in producing crops. Students also played a game called "A Week in the Life of a Migrant Farm Worker" in which they assumed the job of a typical farm worker. By facing the financial barriers associated with small and unsteady wages, the fourth graders were able to conceptualize a life outside their own.

Under the guidance of their advisor, Denise Weiland, the Anthro Club did their own research on the statistics of international poverty. After assembling relevant information, students organized their material into games and exercises that would appeal to the younger students. A hunger banquet was arranged at Anderson Elementary as the pinnacle of their classroom education. High school students divided the 4th graders into three groups, low income, middle income, and high income, proportionate to global statistics. Accordingly, each income level was invited to enjoy a typical meal based on their economic standing; the wealthy group (3- 4th graders) had pasta, salad, and garlic bread with a linen tablecloth and silverware. The middle class group (7- 4th graders) ate bean burritos with a paper tablecloth, and the poverty stricken group (18- 4th graders) ate rice off of banana leaves with their fingers while sitting on the ground. Beyond their gasps and complaints, the students experienced, for a meal, the life of children less fortunate than themselves, remembering that 30,000 children die from hunger every day.

After the hunger banquet, the students took their education outdoors to get a glimpse of the life of a migrant worker. On March 28th, students went to The Incredible Edible Park in Irvine. They met Sam Crothers of Second Harvest Food bank, who instructed the students on how to pick carrots, cabbage, and strawberries. After a couple hours of labor, the crops were picked and the Anthro club led a reflection. As the 4th graders repeated the key values of Cesar Chavez, a tone of appreciation was shared for the hard work of Cesar Chavez and migrant farm workers. The service project was complete, and all of the produce was donated to the Second Harvest Food bank to help feed the hungry families in

Orange County.

California State of Education Address by California Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell touts service-learning as key to successful schools.



[This is an excerpt from the annual State of Education Address given February 7, 2007 by Jack O'Connell, California's elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction.]

. . . The 21st century demands that students know how to work cooperatively, to learn and to innovate in teams*to interact with, empathize with, and work with people from different cultures. What some consider old-fashioned virtues are essential for successful citizenship in a global economy.

Schools that are making progress closing the achievement gap are schools that have infused their culture not only with high academic expectations but with high expectations for character and behavior. Walk into a school that has made strong academic achievement gains, a school like Lee Elementary School in Long Beach, and you'll see students who respect themselves and their classmates as scholars. You'll see words like "responsibility," "integrity," and "commitment" prominently displayed.

To read more, check out the link below...

[State of Education Address](#)

Fall Service Learning



With school just around the corner, now is the perfect time to begin a service learning program in your classroom. Whether you're looking for a one day activity to fire up your students, or a year long extravaganza, Volunteer Center Orange County has the material to get you going. Email Bette Weinberg, Orange County's service learning regional lead, or head straight to the national service learning website for more information and ideas.
Bette Weinberg- bweinberg@volunteercenter.org
or...

Check out the service learning link below...

[Service Learning Website](#)

Fun Facts!

According to the National Evaluation of Learn and Serve America, **80% of students doing service learning reported feeling that they felt they had made a contribution.**

Info for Grant Writers

Ellen Dougherty Activist Fund for Young Women

The Ellen Dougherty Activist Fund for Young Women seeks women aged 19 and under who propose to develop and lead projects focused on activism and social change. **Deadline August 15th.** To view this grant and others relating to activist women, check out [Ellen Dougherty Grant](#)

Ezra Jack Keats

Ezra Jack Keats Foundation offers minigrants of \$500 for public school and library programs. **Deadline September 15th.** Check out [Ezra Jack Keats](#)

Captain Planet Foundation Captain Planet Foundation supports environmental grants involving young people. **Deadline September 30th.** Check out [Captain Planet Foundation](#)

Service Learning Calendar

August 4- Community Build Day
August 12- International Youth Day
September 11- International Literacy Day
September 11- MyGoodDeed.org
September 11- One Day's Pay
October 1- Be the Change Day

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