

VIP STAGE PASS

Highlights of the Volunteer Infrastructure Project



At a KidWorks (a VIP partner site through OneOC) appreciation event, a panel of teens (above) shared the impact made on their lives by volunteers. What will you do to show the volunteers you work with how important they are?

We have
OFFICIALLY met our
statewide goals!
Congratulations everyone!!

Thanks to our passion, dedication, and hundreds of thousands of AmeriCorps service hours around the state, we've officially met our volunteer goals of **7,000 one-time and 7,000 ongoing volunteers across the state who have served over 70,000 hours total!** (And we've even managed to meet more than twice our short-term volunteer goal!) Congratulations everyone! This is evidence of all of our amazing work, and the skills and passion we bring to the organizations we serve. We've only got a couple more months left for the term at most partner sites – let's see just how many more volunteers we can engage in meaningful service!

Time for Appreciation!

Many of the volunteers managed by VIP have now been dedicated to their service for months. Some have even served hundreds of hours. This is a great time to show some appreciation and let your volunteers know how much you value them. Here are some great ideas from VIPs.

Our ongoing volunteers have been so inspiring for us; they show up and happily help out with whatever they are capable of doing because they truly believe in our mission. The interesting thing for us is that for how much we appreciate them, they appreciate us just the same. We express this appreciation by providing snacks on our designated volunteer days, giving them **incentives for certain amounts of volunteer hours**, letting them take home plants, veggies, or flowers and giving them a lot of verbal thanks and praise, keeping in mind to **be genuine**.

- **Christine Coltellaro, VIP at MEarth Hilton Bialtek Habitat in Monterey**

VIP Leaders recently shared with each other the best appreciations they have ever received. Here are some creative ideas based on those experiences:

- Create a plaque or other permanent acknowledgement of their service that can stay at your organization.
- Get the president, executive director, or another "higher up" at your organization involved. Have them write a personal letter to your volunteers, stop by to say a quick thank you, or take them to lunch.
- Collect appreciations from staff and service recipients that detail the impact that was made, and present them to your volunteer.
- Give a personalized gift, like something that reflects the volunteer's hobbies or interests, or a framed photo of the volunteer serving or of the clients they serve.

Serving Outdoors

As the weather warms up and summer approaches, many of our VIP sites have been out coordinating volunteer projects in nature conservancies, farms, and gardens. Here is a look at some of these outdoor projects!



HandsOn Central California held its Generation Green event on April 9th. The event focused on environmental restoration, conservation, and education. Over 180 volunteers came out to serve in 8 different environmental projects. “The most moving part of this day of service,” says VIP Leader Jonathan Muñoz, “was seeing all the volunteers who represented various ages groups - there is generational appreciation and conservation of our environment.”

Pictured below are two volunteers from this great service day!



VIPs at Volunteer San Diego partnered with an AmeriCorps NCCC Team for a service project at the Lakeside River Park Conservancy. They helped with flood control, restoring natural habitat, improving the water quality, and with urban planning. Above, VIP Rachel Lebowitz (right) is pictured with a NCCC team member.



In celebration of Earth Day, Naima Wright-Clay (pictured above), coordinated the Farm Work Day at Vintage High School ROP Farm in Napa. AmeriCorps members, student volunteers, Napa Future Farmers Association and staff came out to help. This allowed the farm to start planning for their annual “Seed to Table” program, Farmers Market, and pumpkin patch. Thirty six volunteers got involved that day, serving a total of 196.5 hours.

VIP is now Social!

‘Like’ our Facebook page or follow our blog to get more updates about what is happening across the state in VIP and hear about some helpful resources.

VIP Blog:

<http://www.calservesvip.blogspot.com/>

VIP Facebook Page:

<http://www.facebook.com/CaSERVESVIP>

Volunteer Troubleshooting: Communication is Key!

By Jessica Heatherington, VIP Fellow at Boys and Girls Club, Central Sonoma County
We had two new volunteers from the high school come over to work with us, and the two young men were floating around without any clear direction. The coordinator and I met with the volunteers to discuss their passions. We found out that both of them loved to golf and one of them actually worked at a local golf course. We then created a golf club where students learned the basics of the game. As a culminating event we will take a group of them to play on the greens at a local course.