

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**“East of Affluence”: Hands On Bay Area heads volunteer
exploration of East Palo Alto**

Twelve volunteers to explore the disparities that exist between East Palo Alto and its
more affluent neighbors

Over the next four weeks, a twelve member team is participating in a volunteer series titled “East Of Affluence” exploring themes of racial diversity, demographic change, educational inequality, regional planning and local politics in East Palo Alto. Through a combination of volunteer projects, issue-based education, and thoughtful discussions, participants will examine community issues and challenge their own stereotypes about the region.

The East of Affluence team is made up of an ethnically and geographically diverse group of volunteers from a variety of Peninsula and South Bay communities including East Palo Alto. Nicole Jones, a San Jose resident on the team, grew up in East Palo Alto and joined the series to continue to serve and learn about the community in which her family and friends still reside. “I love the neighborhood I come from,” states Nicole, “And I would love to see more youth come out of there with successful looking futures.”

Volunteers were selected through an application process and are committed to participating in nine activities starting August 26th and ending September 30th, 2006. The team is being lead by Matt Chwierut, a recent Stanford graduate and volunteer who, for the past five years, has actively explored East Palo Alto’s relationship with its neighboring communities.

“I want to introduce and approach the issues confronting East Palo Alto with respect and accuracy,” states Matt. “The history of the community has many chapters, and I want to read them with a group of volunteers who are committed to discussing them honestly and openly. I admire the TeamWorks program because through it, volunteers can truly grapple with important issues in public service.”

This five-week series is part of TeamWorks, a service learning program offered by Hands On Bay Area, a local non-profit organization that connects Bay Area volunteers with more than 120 volunteer projects every month. Hands On Bay

Area currently holds twelve TeamWorks programs annually, each focusing on a different issue area or geographic region of the Bay Area. To learn more about Hands On Bay Area and TeamWorks programming, please visit www.handsonbayarea.org.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

Members of the media are invited to speak with Hands On Bay Area staff, the TeamWorks Program Coordinator, and members of the volunteer team. Interviews can be arranged privately or in coordination with volunteer projects by contacting the TeamWorks Program Coordinator Michael Cook by email at michael@handsonbayarea.org or phone at 415-541-9616 ext 113.

Photography opportunities are available at events with prior consent.

EVENT DETAILS:

- Gateway Family Garden; Saturday, August 26th, 2006
- Movie Screening and Discussion: "Dreams of a City: Creating East Palo Alto"; Wednesday August 30th, 2006
- Collective Roots Garden Project; Saturday, September 9th, 2006
- EPA Charter School Library; Saturday, September 16th, 2006
- "I Have A Dream" Educational Support Program – Saturday, September 23rd, 2006
- Panel Discussion
- Nuestra Casa Adult ESL Classes; Wednesday, September 27th, 2006
- "The Next Step" One East Palo Alto; Thursday, September 28th, 2006
- Series Wrap Up; Saturday, September 30th, 2006

Directions and times provided upon request