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MIDDLE EAST STUDENTS FIND COMMON GROUND WITH BAYVIEW YOUTH THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Local service-learning initiative touches a global audience.

(San Francisco, CA) Hands On Bay Area is bringing together youth from the Bayview with twenty-two visiting student leaders from over a dozen countries in the Middle East and North Africa for a day of volunteering. The project is one of Hands On Bay Area's innovative service-learning programs that combine volunteering with discussion and reflection.

The visiting students and Bayview youth will roll up their sleeves for a day of wetlands restoration near Candlestick Park on Saturday, August 4 from 10AM to 2 PM. The project will include a presentation from the local youth about their ongoing work to restore the Bay as well as facilitated discussion about community service and leadership.

The visiting students leaders are participating in the a seven-week Dickinson College course, "The United States through the Prism of Leadership," which seeks to elevate the leadership and problem-solving skills of the student leaders by fostering communication skills, "teambuilding" capacities, and management skills.

Hands On Bay Area, a local expert in service-learning, is managing the service project in partnership with Literacy for Environmental Justice. "It would be unique if these youth just came together for a discussion, but to do service together, side-by-side, means that they are building bridges, across cultures and countries, based in action, not just words," said Jim Pitofsky, Executive Director of Hands On Bay Area.

Hands On Bay Area offers local residents service-learning opportunities through their TeamWorks program. Through the program, teams of volunteers commit to participating in a series of 5-7 service projects in the region and facilitated reflection sessions with a team of other volunteers. Currently, three HOBA TeamWorks series offer volunteers a chance to learn more about the issue of immigration.

Where: Native Plant Nursery, 1050 Carroll Ave, San Francisco 94124

Hands On Bay Area

Hands On Bay Area (HOBA) strengthens communities through volunteer action and leadership development. Each month, Hands On coordinates and manages more than 100 community service projects that engage 4,500 volunteers each year. For more information, please visit www.handsonbayarea.org.