

Santa Barbara County Service Learning Initiative

THE SERVICE LEARNING

CURVE



Highlights from the 2009 California Service Learning Leadership Institute



The focus of this year’s Institute was “Youth Service, Today, Tomorrow, and Beyond.” SBCSLI was represented by Region 8 Lead, Art Fisher; SBCSLI coordinators, Irene Falzone and Kathy Kelly; Ontiveros Elementary School Principal, Margaret Ontiveros; Orcutt Assistant Superintendent, Ken Parker; Santa Barbara County Court and Community Schools teacher/administrator, Terri Carbajal; Montecito Union School teacher, Jennifer Wilson; and Santa Barbara High School teacher, Lee Ann Knodel, with students from her Virtual Enterprise class, who also presented at the Institute. Also attending were representatives from Channel Islands YMCA Youth Programs and two Region 8 Youth Catalysts, Katherine Gray and Ana Aguilar (both from Santa Barbara High School).

Attendees participated in workshops addressing the dropout problem in California and learned about strategies for increasing the graduation rate and the Youth Graduation Empowerment Project (YGEP), which seeks to establish local and regional youth summits aimed at keeping students in school. YGEP

works to identify needed changes in schools and communities to increase graduation opportunities. Information, www.ygеп.org

- State Senator Gloria Romero, herself a teacher, gave an inspiring and insightful talk about education and California’s efforts to support youth. Senator Romero shared stories about her childhood and some of her struggles, which resonated with many in the audience. After her talk, she took the time to speak with youth, pose for pictures with them, and expressed her desire to come and speak to Santa Barbara County teachers and students, if her schedule permits. University of Southern California Professor Manuel Pastor gave the plenary presentation on coming demographic, economic, social, and cultural changes predicted for California over the next 10 years. His research made it clear that we desperately need inclusive programs, such as those Service Learning provide, if we are going to succeed as a state and as a country. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jack O’Connell, honored 11 California Service Learning Leader Schools and shared their programs with the Institute.



- The Virtual Enterprise Classroom presentation by Lee Ann Knodel’s SBHS students showed how the class uses Service Learning to support and expand its mission of pioneering responsible business models. It was very well received and many Institute attendees have contacted the group to learn more about integrating this unique program into their own schools.

- Shelley Billig, from the RMC Research Corporation, shared the most recent research on Service Learning. The results are very encouraging and indicate what we have all long suspected. Service Learning makes a positive difference in academic achievement!

- Shelley’s PowerPoint is available on our website.

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Highlights from the 2009 California Service Learning Leadership Institute *(continued)*

- Effective Cesar E Chavez after-school models were introduced, exploring essential components for sustaining a successful club at the middle school level.
- The EPICS High model of STEM Service Learning was introduced and data shared on the impact of this highly successful program, conducted between participating high schools and Purdue University. Ken Parker is looking into this for the Orcutt Charter High School.
- The session on Empowering Alternative Education and Court/Community Schools with Service Learning discussed innovative strategies to integrate high-risk youth in Service Learning activities. Melanie Sutton, SBCSLI Site Advocate at Los Robles High School, has developed an innovative program for incarcerated youth that she would be happy to share with other interested teachers.

Highlights from Mid-Year Meetings: Great Job, Team!

We recently completed our mid-year meetings with Site Advocates and principals. The power of Service Learning is palpable as teachers work to engage their students in learning. It was so exciting to hear about the amazing activity going on in classrooms throughout our county and what schools and teachers are accomplishing! We don't have space to list all of the good work- but wanted to share a few highlights with you.

North County

- **Alice Shaw School** (Orcutt) continues to expand their intensive projects around energy and the environment, as well as working with animals and the Humane Society.
- At **Ontiveros School** (Santa Maria), students learn how to write persuasively and analyze and graph data by evaluating philanthropic organizations through their written appeals for support. From their research, they will be selecting an organization to support as a classroom this year. They are also doing native plant and green garden projects.
- **Taylor School** (Santa Maria) students continue to work in the school garden, collecting seeds and growing plants, as well as the local park pond ("Clean the Park Campaign"), using this "outdoor school" as a teaching tool for math, science and literacy development (over 20 classrooms participating). They are also working on projects supporting animal care and awareness with the Humane Society.
- **El Camino Junior High** (Santa Maria) is working with students and Cal Poly to plan and beautify their school site. Also planting oak tree seedlings in the community.
- **Fesler Junior High** nurtures and plants oak trees (in cooperation with their partner, Parks and Recreation), also learning about the critical role that trees play in maintaining healthy air quality. Check out Mike Muscio's link: <http://www.smbd.org/page.cfm?p=1794>
- **Benjamin Foxen School** (Blochman) is working to grow produce that can be used as community food share; making placemats for hospital patients, and sending Valentines to veterans
- **Joe Nightingale School** (Orcutt) is working with students to publish the school newsletter (the Challenge), which highlights SL Projects. News has spread and now other grades are coming to them with write-ups of their SL projects to share in the newsletter. Working hard this year with Cal Poly to develop green energy (solar panels), gardening/composting and recycling.
- **Fairlawn School** (Santa Maria) does Service Learning projects in their 4/5/6 Leadership class including: Pennies for Patients, canned food collection, growing produce in garden boxes (2 other teachers doing this now, as well). Vegetables will be part of school lunches.
- **Alvin School** (Santa Maria) students continue to work with the Senior Center, Angels Bearing Gifts (serving the developmentally disabled), write letters to veterans, and are learning ASL.
- At **Mary Buren School** (Guadalupe), students continue to make educational videos to share with their families; work with the senior center and library on cultural projects; gardening and recycling projects, as well as fire safety projects and Pennies for Patients ("We are all philanthropists")

South and Mid-County

- **El Camino School** (Goleta) works with Angel Bearing Gifts and is continuing to develop school-wide composting. They have established a partnership with Wildlife Network and are now making plans and discussing what they can do to help support their work.

- **Isla Vista School** (Goleta) is focused on "going green". They are using recycling (a service to the school) to raise money for Science Camp.
- **La Patera School** (Goleta) continues to do school-wide recycling. Special Resource Class wanted kids without homes to have pajamas and started "cozy kids". They collected pjs., socks, and slippers. Students bar graphed items collected, made posters, wrote scrip and presented to classrooms. They took a trip to Transition House and donated what they collected, providing services to homeless families.
- **Montecito Union School** (Montecito) continues to do the Unity Shoppe but is looking for ways to include more student voice and have been surveying school and community needs. The District has included a Service Learning element in their plan
- **Jonata School** (Buellton) has developed a partnership with the City and students will be helping with planting and development of the new Botanic Garden
- **Santa Ynez School** (Santa Ynez) has a team of four teachers supporting the student-led school garden project. Students make the decision about what will be planted and then distribute the food grown to the local food bank, school cafeteria, or in some cases to families at their school site

What a wonderful opportunity to work together with teachers like you!

Olive Grove Charter School joins SBCSLI

We are delighted to welcome the Los Olivos **Olive Grove Charter School** to our Initiative. Olive Grove teachers will be meeting with us for an initial training on April 20, with a follow-up training on April 27.

THANK YOU, ORCUTT SITE ADVOCATES!

Valerie Trenev and Gail Winn-Jones, along with several of their **students** (Alice Shaw School) ; **Lynn Ramos, Stacey Lovell, and Susi Haggerty** (Joe Nightingale School) gave a wonderful Service Learning presentation to the **Orcutt School Board**. Board Members were moved and impressed, asking questions and pledging their continued support for Service Learning in the Orcutt District. **Dr. Ken Parker**, who attended the Anaheim Leadership Institute, is following up with Service Learning opportunities at the Orcutt Academy. A special thank you to Orcutt Curriculum Director, **Bob Bush**, for organizing the presentation and for being an advocate for Service Learning in Orcutt..

SAVE THE DATES!!

- **WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2009**
 ~ **NORTH COUNTY CELEBRATION**~ 3-5 PM
TAYLOR SCHOOL
 1921 Carlotti Drive, Santa Maria, CA 93454 (805) 361-6250
- **THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2009**
 ~ **SOUTH COUNTY CELEBRATION** ~ 3-5 PM
LA PATERA SCHOOL
 555 N La Patera Lane, Goleta, CA 93117 (805) 681-1280
- **Monday, August 10, 2009**
 ~ **SUMMER SERVICE LEARNING INSTITUTE**~
CARPINTERIA HIGH SCHOOL
 4810 Foothill Road , Carpinteria, CA 93013

RESOURCES

- <http://www.sbwater.org/ClassMats.htm> (resources and projects arranged by grade level)
- <http://www.freekibble.com>
- <http://www.freekibblekat.com>
- <http://www.freerice.com>
- <http://www.commonvision.org> (Fruit Tree Tour)
- <http://www.agardenpatch.com/> (Grow Boxes)
- <http://www.donorschoose.org>



Obama/Biden plan for Integrating Service into Learning

- **Expand Service-Learning in Our Nation's Schools:** Obama and Biden will set a goal that all middle and high school students do 50 hours of community service a year. They will develop national guidelines for service-learning and will give schools better tools both to develop programs and to document student experience. Green Job Corps: Obama and Biden will create an energy-focused youth jobs program to provide disadvantaged youth with service opportunities weatherizing buildings and getting practical experience in fast-growing career fields.
- **Expand YouthBuild Program:** Obama and Biden will expand the YouthBuild program, which gives disadvantaged young people the chance to complete their high school education, learn valuable skills and build affordable housing in their communities. They will grow the program so that 50,000 low-income young people a year a chance to learn construction job skills and complete high school.
- **Require 100 Hours of Service in College:** Obama and Biden will establish a new American Opportunity Tax Credit that is worth \$4,000 a year in exchange for 100 hours of public service a year.
- **Promote College Serve-Study:** Obama and Biden will ensure that at least 25 percent of College Work-Study funds are used to support public service opportunities instead of jobs in dining halls and libraries.



First lady Michelle Obama helped break ground on a new White House organic "kitchen garden." It will be the first working garden at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue since Eleanor Roosevelt planted a "victory garden" at the height of World War II. This time, however, the enemy is obesity. The first family is hoping to send a clear message to a fast food-driven nation that often seems to be losing the battle of the bulge. We're just hoping that a lot of families look at us and say this is something that they can do and talk to their own kids about and think a little bit critically about the food choices that they make," said Marian Robinson, the president's mother-in-law.

GIVE ACT/EDWARD M. KENNEDY SERVE AMERICA ACT PASSED BY CONGRESS!!!

The Senate has passed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act .This landmark legislation, in conjunction with the GIVE Act passed last week by the House, will dramatically expand support for Service Learning in our nation's schools and communities. It calls upon more school age youth to be active contributors to society, not just recipients of service. Young people—even those as young as five years old—are ready to use the skills and knowledge learned in school and community-based programs to improve their own communities.

Hot tip of the day!

<http://www.insideurbangreen.org/recycled-popsoda-bottles/.org/recycled-popsoda-bottles/>