

KIDS for the BAY

Environmental education through action

Newsletter

Spring 2008

www.kidsforthebay.org

A Project of Earth Island Institute

In The Aftermath of the Oil Spill

On November 7, 2007 a Cosco Busan freighter hit the Bay Bridge and spilled 58,000 gallons of toxic bunker fuel into the San Francisco Bay. Here at KIDS for the BAY we have been deeply saddened by this disaster for our unique estuarine environment, our wildlife and our community.

All local beaches and shorelines were closed due to large amounts of toxic oil globules invading the shoreline. Thousands of birds have been killed. The less obvious impacts include the countless underwater animals and plants that are in danger as a result of the oil spill.

oil globules from the beaches and shorelines where, every spring for the past 15 years, we have led our students on field trips. Six KftB staff members also volunteered to spot distressed, oil-covered birds to be recovered and rehabilitated in efforts coordinated

by the Shorebird Park Nature Center.

Another less obvious impact of the oil spill is on the subsistence fishing community – those families who fish from the Bay and eat the food they catch. KftB is conducting outreach efforts in our schools to teach about Safe Bay Food Consumption through our Watershed Action Program.



Program Director Sayo Costantino looks out over the Berkeley Marina and searches for distressed birds

This program reaches low-income school communities and provides information on how to reduce the intake of toxins from consuming Bay fish.

Currently many beaches remain closed and we are waiting to see if we will be able to lead any Bay field trips this year. The San Francisco Bay Estuary is a national treasure of incredible importance to the people and wildlife that inhabit this environment. Now, more than ever, it is essential that we stay focused on the restoration and education efforts that ensure the protection of this critical natural resource. ♦



A huge response from the community brought thousands of volunteers out to the Bay eager to do their part to help in the clean-up operation and the rescue of wildlife. KIDS for the BAY (KftB) staff participated in the Hazardous Materials Clean-Up Volunteer Training with the City of Berkeley. They helped to clean up



Sheela Shankar, Sayo Costantino, Shannon Bowen, Deborah Zierten, Leslie Haynes and Mandi Billinge volunteer to spot oil-covered birds at the Berkeley Marina

KIDS for the BAY Celebrates 15 Years of Excellence!

On October 13th, KIDS for the BAY celebrated 15 Years of inspiring the next generation of environmentalists at the Montclair Women's Cultural Arts Club! It was a wonderful evening, celebrating with donors, funders, friends, family, past and current teachers and students.

Our Executive Director and Founder, Mandi Billinge, gave an inspiring speech looking back on the success of the past 15 years and gave the audience a glimpse of our bright future by unveiling our new program, the Urban Wilderness Classroom.

KIDS for the BAY was proud to honor two classes for their outstanding action projects with our **Environmental Excellence Award**:

Betty Buginas' 4th/5th Grade Class at Castro Elementary in El Cerrito

Student Representative: Mike Jerez

Stephanie Kroll's 4th Grade Class at Rodeo Hills Elementary in Rodeo

Student Representatives: Cora Concannon and Mika Ella Pomaran



Executive Director Mandi Billinge speaks about KIDS for the BAY's 15 Years of Excellence



KftB staff celebrates 15 Years of Excellence!



Student Representatives for Rodeo Hills Elementary: Cora Concannon and Mika Ella Pomaran

KIDS for the BAY also proudly presented Board Member Leilani Alo with the Environmental Leadership Award for her years of incredible leadership in supporting KIDS for the BAY.

After the awards ceremony, everyone was delighted to be entertained by our very own Education Director Shefali Shah's performance with Cacique y Kongo, an Afro-Puerto Rican Bomba Music and Dance Ensemble! We then wrapped up the night by dancing to music by DJ Kendread!

We sincerely appreciate the generous supporters of our event:

Bronze Level Sponsor

Wells Fargo

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Frey Vineyards

Emilia's Flowers

Red Robin Catering

Barbara Price

DJ Kendread

Cacique Y Kongo

Kelly Marquis

Sequoia Graphics

Betty Buginas

Stephanie Kroll

Sara Bernard Photography

Thank you to everyone who made this event possible and to all of our wonderful supporters who have helped us deliver programs to 40,000 students and 1,700 teachers over the past 15 years! ♦



Education Director Shefali Shah performs Bomba dance with Cacique Y Kongo

NEW KIDS FOR THE BAY PROGRAM BEGINNING THIS SCHOOL YEAR: The Urban Wilderness Classroom

Imagine attending a school surrounded by chain link fences, located in one of the most industrialized counties in the nation and built on an abandoned toxic site. Our target elementary school, Jefferson School in San Leandro, Alameda County, is in a highly urbanized neighborhood with no current access to nature. At Jefferson School, 66% of students receive free or reduced-price lunches and 41% of students are English-Language learners.

Now imagine a beautiful, colorful place in a corner of that urban schoolyard. This special place is filled with nature and peace. It has been created by the many small hands, big hearts and actively engaged minds of Jefferson School students. It is a haven for them to explore and a living laboratory for them to study. It is a place for them to learn science, leadership, and community pride.

In the new Urban Wilderness Classroom Program KftB will work with every teacher and every class of students to design, create, study and maintain an Urban Wilderness Classroom at Jefferson School in San Leandro.

Each grade level will design and create a habitat within the UWC based on the science standards taught at each grade level. For example, second graders studying scientific life cycles will create a pond habitat to study the life cycles of aquatic invertebrates and Pacific Chorus Frogs. Once the wilderness is developed, KftB will lead lessons that teach the California State Science Standards through studying the various habitats of the wilderness and cultivating and maintaining them. This creative hands-on approach will engage students in the critical thinking skills necessary to succeed in science as they create and maintain their habitats.



Wilderness habitats will include:

- fresh water pond
- native plant garden including plants to attract butterflies and hummingbirds
- mini beast habitat for invertebrates and amphibians
- edible garden
- bird feeding and nesting habitats and birdbaths
- rockery with a rock collection, native plants and a sensory garden
- compost pile and tool shed.

The wilderness will include a quiet corner for meditation and reflection and a nature mural. There will also be an information center in the school,

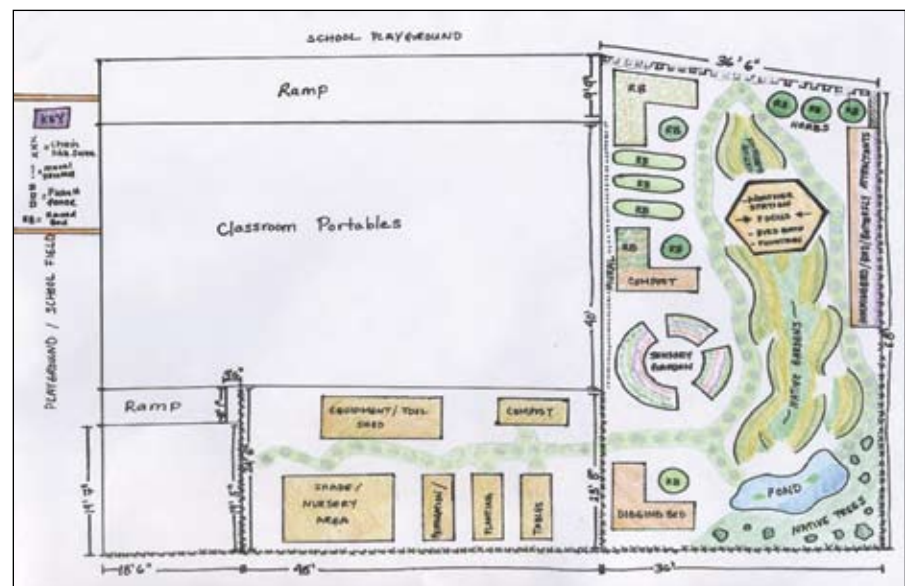
showcasing student-designed materials that teach about the UWC.

This exciting model program will train 30 teachers to use the local environment as an educational resource to stimulate 514 students' learning and empower these students to become environmental stewards.

After a five year period of KftB supporting the school, the principal, teachers, students, parents and community partners will continue the program independently as a completely integrated part of their school curriculum and culture. ♦

"The teachers and I are thrilled to have this opportunity to partner with KIDS for the BAY to bring a school wide environmental science program to our school. This project will be a huge benefit to our school community."

— Ruben Aurelio, Principal, Jefferson Elementary School, San Leandro



Developing Leadership at KIDS for the BAY

KIDS for the BAY is committed to developing our multicultural leaders in environmental education. We deliver a comprehensive internal professional development program, which all staff members are required to participate in each year. Education Director Shefali Shah, who has been with KftB for the past eight years, manages this program. All staff are required to develop new skills and background knowledge that will advance their careers in environmental education and nonprofit organizations.

As our organization grows we redefine roles and responsibilities and promote current staff to new positions to take on more responsibility within KIDS for the BAY. In September 2007, Sheela Shankar was promoted to the position of Associate Director. Sheela has been with KftB for the past eight years. She started as a Program Coordinator and has since worked as a Program Director and Education Director before accepting the position

of Associate Director. As Associate Director, Sheela is a crucial part of the leadership, decision-making process at KIDS for the BAY. Her many responsibilities include: personnel management, working with the Executive Director on the Leadership Committee, managing the evaluation plan, supervising program and curriculum development, fundraising and many other tasks.

Now in her fifth year with KIDS for the BAY, Kristina Cervantes-Yoshida was promoted to Education Director at the beginning of this school year. This gives Kristina the opportunity to put into practice all her wonderful ideas for curriculum and program development for current and new programs.



Associate Director Sheela Shankar presents the Environmental Excellence Awards at KftB's 15 Year Celebration

Leslie Haynes and Sayo Costantino were both promoted to the position of Program Director. In this position, they have increased responsibility for managing government contracts and assisting with fundraising as well as managing our key programs. ♦



KIDS for the BAY Staff 2008 - top row left to right: Development Director Shannon Bowen, Education Director Kristina Cervantes Yoshida, Office Assistant Patrick Stelmach, Associate Director Sheela Shankar, Program Director Sayo Costantino, Program Director Leslie Haynes, Program Director Krista Mendelsohn, Education Director Shefali Shah - second row left to right: Program Coordinator Jonah Landor- Yamagata, Executive Director Mandi Billinge, and Program Coordinator Deborah Zierten.

Check our updated website: www.kidsforthebay.org!

Thank you

to our generous funders and donors in 2007:

Foundations, Corporations, Public Agencies, and Other Funders

Alameda County Clean Water Program
Bernard Osher Foundation
S.D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation
California Bay Delta Authority
Watershed Program
Capital Group Companies
Cedar Tree Foundation
Cheese Board Pizza Collective
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Rose Foundation
SF Station
San Francisco Estuary Project
Sierra Club
StopWaste.Org
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Town of Danville
Wells Fargo
West Berkeley Foundation
West Contra Costa County Integrated
Waste Management Authority/
Recyclemore

2007-2008 Donors

Environmental Visionary:

\$10,000 +

Anonymous
Holloway Family

Watershed Activist: \$5,000

Estuary Guardian: \$2,500 +

Ricardo Torres
Capital Group Companies

Habitat Protector: \$1,000 +

Leilani Alo
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Kuppe & Shaku Shankar
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(Green Planet Real Estate)
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Bay Sponsor: \$500 +

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Bill and Missy Waytena

Creek Steward: \$250 +

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Bill Strong & Teresa Rubio
Kathy & George Wolf

Donor: \$1 to \$249

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Mildred Bennet
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Sandra Clement & William Flynn
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Sheela Shankar & Anthony DeCicco
Shirley Mae & Igor Skaredoff
Patrick J. Stair
Jerry Travis
Emily Vogler
Susan Wilde
Carrie Wilson & Wick Pancoast
Jerry & Gloria Yoshida

KIDS FOR THE BAY NEWS

KIDS for the BAY Wins Three Awards in 2007!

NATIONAL AWARD: Coastal Living Magazine's Education Award

Out of all of the nation's environmental education programs, *Coastal Living Magazine* chose KIDS for the BAY's outstanding Watershed Action Program to present with their Education Award. In March, *Coastal Living* will publish a full-page feature article on our Watershed Action Program with a special emphasis on our Marine Sanctuaries Action Projects!



LOCAL AWARD: Contra Costa Watershed Forum Education Project of the Year Award

The Contra Costa Watershed Forum recognized KIDS for the BAY's outstanding student led restoration action projects on creeks in Contra Costa County through our Watershed Action Program!



Cedar Tree Foundation Award

In November 2007 the Cedar Tree Foundation awarded a \$150,000 grant to KIDS for the BAY for our Watershed Action Program. This was the first grant ever awarded by the Cedar Tree Foundation to an environmental education organization. Program Officer Sophia Kolehmainen explained, "We are looking forward to learning more about environmental education through this grant to KIDS for the BAY." KftB greatly appreciates the support of the Cedar Tree Foundation for our Watershed Action Program.



International Visitors To KIDS for the BAY

In 2007 KIDS for the BAY hosted two international delegations who came to observe our programs. These groups were eager to learn more about our model programs and how they can replicate them in their own countries.

Goldman Environmental Prize Winner Visits KIDS for the BAY

Munkhbayar, the Goldman Environmental Prize Winner in 2007, for Mongolia, visited KIDS for the BAY in April. Munkhbayar was recognized for his work to save Mongolian rivers from the detrimental effects of gold mining, which devastate the environment on which local people depend for their livelihood. Munkhbayar was



Green Party Mayor of Richmond, Gayle McLaughlin, Goldman Prize Winner Ts. Munkhbayar and Castro School students

"I am very excited to meet with you at KIDS for the BAY and to hear about all the work that you do with children. I believe that children are the most important component of our Onggi River Movement."

—Munkhbayar, Goldman Environmental Prize Winner, 2007

interested in KIDS for the BAY's programs because he believes that the involvement of youth is vital to the success of his movement in Mongolia.

Visit From The Ukraine Delegation

In August a group of 15 environmental scientists from the Ukraine came to visit KIDS for the BAY. All the members of the group were very interested in finding out more about our programs both in the classroom and in the field. They are now working on funding a visit by KIDS for the BAY to go to the Ukraine to train environmental educators there.

Summer Academy for Educators 2008

WATERSHED AWARENESS AND SUSTAINABLE ACTION

Join KIDS for the BAY's ground-breaking Summer Academy for Educators! In this exciting environmental action course, educators will participate in five days of experiential learning. The Academy combines fieldtrips and indoor hands-on learning that you can directly apply to any educational setting. Each day consists of six hours of activities, discussions, and curriculum integration planning. Strategies for teaching students with diverse cultural backgrounds and language needs will be modeled. KIDS for the BAY lessons and activities meet many California Science, Social Science and Math Standards.

- ♦ Fieldtrips ♦ Teaching Strategies
- ♦ Hands-on Science Experiments
- ♦ Developing Place-Based Action Projects
- ♦ A Boat Ride on the Bay
- ♦ and Much More!



Includes an afternoon boat ride on the Bay!

DATES: Monday, June 23, 2008 – Friday, June 27, 2008

TIMES: 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Friday, June 27, late end time for Boat Trip on the Bay –
9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

LOCATION: River of Words Office, Berkeley
2525 Eighth Street @ Dwight, Suite #13C

COST: \$25

STIPEND: Participants will receive a \$300 stipend for the purchase of environmental education equipment and resources after completing the Summer Academy Course.

OPTIONAL: 4 graduate level units through Cal State University, East Bay. **Included in cost.**

PARTICIPANTS: Formal and non-formal educators who work with elementary and middle school aged youth

CONTENT: Bay Area geography, watershed ecology, natural resource conservation, waste reduction, water issues and conservation, environmental justice and action, Bay health, scientific inquiry process, and Bay organism studies

CONTACT: Shefali Shah, Education Director
shefali@kidsforthebay.org ♦ (510)-985-1602

www.kidsforthebay.org

Please visit our website to download an application form.

Application Deadline: MAY 9, 2008



"The KIDS for the BAY curriculum is the one I use year after year. Their training and modeling of lessons was excellent and left me confident and excited to teach the activities myself."

— *Laura Prival, 5th Grade Teacher
Allendale Elementary School, Oakland*

An Exciting Eighth Year of Summer Camp!

Want to give your child an unforgettable summer camp experience that combines outdoor exploration and learning science? Then sign up for our exciting summer camps for 4-6 year olds, 5-7 year olds, and 8-10 year olds!

Through our summer camps, your child will discover the intricate ecosystems of five different habitats while learning how to protect and care for their local environment. We offer seven weeks of summer camp located in the East Bay and one week of summer camp located in the Presidio in San Francisco. To sign up, please go to www.kidsforthebay.org to download an application form or call Jonah at **(510) 985-1602** to have a form mailed to you.

Remember—our camps fill up early, so book now to ensure your place!

KIDS for the BAY 2008 Summer Camp Schedule

Aquatic Science Adventure Camp:

Age 8-10:

June 16 – June 20

June 23 – June 27

July 28 – August 1

Age 5-7:

July 7 – July 11

July 14 – July 18

July 21 – July 25

Mini Beasts Camp:

Age 4-6:

July 7 – July 11

July 14 – July 18 (Presidio

Location in San Francisco)



Make new friends at summer camp!



Sail on the San Francisco Bay!



1771 Alcatraz Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94703

