

Special Thanks To

KIDS for the BAY Sponsors

Alameda County Fish and Wildlife Commission, Alameda County Waste Management, Bernard-Osher Foundation, CALFED Bay-Delta, California Coastal Conservancy, City Of San Pablo, City Of Richmond, Contra Costa County Watershed Program, Dean Witter Foundation, Giant Steps Foundation, J. Vance Huckins Fund/Tides Foundation, Rose Foundation

This year KftB will partner with 140 teachers and 3,500 students in hands-on environmental education programs.

In a recent letter, Ms. Charlotte Bremond, a teacher at Fruitvale School in Oakland, shared her appreciation of the KIDS for the BAY program in her classroom:

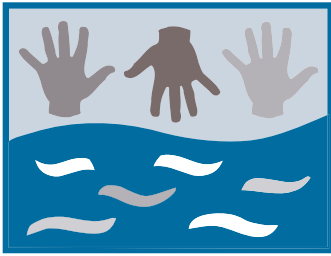
"My students are truly excited thinking about and waiting for our KIDS for the BAY science lessons. They leave with such great information, lasting experiences with our creek and great hands-on activities.

"As schools get further and further away from active learning experiences and closer to more weekly assessments of every kind, students miss out on the joy of learning. KIDS for the BAY is putting back this missing dimension into our classrooms.

"As a teacher of 34 years I love this great program. Thanks for the interesting curriculum and terrific Program Director; Kristina Cervantes is a born teacher! Keep up the great work; it is wonderful for our students."



1771 Alcatraz Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94703



KIDS for the BAY

Environmental education through action

Newsletter

Winter, 2004

A Project of Earth Island Institute

New KIDS for the BAY Programs

In 2003 KIDS for the BAY celebrated our Ten Year Anniversary. This year we are defining a new phase of growth and expansion for our organization. In September we hired four new Program Directors, which significantly increases our capacity. We also developed two new county-wide programs, the Watershed Action Program and the Four Rs Action Program. The **Watershed Action Program** is funded by a contract with the Contra Costa County Watershed Program. Over the next three years KftB will partner with every school in unincorporated Contra Costa County to deliver the Watershed Action program to every fourth grade teacher and class of students. In this program, teachers and students learn about their local watershed and the wider San Francisco Bay Area watershed. They learn about sources of pollution and watershed environmental health and justice issues. Each class goes on field trips to local creek and bay habitats and the students select, design and implement a Watershed Environmental Action Project. We plan to expand this program to incorporated Contra Costa County and Alameda County this year. Each participating class will be linked through a web site that describes their environmental action projects developed with KftB.



Students assess packaging for picnic items in the Four Rs Action Program



Students test water quality for their local creek in the Watershed Action Program

Our second new program is the **Four Rs Action Program – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rot**. This is funded by a contract with the Alameda County Waste Management Board. It provides the opportunity to integrate the Four Rs message into our current programs and to develop a new program. When students complete a creek or bay clean-up project they are always impacted by the amount of garbage they collect and they want to do something to reduce the garbage getting into their neighborhoods and local creeks. The Four Rs Program teaches students how to reduce garbage at the source and how to make positive choices about reuse. It also helps students and teachers to set up recycling and composting programs in their classrooms.

These two new KftB programs teach the latest state science and social studies standards. They provide hands-on professional development for teachers by providing the opportunity for teachers to learn alongside their students. KftB provides curriculum guides, modeling of activities, support with developing student-centered environmental action projects and an equipment package for each school. Our goal is for these environmental education programs to become integrated into the culture and curricula of our target schools. ♦

KIDS for the BAY Mission

KIDS for the BAY collaborates with teachers to inspire environmental consciousness in children and cultivate a love of learning. We are committed to education through action and to restoring a healthy environment for all communities.

KIDS for the BAY Programs

KIDS for the BAY provides professional development for teachers and academic enrichment for students. Our programs use the local environment as a living laboratory for student's learning and teach the latest state science and social studies standards. Students learn about their local watershed and environmental health and justice problems. They become environmentalists by cleaning up creeks, planting trees and wildflowers, interviewing politicians about local environmental justice issues, teaching their families how to safely prepare fish to eat from the bay and more education through action projects.

KIDS for the BAY Staff Update:

In September 2003 we expanded our organization by hiring four new Program Directors. We are thrilled about the new ideas and experiences they bring to KftB.

(From left to right in photo)

Mandi Billinge, our Executive Director, is excited about this new phase of growth for KftB. Her goal is to maintain the quality of our work as we increase the quantity.

Krystal Robinson Justice, Program Director, comes to KftB with experience working in social justice nonprofits, a teaching credential from New College of California and a B.A. from Harvard University.

Kristina Cervantes-Yoshida, Program Director and East Bay native, has a strong science and teaching background. She received her under-graduate degree in biology and marine science from Smith College.

Anthony DeCicco, Program Director, comes to KftB with a diverse environmental and teaching background. He is currently in the Master's Program in Education at CSU Hayward.

Shefali Shah has been promoted to Education Director. This year she completed her Masters Degree in Teaching Environmental Literacy from New College of California and celebrates her fourth year with KftB.

Keturah Ashfield, Program Director, has a background in outdoor education with the National Park Service and is an Oberlin graduate with a degree in Environmental Studies.

Sheela Shankar is beginning her fourth year at KftB, now as an Education Director. She is studying for her Master's Degree in Education at CSU Hayward.



KIDS for the BAY staff

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KIDS for the BAY Advisory Board

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To Contact Us:

KIDS for the BAY is located at 1771 Alcatraz Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94703. Our phone number is (510) 985-1602. Our e-mail address is kftb@aol.com.

KIDS for the BAY Summer Camp

New Camp For Older Students

In 2003 we added a new camp for 8 – 10 year old students. In this week long Aquatic Science Adventure Camp students take a boat trip on the San Francisco Bay and study the animals and plants living in the open water. They complete detailed investigations of bay-estuary and creek habitats, including water quality testing and they learn how to take action to help solve some of the issues affecting their local environment. Camp sites include Berkeley Marina, Point Richmond Beach, Wildcat Creek and Lake Anza.

Our younger students, ages 5 – 7 years enjoy fishing for crabs, catching waterstriders, studying damselfly nymphs, experimenting with estuary water, plant art, nature hikes and games. Camp sites include Berkeley Marina, Jewel Lake, Strawberry Creek and Lake Anza.

In 2003 our camps sold out very early in the year and we had waiting lists for every session. In 2004 we will add another week of camp to make a total of four sessions. The dates for this year are:

5-7 years: 6/14 – 6/18 and 7/5 – 7/9

8-10 years: 6/21 – 6/25 and 7/12 – 7/16

Please call (510) 985-1602 to receive an application form in the mail or visit our website at www.kidsforthebay.org

Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis; please apply early to ensure your place.



KIDS for the BAY campers on the Pegasus boat ride with the Nautilus Institute



If you would like to make a donation to support **KIDS for the BAY** please make your check payable to:

Earth Island Institute/KftB
and mail to:

KIDS for the BAY, 1771 Alcatraz Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94703

For further information, please call (510) 985-1602

or visit our website at www.kidsforthebay.org

Name _____

Address _____

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Watershed Action Program

In this exciting program, KIDS for the BAY comes to your classroom to teach hands-on science experiments and activities that engage students with their local watershed. The Watershed Action Program consists of two days of interactive in-class workshops, a fieldtrip to a local creek, bay or delta habitat, and an environmental action project. This program provides a fun and educational experience for students and meets many California State Science and Social Science Standards. The Watershed Action Program is also a teacher training program in which a curriculum and supplies are provided and activities are modeled for you with your students.

IN HANDS-ON INVESTIGATIONS, YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS WILL:

- Create a model of the Bay-Delta Estuary environment
- Experiment with watershed chemistry
- Investigate the biology of watershed habitats
- Learn about local environmental justice issues
- Develop and implement an environmental action project



ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- Raise and release native Pacific Chorus Frogs
- Create books, posters and flyers about reducing pollution
- Grow and plant native creek-side trees and wildflowers
- Release ladybugs as an environmentally safe approach to pest control
- Organize a creek or bay clean up
- Present personal actions to reduce pollution to families and the community
- Interview a local politician about environmental justice issues
- Demonstrate safe bay fish cooking practices at a school community presentation
- Test creek water quality and assess the health of the creek

"This is an excellent hands-on, concept oriented program that focuses on students becoming part of our ecological community. I love having the lessons modeled for me. The curriculum is very effective and I feel confident to teach this myself after partnering with KIDS for the BAY." — Marina Franco, 3rd grade teacher, John Muir Elementary School, Berkeley, CA

"KIDS for the BAY provides the best science learning that we do all year. My students learned the processes of scientific thinking, why things happen and how one thing affects another." — Steve Ahonen, 5th grade teacher, Highlands Elementary School, Pittsburg, CA

Please call **(510) 985-1602** to receive an application in the mail or visit our website at www.kidsforthebay.org.



Career Development at KIDS for the BAY

Sheela Shankar and Shefali Shah are both in their fourth year of working for KIDS for the BAY. They were both promoted to Education Directors this year and have taken on more responsibility for program and curriculum development and supervising new staff. In the following interview they reflect on how their experience with KIDS for the BAY has helped them develop their careers in environmental education.

What was your experience prior to working with KftB?

Sheela: I had taught environmental education programs before, but I never had the opportunity to work on an in-depth level with teachers and students and really evaluate the impact of the work. This is why I wanted to work with KftB because our programs are long term and in-depth. We evaluate everything we do and use the information to make improvements.

Shefali: My only teaching experience was substitute teaching. I learned so much from other KftB staff, especially Jocelyn Manuel who was the Education Director when I joined the organization. I experienced environmental justice issues first hand living in Puerto Rico and seeing the ecological damage and devastation on the island of Vieques due to U.S. military operations.

How has working with KftB helped you develop your knowledge and skills?

Sheela: I have learned so much about teaching from other KftB staff. Our model of observing one another and giving feedback is really helpful. I have learned how to develop curricula and I love doing research to write new lessons. I am really enjoying creating our new Four Rs Program. I have also gained a great deal of experience working with the teachers that we train in our programs and building relationships with the teachers and principals at our schools.

Shefali: In my work with KftB, I have learned how to develop and teach hands-on lessons built around meaningful experiences for students in environmental education and environmental justice. I particularly enjoy creating new lessons and developing materials for teaching. When I supervise someone else teaching it really helps me to develop my own teaching skills and reflect on the best approach for each activity and lesson. It is definitely a two way learning process.

Through teaching KftB programs in public schools I have learned a lot about environmental justice issues in our schools. For example, schools in Oakland and Richmond have so few resources and are located in toxic environments. The students already know a lot about the pollution affecting their lives and the health problems it causes including cancer and asthma. KftB helps to empower students with activities that they can do to address these problems.



Sheela Shankar teaching the Four Rs Action Program



Shefali Shah teaching a pond investigation lesson.

How has working with KftB helped you develop your leadership skills?

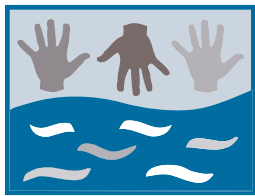
Sheela: At KftB we are all seen as leaders. We all recognize leadership in each other and value all our different contributions. There are no power issues or hierarchies and everyone has key responsibilities. That feels really good. After four years with KftB, I have learned so much about our programs and I have a lot to give to the new people working here. I love helping our new staff problem solve and be successful.

Shefali: I enjoy meeting with principals and teachers and doing outreach for KftB. I have learned to promote our work very effectively because I believe in it. Every time I go into a classroom to teach one of our programs I am a leader in that classroom and a role model for our students.

What are your current career goals?

Sheela: I plan to continue my work with KftB. I love working here, which is why I am still here! I am enjoying studying my Master's Degree in Curriculum Development at Cal. State Hayward. I love being in the environmental education field and sharing my work with others.

Shefali: I also want to continue working with KftB. In addition I am currently lecturing at New College in San Francisco and I have a very strong interest in teacher training. I am also interested in studying for a PhD in curriculum development. My goal is to develop meaningful curricula that inspires students to make positive change in their environment and their lives. ♦



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Mandi Billinge, Executive Director/Founder

Four Rs Action Program

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rot

In this exciting program KIDS for the BAY comes to your classroom to teach hands-on science experiments and activities that provide an in-depth investigation into waste reduction and the Four Rs. The Four Rs Action Program consists of five two-hour lessons and a choice of environmental action projects that focus on reducing our waste stream. It provides a fun and educational experience for students and meets many California State Science, Social Science, and Math Standards. The Four Rs Program is also a teacher-training program; a curriculum guide and equipment are provided and activities are modeled for teachers with their students.



IN HANDS-ON INVESTIGATIONS, YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS WILL:

- Learn about our waste stream and landfills
- Conduct a neighborhood clean-up and categorize the garbage items collected
- Share a picnic and analyze packaging in lunch items
- Make recycled paper
- Investigate red wiggler worms and an active compost bin
- Learn about environmental justice leaders working to reduce waste in their communities

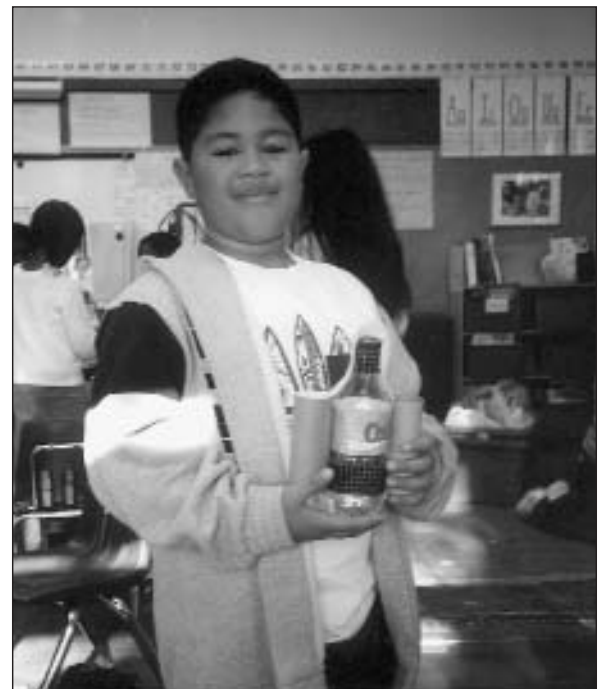
CHOOSE FROM THE FOLLOWING ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROJECTS:

- Set up a recycling system for your classroom and a buddy class
- Set up a worm compost bin in the classroom
- Create art projects out of reusable materials
- Lead presentations to family members and schoolmates on the Four Rs

"I am absolutely thrilled with our KIDS for the BAY program and I have expanded it into the year-long theme for my class. I feel confident that I can teach everything myself next school year with all the training and equipment you have provided."

— *Monica May, Teacher, Sequoia School, Oakland*

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KIDS for the BAY — Meeting the Need for Diversity in Environmental Education

Environmental education organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area are operating in a highly diverse environment. In order to be effective these organizations must address some important issues including environmental justice and organizational diversity. Yet many environmental education organizations are still lagging behind in addressing these critical issues and in presenting role models and teachers who reflect the ethnicities and experiences of their target student populations.

KIDS for the BAY partners primarily with low income, urban schools where 80 – 100 per cent of students are children of color. Our board and staff reflect the culture of the school communities we work with and our Program Directors are important role models for our students, teachers and the wider community.

One of the keys to meeting the needs of a diverse student population is to have a diverse employee base. KftB advertises jobs to ensure that there is outreach to diverse communities. Equal access to job opportunities is only possible if you advertise to and interview a diverse selection of candidates.

At KIDS for the BAY we currently have seven staff, including Asian American, Latina, African American and Caucasian people. The diversity in our organization is a wonderful source of energy and creativity.

If we are to encourage our students to become environmentalists then it is important to provide role models who reflect their cultural backgrounds and inspire them to believe that they too can be scientists and environmental activists. It is also crucial to address urban environmental issues that affect student's daily lives.

In order to fully address the issues of diversity within the environmental education community it is important to acknowledge the power of the unexpected voice, for example a white person who speaks out against racism, a heterosexual person who speaks out against homophobia. We recently hired our first Caucasian Program Director, Keturah Ashfield. She is already becoming a leader in the field of multicultural environmental education as she teaches KftB curricula and uses our inclusive approach to teaching.

Diversity and inclusiveness are everyone's responsibility and can only strengthen any organization and any movement. ♦



KftB Program Director Kristina Cervantes-Yoshida demonstrates the concept of a watershed to students in the Watershed Action Program.