



KIDS for the BAY

Newsletter

Spring 2013

www.kidsforthebay.org

A Project of Earth Island Institute

~ Celebrating 20 Years! ~

KIDS for the BAY Celebrates 20 Years!

On October 20, 2012, the beautiful greenway of Codornices Creek was brightened by KIDS for the BAY volunteers and celebrators. How does an environmental education organization celebrate its 20 Year Anniversary? By doing something for the earth of course! Teachers, families, donors, board members and other supporters joined together to plant more than 200 native plants beside Codornices Creek and to celebrate KIDS for the BAY's 20 years of successful environmental education programs in local schools.



Planters gathered to celebrate KIDS for the BAY's accomplishments with an amazing performance by Quenepas – Puerto Rican drumming, dancing and singing youth group – and for the presentation of the KIDS for the BAY Guardian Awards (see story on page three).

Over the past 20 years, 60,000 school students have graduated from a KIDS for the BAY program. This includes 60,000 Inspired Environmentalists who are helping to take care of the environment we all share. 2,650 teachers have also graduated from a KIDS for the BAY program. Many of these teachers continue to teach environmental science education to their students every year, using the tools and resources provided by KIDS for the BAY.

We want to thank our students, teachers, school principals, donors, staff, board members and other supporters for a wonderful journey over the past 20 Years, and

for helping KIDS for the BAY to achieve an amazing accomplishment of 60,000 Inspired Environmentalists! We are looking forward to inspiring another generation of environmentalists in the next 20 Years! ♦

Visit our website to watch our wonderful new video, sign up to receive our E-Newsletter and read our latest Annual Report: www.kidsforthebay.org



20 Year Anniversary Matching Gift Campaign – Thank You to Our Major Donors

KIDS for the BAY raised \$20,000 in major donations of \$250 - \$1,000 in honor of our 20 Year Anniversary in 2012! The Dean Witter Foundation will match these funds for a total of \$40,000 to help support our programs in the 2012-2013 school year, which are currently reaching 147 teachers and 4,334 school students. We want to say a very big THANK YOU to our major donors, including: retired teachers who were former participants in KIDS for the BAY programs, advisory board members, friends and family members, parents of our school students and summer camp kids, KIDS for the BAY staff and many others in our network. We really appreciate all your support for our work!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

During the current 2012 – 2013 School Year, KIDS for the BAY is partnering with 147 teachers to deliver hands-on environmental education programs to 4,334 school students. These programs are:

Turning Students on to Science

California is rated the third lowest state in the nation in science test scores. Students participating in KIDS for the BAY programs have the opportunity to learn hands-on science both in the classroom and in the outdoors. Our partner teachers tell us that for many of our students this is their only hands-on science experience for the entire school year.

KIDS for the BAY students experiment with simulating an estuary by creating a model of the San Francisco Bay in the classroom out of clay, and mixing salt water and fresh water to create brackish water. Students also experiment with the different densities of fresh water and salt water and learn about the significance of the null zone in the bay, as well as many more hands-on science activities.

"The KIDS for the BAY Watershed Action Program has helped me to address the California Science Standards in a way that was fun, interesting, and accessible to all students."

— Julie Romero, Third Grade Teacher, Fair Oaks Elementary School, Pleasant Hill



Connecting Students With Nature

A lack of routine contact with nature may result in stunted academic and developmental growth. This unwanted side-effect of the electronic age is called Nature Deficit Disorder (NDD).

KIDS for the BAY takes school students and their teachers into the outdoors to explore and investigate the world around them. In addition to excursions in the school neighborhood, students go on field trips to local creek, bay and ocean habitats for a close-up encounter with nature. All field trips are on public land and accessible by public transport so that students can return with their families.

Fairmont Elementary School students from El Cerrito had a fabulous experience on their KIDS for the BAY field trip to Crown Memorial State Beach/Crab Cove in Alameda. The fourth and fifth graders were so excited to explore the rocky shore and discover mud crabs, acorn barnacles, blue mussels, clams, and sea lettuce. Parent chaperones also enjoyed the experience. One shared, **"I would never have thought to come here and look under the rocks. Who knew there were all these animals here?"**

Using binoculars to observe birds was another highlight of the trip. Students worked in pairs and walked along the shoreline with bird identification field guides, expertly discussing the birds they saw. Students also studied plankton through microscopes and conducted a shoreline clean-up to remove trash from the beach. During the clean-up they collected many different types of trash including plastic pieces and paper bags. Afterwards a student named Olivia reflected, **"One of my favorite parts of the field trip was when we did a beach clean-up. It made me feel good to help make the beach clean."**



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS continued

Empowering Students to Take Action for the Environment

“Environmental education through action” is one of the main goals of KIDS for the BAY. Planning and implementing environmental action projects is so empowering for our students. When they take action, and teach others to take action, they discover how powerful their choices for a better environment can be.

More than 1,500 KIDS for the BAY students have taken to the streets this winter to clean up their school neighborhoods and prevent harmful trash from getting into storm drains that lead to the San Francisco Bay. Armed with tongs, and bags for collecting trash and recycling, KIDS for the BAY students have collected hundreds of pounds of trash from their local streets. It is amazing how enthusiastic our students are about helping the earth by cleaning up their local environment! Their efforts are helping to reduce plastic marine debris in creek, bay and ocean habitats (see story on page four). ♦



Creating a Lasting Impact

Our unique Teacher Training Model provides the opportunity for teachers to learn our programs alongside their students. Many teachers continue teaching our programs after their first-hand training, using the curriculum guide, equipment kit and ongoing support provided. We commend two teams of teachers for their commitment to continue to teach KIDS for the BAY programs at their schools:

KIDS for the BAY Guardian Awards

JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BERKELEY

At John Muir Elementary School in Berkeley, the entire faculty of teachers, the school principal and parents partnered with KIDS for the BAY for three years, to teach every student about local creeks, the bay and the ocean in our School Wide Watershed Action program. Harwood Creek, which flows through the school grounds, was the focus of one of KIDS for the BAY's original programs, the School Wide Creek Education Program. It is wonderful to extend our partnership with John Muir School to introduce a new program many years later.



Audrey Amos, Principal of John Muir School, accepts the KIDS for the BAY Guardian Award from Mandi Billinge, Executive Director of KIDS for the BAY

WORLD ACADEMY TEAM OF THIRD GRADE TEACHERS, OAKLAND

KIDS for the BAY began working with World Academy third grade teachers five years ago, including: Colleen Hodge, Jennifer Erickson, Sarah AnnLeRoy, Carolina Monterrosa, Darlene Smith-Walters and Lucy Schmidt. The teachers now teach our Watershed Action Program every year as a completely integrated part of their curriculum. These teachers are amazing! They teach the program, including all the classroom lessons and action projects, and they take all their third grade students – 150 students – on two field trips to Sausal Creek and Crab Cove each year.

BE AN ENVIRONMENTALIST

Reduce Plastic Marine Debris

Studies show that there are 46,000 pieces of plastic litter floating on every square mile of the ocean. More than 1 million birds, more than 100,000 whales, seals and turtles, and countless fish world-wide are killed by plastic debris each year. These deaths occur through entanglement, suffocation and starvation by ingestion. Do your part to reduce plastic marine debris. Reduce your use of plastics, especially single-use plastic bags, reuse plastic materials, recycle plastics where possible and make sure plastics are properly disposed of and do not find their way into storm drains, creeks, the bay and the ocean. ♦



2013 KIDS for the BAY Summer Camp: Now Accepting Registrations!

Summer is right around the corner — get ready for a fun-filled summer of hands-on science and nature exploration in the outdoors! KIDS for the BAY invites children age 5-11 years to spend the summer with us, exploring nature in our 2013 Summer Camp Program. Campers will investigate bay and ocean shorelines, visit botanical gardens, hike along beautiful creeks, collect insects from ponds, and swim in a lake!

5-8 and 8-11 year old camp sessions!

In our **NEW 8-11 year old KIDS for the BAY Explorers** camp, campers will experience higher-level science investigations, kayak on the bay, visit the ocean and many more exciting adventures.

5-8 year olds can choose from three fun nature-based themes:

Aquatic Science Adventures

Wonderful World of Plants

Animals, Animals, Everywhere!



Field Trips around the Bay Area — transportation provided by KIDS for the BAY!

We have added exciting nature Field Trips to our camps, with destinations including the Lindsay Wildlife Museum in Walnut Creek, Golden Gate Park Botanical Gardens in San Francisco, and Samuel P. Taylor Park in Marin. Transportation to all Field Trip locations will be provided by KIDS for the BAY.



Learn more about our 2013 Summer Camp Program and register online at www.kidsforthebay.org/camp.

Questions? Call Eugenia or Sheela at the KIDS for the BAY office: **510-985-1602**.

We look forward to spending another summer with you!

"The camp is very well organized, with a great balance of science and just being-outside fun!"
— Theresa, Camp Mom