



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 24, 2006

Date: October 24, 2006  
To: Members of the City Council  
From: Mayor Tom Bates  
Subject: 2006-2007 City of Berkeley Volunteer Champions Campaign

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the City Manager the development of an annual campaign that promotes and publicizes employee volunteerism in the community, especially volunteerism with Berkeley's youth and families.

BACKGROUND

Employees in The City of Berkeley have long participated in volunteer efforts. They help to organize neighborhood clean-up days, participate in citywide events such as Drop Everything and Read (DEAR day) and Rebuilding Together and, three years ago, the City Council approved an employee release program known as Berkeley Champions for Kids (BCK) to promote volunteerism with at-risk youth.

In promoting a citywide campaign to encourage participation of City employees in volunteer mobilizations and individual efforts, we can contribute to the overall health and success of our youth. Study after study also demonstrates that employee involvement in community volunteering helps build morale and productivity in the workplace.

The following events are exciting opportunities for our city employees to engage directly with youth in the community.

**December 4, 2006 – Project Homeless Youth Connect**

More than 300 homeless youth ages 18–25 live in and around Berkeley. Many have aged out of the foster care system with no family or financial support. Others have mental and physical disabilities and/or substance abuse problems. These vulnerable young men and women need access to housing and a range of supportive services to begin to address their problems and get on track for healthy, productive lives.

Berkeley Homeless Youth Connect, the first such initiative dedicated to youth, is a series of community-based resource events that bridge the gap between homeless youth and the critical services they need. By bringing together numerous local and regional service providers,

community partners and volunteers in a central location, Homeless Youth Connect helps ensure that young people can obtain a wide variety of services and information in the course of an afternoon.

**March 13, 2007 – BUSD Drop Everything and Read Day (DEAR)**

For more than a decade, hundreds of volunteers have dropped what they were doing and read to Berkeley elementary students. This year, on March 13, City employees will have the opportunity take 30 minutes out of their day to read to children in Berkeley children. This is a fun, one-time opportunity to share your favorite stories and your own love of reading with classes guaranteed to be packed with avid listeners.

**April 2007 - Rebuilding Together**

Rebuilding Together (formerly known as Christmas in April) provides opportunities for people from all walks of life to build community spirit & teamwork by working on home repair for low-income, elderly, and disabled homeowners; free access modifications to increase homeowner safety and independence; and renovations for non-profit and community facilities. This spring, by working with Berkeley Champions for Kids and Rebuilding Together, City of Berkeley employees can help provide needed support to a soon to-be-determined youth oriented project.

**On-Going Volunteer Opportunities with Youth**

Berkeley Champions for Kids and Berkeley School Volunteers have an ongoing list of volunteer opportunities to work with youth in the community and in the schools. Opportunities include tutoring, coaching, mentoring, teacher support, and much more.

To help promote and organize this effort with the City, Berkeley Champions for Kids (BCK) Volunteer Center and Berkeley School Volunteers (BSV) will offer informational presentations, promotional materials, registration and support.

FISCAL IMPACTS: none

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