



LA CONSERVATION CORPS

November 24, 2010

Today, the Corps held its annual Thanksgiving Feast at Los Angeles State Historic Park for all YAC corpsmembers. The staff prepared and served the food to over 300 people. As you can see from the photos on our [slideshow](#), everyone had a fantastic time! We wish a happy and safe Thanksgiving to all our LA Corps family!

Celebrating 25 Years!



Antonio Jones, L.A. County Federation of Labor

When did you work for the Corps and for how long?

I joined the Corps in 1992 and stayed with the Corps for roughly 10 years. Initially I was a corpsmember, but I eventually worked my way up to supervisor.

Please tell us about your life now, both professionally and personally.

Well, professionally, I'm a political representative with the L.A. County Federation of Labor – the AFL-CIO. The Federation oversees about 300 unions in the county of Los Angeles, representing roughly 380 thousand union members. My primary responsibilities there are in the political department, working to help or endorse candidates and get them elected to political office. I do a lot of C.O.P.E. interviews, or interviews by the Council On Political Education. C.O.P.E. interviews are interviews where a large group of union members comes together to interview candidates seeking political office, whether they are running for governor, school supervisor, or assembly member. These interviews are pretty important because they determine what candidates the unions endorse and Organized Labor's endorsement is one of the most powerful endorsements to have in the county of L.A.. So, in conducting C.O.P.E. interviews I essentially oversee that endorsement process. My other responsibilities include providing logistical assistance to these unions when they are out on the picket line – whether it's helping to set up a picket line, helping to organize workers, or being a bridge to unions seeking to communicate with politicians regarding certain issues. I also just finished running the I.E. (individual expenditures) campaign for Jerry Brown.

In my personal life I have a thirteen year old son and was in a marriage that lasted for about 12 years. Other than that, it's mainly work – once you get involved in the labor movement you pretty much give up your personal life. I spend most of my time staying involved in the community and keeping my eyes and ears open to the needs of the community, so in my personal life it's pretty much just me and my son.

How did the Corps influence who you are and what you are doing currently?

The Corps influenced me by giving me the opportunity to give back to my community. In the past, I

served some prison time and after I got out Bruce Saito and the Corps gave me a chance to reintegrate into society and serve my community. I still really appreciate the Corps for giving me that second chance. It allowed me to become involved in service initially and ultimately was what led to my position now, where I serve the community on a larger scale. I'm no longer planting trees and cleaning graffiti, but I'm helping to put people in power that can do great things for residents of poor neighborhoods like the one I was raised in.

Is there anything particularly memorable about the Corps that you would like to share?

The 7am physical training! I really enjoyed doing that because I love to stay in shape and got a kick out of working out every morning. I also loved being part of the graffiti removal program – it was great going into some neighborhoods that were covered in graffiti and helping to make them look a little less rundown. I think a neighborhood's appearance and the presence of graffiti can have a psychological affect on its residents – so I think that removing graffiti within twenty four hours has the potential to save lives. Graffiti removal is definitely a needed resource for Los Angeles and I sometimes miss my work helping to beautify our wonderful city.

Today, the Corps held its annual Thanksgiving Feast at Los Angeles State Historic Park for all corpsmembers. The staff prepared and served the food to over 300 young people. As you can see from the photos below, everyone had a fantastic time! We wish a happy and safe Thanksgiving to all our LA Corps family!

Young Adult Corps

Last week a crew of 6 corpsmembers from 3 different Corps sites (ELA, SLA, and SEA Lab) kicked off the Santa Cruz Island restoration project. Working with professional ecologists, the Corps will eradicate several different species of invasive vegetation. In an effort to address specific targeted plant species the 5 week project will be spread out over several months. The Nature Conservancy is planning a marketing campaign around the project, culminating in a "Fieldtrip" to Santa Cruz Island project where corpsmembers, Corps staff and board members, TNC executives, and invited dignitaries will visit the island to celebrate the project and the hard work of our corpsmembers. Stay tuned for more developments and schedule of events.



Corpsmembers work to eradicate invasive vegetation on Santa Cruz Island

Recycling Across LA

This Saturday, November 27th RACLA crews will be busy recycling at the USC v. Notre Dame football game at LA Coliseum. Fight on Trojans!

LA River Keepers

On Friday, November 19th, twenty-five NBC Universal volunteers teamed up with the LA Corps River Keepers and met at Marsh Street Park to clean up the Los Angeles River. Julie Berk, Senior Vice President of Creative Services Marketing for Universal Pictures, kicked off the event. The River Keepers worked with the NBCU volunteers to clear litter from the river bed which, if left in the river, eventually flows into the ocean and pollutes our beaches. Volunteers also removed weeds along the bike path to help keep it safe for bikers and pedestrians!



NBCU volunteers teamed up with the LA River Keepers at Marsh Street Park

On Saturday, December 4, the River Keepers will be out for the grand opening celebration of the Elysian Valley Pedestrian/Bike Path. Councilmember Ed Reyes and KCET are inviting everyone to participate in [KCET's Departures LA River StoryShare Initiative](#). Everyone is invited to go and record your story for this historic documentation of life along the river! Please follow the link to sign up on the website and receive more information.

Happy Thanksgiving!

