

February 3, 2012

Farewell and Best Wishes!

Today the LA Corps bids adieu to Maribel Briseño, a two-time staff member who has worked in various positions with the organization, including Counseling, the Bridges program at Gompers and most recently, at our Northeast LA Center. At a luncheon in her honor, Maribel thanked her colleagues and Senior Director Irene Lopez-Muro for the opportunities and friendships she found at the Corps. We wish her all the best as she pursues her future goals.



Maribel Briseño with Executive Director, Bruce Saito

On Monday, January 30th, the garden at Metropolitan High School in downtown Los Angeles was officially launched with a planting day, led by Blanca Fuentes' crew from our ELA Center. As part of the EMA School Gardens program, ten raised beds were built and installed by Celia Garcia's crew after the area was cleared and leveled. Students from the high school were joined by volunteers from Signorelli, a clothing company located next door that sponsored the garden. [ABC7](#) came out to cover the event in which the LA Corps crew helped students plant cilantro, peppers, eggplant, lettuce, zucchini and tomatoes. Principal Raul Aguilar informed us that the school will be starting a horticulture class where the students will have hands-on lessons in botany and nutrition. For more pictures of the project, please see our [Facebook album](#). Thanks to our Young Adult Corpsmembers for creating a green space for their peers in the middle of the industrial warehouse district!



Metropolitan High School Garden: Before & After

Young Adult Corps

Corpsmembers from East LA and the GIC training crew continued installing drainage and pouring concrete curbs at the Crescenta Valley Dog Park. The project is progressing nicely and representatives from local Council Districts, newspapers and blogs have all stopped by due to the high profile nature of this project. Check out this [Blog post](#) to learn more about the project!



Corpsmembers pouring concrete curbs

Corpsmembers from East LA are now in the process of forming the curb for the Willowbrook walking path along the Compton Creek Channel. The curb will be 1,000 feet long when it's completed and it will prevent water from flowing down the slope. The water will instead be diverted to a specially designed EZ Flo device. This device will slowly release the water to surrounding native trees and grasses.



A chainsaw sure comes in handy, when you are doing trail maintenance on the Backbone trail in the beautiful Santa Monica Mountains. Unlike fire fuel cutting, trail maintenance requires a bit more patience to insure the brush and trees are trimmed to preserve their beauty while clearing a safe path for hikers. Trail maintenance is usually only performed every six years due to limited budgets, so proper technique and training is crucial. As part of our AmeriCorps Wildlands Recovery Team "Lost Hills" program, our 20 AmeriCorps members will receive S-212 Wildland Fire Chainsaws certification. Following their certification, they learn to work in pairs to promote safety while using such a powerful tool with a supervisor close by for additional on the job training.



Pictured with the hikers are Benjamin Aparicio and Dennis Welsch.; Ronnie Massie and Weston McLaren.

On Friday January 27, 2012, hikers that were on their way to one of California's most magnificent views of both mountain and coastline, stopped to thank our hard working crew, who were also doing tread maintenance, which consisted of raking thousands of rocks from the trail. If you are interested in hiking and being rewarded with breathtaking views - try the [Backbone Trail](#). Thanks to our partnership with AmeriCorps, National Park Service (NPS), and Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA), the path is all clear!

PSI Cohort

A running group will be meeting at Norman O. Houston Park located at 4800 South La Brea, Los Angeles, CA 90008, this Saturday at 6am for a Kenneth Hahn State Park Trail Run (6-miles loop). If you would like to join please contact Robert Skillman for addition details at (213) 210.7620 or rskillman@lacorps.org.