



LA CONSERVATION CORPS

Transforming Youth. Enhancing Communities.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ALERT

Heroic Youth Leaders are Treated to an Early Thanksgiving in Recognition of Their Environmental Stewardship

Young Heroes at the Helm of Cleaning and Greening Los Angeles County are Celebrated

Los Angeles, CA-----November 2019-----Los Angeles young adult “Corpsmembers” from the LA Conservation Corps (LA Corps) are being celebrated with an early Thanksgiving meal in appreciation for their daily commitment and leadership in caring for the environment and revitalizing neighborhoods across Los Angeles County with beautification and conservation projects.

As Corpsmembers, they participate in hands-on job skills training and work experiences at the Corps with an emphasis on conservation; they earn a paycheck while they learn. They develop a solid work ethic, patience, effective communication skills, teamwork, self-confidence, leadership, and green workforce skills as a result of the program, becoming environmental stewards. Many Corpsmembers are at-risk young adults who join the Corps for a second chance.

In addition to recycling, cleaning alleys, removing graffiti, planting trees, building trails and clearing fire fuel, these young leaders participate in and/or lead service projects, connecting people to nature and revitalizing urban green spaces across L.A. County. For example, at the top of the Culver City Stairs at the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook, Corpsmembers have been working for more than a year in collaboration with California State Parks and the Audubon Society to enhance the safety of trails for hikers, build uniform step heights, conduct trail maintenance, and protect native plants. They hosted a day of service there for community volunteers to plant trees recently on National Public Lands Day.

WHAT: A Thanksgiving meal is being served to young adult Corpsmembers who are part of the LA Conservation Corps. Corps staff and employees from the HCVT accounting firm will be serving the meals, giving back to the young leaders who are at the helm of conservation in Los Angeles County.

WHO: 200 Corpsmembers will take a break from their hard work cleaning and greening Los Angeles to enjoy a break and a holiday meal. Several will receive certificates of achievement and recognition as leaders.

WHERE: Belvedere Park Gym, 4914 East Cesar E Chavez Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90022

WHEN: Thursday, November 21, 2019 from 12 noon - 1:30pm

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About the LA Conservation Corps

The LA Corps is an environmentally focused youth development organization. We unleash the power of youth to restore the urban environment and preserve natural resources on the coast and in the forests and mountains surrounding Los Angeles. Corpsmembers make Los Angeles' underserved urban neighborhoods better places to live, work, learn, and play. They build parks and community gardens, plant trees, restore habitats, refurbish trails, clean alleys, recycle and work on other projects and more. In the course of restoring the environment for future generations, and serving the communities they live in, youth are empowered to chart their own courses out of poverty and toward a meaningful career through access to education, job training, and support services. www.lacorps.org #LACorpsPower

Recent Corpsmember Successes:

Over the past year, 661 Corpsmembers between the ages of 14-24 have cared for and beautified the community via service projects. They are responsible for:

- **960,055** Square feet of graffiti abated from City streets
- **5,133** Tons of litter and debris collected
- **2,984,671** Pounds of trash collected
- **47,918** Illegally dumped bulky items removed
- **1,045,245** Square feet of weeds removed
- **53,715** Alleys cleaned
- **23.84** Acres of fire fuel cleared from the urban-wildlife interface to help prevent fire
- **376,000** Pounds of food rescued in the San Fernando Valley and distributed to tens of thousands of people in need served by the Pacoima area MEND (Meeting Every Need with Dignity) food bank, instead of going to a landfill

These Corpsmembers lead conservation efforts as environmental stewards and have achieved:

- **71** Tons of beverage containers recycled
- **5,013** Trees planted, helping to reverse environmental pollution
- **13,525** Trees distributed to City of LA residents
- **16,592** Linear feet of trail built/maintained
- **157** Acres of habitat restored

Corpsmember Quotes:

Corpsmember Juan, who drives the Corps Food Rescue Program truck, expresses, "It makes me feel good that I'm actually helping out. I didn't know anything about landfills until I started working here. The Corps has taught me a lot. This food was considered waste, but now other people are able to enjoy it. Something we take for granted, a lot of other people now enjoy."

Corpsmember Alex, also on the Corps Food Rescue Program shares, "This is my first real job. It's interesting to see how people react. You wouldn't expect people to be super joyous when we hand them just one little basket that's for them. Now I know there are more options than just getting rid of whatever food is not being sold by a certain date. Instead of putting it to a dumpster, we can give food to people who actually need it."

Clean & Green Program Corpsmember Ka'Jane reflects, "As a Corpsmember, I've learned that sometimes you have to step outside your comfort zone. I've always been really shy. But when you're working with a team, you've got to get to know everybody. My coworkers became like family to me. One time we faced a big alley cleanup project that felt like too much to get through. But we worked together and knocked it out. After that experience, everything now feels easier because I feel like I can conquer anything!" She ends, "Being a part of the Corps makes it easy for you to succeed. When you walk into this job, you quickly learn it's not just a job, it's an experience."

Clean & Green Program Corpsmember Diego says, "I didn't know how to use any of the tools on my first day working at the Corps—I didn't even know how to use the rake!" He adds, "I started studying my Crew Supervisor to learn how to do things and then I started jumping in to help. Sometimes you doubt yourself because it's a lot of work. You have to have good expectations and not put yourself down. You can set the mood with a group. I learned you have to show initiative. You have to show it out there. Make your own footsteps, instead of falling off. Someone is always watching, even if you don't think so. I love the job. It's everything you don't expect—at the end of the day, you love it—working here. You learn a lot."

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