

“G.I.V.E.” - Growing Intergenerational Volunteers for the Environment

Submitted by Diane Griffeath

Purpose:

1) To generate new volunteers for the environment; 2) To create opportunities for meaningful intergenerational activities; 3) To foster passing on the knowledge of “place” from older to younger generations.

Immediate Goal: (include March 20th deliverable)

To create a user-friendly written Guide for those interested in intergenerational environmental volunteerism. To present this Guide to senior and youth organizations in a program designed to boost volunteerism.

Long Term Goal: (if applicable)

To help establish ongoing partnerships between senior and youth organizations, focusing on environmental volunteerism.

Background:

Great individual and societal benefit can accrue from collaboration between generations. A Guide crafted to address specific interests and ability level can be an effective tool to encourage such collaboration. My experience working for schools in Marin, and working as a Gerontologist in residential care, help to provide insight as to how this project can be most successful.

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The Guide will present opportunities for seniors to spend quality time with youngsters, opening up a window of shared time to tell stories of “place.” The intended outcome is to create continuity in love for the land and environmental stewardship, and to grow and strengthen bonds within the community. Challenges may lie within the survey process—in the large amount of time it may take to gather information from environmental organizations. Also of concern is the accuracy of information gathered, as it relates to the appropriateness for volunteers who may have differing intellectual and physical abilities. The benefit for users of the Guide will be succinct, pre-screened recommendations for how to best plug into these volunteer activities--perhaps with a grandchild, a local elementary school or an assisted living community.

Scope/Milestones: (include March 20th deliverable(s))

1) Research, qualify and catalog a list of environmental opportunities in Marin. (Interview responsible parties to assess appropriateness for different ages, and different levels of intellectual and physical abilities. 2) Create a written guide, coded by topic and time commitment, with designations for differing abilities (by March 20th). Disseminate the guide, and give a presentation, to at least six organizations (by March 20th).

Size of team/Skills needed:

One other person on the team would be helpful, particularly someone with current contacts within youth organizations. Graphic layout and/or web design experience would be helpful as well, to assist in producing an attractive guide.

External Partners/Sponsors: (if any)

Various senior and youth organizations in Marin will be approached, to provide a venue for presenting a program on intergenerational volunteering and the G.I.V.E. Guide.