



United Way of
San Luis Obispo County



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NEWS RELEASE

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Volunteers “Make a Difference” in San Luis Obispo County

San Luis Obispo, CA – Over 800 people volunteered at sites around San Luis Obispo County on Saturday, October 22, as part of the 13th Annual Make A Difference Day.

Cal Poly students, the Central Coast Volunteer Corps, the United Way Youth Board, and employee groups from AME Unmanned Air Systems, Bank of America, Best Buy and Zurn were among the community members who worked for four hours, completing landscaping, painting, senior care and other projects. It is estimated that \$62,800 was saved by local nonprofits, based on the Corporation of National & Community Service’s value of \$22.79 per volunteer hour in the state of California.

The 40 site locations ranged from Cambria to Oceano and included projects such as preparing barrels for holiday food drives with the Food Bank Coalition of SLO County; re-vegetating the Lower San Luis Obispo Creek Floodplain Preserve for The Land Conservancy of SLO County; preparing an educational outdoor garden at Bishop’s Peak Elementary School; pasture repair, barn work, and bathing horses for the Partners in Equestrian Therapy; and assembling meals for clients of the AIDS Support Network.

Community Center Coordinator and welcome speaker of the event, Joy Pederson Harkins, PhD, shared her thoughts, "This was the largest turnout of both volunteers and agencies that we have had for this event. There was a significant increase in Greek organization participation, as well. I believe that many volunteers learned about important services and programs offered by local nonprofit agencies as a result of volunteering on Make a Difference Day."

This year’s Make A Difference Day was the 13th annual partnership between the Community Center at Cal Poly and United Way of San Luis Obispo County, to locally host this National Day of Service established by USA WEEKEND Magazine. Prior to serving, participants assembled for a morning kickoff where they were treated to a complimentary breakfast and received a t-shirt to wear sporting the student-designed motto, “Learn By Doing Good.”

Local volunteer information and opportunities with various agencies are available year round at www.VolunteerSLO.org. For more information about United Way of San Luis Obispo County visit: www.unitedwayslo.org.

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This news release is available on the United Way of San Luis Obispo County website at <http://www.unitedwayslo.org/News/index.html>.

Additional photos are available on flickr.com.