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Volunteers and Nonprofit Organizations Connect in Solano County

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July 9, 2010
Friday 8:00am - 8:00am

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Volunteers and Nonprofit Organizations to Have a New Way to Connect in Solano County

The new Volunteer Center of Solano County opens to the public this week. Individuals, groups and families can find local volunteer opportunities at www.VolunteerSolano.org.

For the past several years, people who wanted to make a difference in our community had a difficult time finding volunteer projects. Starting this week, Solano County residents have a new, centralized resource in the Volunteer Center of Solano County.

"We provide a connection to wide variety of volunteer opportunities, ranging from videographers for community television to teaching deaf children how to communicate," says Lorraine Meuleners, Executive Director of The Volunteer Center. "We partner with over 125 nonprofit organizations to offer 375 volunteer positions for people to choose from, and the number of positions is growing daily. This wide variety of opportunities makes it very easy to find an opportunity to support the causes most important to you."

Individuals, families and groups who want to volunteer can visit the Volunteer Center's website at www.VolunteerSolano.org or call 707-422-2232 to find local volunteer opportunities that meet their interests and schedules.

"From my perspective, a Volunteer Center is an essential piece of infrastructure that we've been missing in Solano County," said Aimee Durfee, VP for Community Investment at United Way of the Bay Area. "The people of Solano County already have an incredible spirit of volunteerism - all we're doing is providing a single point of contact so volunteers, nonprofits and public agencies can more easily find each other. With the establishment of this Volunteer Center, we hope to magnify the volunteer enthusiasm that is already here in Solano County."

Nonprofit organizations rely on volunteers to help deliver the essential programs in our community. It is through the efforts of volunteers that food is sorted and delivered to those who are hungry, abandoned cats and dogs are rescued and native wildlife habitats are restored. And the nonprofits that list their volunteer opportunities with the Volunteer Center are very eager to recruit new volunteers.

"For us, engaging more volunteers means we could serve more homebound seniors," says Robert Fuentes, Executive Director of Faith in Action, an organization that provides transportation and other support services to isolated senior citizens.

"We are ready to increase our volunteer pool by 25%, which would enable us to serve 30-40% more seniors. Given the economic downturn, we are always receiving more requests for help and expanding our volunteer program at this time will allow us to take care of the most vulnerable persons in our community," says Fuentes.

The public launch of new Volunteer Center of Solano County is the result of a long-term, collaborative effort between several organizations and businesses.

"This would not have happened without the long-term commitment of a very unique collaboration among the founding organizations," says Durfee. "The Solano Nonprofits Coalition took on the challenge and we brought together nonprofits, business and funders to make it happen."

"As a founding sponsor of the Volunteer Center of Solano County, the Valero Benicia Refinery is excited about the opening of the Center and our employees are eager to learn more about volunteer opportunities throughout the county. Through our Valero Volunteer Council, employees have long demonstrated a strong commitment to volunteerism and are passionate about helping non-profit organizations and the clients they serve," says Joe Muehlbauer, Process Engineering Manager, Valero's Benicia Refinery.

The Volunteer Center of Solano County's Advisory Council:

- Kay Bosick, Youth and Family Services, Inc
- PJ Davis, Community Action Partnership Solano
- Aimee Durfee, United Way of the Bay Area
- Father Robert Fuentes, Faith in Action and Solano Nonprofits Coalition
- Saskia Lembesis, Meals on Wheels of Solano County
- Leanne Martinsen, Area Agency on Aging Serving Napa and Solano
- Lorraine Meuleners, Volunteer Center of the East Bay
- Maria Moses, Community Member
- Joe Muehlbauer, Valero Benicia Refinery
- Karla McCormick, Volunteer Center of the East Bay
- Cynthia M. Phillips, 2B Successful Youth, Inc
- Rochelle Sherlock, Community Member, Consultant
- Stephanie Wolf, Solano Community Foundation

About The Volunteer Center

The Volunteer Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and supporting local volunteerism. We believe that everyone has a valuable contribution to make as a volunteer and that even small amounts of time and effort can make a difference in our community. In the fall, the Center will organize an online catalogue of holiday-related volunteer projects and will begin offering volunteer management training classes to its new nonprofit partners in Solano County.

The new Volunteer Center of Solano County is operated by The Volunteer Center of the East Bay.

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