

# GRADES OF GREEN YOUTH CORPS

## Final Report 2015- 2016

a BIG THANKS!



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## Executive Summary

The Youth Corps Eco-Leadership Program (Youth Corps) is a program designed to inspire and empower the eco-leaders of tomorrow. The Youth Corps consists of a committed group of selected students actively caring for the environment by creating and implementing a yearlong Grades of Green Project in their school or community. This team receives regular guidance and leadership training from passionate Grades of Green staff and a supportive peer network of fellow Youth Corps students. Youth Corps students become inspired to help the environment and empowered when they see their actions spark change.

During the 2015 - 2016 year, 59 2<sup>nd</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade students from all socio-economic ranges participated in the Youth Corps Program and made positive environmental impacts in their communities. Students came from 36 schools within the Southern California region, including the cities of El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Carson, Lawndale, Hawthorne, Redondo Beach, Torrance, Los Angeles, Claremont, Long Beach, Santa Monica, Venice, Montebello, Pacific Palisades, Huntington Beach, Palos Verdes Estates, and Irvine. 19% of Youth Corps students were from underserved communities, a 5% increase from the previous year. Grades of Green's hands-on training to become the next generation's environmental leaders allowed these students to effect real, positive environmental change and inspire 21,600 students in their school communities. These students continue to inspire their peers, educators and parents to help protect the environment.

Youth Corps students were encouraged to select a Grades of Green Project that they were most passionate about from a list of over 40 Grades of Green Activities offered on our website within the categories of air, water, earth, energy, or toxins, and waste. Each Youth Corps student implemented their Grades of Green Project in their school or community in order to inspire and empower their peers and broader school community to care for the environment. Each student received a Grades of Green Advisor, who was available to guide and mentor them throughout their year-long tenure. Along with the five Meet-Ups per year, Youth Corps Advisors offered additional hands-on support, mentorship, phone calls, emails, a monthly newsletter and monthly open office hours so Youth Corps students felt fully supported. Each Grades of Green encounter provided every student with the leadership skills and the environmental knowledge and capability to create a healthier earth. These individual Grades of Green Projects produced a positive environmental impression, not only on each individual Youth Corps student, but also on their entire school and broader community. Thanks to funding from sponsors like you, they learned about the problems facing their environment and what they can do about it, gained valuable leadership skills, made new friends, and created a healthier environment. When combined, these students and their Grades of Green Projects truly have the capability to have an extraordinarily positive impact on the world!

## Youth Corps Final Results and Metrics

The Youth Corps students generated very impressive results through the completion of their Grades of Green Projects.

Because of the efforts of the 2015-2016 Youth Corps:

- **59 students became Eco-Leaders**
- **21,600 Southern California students from 36 schools were inspired by Grades of Green Youth Corps Students to care for the environment**
- 5,760 shoes were diverted from landfills
- 70,000 pounds of trash were diverted from landfills
- 1,395,752 gallons of water were conserved
- 300 students were educated about the harm of pesticides
- 9,054 students were educated by Grades of Green Earth Tips
- 310 students were educated about native gardening
- 180 students were educated about ocean pollution
- 900 students are breathing cleaner air + 6 million students will be breathing cleaner air if another student's statewide Resolution passes
- 679 students were educated about the importance of bees
- 50 students educated about citizen environmental science
- 2 student Grades of Green teams were created
- 25 students were taught about green cleaning
- 30 pounds of e-waste were diverted from a landfill

Because the efforts of all Youth Corps students since the Program inception in 2011:

- **140 students have become Eco-Leaders**
- **47,400 students from 51 schools were inspired by Grades of Green Youth Corps Students to care for the environment**
- 16,060 shoes were diverted from a landfills
- 19 student Grades of Green teams were created
- 735 students were taught about green cleaning
- 58,630 pounds of e-waste were diverted from landfills
- 16,400 pounds of clothing and textiles were diverted from landfills
- 263,000 pounds of trash were diverted from landfills
- 100 native trees were planted
- 1,455,752 gallons of water were conserved
- 20,000 sheets of paper were saved
- 16.5 pounds of carbon were offset
- 300 students were educated about the harm of pesticides
- 9,054 students were educated by Grades of Green Earth Tips
- 310 students were educated about native gardening
- 180 students were educated about ocean pollution
- 900 students are breathing cleaner air + 6 million students will be breathing cleaner air if another student's statewide Resolution passes
- 679 students were educated about the importance of bees
- 50 students were educated about citizen science

## Student Highlights

Joshua C. was selected as one of only 10 students nationwide to receive the 2015 President's Environmental Youth Award for his [Grades of Green School Wide Water Reduction Activity](#) project and is being flown to Washington D.C. in August 2016 to be congratulated by President Obama at the White House.

Antonio J. has helped to create Resolution that will allow 6 million students across the state of California to breathe cleaner air by implementing [Grades of Green's No Idle Zone Activity](#) at all California schools.

Keira P. and Felix B. saved 173,666 gallons of water through [Grades of Green's Schoolwide Water Reduction Activity](#).

Riley F. conserved enough energy to power the lights at her school for 349 hours in three weeks during her [Grades of Green Electricity Challenge](#).

Emma P. educated 25 students on the harms of toxins through [Grades of Green's Green Cleaning Supplies](#) Activity.

Ethan C. taught the students at his school how to sort their waste and diverted 42,000 pounds of trash from entering the landfill throughout the school year through [Grades of Green's Trash Free Lunches](#) Activity.

Kiley W. and Zoe S. educated 300 students on the harmful effects of pesticides through [Grades of Green's Pesticide Reduction Activity](#).

Sydney W. and Drew S. gave out 300 toothbrushes with reminders to turn off the tap resulting in students at their school saving 849,000 gallons of water through [Grades of Green's Schoolwide Water Reduction](#) Activity.

Xanna P. educated 320 students at her school about the importance of recycling milk cartons through [Grades of Green's Trash Free Lunches](#) Activity.

Reece R. gave away 200 rain barrels, resulting in a savings of 140,000 gallons of water.

Penn C. eliminated the need for 7,200 single use plastic water bottles by organizing the installation of 2 [Grades of Green Water Refill Stations](#) at Grand View Elementary School.

Rylee G. diverted 30 pounds of e-waste, 27 pairs of shoes, and 9 bags of bottles and cans from entering a landfill through [Grades of Green's Earth Day Celebration](#) Activity.

Liam C. saved over 9,000 gallons of water by distributing 40 shower buckets to his neighbors and members of the community.

Miranda L. distributed 178 rain barrels and saved 124,600 gallons of water because of them.

Nathan K. educated 679 students about the importance of bees and the problems with their population collapse.

Hannah G. educated 1600 students through [Grades of Green Earth Tips](#).

Johanna J. educated 50 students about ocean pollution.

Tierra J. educated 20 of her classmates through [Grades of Green Earth Tips](#).

Cosmo I. educated 40 students at his school about what they can do to be more environmentally friendly through interactive posters and [Grades of Green Earth Tips](#).

Max R. created a website, raised funds, purchased and planted 100 native trees in his Hermosa Beach community. He also created a presentation about the importance of native trees and taught it to 180 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

Samuel S. educated 30 students about the importance of pollinators.

Mirabella A. educated 240 students about the benefits of mulching.

Alexsia H. educated 844 students about green tips through the [Grades of Green Green King and Queen Challenge](#).

Sophia T. has allowed for 900 students to be breathing cleaner air at her school since encouraging parents not to idle their cars while picking up their children through [Grades of Green's No Idle Zone](#) Activity.

Sydney D. educated 950 students at her school through posting [Grades of Green Earth Tips](#).

Lauren S., Macallan L., and Ryan G. eliminated the need for 54,000 single use plastic water bottles by organizing and fundraising for the installation of [Grades of Green Water Refill Stations](#) at Mira Costa High School.

Sam H. has collected 8,000 pairs of shoes since he started his shoe drive collection project five years ago.

Sarah S. educated 30 people about the harms of ocean pollution.

Vanessa S. started a [Grades of Green Team](#) at her school and educated 4,000 students through green tips in [Grades of Green Display Cases](#).

Malik K. educated 1600 students about the importance of pollinators.

Isaiah W. educated 50 students about bird species and how to become citizen scientists.

Gerard L. educated 130 students at his school about [Grades of Green's In-Class Recycling Activity](#).

Annemarie D. diverted 1,400 pounds of trash from a landfill through introducing [Grades of Green's Campus Composting](#) Activity to pancake breakfasts at her church.

Meera S. and Allie K. educated 40 second graders about [native gardens](#).

## Youth Corps Meet-Ups Summary

The Youth Corps students participate in five Meet-Ups during the school year. These Meet-Ups instill leadership and environmental values in each student and allow students to experience different aspects of the environment through hands-on field trips. During these Meet-Ups, students receive guidance and mentorship from Youth Corps Advisors and peers to implement a successful Grades of Green Project. For a deeper leadership experience, Grades of Green offers Chair and Secretary positions for elementary, middle, and high school students. The student Chairs lead the project discussions and the student Secretaries take notes throughout the meetings. The Final Celebration Meet-Up highlights each student’s individual success and the achievements as a whole. Grades of Green is inspired by what these students accomplished with our environmental guidance and support, and has faith they will be the environmental leaders of the future.



**Orientation Meet-Up, September 2015-** The Youth Corps students met each other for the first time at the George E. Gordon Clubhouse in El Segundo, CA. They received their Grades of Green customized t-shirts, handbooks, water bottles, and eco-pencils made from used currency! The day included a program overview presentation to the parent and students, a delicious lunch provided by in-kind sponsors Fresh Brothers and GROW, and a “mini” fair with six activity booths hosted by Grades of Green staff and environmental experts in the fields of Air, Water, Energy, Toxins, Earth, and Waste so students could learn more about each Grades of Green Activity. Students also bonded during fun get-to-know-you games and group activities. They then met in their age groups with their Grades of Green Advisor to discuss their ideas for a specific Grades of Green Project to implement. Students left with concepts and inspirations on how to best care for the environment based on their passions and Grades of Green’s expertise.



**Autumn Meet-Up, November 2015-** The Youth Corps students met at The Marine Mammal Care Center in San Pedro, CA. The day included a tour and lesson about the seals and sea lions, as well as human impact on their eco-systems. After the tour, Youth Corps students met in their age groups with their Youth Corps Advisors to discuss and share ideas regarding starting their Grades of Green Projects. The students also participated in a storytelling workshop, which included guidance on how to create a great poster, deliver an elevator pitch and take a great photo! The day ended with highlights from the Youth Corps Chairs, updates, and outreach opportunities.



**Winter Meet-Up January, 2016-** The Youth Corps students met at The Star Eco-Station in Culver City and took an amazing tour of the rescued animals. They then learned about and played all of Grades of Green’s eco-outreach games in order to be self-sufficient in helping out at Grades of Green outreach events. After a healthy and delicious snack, they split into age groups to discuss and receive feedback and support from peers and staff about the status of their Grades of Green Projects. Grades of Green has found that the students who attend the Meet-Ups are more likely to overcome hurdles and obstacles as they are discussed and advise given from their Advisor and peers on how to overcome them.



**Spring Meet-Up, March, 2016-** The Youth Corps Students met at The Madrona Marsh in Torrance, CA. They had an inspiring tour of the Marsh and the wetland museum in the facility. After a snack, students then got together to discuss their Grades of Green Projects with their peers and Youth Corps Advisor, with an emphasis on how to complete their Projects before the Celebration Meet-Up. They received an overview of all Grades of Green Earth Month opportunities in which they could be involved. Students also received a special workshop on how to make presentations in order to prepare for the Celebration Meet-Up!



**Celebration Meet-Up, June 2016-** Grades of Green hosted a special Celebration Meet-Up at the Discovery Cube in Orange County, CA. The Youth Corps students, along with family and friends, came out to celebrate each other's Grades of Green Project accomplishments! Each student gave a 2 minute presentation on their Grades of Green Project, including why they picked it, how it went, what they learned, and how it helped the environment. This gave the students an opportunity to practice everything they learned in the Meet-Ups; including public speaking, storytelling, leadership, and how to deliver a presentation. The day was filled with inspirational speeches and presentations as well as a healthy lunch, photo booth, surveys, certificates from Grades of Green and the County of Los Angeles and, of course, Grades of Green cookies! After the presentations, students and their families were invited to tour the Discovery Cube for free! These students conveyed passion, excitement, poise, and maturity during their Final Presentations. Grades of Green staff and community were beyond impressed at their skills and achievements. We truly believe that our vision of making environmental protection second-nature in young minds is becoming fulfilled in these students!

Some comments we received from parents regarding the benefits the students received from the program included: improved self-confidence, public speaking skills, responsibility, a deeper awareness of environmental issues, seeing the effects of perseverance, leadership skills, awareness about their surroundings, a deeper appreciation of the environment, commitment and execution, increased communication and analytical skills, increased self-worth, independent initiative, and encouragement to look beyond themselves and think about the community. [Click here](#) to watch the student presentations!

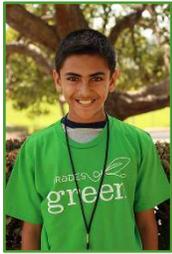


## Student Summaries

Below is a list of the 2015-2016 Youth Corps students, including their biographies and photo, Grades of Green Project, and Project results.

### Elementary School

#### Umar B.



Umar is in fifth grade at Woodbury Elementary School in Irvine, California. This is his first year on the Youth Corps. Umar believes preservation of the environment is important because oxygen is created by trees and plants. Oxygen is important for humans to survive and therefore we should protect the environment to keep this process going. He was excited to be on the Youth Corps so he could learn more about how to take care of the environment and use these lessons to help the environment instead of unintentionally harming it. In his free time Umar likes to swim, play soccer, and basketball.

**Grades of Green Project-** Umar and his brother, Ismail, created a [Grades of Green Eco Lesson](#) presentation to educate students in their school about ocean pollution and what people can do to create healthier oceans. They delivered their presentation to classrooms, and on the school’s television station.

#### Ismail B.



Ismail is in third grade at Woodbury Elementary School in Irvine, California. This is Ismail’s first year on the Youth Corps. Ismail believes the environment is important to all people because it is our home; therefore, it needs to be cared for so that we can be healthy and survive. In his free time, he likes to build Legos, swim, and play soccer.

**Grades of Green Project-** Ismail and his brother, Umar, created a [Grades of Green Eco Lesson](#) presentation to educate students in their school about ocean pollution and what people can do to create healthier oceans. They delivered their presentation to classrooms, and on the school’s television station.

#### Aisha B.



Aisha is in third grade at Woodbury Elementary School in Irvine, California. This is Aisha’s first year on the Youth Corps. Aisha believes people need to take care of the environment to keep it healthy and this, in turn, will keep people healthy. She likes to help preserve the environment by recycling at home and taking trash free lunches to

school. In her free time Aisha likes to swim, draw, and make balloon animals.

**Grades of Green Project-** Aisha created a presentation about [Grades of Green's In-Class Recycling Activity](#), and delivered it to the students in her classroom to teach them how to recycle correctly at home. She also helped her brothers, Ismail and Umar, by giving ocean pollution presentations to classrooms as well.

**Emma P.**



Emma is a fifth grader at St. Mark's School in Venice Beach, California. This is Emma's second year on the Youth Corps. She likes being a part of the Youth Corps because she has learned to take care of the earth and has met new friends by participating in group activities. She enjoys being outdoors and wants to keep nature as clean as possible: from the air to the seas to the earth. Emma hopes to learn more and she wants to share her new environmentally friendly tips with her family and classmates. Emma loves to play basketball, ride bikes, practice playing the violin and piano, and being outdoors whenever possible.

**Grades of Green Project-** Emma researched the dangers of toxic cleaners and the benefits of green cleaners. She prepared a lesson about the [Grades of Green Green Cleaning Supplies Activity](#) that she presented to her class that included stations where her classmates made three types of homemade cleaning supplies with common household ingredients.

**Kiera P.**



Kiera is a fourth grader at Franklin Elementary School in Santa Monica, California. This is Kiera's second year on the Youth Corps. Kiera cares about future generations of kids like her and wants to make sure we conserve our limited resources so they too can have access to them. Kiera knows Los Angeles has a lot of people and has to be smart about using its resources wisely. Kiera is a girl scout and enjoys art, drawing, and playing on the monkey bars.

**Grades of Green Project-** Kiera teamed up with classmate Felix to educate students on ways to save water and hosted a [Grades of Green Schoolwide Water Reduction](#) challenge. Together, the 107 students at their school saved 173,666 gallons of water!

**Penn C.**



Penn is a fourth grader at Grand View Elementary School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is Penn's second year on the Youth Corps. Penn thinks it's so important to protect all of the biodiversity on the planet so that future generations can enjoy the beautiful plants and animals that exist today. He wants everyone to know just how cool it is to keep all of the earth safe and healthy. Penn enjoys playing

football, reading and hanging out with friends.

**Grades of Green Project-** Penn worked with the Manhattan Beach Unified School District to get hydration stations, or [Grades of Green Water Bottle Refill Stations](#), installed on campus. After researching possible location options for the hydration stations, two stations were installed and Penn educated his peers about the benefits of reducing their use of single use plastic water bottles.

**Xanna P.**



Xanna is in fifth grade at Horace Mann Elementary School in Long Beach, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Xanna was excited about the Youth Corps because she wanted to demonstrate that children of any age can make positive changes. She wants to protect the environment since we only have one planet and she believes we should preserve it for now and the future. In her free time, Xanna likes dancing ballet, singing, reading, writing poetry, surfing, and learning how to play the violin.

**Grades of Green Project-** Xanna was inspired by [Grades of Green's Trash Free Lunches](#) Activity and launched a lunchtime recycling program focused on recycling milk cartons. She gave a presentation to all of the students in the school during an assembly to teach them how to recycle properly, and regularly manages the recycle container during lunch with her friends. Xanna was also Grades of Green's featured speaker at our green fundraising evening, Verte. Her Ted Talks styled speech received a standing ovation. Check it out [here](#) and prepare to be inspired!

**Carter C.**



Carter is in second grade at Grand View Elementary School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is his first year on the Youth Corps. Carter was excited to be on the Youth Corps because of his passion for the beach and all of its creatures. He is concerned about ocean pollution and how it is badly affecting the sea animals. Carter wants to stop people in his community from using single-use plastics and persuade restaurants to use real metal utensils instead of plastic. In his free time Carter likes to run, jump, read, cook and play video games.

**Grades of Green Project-** Carter, along with fellow Youth Corps students and classmates Reece and Will, formed a team called the "Energy Detectives" and hosted a week long [Grades of Green Electricity Challenge](#) for all of the second grade classrooms. The group gave a presentation to each of the five second grade classrooms to explain to the students how they can save energy. The classroom that saved the most energy during the week was rewarded with a Popsicle party!

**Ethan C.**



Ethan is in fifth grade at Meadows Elementary School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is Ethan's first year on the Youth Corps. Ethan

chose to be on the Youth Corps because he enjoys being a part of a good cause. He believe in protecting the environment because he loves animals and plants and knows that if we don't take care of nature, then we could lose important species. Ethan is an active member in his community as a boy scout. In his free time he enjoys playing tennis, soccer, and video games.

**Grades of Green Project-** Ethan led a waste reduction effort at his school through [Grades of Green's Trash Free Lunches](#) Activity and officially launched a lunchtime sorting station at his school. He gave the physical education classes at Meadows Elementary School a lesson on how to reduce, reuse, and recycle. At the end of the first day of sorting, the students reduced their usual 8 bag count to only 1 bag of landfill trash.

Will T.



Will is in second grade at Grand View Elementary School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is his first year on the Youth Corps. Will was excited about being on the Youth Corps because he wanted to help teach other kids to be kind to our earth. In his free time Will enjoys going to the beach and surfing, playing mine craft, and building.

**Grades of Green Project-** Will, along with fellow Youth Corps students and classmates Reece and Carter, formed a team called the “Energy Detectives” and hosted a week long [Grades of Green Electricity Challenge](#) for all of the second grade classrooms. The group gave a presentation to each of the five second grade classrooms to explain to students how they can save energy. The classroom that saved the most energy during the week was rewarded with a Popsicle party!

Reese M.



Reese is in second grade at Grand View Elementary School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is his first year on the Youth Corps. He was excited to be on Youth Corps so he could help teach people about how fragile the environment is. He finds it important to keep the planet healthy. Reese does his part by making sure to conserve energy, not waste water and recycle his waste whenever he can. In his free time he likes to ride his skateboard and build Legos.

**Grades of Green Project-** Reese, along with fellow Youth Corps students and classmates Carter and Will, formed a team called the “Energy Detectives” and hosted a week long [Grades of Green Electricity Challenge](#) for all of the second grade classrooms. The group gave a presentation to each of the five second grade classrooms to explain to students how they can save energy. The classroom that saved the most energy during the week was rewarded with a Popsicle party!

Riley F.



Riley is in fifth grade at Sycamore Elementary School in Claremont, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. She was one of the founding student leaders at her school's Green Team, and helped her school participate in Grades of Green's 2014-15 Trash Free Lunch Challenge. Riley is passionate about helping the environment because we have only one planet and she wants to keep it healthy for as long as we can. In her free time Riley likes sewing, baking, running, dancing, Singing, swimming, and reading.

**Grades of Green Project-** Riley led [Grades of Green's Electricity Challenge](#) at her school and encouraged classes to turn the lights off as much as possible for three weeks. She made an instructional video and e-mailed it to the teachers, as well as a chart where they could color which hours they had the lights off each day. Teachers at Riley's school conserved enough energy to power their lights for 349 hours.

**Reece R.**



Reece is in fifth grade at Hermosa Valley Elementary School in Hermosa Beach, California. This is her second year on the Youth Corps. Reece likes being on the Youth Corps because she enjoys taking care of the environment and preserving its beauty for the next generation. She believes all living things deserve the same treatment and should have a safe environment to live in. Reece likes to help her community by being on the junior lifeguards. She feels that by taking care of the environment, we are helping all living things including us.

In her free time Reece likes dancing, acting, baking, soccer, playing with friends and going to the beach.

**Grades of Green Project-** Reece wanted to utilize the El Nino rain storms to their full potential while having a positive impact on the drought. On November 7<sup>th</sup>, inspired by the [Grades of Green School Wide Water Reduction Activity](#), she paired up with West Basin Water District to host a rain barrel giveaway which allowed over 200 families in her community to receive a rain barrel for their home free of cost. In total, Reece save 140,000 gallons of water!

**Kiley W.**



Kiley is in fifth grade at Lunada Bay Elementary School in Palos Verdes Estates, California. This is her second year on the Youth Corps, and she is the Co-Chair of the elementary school Youth Corps student Meet-Ups. Kiley is passionate about taking care of the environment because she fears someday the planet will be polluted and there will be no place to live. In her free time Kiley enjoys playing piano, playing volleyball, swimming, and reading.

**Grades of Green Project-** Kiley teamed up with classmate Zoe to present a fun skit at their school wide spirit assembly to encourage their peers to choose organic fruits

and vegetables and to avoid pesticides. All props and scenery for the [Grades of Green Pesticides Reduction Activity](#) were made from recycled cardboard boxes.

**Sydney W.**



Sydney is in second grade at Lunada Bay Elementary School in Palos Verdes Estates, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Sydney was excited to be on the Youth Corps because she thinks it's important to take care of the environment. She is scared that if people don't take care of our Earth, people won't have anywhere to live. In her free time Sydney likes to practice violin, tennis, soccer, and play with her dogs.

**Grades of Green Project-** Sydney teamed up with classmate Drew to give a presentation to the two second grade classrooms at their school to educate them about the drought and encourage them to turn off the tap when they brush their teeth. In completing the [Grades of Green Schoolwide Water Reduction Activity](#), she and Drew invited students to sign a Turn off the Tap pledge, and every student was gifted a green toothbrush with a Grades of Green Turn off the Tap logo to remind them about their pledge to save water.

**Zoe S.**



Zoe is in fifth grade at Lunada Bay Elementary School in Palos Verdes Estates, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Zoe is excited about the Youth Corps because she loves animals and wants to help them live long and healthy lives. Zoe wants to preserve nature so that people and animals can have healthy places to live. In her spare time Zoe likes horseback riding, sailing, swimming and camping with her family.

**Grades of Green Project-** Zoe teamed up with classmate Kiley to present a fun skit at their school wide spirit assembly to encourage their peers to choose organic fruits and vegetables and to avoid pesticides. All props and scenery for the [Grades of Green Pesticides Reduction Activity](#) were made from recycled cardboard boxes.

**Drew S.**



Drew is in second grade at Lunada Bay Elementary School in Palos Verdes Estates, California. This is his first year on the Youth Corps. Drew was excited to be on the Youth Corps because he wants to help make his community better by getting rid of pollution. Drew is involved in his community by being in Cub Scouts and Indian Guides. In his free time Drew likes to play baseball, football, and go on camping trips with his family.

**Grades of Green Project-** Drew teamed up with fellow Youth Corps student and classmate Sydney to give a presentation to the two second grade classrooms at their school to educate them about the drought and encourage them to turn off the tap when they brush their teeth. In completing the [Grades of Green Schoolwide Water Reduction Activity](#), he and Sydney invited students to sign a Turn off the Tap pledge, and every student was gifted a green toothbrush with a Grades of Green Turn off the Tap logo to remind them about their pledge to save water.

**Felix B.**



Felix is in fourth grade at Franklin Elementary School in Santa Monica, California. This is his first year on the Youth Corps. Felix wants to help the environment because it's fun and he knows it is important to protect the Earth. In his free time Felix likes to play sports, make art, and practice his acting skills.

**Grades of Green Project-** Felix teamed up with classmate Kiera to educate students on ways to save water and hosted a [Grades of Green Schoolwide Water Reduction](#) challenge. Together, the 107 students at their school saved 173,666 gallons of water.

**Kirsten C.**



Kirsten is a fifth grader at Lou Dantzler Preparatory Elementary School in Los Angeles, California. This is Kirsten's third year on the Youth Corps, and she was the Co-Chair of the elementary school Youth Corps student Meet-Ups. Kirsten thinks it's important to spread awareness about the importance of protecting our planet because the more people who care, the bigger impact we can make. She leads her school's earth club and helps plan weekly activities to "green" her school. When she is not busy with school

she enjoys reading, gardening, and volunteering for the non-profit organization Foster & Banks Walk in Faith Foundation.

**Grades of Green Project-** Kirsten worked with her school's Green Team to create a [Grades of Green Drought Tolerant Garden](#) on campus, featuring drought tolerant plants. The garden is located at the front of the school so all students, visitors and families can enjoy it.

**Caoilin T.**



Caoilin is a fourth grader at St. Paul the Apostle School in Los Angeles, California. This is Caoilin's third year on the Youth Corps. Caoilin has led many green activities at her school, including helping to recycle school supplies and organizing clothing drives. She thinks that it's important to protect the planet by practicing the three Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle.

In her free time Caoilin enjoys making art, playing Animal Jam and being a great team mate on her club Hockey team.

**Grades of Green Project-** Caoilin had a [Grades of Green Earth Day Celebration](#) at her school by hosting a recycled art contest. Students were encouraged to create a unique piece of art using items that are normally thrown away or recycled to structure their masterpiece. Winners were rewarded with eco-friendly prizes such as reusable water bottles and lunch boxes.

**Rylee G.**



Rylee is a fifth grader at Madison Elementary School in Redondo Beach, California. This is Rylee’s fourth year participating on the Youth Corps. She thinks that going green doesn’t have to be hard and in fact it can be fun! To teach her fellow students the fun of being green, she started a Grades of Green club at school. Rylee is interested in spreading a positive message about protecting the planet so that more students will want to be eco-friendly. In Rylee’s free time she enjoys singing, playing piano, acting, playing games, and swimming.

**Grades of Green Project-** Rylee hosted a school and community-wide [Grades of Green Earth Day Celebration](#) Festival showcasing many of the Grades of Green Activities, as well as booths with other environmental organizations. She invited her entire school community to attend her Festival to learn about how to protect the environment. Throughout the event, Rylee was able to collect 30 pounds of e-waste, 27 pairs of shoes, 9 bags of bottles and cans, and had an environmental pledge sign.

**Middle School**

**Liam C.**



Liam is an eighth grader at Manhattan Beach Middle School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is his second year on the Youth Corps. Liam is very active in his community and can be found volunteering for a charity that supports Leukemia research efforts and at March of the Dimes. Additionally, he serves as an altar server at his church. Liam strongly believes it is necessary that everyone take part in making our world healthier. In his free time Liam likes to play tenor saxophone, basketball, and being a part of the school’s symphonic band.

**Grades of Green Project-** Liam acquired shower buckets donated from West Basin Water District and distributed them to his neighbors and other members of his community. He encouraged them to put the buckets in the shower while waiting for the water to get warm and use that water for their plants or for something else so that it isn’t wasted. Inspired by [Grades of Green’s School Wide Water Reduction Activity](#), Liam also gave the participants a chart so they could keep track of how

much water they were able to divert from being wasted. In total, Liam saved 9,000 gallons of water!

**Miranda A. L.**

Miranda is in eighth grade at Charles Evan Hughes Middle School in Long Beach, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Miranda wanted to be on the



Youth Corps because she loves being involved and staying busy with many different activities. She is passionate about the environment because it is home to so many different species and humans rely on it to survive. Miranda thinks helping the environment is fun and likes to make a positive difference because she feels she is adding to a great cause. Miranda is also involved in causes at school, like the student council, green team, and being a WEB (where everybody belongs) leader. In her free time her hobbies include drawing, reading, and, in the summer, swimming.

**Grades of Green Project-** Miranda was inspired by [Grades of Green’s Schoolwide Water Reduction Activity](#) and teamed up with Rain Barrels International and organized a rain barrel sale at her middle school. The event was held on February 7<sup>th</sup> and 178 rain barrels were distributed that day, saving a total of 124,600 gallons of water!

**Alexandra F.**



Alexandra is a seventh grader at Millikan Middle School in Sherman Oaks, California. This is her second year on the Youth Corps. For Alexandra, protecting the environment is important because the planet’s health directly affects human health. She believes if we want to live for a long time we need to take care of our plants and animals. Alex hopes to help with water conservation since she is worried by the recent problems caused by the LA drought. In her free time Alex likes to play the piano, dance, sing and play soccer. She also just started Krav Mega!

**Grades of Green Project-** Alexandra was so inspired by the Fall Meet-Up at the Marine Mammal Care Center that she decided to become a [Grades of Green Student in Action](#) and get items donated to the Center. She also informed other students at her school about what the Center does and how they can get involved.

**Johanna J.**



Johanna just made the big jump from elementary school to sixth grade at Lincoln Middle School in Santa Monica, California. This is her second year in the Youth Corps and she enjoys being known as someone who helps take care of the planet and all the living things on it. Johanna loves living by the ocean and thinks it’s her and everyone’s responsibility to keep it clean and healthy. Johanna wants to protect

our oceans and the wildlife because she enjoys giving back to the earth. Johanna is a member of her school's Student Council and enjoys being a leader on campus and making a difference. In her free time she likes to play volleyball, basketball, piano, and doing musical theatre. She is also involved in her community as a beach captain and a speaker for Heal the Bay.

**Grades of Green Project-** Johanna created a [Grades of Green Eco Lesson](#) video about ocean pollution and presented it to 50 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders at her old elementary school. The video taught the students how trash gets into the ocean, other sources of ocean pollution, the harms that ocean pollution causes, and what the students can do to care for the planet. Click [here](#) to see the video.

### Noah M. S.



Noah is a sixth grader at St. Mark School in Venice Beach, California. This is Noah's second year on the Youth Corps. Noah wants to protect our planet and keep it healthy by reducing waste and responsibly sorting trash. Noah believes taking care of the environment is important because he wants his generation and future generations to be healthy and benefit from the earth's natural resources. He likes to think everything we do every day has an impact on our planet, good or bad, and he chooses to do good! Noah's hobbies include playing chess, dirt biking, running, drawing, and being a part of the Grades of Green program.

**Grades of Green Project-** Noah was so inspired by [Grades of Green's Electricity Challenge Activity](#), he created a Minecraft video to teach his classmates what they can do around their own home to conserve energy. In the video, he discusses the importance of saving energy in a fun game setting.

### Tierra J.



Tierra is a sixth grade student at Jane Addams Middle school in Lawndale, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Tierra was excited about being on the Youth Corps because taking care of the environment is important to her. Tierra wants to preserve nature and keep it clean for animals so they have a safe habitat to live in. She feels passionately about protecting nature's beauty and protecting all the natural resources the environment has to offer. She is currently in the Leadership Club at school and last year she was in the Friendship Circle. In her free time Tierra likes to cook, bake, learn ways to save the earth, and learn new words and definitions.

**Grades of Green Project-** Tierra completed [Grades of Green's Earth Tips Activity](#) and showed her classmates what she does every day to care for the environment. She recorded each time she turned off the lights, conserved water, and made

recommendations of how others could do the same when she observed them in wasteful actions.

**Samuel S.**



Samuel is in eighth grade at Charles Even Hughes Middle School in Long Beach, California. This was his first year on the Youth Corps. Samuel was excited to be on the Youth Corps to make a difference in his school and help the environment at the same time. Samuel feels that taking care of the environment is important because we only have this planet and too many people seem to forget this, which hurts the environment. He wants to help inspire others by showing what a big difference people can make in protecting the fragile environment. Samuel is an active member of the jazz band at his school - his instrument of choice is the tuba. Another hobby of his is gardening - he enjoys planting drought tolerant, California native species.

**Grades of Green Project-** Samuel received a grant from the Pollination Project to create a **Grades of Green Drought Tolerant Garden** that also serves as a pollinator pathway garden at his school. He researched which plants attract specific pollinators and spent the grant money on seeds for those plants. Samuel presented his project to the Environmental Science class at Hughes Middle School and had the 30 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the class help him plant the garden.

**Braeden R.**



Braeden is a sixth grader at St. Mark School in Venice Beach, California. This is Braeden’s second year on the Youth Corps. He thinks it’s important to reduce our waste and banish litter from our schools and communities. Braeden knows that if we want to keep our planet healthy, we have to keep it clean and make sure that neither animals nor people are harmed by pollution. When Braeden has free time he enjoys playing football and the trumpet.

**Grades of Green Project-** Braeden was inspired by **Grades of Green’s Trash Free Lunches Activity** so he created a scratch game to teach people what to recycle, compost, and throw away. When playing the game, the user receives points each time they sort the waste correctly.

**Mirabella A.**



Mirabella is in eighth grade at Charles Evans Hughes Middle School in Long Beach, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Mirabella is passionate about the environment because she feels people should take care of the place they live in, and not take our planet for granted. She does not want to live on a littered planet and thinks people should do their best to keep animals’ habitats safe and clean. Mirabella likes to be involved in school; she is president of the Japanime Club, a

WEB leader, and a student body secretary. In her free time Mirabella enjoys playing tennis, playing the viola, doodling, and reading.

**Grades of Green Project-** Mirabella led a hands-on mulching lesson at Hughes Middle School for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade science classes where the 240 students learned about the benefits of mulching and were able to go outside and spread mulch across their campus. Inspired by [Grades of Green’s Drought Tolerant Garden Activity](#), the students used shovels and wheel barrows to improve the health of plants on campus.

**Hannah G.**



Hannah is in eighth grade at Charles Evan Hughes Middle school in Long Beach, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Hannah was excited about the Youth Corps because the environment is very important to her and she wants to help her community become a better place by spreading environmental awareness. Hannah enjoys being involved in her community by being a Cadet Girl Scout. She also stays involved in school by being on the executive board of Student Council, a member of Green Team, the run for fun club, and a WEB leader. In her

free time Hannah loves to read, play with her cats, run cross country, travel, and watch anime.

**Grades of Green Project-** Hannah taught her 1600 fellow middle school students at Hughes Middle School about things that they can do to protect the environment through posting [Grades of Green Earth Tips](#) and speaking to the students through morning announcements.

**Cosmo H.**



Cosmo is in eighth grade at Intellectual Virtues Academy in Long Beach, California. This is his first year on the Youth Corps. Cosmo is very passionate about preserving the environment and is one of the founding members of IVA’s Green Team called Evergreens. Their mission is to find a solution to the environmental crisis of today by education on the issues and uniting for a cause. Cosmo wants to be a part of the Youth Corps so he can pass on his new knowledge from the program to his peers and establish a strong “green” culture in his community. In his free

time he loves technology, reading, watching movies, automobiles, and Legos.

**Grades of Green Project-** Cosmo posted interactive posters at his school during Earth Month where he could inform students about [Grades of Green Earth Tips](#) and students could write on the posters any ideas they have about ways in which they can care for the environment. This included ways they can make their holidays more environmentally friendly and ways they can conserve water, energy, and waste. Over 40 students participated!

**Alexsia H.**



Alexsia is in sixth grade at Marine View Middle School in Huntington Beach, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Alexsia is excited to be on the Youth Corps because she loves to take care of the earth. She is passionate about the environment because her whole life she has been surrounded by green influences. Alexsia grew up learning about green chemistry, the harm in household chemicals, the danger of filling landfills, and carbon pollution from cars. Alexsia believes if people do not conserve and care about their impact on the environment, the planet will become overcrowded with trash and pollution. Alexsia has been a Girl Scout for 7 years and leads her troop in doing environmentally friendly projects. In her free time, Alexsia enjoys being a ballerina, which she has been for 8 years and performs in the Nutcracker every year. She also likes going to the Discovery Science Center Eco-Challenge, practicing voice lessons, and singing.

**Green Project-** Alexsia implemented [Grades of Green's Green King and Queen Challenge](#) at her school. Classrooms competed against each other to see which could be the most eco-friendly. The winning three teachers won gift baskets from Grades of Green partner Earth Friendly Products.

**Elise W.**



Elise is in eighth grade at Intellectual Virtues Academy in Long Beach, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Elise was excited to be on the Youth Corps to give her an opportunity to bring solutions to the environmental issues at her school and in the community. Elise wants to work on improving our environment so that it will positively affect the lives of people and animals on this planet. Her main concern is to preserve this one planet we have because she believes it is being poorly taken care of. Last year she was involved in a club that made mini movies, the math club, the student council, and the green-team. In her free time she loves competitive horseback riding, sewing, and teaching her dog tricks.

**Grades of Green Project-** Elise was so inspired by [Grades of Green's Schoolwide Water Reduction Activity](#), she invented a desalinization process. She found that through filtration and evaporation processes, salt water can be turned into safe, potable water.

**Nathan K.**



Nathan transitioned from elementary school to sixth grade at Richardson Middle school In Torrance, California for his second year on the Youth Corps. Nathan thinks saving the environment is very important for our future existence. He likes nature and wants to preserve it by reducing pollution which helps keep the earth healthy for both humans and animals. Nathan is a Weebelo Cub Scout and greatly enjoys hanging out with friends, playing Legos, practicing trumpet and collecting fossils, gems and minerals.

**Grades of Green Project-** Nathan hosted a [Grades of Green Earth Day Celebration](#) festival at his school that focused on the importance of bees. He created posters and brought snacks like honey sticks, tangerines, and honey nut cheerios that depend on bees to show the students at his school how significant of a problem the declining bee population is.

**Carissa P.**



Carissa is in eighth grade at Intellectual Virtues Middle School in Long Beach, California. This is her first time on the Youth Corps. Carissa has always been fascinated with the environment and two years ago when she participated in the POPS (Plastic Ocean Pollution Solutions) Youth Summit she became even more committed to the cause. After the summit it made her realize she wants a career in learning and teaching about the environment.

Carissa is involved in school and acts as Vice President of the school's Green Team, The Evergreens. She has also been a committed member of the American Gymnastics Academy for two years and on an outrigger paddling team that races all over California. For fun Carissa likes to go swimming with friends at the beach and participate in beach clean ups.

**Grades of Green Project-** Carissa paired up with fellow Youth Corps student Gigi to give the students at their school a [Grades of Green Eco Lesson](#) on Ocean Pollution during their Beach Day. The presentation included how trash gets into the ocean and other sources of pollution, and concluded with the students doing a beach clean-up.

**Gigi M.**



Gigi is in eighth grade at Intellectual Virtues in Long Beach, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Gigi was excited to be on the Youth Corps to further her knowledge on ways to help the planet. She is amazed by the multiple ways she can live a more sustainable life and wants to share what she learns with others. Gigi wants to be a part of the positive difference made on our environment because she believes what people do today can have long lasting effects. Gigi likes to spend her free time with a local kid's theatre company, where she likes to act in comedies and help out with shows that involve younger kids. She also likes to play the piano, play the ukulele, hang out with friends at the beach, surf and bake.

**Grades of Green Project-** Gigi paired up with Carissa to give the students at their school a [Grades of Green Eco Lesson](#) on Ocean Pollution during their Beach Day. The presentation included how trash gets into the ocean and other sources of pollution, and concluded with the students doing a beach clean-up.

**Joshua C.**



Joshua jumped from elementary school to sixth grade at Manhattan Beach Middle school in Manhattan Beach, California for his second year in the Youth Corps. Joshua loved being a part of the program last year

because he learned to be leader and take action, he saw that this made a positive difference in his community. Three years ago, Joshua became a Green Representative at his school, and he really enjoys working in a team setting with his friends to help his school become more eco-friendly. Joshua keeps busy outside of school participating in soccer, baseball, swimming, biking, hiking and traveling with his mom. He also is fluent in Romanian!

**Grades of Green Project-** Joshua executed a Grades of Green Schoolwide Water Reduction awareness campaign with the purpose of educating the students at his school and their families on the California drought and simple tips on things everyone can do to help. He wrote an article for the school newsletter, created a video that was played during the school’s morning announcements, and another article that was published in the school newspaper. These tips reached approximately 1,800 students and school staff members. Joshua was also selected as the 2015 recipient of the President’s Environmental Youth Award, and is being flown to Washington D.C. summer 2016 to be congratulated by President Obama himself!

Max R.



Max is a seventh grader at Hermosa Valley School in Hermosa Beach, California. This is Max’s fourth year on the Youth Corps. His past project involved creating a website to raise awareness about a potential oil drilling project in his hometown. He also worked with his sister to implement Foam Free Fridays at his school which brought awareness to the disadvantages of using Styrofoam trays in school cafeterias. Max really enjoys public speaking and has spoken in front of his city council in support of plastic bag and styrofoam bans, leading to those bands being passed. He is a true leader who wants not only to lead, but to lead others to do the right thing. In his free time he likes to enjoy the ocean and surf.

**Grades of Green Project-** Max led an initiative to plant 100 native trees in Hermosa Beach as part of Grades of Green’s Drought Tolerant Garden Activity. He taught a lesson to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at his school about the importance of trees and the benefits of planting native plants. Max fundraised for the supplies and worked with the City of Hermosa Beach to plan planting dates. 350 students ended up participating in planting all 100 trees along the greenbelt in Hermosa Beach. They are each marked with signs so people can watch the trees they sponsored grow and Max can monitor the trees’ health.

Sophia T.



Sophia is an eighth grader at Parras Middle School in Redondo Beach, California. This is her fourth year on the Youth Corps. Sophia believes that knowledge is power and we need to teach students different ways they can make a difference. In her free time, Sophia enjoys playing tennis and flute, cooking, reading, traveling, and playing with her pets.

**Grades of Green Project-** Sophia implemented [Grades of Green’s No Idle Zone Activity](#) at her school. She worked with her principal and her classmates to create No Idling Zone signs and hold them up when parents were picking their children up from school. She talked about the harms of idling and taught the other 900 students at her school about how they breathe cleaner air when engines are not idling.

**Sydney D.**



Sydney is a seventh grader at Adams Middle School in Redondo Beach, California. This is her fourth year on the Youth Corps. In the past she has helped her school implement Grades of Green’s Trash Free Lunch Activity. Sydney believes protecting the environment is important because we only have one earth. She thinks it is very important for people to remember that, as we become more involved with technology, we shouldn’t forget about the unique qualities of what’s outside. In her free time Sydney has been in Girl Scouts for nine years and enjoys engineering, drawing, playing the ukulele, and going on her laptop.

**Green Project-**Sydney took on [Grades of Green’s Display Cases Activity](#) to inform the other 950 students at her school how they can care for the environment. Each month, Sydney changed the display cases so that her classmates could learn about a variety of environmental topics.

**High School**

**Antonio J.**



Antonio is a tenth grader at Long Beach Polytechnic High School. This is Antonio’s third year on the Youth Corps. He is very passionate and dedicated to saving the planet through Grades of Green’s No Idle Zone Activity. Antonio helps out at numerous outreach events and loves making a positive impact in his community. Antonio believes we must take care of the environment so that it will be healthy and we will have a clean place to live in the future. In his free time he enjoys bodyboarding and playing Saxophone.

**Grades of Green Project-** Antonio has been working for three years on [Grades of Green’s No Idle Zone Activity](#). He is committed to getting No Idle Zone legislation passed all throughout California. He began his project in 8<sup>th</sup> grade at his Long Beach middle school, but then worked with his school district to try and get No Idle Zones in all Long Beach Schools. Grades of Green introduced him to Assembly-member Hadley and Grades of Green partner Coalition for Clean Air. As a result, Antonio spoke as a featured guest at the Southern California Air Quality Management District’s Board meeting and inspired Assembly-member Hadley to carry a No Idle

Zone Resolution, which is expected to pass. When it passes, 6 million students across the state of California will be breathing cleaner air thanks to Antonio!

**Annemarie D.**



Annemarie is a tenth grader at Marlborough High School in Los Angeles, California. This is Annemarie’s fourth year on the Youth Corps and she is the Co-Chair of this year’s high school Youth Corps students’ meetings. Annemarie likes being on the Youth Corps because it is an incredible way to protect the environment and provides unique opportunities to kids in school. She appreciates being around others that share a love for the environment and how they inspire her to do more for the environment. Annemarie feels a moral responsibility to

take care of the environment for people today, the animals that share this earth with us, and for the generations to come. In Annemarie’s free time she enjoys volunteering at the Roundhouse Aquarium, being a member of the Robotics Club, being a member of ACUTE (Action to Clean Up the Environment), participating in Caswell Scholars, the swim team, and water polo. Her hobbies include reading, photography, playing piano, and especially spending time with friends and family.

**Grades of Green Project-** Annemarie has been working on making her church’s pancake breakfast a waste free event. Through [Grades of Green’s Campus Composting Activity](#), they now create less than half of a bag of trash at each event of 350 people, down from 10 bags! She is currently working on a research project to determine whether paper plates that would be recycled or plates that can be washed in an industrial dishwasher would be the most environmentally beneficial way to serve food at the pancake breakfast.

**Sam H.**



Sam is an eleventh grader at Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks, California. This is Sam’s fifth year on the Youth Corps and he is the Co-Chair of this year’s high school Youth Corps students’ meetings. Sam was one of the original 12 students that joined the Youth Corps in 2010. Sam wants to leave the earth better than it is for his future generation. His mission is to not leave his generation’s legacy as those who destroyed the earth, but instead the generation that saved the planet. Sam has been thoroughly involved in his community. He has been involved with the St. Sebastian Sports Project, which helps

collect used sports equipment and takes it Catholic schools that do not have money for sports. Sam has also been working with an organization, Soles 4 Souls, as part of his work on the Youth Corps. He is also involved in the student government and is a school ambassador. In Sam’s free time he plays Varsity basketball and volleyball.

**Grades of Green Project-** Sam has been implementing [Grades of Green’s Collection Activity](#) by hosting a shoe drive collection for the past four years and donates the shoes to Soles 4 Souls, where they are given to people in need or repurposed. This year, he collected 1,700 pairs of shoes at his middle school’s fun run

and his high school basketball competition. Since the beginning of his Youth Corps experience, Sam has collected over 8,000 pairs of shoes to donate. Sam has a goal of collecting 25,000 pairs of shoes before he graduates high school!

**Macallan L.**



Macallan is a tenth grader at Mira Costa High School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is Macallan’s second year on the Youth Corps. He wants to make a difference in his local environment, and strongly believes the environment must be protected. Macallan has been involved with non-profits such as Better Life Coffee, which drills wells for water in Africa, and Lennox Food Bank. Macallan sees so many environmental problems in the world such as pollution and water shortages, and he wants to help provide solutions. In his free time Macallan likes to play lacrosse, beach volleyball, surfing, and going to the beach.

**Grades of Green Project-** Macallan, along with his fellow Youth Corps students and classmates Lauren and Ryan, worked very diligently to fundraise for two **Grades of Green Water Refill Stations** on their high school campus. They raised \$6,000 to install two hydration stations on campus! They are in the process of getting these installed on campus and plan to publicize the stations and educate and encourage their classmates to bring reusable water bottles and use the hydration stations.

**Sarah S.**



Sarah is a twelfth grader at Bishop Montgomery High School in Torrance, California. This is her third year on the Youth Corps. Sarah is excited to be on the Youth Corps again so she can continue to spread awareness about the importance of conserving and caring for the environment. She is passionate about the environment and animals but is worried about the current state of the planet; therefore, she wants to encourage people to reduce their negative impacts. Sarah likes to be involved in her community. She is currently a Girl Scout and a member of the Habitat for Humanity club and photography club. In her free time Sarah likes to play soccer, go to the beach, and learn more about the environment.

**Grades of Green Project-** Sarah wanted to teach her Youth Group about how important it is to care for the ocean. She created a yoga, surf session, and beach clean-up for her Youth Group. She then created and taught a **Grades of Green Eco Lesson** presentation about ocean pollution and what students, like her, can do to create a healthier oceanic environment.

**Vanessa S.**



Vanessa is a twelfth grader at Hawthorne High School, in Hawthorne, California. This is Vanessa’s second year on the Youth Corps and she is the Secretary of this year’s high school Youth Corps students’ meetings. Vanessa loves that the Youth Corps offers guidance on new ways to make environmental changes. She

also loves the support from peers for her Grades of Green Project and being around students with the same mindset and attitude about the environment. Vanessa believes people are focusing too much on the advancements of technology and in the process forgetting about caring for the environment. However, she is passionate about making a change and wants to help people join the cause in improving our environment and quality of life. In her spare time Vanessa enjoys playing music. She is a member of Hawthorne High’s Marching Band and occasionally attends a drum circle in Hermosa Beach to drum/volunteer.

**Grades of Green Project-** Vanessa became a [Grades of Green Student in Action](#) after working with her principal to get an environmental student council position started at her high school. It will be implemented next year. She also created a [Grades of Green Display Case](#) with the help of the Key Club on her campus. This case provides information to students about ways they can be more environmentally-minded at school.

**Shelby S.**



Shelby is in eleventh grade at Mira Costa High School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps. Shelby’s passion for the environment started at Grandview elementary school where she joined the Earth Club and encouraged others to reduce waste. She is very passionate about further reaching out to her community to educate not only the school but also society on the importance of the environment and its effect on humans. In her free time Shelby is involved in the drama department, in the improv club, and in the Mira Costa choir. She also enjoys painting, playing guitar, and spending time with her friends.

**Grades of Green Project-** Shelby got creative with the [Grades of Green Eco-Lesson Activity](#) and wrote an environmental song about how important it is to protect the environment and performed it at an outreach event at Hawthorne Earth Day as well as the Youth Corps Celebration Meet-Up.

**Daniel V.**



Daniel is in tenth grade at Harvard Westlake High School in Studio City, California. This is Daniel’s second year on the Youth Corps and he is the Secretary of this year’s high school Youth Corps students’ meetings. Daniel’s interest in environmental projects started when he led his Green Team at his middle school in Grades of Green’s Trash Free Lunch Challenge. He is excited to keep expanding his knowledge about the environment and wants to keep being inspired to make a change in his community, state, and even the world. Daniel strongly believes people should take care of the environment, and do their part to make the world a cleaner place. In his free time Daniel enjoys spending time with his friends and relatives, reading a great novel, taking trips to Knott’s Berry

Farm, volunteering at Jane Addams Middle School and his church, and hanging out with his cousins at the beach.

**Grades of Green Project-** Daniel was inspired by [Grades of Green’s In-Class Recycling Activity](#) and created recycled lesson plans and crafts for the children’s ministry at his church. This way, the students he teaches are not only learning, they are creating treasures from what some deem as trash. He reached out to his community to collect recyclable materials and used many old materials that were headed for the trash can.

**Meera S.**



Meera is in ninth grade at Chadwick School in Los Angeles, California. This is her first year in the Youth Corps. Meera is excited to be on the Youth Corps because of the leadership opportunities offered which will give her the ability to make a big difference. She is passionate about this cause because she feels nature is extremely fascinating and wants to keep it preserved for as long as possible. Meera believes educating people is the key to making a lasting impact because change starts when people know and understand the problems. In her free time, Meera is involved in the National Charity League, a non-profit where mothers and daughters serve their community together. Meera is involved in yearbook at Chadwick School.

**Grades of Green Project-** Meera, along with fellow Youth Corps student and classmate, Allie, took on [Grades of Green’s Drought Tolerant Garden Activity](#). They used Grades of Green’s Native Gardens and Composting Eco-Lessons to teach the second grade class at their school two separate lessons about the benefits of native gardening, composting, eating healthy, and air quality. They planned all of the lessons with the teachers, and orchestrated all the details including getting the supplies for the Eco-Lessons.

**Malik K.**



Malik is a ninth grader at Millikan High school in Long Beach, California. This is his second year on the Youth Corps. Malik volunteers at the Science Shack, where he educates visitors about life in the Colorado Lagoon. Additionally, Malik is a part of Jazz Angels where he plays bass clarinet and e-flat baritone saxophone. Protecting the environment is important to Malik because we have limited resources available to us and we need to preserve them as much as we can.

**Grades of Green Project-** Malik created a Monarch butterfly sanctuary at his former Middle School as part of [Grades of Green’s Drought Tolerant Garden Activity](#). He then taught these students about the importance of Monarch butterflies and their

habitat. He applied for and received funding to paint a mural at his school encompassing the beauty of the monarch butterfly to further inspire his classmates.

**Isaiah W.**



Isaiah made the big jump from middle school to ninth grade at Millikan High School in Long Beach, California for his second year on the Youth Corps. Isaiah is very active in his community, having participated in beach clean-ups, book drives, canned food drives, bird watching days, and plant sales. He believes taking care of the environment is important because people should want to preserve a healthy planet for generations to come and there are so many simple ways to do it! He loves helping out his school and his green team because giving back makes him feel good. Isaiah has many hobbies which include; drawing, flying remote control helicopters, playing with animals, and running cross country at his high school.

**Grades of Green Project-** Isaiah created and taught an amazing presentation about native birds to the middle school Green Team and Creative Writing Club. He gave them an assignment where each student received an overview of a selected bird and created a painting and a poem about the bird. He then put these up in the school's **Grades of Green Drought Tolerant Garden**. He also planned a field trip and took these students to the local wetland to discover these native birds. Along with that, he received a grant to update the garden. He built and installed new benches, native plants, and stepping stones to improve the school garden.

**Kolby H.**



Kolby is a tenth grader at Redondo Union High School. This is his second year on the Youth Corps. Kolby enjoys getting involved in his local community. Kolby has been involved in multiple beach clean-ups as well as a program that takes underprivileged kids to the beach. He is a strong advocate for living simply because he believes we only have one earth and it is every person's responsibility to look after it. In his spare time he enjoys playing guitar, body surfing, shaping hand planes, making surf videos and inspiring people to live sustainably.

**Grades of Green Project-** Kolby is currently working with his school administration to implement **Grades of Green's In-Class Recycling Activity**. He formed a team of students to teach his school community about the importance of recycling and was able to put recycle bins in many of the eating areas and classrooms. He is planning to continue his project for the next two years so that eventually recycling is available throughout campus.

**Ryan G.**



Ryan is in eleventh grade at Mira Costa High School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is his first year on the Youth Corps. Ryan was inspired to get more involved in saving the environment when he visited Colorado and experienced the non-polluted air quality. When comparing this quality to LA air it made him sad. He now wants to help solve air quality problems. Ryan likes to be involved in his community by volunteering at Habitat for Humanity, and helps at home by gardening with his dad. In his free time Ryan plays on the school's lacrosse team, goes to the beach, and likes swimming.

**Grades of Green Project-** Ryan, along with fellow Youth Corps students and classmates Lauren and Macallan, worked very diligently to fundraise for two Grades of Green Water Refill Stations on their high school campus. They raised \$6,000 to install two hydration stations on campus! They are in the process of getting these installed on campus and plan to publicize the stations and educate and encourage their classmates to bring reusable water bottles and use the hydration stations.

Gerard L.



Gerard has just made the jump from middle school to high school at Sato Academy of Math and Science in Long Beach, California for his second year on the Youth Corps. Gerard joined the Youth Corps to become an environmental leader. He greatly enjoyed the program last year and thinks it's an awesome organization that anyone would like to be part of. He is very passionate about helping students and schools to learn more about improving the environment. He would love to share all his new knowledge from Grades of Green with his community. In Gerard's free time, he enjoys reading books, watching movies, and traveling with his family and friends.

**Grades of Green Project-** Gerard took the initiative and started a Grades of Green Team at his High School! He found a teacher to help facilitate, advertised about the club and got students interested and involved. They have regular weekly meetings about the environment. He also set up Grades of Green's In-Class Recycling Activity. The club received in-class recycle bins for each class and taught the entire student body about what to recycle in class. They then collect the recyclables and raise funds for the club. The year, they took the funds and visited a recycling center!

Firdausi S.



Firdausi is in eleventh grade at El Segundo High School in El Segundo, California. This is her first year on the Youth Corps and she is excited to participate because she wants to give back to nature, since it brings her so much happiness. She is also very interested in meeting other kids with similar environmental beliefs. Firdausi believes taking care of the environment is important

because people depend on the planet's resources and humans are the only ones with the power to slow down global warming or other natural disasters. In her free time, Firdausi likes being involved in her community by being a volunteer at the Interact Club, being on the Bay Eagle newspaper, and volunteering at the Roundhouse Aquarium. For fun some of her hobbies include; playing lacrosse, blogging, camping, going to the beach, and biking.

**Grades of Green Project-**Firdausi planned and implemented [Grades of Green's Adopt A Spot Activity](#) at her school with a Campus Clean-Up. She received approval from the principal, created flyers, spread the word, collected raffle prizes, got food and drinks donated, and had everyone come on a Saturday morning to clean up the school campus. It was a great success, and over 10 bags of trash were collected!

### Allie K



Allie is in tenth grade at Chadwick School in Palos Verdes, California. This is her second year on the Youth Corps. Allie grew up with strong environmental values, her mother taught her new ideas and ways to help save the planet which then established a strong connection between her and the earth. She likes the Youth Corps because it joins groups of children and adults then inspires them to save the environment. Allie is passionate about educating others and volunteering for the community. She is a part of a weekly service at her school that assists a low-income elementary schools. Allie is also a member of National Charity League, a group of mothers and daughters that helps in their communities. In Allie's free time, she enjoys painting, drawing, tennis, and being with her friends and family.

**Grades of Green Project-** Allie, along with fellow Youth Corps student and classmate, Meera, took on [Grades of Green's Drought Tolerant Garden Activity](#). They used Grades of Green's Native Gardens and Composting Eco-Lessons to teach the second grade class at their school two separate lessons about the benefits of native gardening, composting, eating healthy, and air quality. They planned all of the lessons with the teachers, and orchestrated all the details including getting the supplies for the Eco-Lessons.

### Lauren S.



Lauren is a ninth grader at Mira Costa High School in Manhattan Beach, California. This is Lauren's fourth year being on the Youth Corps. Some of her past Grades of Green Projects include creating an eco-themed educational video and starting a native garden at her school as part of Grades of Green's Native Garden Activity.

She believes being on the Youth Corps is a great way for her to keep in touch with current environmental issues and loves having the opportunity to educate many people in her my community. Lauren appreciates gaining new leadership and public speaking skills. Lauren thinks it is important to empower people to take care of the environment and hopes to do this by getting involved in environmental lobbying as an adult. In her free time, she enjoys participating in drama activities, tennis, and trips downtown with her sister or friends.

**Grades of Green Project-** Lauren, along with fellow Youth Corps students and classmates Macallan and Ryan, worked very diligently to fundraise for [Grades of Green Water Refill Stations](#) on their high school campus. They raised \$6,000 to install two hydration stations on campus! They are in the process of getting these installed on campus and plan to publicize the stations and educate and encourage their classmates to bring reusable water bottles and use the hydration stations.

**Grace C.**



Grace is a ninth grader at Crossroads School for Arts and Science in Santa Monica, California. This is Grace’s fourth year on the Youth Corps. Two years ago, she started a student Grades of Green Team at her prior school. Grace has also hosted two e-waste drives in the past as part of Grades of Green’s E-Waste Activity, which has raised money to install solar panels at her school. Grace won the White House Champions of Change Award in 2011 for her environmental work and flew to Washington DC to meet President Obama at the White House and receive the award. Grace is involved with the Global Aids Interfaith Alliance and Westside Food Bank. Grace believes we need to protect the environment because we only have one earth and we need to take care of it. In her free time Grace enjoys playing club soccer, being an equestrian, hanging out at the beach and listening to music.

**Grades of Green Project-** Grace taught an underprivileged after-school program about the importance of saving water and about reusing and recycling. She created a lesson plan for [Grades of Green’s Schoolwide Water Reduction Activity](#) and provided information in a fun way to these students. She then created a fundraising page and raised funds for water bottles. She gave each student a water bottle and taught them about the importance of using reusable bottles instead of disposables.

## Outreach Summary

Below is a list of outreach events that Youth Corps students had the opportunity to participate in during the 2015-2016 school year.

### National Association of Elementary School Principal's Conference



**Date:** July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

**Summary:** Grades of Green staff and Youth Corps student leaders spoke about the Grades of Green program. Student speakers presented about their Grades of Green Projects and best practices in inspiring students to care about the environment.

**Youth Corps presenters:** Aidan H, Rylee G.

### Manhattan Beach Farmer's Market



**Date:** July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Summary:** Grades of Green hosted an activity booth at the Manhattan Beach Farmer's Market to show visitors how to reuse vegetable scraps to make colorful cards. Information about the Grades of Green program was also available.

**Youth Corps participant:** Sydney D

### Beach Clean Up event with Assembly-member David Hadley



**Date:** August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

**Summary:** Grades of Green teamed up with Assembly-member Hadley to host a beach clean-up for the community at the Hermosa Beach Pier. Participants collected litter across the beach and learned about the impact litter has on the ocean.

**Youth Corps participants:** Annemarie D., Shelby S., Kolby H., Sam H. Sarah S., Malik K.

Coastal Clean-Up Day



**Date:** September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Summary:** Grades of Green Youth Corps students participated in the Heal the Bay Coastal Clean-Up Day event and spent two hours cleaning up litter.

**Youth Corps participants:** Sarah S., Mirabella A., Miranda L., Xanna P.

California Green Schools Conference



**Date:** October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Summary:** Grades of Green staff and Youth Corps student leader Allie K. spoke about the Grades of Green program. Allie K presented about her Grades of Green Project and best practices in inspiring students to care about the environment.

**Youth Corps presenter:** Allie K

TEDx Manhattan Beach



**Date:** November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Summary:** Grades of Green Youth Corps students gave a presentation to TEDx guests about the importance of waste reduction, and instructed them on how to sort their lunchtime waste at the event.

**Youth Corps participants:** Joshua C., Sydney D., Reece R., Shelby S.

South Bay Environmental Services Center Zero Waste Workshop



**Date:** February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

**Summary:** Grades of Green staff and Youth Corps students spoke to the members of the South Bay adult school about the Grades of Green program, how to live a zero waste lifestyle, and how to compost at home.

**Youth Corps presenters:** Shelby S., Allie K.

Grades of Green at the Defender's Game



**Date:** February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Summary:** Grades of Green staff and Youth Corps students hosted a booth to educate Defender's game guests on how to reduce waste and take care of the environment. Grades of Green's Trashketball activity was featured at the booth.

**Youth Corps participants:** Penn C., Joshua C.

Hawthorne Earth Day Festival



**Date:** April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Summary:** Grades of Green Youth Corps students hosted a booth where event guests could learn about the Grades of Green program and play interactive games. Games included Grades of Green's Trashy Trivia quiz cards and "How Long 'Til It's Gone" game, which illustrates how long it takes for items to decompose in a landfill.

**Youth Corps participants:** Daniel V., Shelby S.

Star Eco Station Earth Day Celebration



**Date:** April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Summary:** Grades of Green staff and Youth Corps students hosted a booth where event guests could learn about the Grades of Green program and play interactive games. Games included Grades of Green's Trashy Trivia quiz cards and "Natural Resources" game, which illustrates which resources everyday objects are made from.

**Youth Corps participants:** Johanna J.

Manhattan Beach Earth Day



**Date:** April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Summary:** Grades of Green Youth Corps students, staff and volunteers managed a Grades of Green booth where attendees could learn about Grades of Green and play interactive games focused on environmental conservation. Youth Corps students also spoke about their Grades of Green Projects at the education stage. Youth Corps students Liam, Rylee, Lauren, Macallan, Ryan, and Ethan were presented with the City of Manhattan Beach Environmental Hero Award. Youth

Corps student Joshua was presented with the President’s Environmental Youth Award from a representative from the US EPA.

**Youth Corps participants:** Xanna P., Rylee G., Liam G., Ethan C., Lauren S., Macallan L., Ryan G., Kolby H.

Verte 2016



**Date:** May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Summary:** Each year, Grades of Green hosts a green evening to celebrate all those who help Grades of Green make environmental protection second nature in young minds. Guests were greeted at the event by Youth Corps students and three Youth Corps students gave presentations during the dinner program to showcase their Green Projects and encourage guests to get more involved with Grades

of Green. One student, Xanna, gave a Ted Talks styled presentation that inspired a standing ovation!

**Youth Corps participants:** Annemarie D, Allie K, Rylee G., Joshua C., Isaiah W., Alexia V., Antonio J., Sam H., Xanna P.

## Youth Corps Press

[MBX Newsletter](#)

[South Bay Magazine](#)

[Santa Monica Patch](#)

[MBMS Weekly Wave](#)

[The Daily Breeze](#)

[The Beach Reporter](#)

Planet Experts (not yet published)