



# Young Dreamer Network - 2017

# Young Dreamers 2016 Results

**When we reached out to you in early 2016 for consideration, our Young Dreamers had significant plans for the year. We are happy to report that with your help they met their goals for 2016, new chapters have formed, and they are on a path to an impressive 2017.**

Their commitment to community continues to shine as much as the breadth of involvement they have in various areas of service and development.

They introduced native plants at several parks in the county, completed neighborhood clean-up's in the North Fair Oaks Community, volunteered for numerous activities with Kainos and its residents, and served hundreds of meals at St. Anthony's Dining Hall.

They continue to support younger generations through helping to deliver more than 600 books to a library in East Palo Alto.



In three separate trips, over 50 Young Dreamers traveled to Guatemala, Costa Rica, India and Vietnam to volunteer with their international counterparts. In Guatemala they repaired a retaining wall in the village we sponsor. In Costa Rica, they built a permanent recycling center for our community. And in India, they supported the school we operate in the Elephant Village, Jaipur.

In the fall of 2016, over 50 new members joined our program to replace some who had graduated and to increase our overall numbers to more than 80 members in Redwood City. We now have dedicated faculty advisors at each school, which has allowed our Executive Director to focus on running and growing the organization. These faculty advisors have brought structure and leadership opportunities to the campus meetings, guidance to community service projects, and they are supporting the students as they fund-raise for next summer's trips.

We are so proud of what our Bay Area teens have accomplished this year and are excited for what's in store for them in 2017.

# About Young Dreamer Network

## **Mission**

Young Dreamer Network (YDN) exists to empower teens to become difference makers in their communities. They are identifying challenges within their community and are addressing these challenges through strategic actions. In San Mateo County, our program entails leadership development, service-learning, international volunteer trips and after-school workshops at local high schools. In our international locations, YDN includes the aforementioned components along with academic scholarships for promising youth to attend quality high schools. These are youth who live where school is a privilege not a right, and their parents are unable to pay for them to attend secondary school.

## **Vision**

Young Dreamer Network currently operates in the U.S., Guatemala, India, Ghana, Vietnam and Costa Rica. We will continue to add communities around the world until we have covered the globe with Young Dreamers. Our vision is for all of these groups to be connected with each other to form a network of teens, learning and leading together as they transform their communities.

## **History**

Young Dreamer Network was formed in 2007 by Executive Director Brian Buntz, a former Peace Corps Volunteer, middle school teacher and business leader. YDN is a 501(c)(3) public charity, which was created in Summer 2010. Prior to 2010, YDN was operated by The University of Dreams Foundation. YDN began by providing scholarships and academic and financial support to promising teens in Guatemala and India. The Redwood City Chapter of YDN was launched in Fall 2010 with 14 brave, young pioneers from Summit Preparatory and Everest Public High School. Since then, it has grown to over 80 in Redwood City and has expanded its domestic reach to places like Sunnyvale, and Woodside, CA and Tucson, AZ.



# YDN Redwood City Chapter

## Taking action to support the community and benefit the environment

Throughout 2016 and early 2017, our Redwood City Young Dreamers have coordinated service projects in the areas of education/kids, poverty/hunger, the environment, health care, and animals. By partnering with North Fair Oaks Forward on a neighborhood clean-up campaign, our members continued to understand the benefits of cleaner communities, from the environmental impact to the sense of pride that comes from honoring the communities in which they live.



This pride translated into action on several other projects to benefit and support those around them. They prepared meals for needy families, introduced native plants at parks through the county including Stulsaft and Aratradero. They delivered hundreds of books at the Brentwood Academy library in the

Ravenswood activities for Kainos residents  
***“Taking part in these service of Redwood City and shows me***



School District, as well as organized throughout the year.

***projects connects me to the needs my ability to contribute.” (Jacyn)***

This sentiment is a perfect embodiment of our mission of empowering teens to become difference makers in their community, and represents the impact Young Dreamer Network has had on the lives of our Bay Area youth.

## Creating Independence and an Additional Chapter

The Redwood City Young Dreamers have transitioned into a student-run club, but now have on-campus advisors in the form of teachers who have signed up to help guide the clubs. These faculty members at both Summit and Everest act as advisors to the group, but the students now run the meetings, community service project development, and fund-raising. These are the types of leadership and self-development practices that our organization exists to create.

One of the many benefits of groups operating autonomously is the ability for Young Dreamer Network Staff to continue to create chapters throughout the Bay Area and beyond, as well as continuing to support existing chapters in creating a well-rounded local and global network. One such example can be seen in the group of 20 teens from Denali High School in Sunnyvale that has launched a YDN Chapter this year. Although small, it is a step in the right direction as we aim to bring this program to every campus in the area.

# The Service Trips that Transformed our Members

In the summer of 2016, Redwood City Young Dreamers completed summer service trips to Jaipur, India, Providencia, Costa Rica, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Vuelta Grande, Guatemala to volunteer alongside the YDN Guatemala, Costa Rica, Vietnam and India Chapters.

In July, Redwood City youth ventured to India to serve, explore and engage. While there, they beautified and improved a tutoring center used by dozens of children in the slum of Ambedkar Nagar, where our Indian Young Dreamers live. They also taught basic English and math lessons to children, and organized games for them at a school YDN operates in the Elephant Village of Jaipur.



Of course, a major component of this trip was getting to know our Indian Young Dreamers. We visited their homes, shared meals with them, engaged in frank discussions and laughed our way through several ice breakers.

In Costa Rica, a group of Young Dreamers worked with their local counterparts to build a permanent recycling center in Providencia, the village we sponsor. This was a major endeavor, which is now fully functioning. This project, and our daily discussions, helped the youth to learn about sustainable development, environmental management and climate change. In their time with the Costa Rican Young Dreamers, they learned about each other's cultures and lifestyles and formed friendships based on their commonalities.

In Guatemala in June, we served by repairing a retaining wall at a school site and organizing games and activities for the local children. What's more, Redwood City Young Dreamers and their Guatemalan peers planted more than 500 trees in the center of the village.

The kids now have true friends and like-minded change partners thousands of miles away from their home. While the actual trips are short in duration, the profound impact it has made on their lives continues to affect their daily mindset.

# A Look Ahead

## **The plan for 2017 includes**

- > Strengthening our current chapter while continuing to expand to additional high schools throughout the area and in other states.
- > Young Dreamers will continue to coordinate service projects in the areas of education/kids, poverty/hunger, environment, health care, and animals.
- > Young Dreamer Network will strengthen its current partnerships and form new partnerships with local organizations to implement our service projects. Targets include: Kainos, Grassroots Ecology, St. Anthony's, Save the Bay, Redwood Family Shelter and local school districts.
- > Creating an additional documentary film focusing on youth, education and service.
- > Organizing food drives, and blanket & coat drives for needy families.
- > An intensified focus on self-discovery and leadership development.
- > Partnering with the City of Redwood City on environmental projects.
- > Summer service trips to Costa Rica, Guatemala and Vietnam.
- > Connecting our respective chapter leaders to form a network-wide Youth Advisory Board.



# Request

We are asking for financial support to:

- > Increase our program staff in an effort to serve more local teens as we are still understaffed.
- > Add programs at additional area high schools.
- > Fund the cost of running our weekly workshops.
- > Provide transportation, supplies and staff for our various local community service projects.
- > Cover a portion of the cost of the summer service trips.

## **Additional Sources of Support**



YDN's funding sources include: Apple, AT&T, AvidBank, Bank of America, Danford Foundation, Dream Careers, DPR Construction, Fox Theatre, Google, Granite Rock, Lyngso, Merrill Lynch, Peter and Paula Uccelli Foundation, San Mateo Credit Union, Ruiz Janitorial Services, Shutterfly, Wells Fargo and hundreds of individual donors.

## **Closing Remarks**

We are asking you to support our local teens as they serve the community, expand their global awareness and grow as leaders. Our low overhead means that the majority of your sponsorship will go to programming. Young Dreamer Network greatly appreciates your support.

Thank you for your time and consideration. All the best!

Sincerely,

*Brian Bantz*

Executive Director  
Young Dreamer Network