



Bay Area

Experience Corps Bay Area Earns Excellence in Nonprofit Volunteer Management Award

On Thursday, April 29, 2010 Experience Corps Bay Area received top honors for Excellence in Nonprofit Volunteer Management at HATS OFF! A Celebration of Volunteer Heroes presented by The Volunteer Center Serving San Francisco and San Mateo Counties.

Experience Corps Bay Area (ECBA) with headquarters in the Sunset district of San Francisco, and more than 240 volunteers in 23 schools in SF, Oakland and San Rafael, is a literacy intervention volunteer program designed to leverage the time, talent, and experience of older adults 55+ (*Boomers*) to be academic mentors for the underserved in our urban elementary schools. ECBA recruits, screens, trains, places and supports volunteers to work 1:1 or in small groups doing targeted academic tutoring, in-class support, and enrichment activities—before, during and after school for students who have been identified as needing more individual support.

“This program is really outstanding. I can’t imagine our school without Experience Corps,” says Principal Wendi Caporicci at Emerson Elementary.

In addition to its strong educational mission, Experience Corps was created from a national research based program model explicitly designed to yield broad health improvements for elderly volunteers by providing them with a rigorous, structured and engaging intergenerational experience that simultaneously increases their physical, social and cognitive activity.

“It is a unique multi-level approach to health improvement that has tremendous benefits, and coupled with its youth education focus, serves a dual-benefit to society” says David Moren, Associate Director for ECBA Oakland. “ECBA is a great win-win for the community.”

While there are many tutoring programs out in the community – many of which are for-profit private companies – Experience Corps members bring the unique value of a full-life of experience, compassion, patience and a willingness to commit for extended periods of time (some having served for more than a decade!). “Part of our community goal is to make our schools more intergenerational. To this end, ECBA aims to shift the overall culture of a school to embrace older members of the community and show children that there are many role models in their very neighborhoods that care for them and who demonstrate what civic engagement and ‘giving back’ can look like” says Eunice Nichols, Director of Encore & Intergenerational Programs at Aspiranet, ECBA’s parent organization.

Recent independent research from Washington University in St. Louis and Johns Hopkins University studied not only Experience Corps’ academic impact on students, which showed

statistically significant results, but also reinforced what we've always know to be true: that volunteers greatly benefit too—from things like decreased rates of depression, cane usage, and isolation to increases in energy, physical activity, social connections and brain health and functionality.

The Excellence in Nonprofit Volunteer Management Award recognizes nonprofit organizations in the Bay Area that effectively engage volunteers in the meaningful work that they do.

ECBA is proud to have received this peer recognition honor, as well as endorsements from the Mayor of San Francisco, AARP, and several media outlets for the proven impact of our volunteer program.

Experience Corps Bay Area plans to deepen its presence in all 23 schools next year and is actively recruiting older adults to join our team and help kids learn to read. Contact ECBA at 415/759-3690 for more information on how to get involved.

*For more information and photography please contact:
Michael Lynch at (415) 889-7183 mlynch@aspiranet.org
Visit ECBA online at <http://www.snbc.org/programs/experience-corps>
<http://www.experiencecorps.org/index.cfm>*