

Walk 'N Rock For Kids

People Reaching Out is a participant in Hope Productions Walk 'N Rock For Kids! Excitement is spreading throughout the community and now is the time to form a walk team or sponsor an individual walker to benefit People Reaching Out. It has never been easier to support youth and families in your community.

- When:** May 23, 2009
- The Walk:** 7 a.m. registration
8 a.m. walk begins at Raley Field in West Sacramento
- The Rock:** 7 p.m. doors open
8 p.m. concert begins
Star-studded, VIP reception and benefit concert with the legendary rock group "Journey"

Individual pledges turned in by May 20, 2009 and receive:

- Raise \$25** receive a WALK 'N ROCK FOR KIDS water bottle
- Raise \$100** receive the water bottle and WALK 'N ROCK FOR KIDS t-shirt
- Raise \$500** receive the water bottle, t-shirt and one upper level concert ticket
- Raise \$750** receive the water bottle, t-shirt and one mid-level concert ticket
- Raise \$1,000** receive the water bottle, t-shirt and one floor level concert ticket
- PLUS!** All individual walkers who raise more than \$1,000 and turn in their money by May 20, 2009 will be entered into a Grand Prize Drawing for 2 tickets to the VIP reception—meet & greet and dinner.

For more information, please visit www.walknrock.org or contact Cole Forstedt at 916-576-3300 ext. 322 or colef@peoplereachingout.org.



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Serving youth and families in the Sacramento Region since 1981



PEOPLE REACHING OUT

Drug Free. Dream Big.

NEWSLETTER
Spring 2009



"Light of My Life"

By: Tavish Lopez
Senior, Valley High School

I know that there are a lot of people who would be different today if they just had someone to pay attention to them when they were younger. I'm a student at Valley High School in Sacramento, and I wanted to help kids at nearby Samuel Jackman Middle School feel like they had someone who would be there for them.

I've always wanted to give back to neighborhood schools. People Reaching Out seemed the best way to do that.

I became the mentor of a young girl named Jonique. I was mainly a mentor to her, but there were always other kids who would join our group to talk. However, we always had our one-on-one time to discuss things important to both of us. Jonique and I began to have a real mentor and mentee bond. She would actually listen to things I'd tell her and most importantly she would remember to do them.

Jonique enlightened me as well. As a mentor, I didn't always know the answer to a question. There were days that she would teach me. Jonique taught me that even through all our problems, there is always light. She is always happy and always smiling even when she wants to give up.

If not for PRO, I wouldn't have met Jonique, and I am thankful for that every day. She has brought light to me by letting me bring light to her. The lessons I learned from People Reaching Out will always be with me. I struggle with things like communication, patience, and sharing, and PRO has helped me with each one.

I know that PRO is and always will be a valuable asset to the mentees, to the mentor, and most importantly to the community – because it brings out the real person inside each of us.





Youth Create Hope and a Plan for the Future

Students in People Reaching Out's SRO program at Sacramento's Valley High School embarked on a mission last summer that could change lives. With a singleness of purpose that would impress activists twice their age, these young leaders developed a plan to reduce youth violence and bring a better quality of life to their community.

Their project is an initiative of the Valley Hi Coalition and funded by The California Endowment Foundation. Students began by researching and developing surveys and then hit the streets to get in front of people to ask their perceptions about youth violence in their neighborhoods. They attended back-to-school nights, gave presentations at community safety meetings, and approached people at local libraries and grocery stores. This grassroots effort resulted in the completion of nearly 400 surveys.

The data uncovered a community deeply concerned about youth violence and also revealed a few surprises. More than 85 percent of youth and adults surveyed agreed that the major cause of violence is drugs and gang involvement. However, the majority said that they have not been victims. In the survey, youths said they feel safe at school but identified school as where most of the violence occurred. (To see the complete survey – go to peoplereachingout.org)

Survey results were shared at two well-attended community meetings that brought together local business owners, the superintendent of the Elk Grove Unified School District, members of the Elk Grove Unified school board, teachers, principals, parents and students.

The survey recommends:

- Incorporating an awareness campaign to publicize available youth programs
- Creating counseling services to get to the root of problems and teach youth to resolve issues peacefully
- Creating a teen center to bring tutoring services, drug and alcohol prevention education and afterschool activities to the area.

"These kids took on what was a college-level project from start to finish," said Staci Anderson, executive director of People Reaching Out. "It just proved what we've believed all along – that when you engage youth and give them a voice, there are no limits to what they can accomplish."

Students in the SRO program, along with the Valley Hi Coalition, have identified a teen center as their priority project. They are inviting local businesses, community leaders, and residents to work with them side-by-side.

"As residents of this community, we can make it a great place to live," said Ashleigh McGee, student at Valley High School. "When youths and adults work together, change can happen. Together we will create hope and a plan for the future of our community."



People Reaching Out is proud to welcome these local leaders to our board, and we look forward to achieving great things together in our community!

Trevor Kern is the vice president and chief financial officer for Zeller Kern Private Wealth Management. Trevor began his career at A.G. Edwards, and in 2007 he established Zeller Kern along with partner Steve Zeller.

Giving back to the community where he works and lives is important to Trevor, and he brings that philanthropic spirit to People Reaching Out. "As a father I'm aware that I'm raising my child in an environment where she will be touched by the issues that People Reaching Out deals with," he said. "It makes me think about the struggles youth face growing up and especially those that don't have the same opportunities I can provide my family. I want to do what I can to ensure that the kids involved in People Reaching Out programs have the same opportunities and guidance to make positive choices for their lives," he said.

Tiffany Moffatt is the corporate affairs director for Wal-Mart's western region. In her role, she advocates for the company's policy and corporate communications initiatives. Prior to joining Wal-Mart, Tiffany spent five years as a public servant, first in her role as communications director for the office of the Governor, and prior to that as the press secretary for the Assembly Republican Caucus.

Tiffany continues her service to the public through her philanthropic efforts. "I am a product of vocational education," she said, "and I have witnessed the impact that a youth organization can make in shaping a young person's life."

Roxanne Gould is senior vice president for State Government Affairs for Tech America, the nation's leading High Tech Trade Association. With more than 20 years experience in public policy, Roxanne leads the company's public policy, grassroots and government relations efforts throughout all 50 states.

"I look forward to helping People Reaching Out educate our community about substance abuse and putting this issue on the radar of key community leaders," said Roxanne. "Working together, we all can change the way we respond to this issue – get in front of the problem and reach kids early enough to put them on a successful path."

WELCOME

new Board Members

about PEOPLE REACHING OUT

People Reaching Out was formed in 1981 by a group of concerned parents and community members in direct response to a lack of resources dealing with adolescent substance use and violence. Since its inception, People Reaching Out has developed and implemented programs based on scientific research and proven prevention strategies. Our mission is to create a safe, drug-free community for youth in the Sacramento region through programs that will foster the development of positive self-esteem and opportunities for personal growth. We strive to be the organization most responsible for leading the Sacramento region to uphold a safe, drug-free community where young people dream big.

People Reaching Out programs include youth-to-youth mentoring, youth prevention education, youth led community coalitions, counseling for academic achievement, and parenting for prevention. People Reaching Out is partnered with five Sacramento area school districts including Elk Grove Unified, Sacramento City Unified, San Juan Unified, Woodland Joint Unified and Washington Unified. The organization serves more than 13,000 youth and families annually.

Yolo Counseling and Parenting Classes Recognized

People Reaching Out was recognized for its individual counseling and parenting classes by The Wayfarer Center Christian Mission in Yolo County, which presented us with the Don Wells Honorary Award for "Excellence in Partnership." PRO has provided parenting classes to 15 families at the Wayfarer family transitional housing program so far this year. People Reaching Out counseling manager, Kathy Green was on hand to accept the award. "This was such a thrill for me," said Kathy. "We love the work we are doing at the Wayfarer Center. **It really is a privilege to help these families. We are truly honored.**"