

Riverside County  
Youth Commission

2010-2011 Term

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## Fourth District Annual Report

## **RIVERSIDE COUNTY FOURTH DISTRICT YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011**

The Fourth District Youth Advisory Council (YAC) identifies youth-related concerns and issues that specifically address the Fourth District. YAC is comprised of students from La Quinta, Palo Verde, Desert Christian Academy, Xavier Prep, and Palm Desert high schools.

The Fourth District Youth Advisory Council of 2010-2011 accomplished the following:

- **13<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Commission Retreat- July 2010**

The 13th Annual Youth Commission Retreat was held at Knott's Soak City Palm Springs on July 28. Motivational speaker John Vandenberg provided the keynote and leadership workshops for this event. Mr. Vandenberg helped youth learn valuable leadership, communication and team-building skills. Council members were also given the opportunity to meet and network with YAC members from all five districts.

- **Fourth District Inaugural Meeting- September 2010**

The first meeting for the Fourth District Youth Advisory Council was held September 7 for the Coachella Valley Council and September 1 for the Blythe Council. YAC members selected goals to work on throughout the 2010-2011 term. The Coachella Valley council decided to help people with disabilities, local animal rescue groups and shelters, the Desert AIDS project, homeless shelters, food pantries, and military families. The Blythe council members decided to focus on building a better foundation for YAC in Blythe by fulfilling many community service projects. Elections for council officers took place at the first meeting, the results were:

**Coachella Valley**: Michael Tseng, Commissioner; Sanket Worlikar, Co-Commissioner; Tanya Durst, Secretary; Brittney Baird, Secretary; Sarah Azody, Parliamentarian; Audrey Wegerle, Youth Summit Representative.

**Blythe**: Matthew Ramos, Commissioner; Kaelin Sprawls, Co-Commissioner; Tamara Shasky, Secretary; Cole Krisell, Parliamentarian; Yecenia Keller, Youth Summit Representative

- **Blythe YAC Member Recruitment- September 2010**

YAC members in Blythe hosted a member recruitment booth at Palo Verde Valley High School throughout September. This project helped to spread the word about YAC and encouraged 16 more teens to join the council for the 2010-2011 term.

- Animal Shelter Supplies Drive- September 2010**  
 Coachella Valley YAC members hosted a supplies drive for local animal shelters during the month of September. YAC members solicited local hotels for linens, stores for food and their peers for additional items. YAC members collected so many towels, pillows, bed sheets and blankets that the extra items were distributed to three homeless shelters.
- Relay for Life at Palm Desert Civic Center- October 2010**  
 YAC members volunteered at Relay for Life at the Palm Desert Civic Center. This event is an annual fundraiser hosted by the American Cancer Society. YAC members helped out with registration, handed out T-shirts and passed out cancer prevention literature.
- For the Children Softball Game- October 2010**  
 Coachella Valley YAC members attended a softball game with For the Children, a nonprofit for foster kids and parents, and Riverside County's Child Protective Services. YAC members played softball, provided entertainment for kids too young to play softball, and helped pass out refreshments.
- "Trick or Treating" for Canned Goods- October 2010**  
 YAC members in both Blythe and the Coachella Valley went door to door on Halloween night asking for donations of canned goods or other non-perishable food items. All of the items collected were donated to the Office on Aging Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program and were distributed to families throughout the Fourth District.
- "Give Thanks. Walk!" St. Jude Children's Hospital Fundraiser- November 2010**  
 YAC members volunteered at the St. Jude Children's Hospital annual fundraiser, "Give Thanks. Walk!" At this event YAC members were route guides for the walking participants at the event, assisted with refreshments, passed out St. Jude's literature, and greeted the participants as they crossed the finish line.
- For the Children Toy Drive & Holiday Party-November/December 2010**  
 With help from *Sherry Mesa THE Salon*, a local business, YAC members diligently collected more than 100 gifts to make Christmas special for children living in foster homes. The toys were wrapped and distributed to the children at the annual Christmas party of For The Children, a nonprofit that supports foster children. The Christmas party was held at Hotel Zoso in Palm Springs on December 19. In addition to providing gifts, YAC members decorated cookies and did arts and crafts with the kids.
- Game & Movie Night at Operation SafeHouse of the Desert- January 2011**  
 YAC members hosted a game & movie night at Operation SafeHouse of the Desert, a shelter for homeless, runaway and other youth in crisis. YAC members brought pizza, drinks and dessert, interacting and bonding with the teens living at SafeHouse.

- **Game Day at the Palo Verde College Child Development Center - January 2011**

Blythe YAC members spent a day at the Palo Verde College Child Development Center reading children's books. They also painted and drew pictures with the children and played games outside with the kids at the day care. It gave a well-deserved break to the women that work very hard at the day care and brought laughter to both the children and the YAC members.

- **Eight Annual Fourth District Youth in Government Day- January 2011**

YAC coordinated Youth in Government Day, pairing high school students with Supervisor Benoit and 27 county employees. Students shadowed Supervisor Benoit and Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Larry Ward, rode along with public safety agencies, witnessed court trials, inspected restaurants and got a glimpse into the rewarding career choices available in public service. After six hours of seeing county government in action, students regrouped to discuss their experiences. Participating departments included Cal Fire, Sheriff's Department, District Attorney's Office, Probation, Economic Development Agency, Transportation and Land Management, Social Services, Law Offices of the Public Defender, Office on Aging and the Environmental Health Agency. The Youth in Government Day was highlighted in *The Desert Sun* newspaper and on local television.

- **Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival Events- February 2011**

- **Battle of the Bands**

YAC took an active role in the 65th Annual Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival, helping to coordinate two unique attractions. On opening day, YAC held the Second Annual Battle of the Bands, where seven local youth bands competed for the grand prize of top-of-the-line Fender instruments and equipment. The competition was a popular attraction at the Fair and generated great attendance and excellent news coverage. YAC members had a hands-on role in organizing the event and working with judges to ensure the event ran smoothly. In addition, YAC members raised \$150 from the raffle of a donated Fender guitar, donating the funds to the World Craniofacial Foundation.

- **High School Competition**

In an effort to bring more young people to enjoy Fair traditions, YAC members also organized the Second Annual High School Competition, featuring a series of funny Fair contests: texting, date pit spitting, funnel cake eating, "camel" racing, lasso throwing, trivia and school spirit. Teams from five high schools competed for the prestigious Date Cup Trophy. YAC members selected the games, acted as referees and awarded trophies to the first, second, and third place teams.

- **Walk for Animals Fundraiser- March 2011**

Coachella Valley YAC members volunteered with Animal Samaritans at the annual Walk for Animals fundraiser. At this event YAC members helped at the refreshment tent, operated various booths throughout the walk route, and passed out gift bags to participants.

- **Baseball Buddies- April 2011**

Baseball Buddies is a local group that hosts weekly t-ball games for kids with disabilities. On April 4, Coachella Valley YAC members volunteered their time and helped these kids hit a baseball, run bases and cheer on their teammates.

- **The HUE Music and Arts Festival- April 2011**

Members from Blythe and the Coachella Valley volunteered at the inaugural HUE Music and Arts Festival in Coachella on April 9. This event displayed art from local young artists, films from local young filmmakers, and music from 15 bands on three different stages. YAC members worked at the first aid and general information tents.

- **Blythe Cultural Day and 5k Walk- April 2011**

Blythe YAC members set up a booth at the city's Cultural Day. YAC members distributed information on YAC, displayed posters to show what YAC has been doing around Blythe and raised \$57 for the Palo Verde Valley District Library through a game called "Pick a Duck." The YAC members set up the booth and decorated it and ran the game throughout the event.

- **Palo Verde College Talent Show- April 2011**

The Blythe council volunteered at the ticket and snack booths at the Palo Verde College second annual talent show on April 29. All of the money raised at this event went to fund scholarships for the Palo Verde Valley College students.

- **Palo Verde Cemetery Clean Up- April 2011**

The Blythe council volunteered to help clean up the Palo Verde Cemetery. On April 30 Blythe YAC members raked leaves that were blocking the irrigation system, filled in uneven ground with soil, and picked up trash.

- **Cinco De Mayo Celebration- May 2011**

The Second Annual Cinco De Mayo Celebration was held May 7 in Blythe. This event was hosted by The Blythe Recreation Center. Blythe YAC members volunteered at various booths at this event. Proceeds went to the Blythe Recreation Center.

- **Building Self Esteem Through Literary Awareness- May 2011**

Building Self Esteem Through Literary Awareness was hosted by The Miss Blythe Organization. Blythe YAC members went to the Palo Verde Valley District Library on May 14 to help Miss Blythe 2011, and Elise Bishoff read to groups of children. The purpose of this event is to encourage young children to go to the local library and explore the joys of reading.

- **Recruitment**

Recruitment for the Fourth District Youth Advisory Council is ongoing through the end of the term and summer. Council members provide contact information of students they recommend for the 2011-2012 council. Youth Advisory Council members have also invited potential applicants to events and meetings during the end of the term. The Fourth District Youth Advisory Council is advertised through local media, Supervisor Benoit's Web site and monthly e-report The Benoit Bulletin, letters to school officials and word of mouth.

**General Recommendations:**

- Work with Supervisor Benoit to develop a program where YAC students can shadow Supervisor Benoit at a Board of Supervisors meeting in Riverside
- Continue to host innovative community service projects
- Establish better methods of communication with members
- Recruit members from all high school in the Fourth District
- Host more presentations from community organizations
- Continue council's positive attitude
- Host more events with fellow Riverside County YACs

The Fourth District Youth Advisory Council thanks the Board of Supervisors for your continued support and dedication of youth in our county.