



STRONG BEGINNINGS

ADVENTURES AHEAD SUMMER PROGRAM

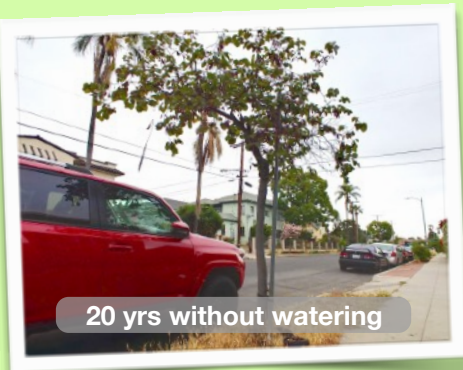
Adventures Ahead Kindergarten class 2019

If you have followed RCP for a while, you know that we are always planting trees. Just a few weeks ago we planted eight Chitalpa trees along Jefferson Boulevard. Moms, dads, kindergarteners, college students and teenagers all did their part to dig holes, prepare the soil, and set up stakes. Our hearts imagined this stretch of Jefferson in 20, 30 or 40 years, shaded by wide, flowering branches. A vision like that makes sore backs and blackened fingernails well worth it.



March 2019 tree planting

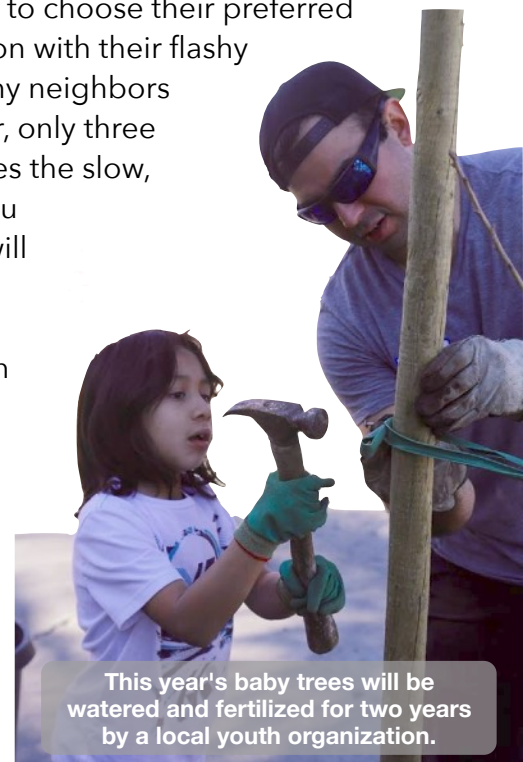
But trees do not grow on hope alone, and we have learned that lesson the hard way. Twenty years ago we organized a voting process for residents of 30th Street to choose their preferred tree species. Chinese Red Buds won with their flashy magenta blossoms. But of the many neighbors who signed commitments to water, only three households actually gave their trees the slow, steady care that they needed. If you drive down 30th Street today you will see a long row of spindly, stunted trees, producing little shade two decades later. But as you approach Kenwood, three trees stand proud and tall. Our friends Preston, Maria Esther, Francisco, and Miguel spent the late 1990's making sure these trees were pruned and had abundant water. Now they beautify the sidewalks in front of their homes.



20 yrs without watering



20 yrs with watering



This year's baby trees will be watered and fertilized for two years by a local youth organization.

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Adventures in Robotics Spotlight

On March 16th Adventures Ahead 5th grade students traveled to Legoland to compete in a robotics tournament. They showed great determination and teamwork even as they faced several setbacks with their robot. We are so proud of their enthusiasm and effort and look forward to building on this experience!



Adventures Ahead 5th grade students

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"There's a lesson here," RCP's president mused, passing the trees on his way home from church. "The importance of a strong beginning."

Our Adventures Ahead tutoring program is about giving children the best possible beginning. All year long they practice phonics, fluency and comprehension so that reading can be fun, not frustrating. They form friendships with USC students and other caring neighbors who read with them one-on-one. They watch tadpoles turn into frogs, dissect squids and create models of human organ systems. They learn to write code and compete in robotics competitions. Their minds are watered with loving encouragement, goals to work toward, routines for practicing skills and exposure to the mysteries of the natural world. We imagine them in 20 years, solving problems, creating beauty and nurturing the next generation.

Perhaps the most impactful part of the year is our four-week summer camp in July. During this time our kids will spend 6 hours a day engaged in active learning.

We have shared this before, and we'll share it again: The achievement gap between middle and low income children gets wider during the summer months. Children with greater resources travel, take lessons and classes, engage in more reading and benefit from close supervision. These kids generally return to school with about the same skill levels they had in the spring, sometimes higher. Lower income kids have fewer opportunities for challenge and enrichment, and often lose skills from the previous year. Adventures Ahead turns this around. Our students will do hands on exploration of Earth Science, read great books, play sports at the park, practice math, and bond with students from UCLA, UCI and Cal Poly SLO. They will gain ground this summer, not lose it.

The cost of four weeks of camp is about \$440 per student. This covers rent, our director's salary, materials, curriculum and technology. We only charge our students \$40 to enroll. Our partners have always made up the difference with donations.

Will you consider sponsoring one of this year's students?

Sponsor a Student this Summer

WOULD YOU MAKE A GIFT TODAY TO GIVE OUR STUDENTS A STRONG BEGINNING?



ONE WEEK OF CAMP
\$100
FOR ONE STUDENT



ALL 4 WEEKS OF CAMP
\$400
FOR ONE STUDENT