

# Youth NEWSLETTER

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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

APRIL 2026

1ST EDITION



I am **Angel Munoz**, a senior at **El Camino High School**. I enjoy spending time with friends, playing games and watching movies. I hope to **work in media** in the future, so I wrote this mini essay to work on my research skills through a topic I believe to be important. Because of this, I decided to submit it to the Youth Newsletter. I am still working on my writing skills, so **feedback would be greatly appreciated**.

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# Youth Voices

## COLUMN

### Volunteerism and Its Flaws

Research has found that since the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteering rates have taken a sharp decline. The U.S. Census and AmeriCorps conducted a survey in 2023 that determined that volunteering rates are growing, but they're nowhere near the average of the 2010s. Many things caused this, but some issues in volunteering stick out heavily. A study published this June found that there did seem to be a correlation between the economy and income with volunteering rates. The study determined that those who were more financially sound and of higher economic status were more likely to volunteer compared to people who aren't, because they need to dedicate more time to working to sustain themselves. However, COVID caused a large shift in class, leading to more and more people needing to dedicate their time to their jobs, and decreasing the amount of people who are available to volunteer.

Everyone, at least once, has cited time as the reason why they do not volunteer, but not to their fault. Many students or people in the workforce simply do not have the time to volunteer, as it typically conflicts with their activities. Many traditional volunteering opportunities, like helping out at food pantries, typically have their hours during the morning or on a weekday, which is just not possible for many people, especially for people who are studying or working. Opportunities that are available after 5 p.m. are usually very commitment based, which may deter people who want to volunteer casually.

High school students in particular find themselves at odds with some restrictions in volunteering. Many volunteer opportunities have some sort of age limit, and while sometimes it makes sense (in regards to things like helping out at events with alcohol), many are harsher. Some opportunities require licences or higher education just to apply, which bars teenagers from getting valuable experience in specific fields from these opportunities.

This doesn't mean there aren't any solutions though. Workplaces could provide VTO (volunteer time off), giving workers a break and allowing them to reap the benefits of volunteering and do some good, while the employer doesn't lose its money. Schools could also implement volunteering into their environment, offering students the opportunity to help out and volunteer around the school during school events or in places like the library. At the same time, organizations that already offer opportunities to volunteer could adapt by offering time and accommodations to those who are busy or disabled. Another thing they can do is offer more virtual opportunities, something some organizations have started adopting. Even something like volunteering if you can could show organizers that there's an increase in demand for this, influencing change in the system.

Volunteering is not in the worst place it could be in; it has been on a path to recovery since the pandemic. People shouldn't be worried about volunteering, but instead they should know that it can be better. Acknowledging these faults and improving on them could improve volunteerism itself and communities all around the country.

# Youth Commission UPDATES



Commissioners Lorraine & Ysabella

This was the first installment of the Donuts for Democracy Event hosted by the South San Francisco Youth Commission Civic Engagement Subcommittee in collaboration with the League of Women's Voters at Serramonte Mall. The goal of this event was to promote youth civic engagement through encouraging pre-registration. The turnout was great and the donuts were even better.



Commissioner Jon



At the 2026 NLC Congressional City Conference, youth leaders of the National League of Cities ("NLC") were formally introduced to youth delegates from across the country. For two days, they moderated workshops and led discussions with young leaders from around the United States. It's inspiring to see these young people not just attending a national conference —but helping run it.



Adam! :)



Commissioners Sania and Ysabella

This is the Letters to Cancer Patients event hosted in collaboration with the UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital. Participants were asked to write letters to cancer patients wishing them well in their stay at the hospital. We had around 120 people show up to the event and a lot of letters ready to donate. We appreciate the support from the City of South San Francisco's city council, Daly City representatives, and Juliana's Journey.

# *Future Events*

- **Library Tutoring Workshop:**  
Wednesday, 3PM - 5PM
- **Donuts for Democracy -**  
Youth Voter Pre-registration @  
El Camino High School: Friday,  
April 24<sup>th</sup>
- **Earth Day Cleanup:** Sunday,  
April 26<sup>th</sup>
- **AP Preparation Sessions:**  
tentative
- **Youth Program Fair:** tentative