



Community Service Restitution Unit

Triannual e-Newsletter

January - April 2018

Serving Our Youth Since 1980



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Lynne Wilkerson

Deputy CPO
Field & Court Services
Karl Johnson

CSR STAFF

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Sylvia Scott
Office Assistant

Joe Medellin
Lead Specialist

SPECIALISTS

Sonia Benavides
Lillian Byas
Melanie Castro
Arturo Gutierrez
Fred Guzman
Judy Larkin
Pablo Villanueva
Joe Villescaz

Global Youth Service Day

Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) celebrates the millions of children and youth around the world who improve their communities each day of the year through community service. In Texas, it is celebrated the entire month of April. Once again, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) served as the state's lead agency.

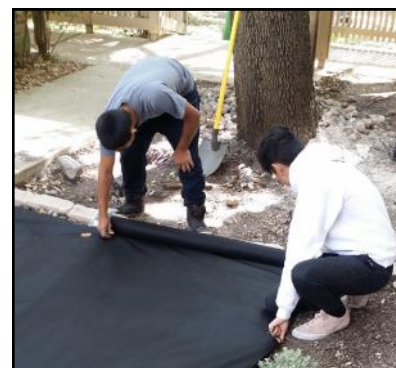
Over several weekends in April, our youth took part in a Beautification Project at St. Francis Episcopal Church. Over 950 sq. ft. of the church's main entryway was landscaped. Youth laid down weed barrier, spread mulch and decomposed granite, planted shrubs and plants, placed stone edging and river rocks, and much more. Plus, the church's marquee area and gen-



CSR Specialist, Joe Villescaz,
Demonstrates Stone Edging
Installation



(L to R) Rev. Patricia Riggins &
Judge Daphne Previti Austin



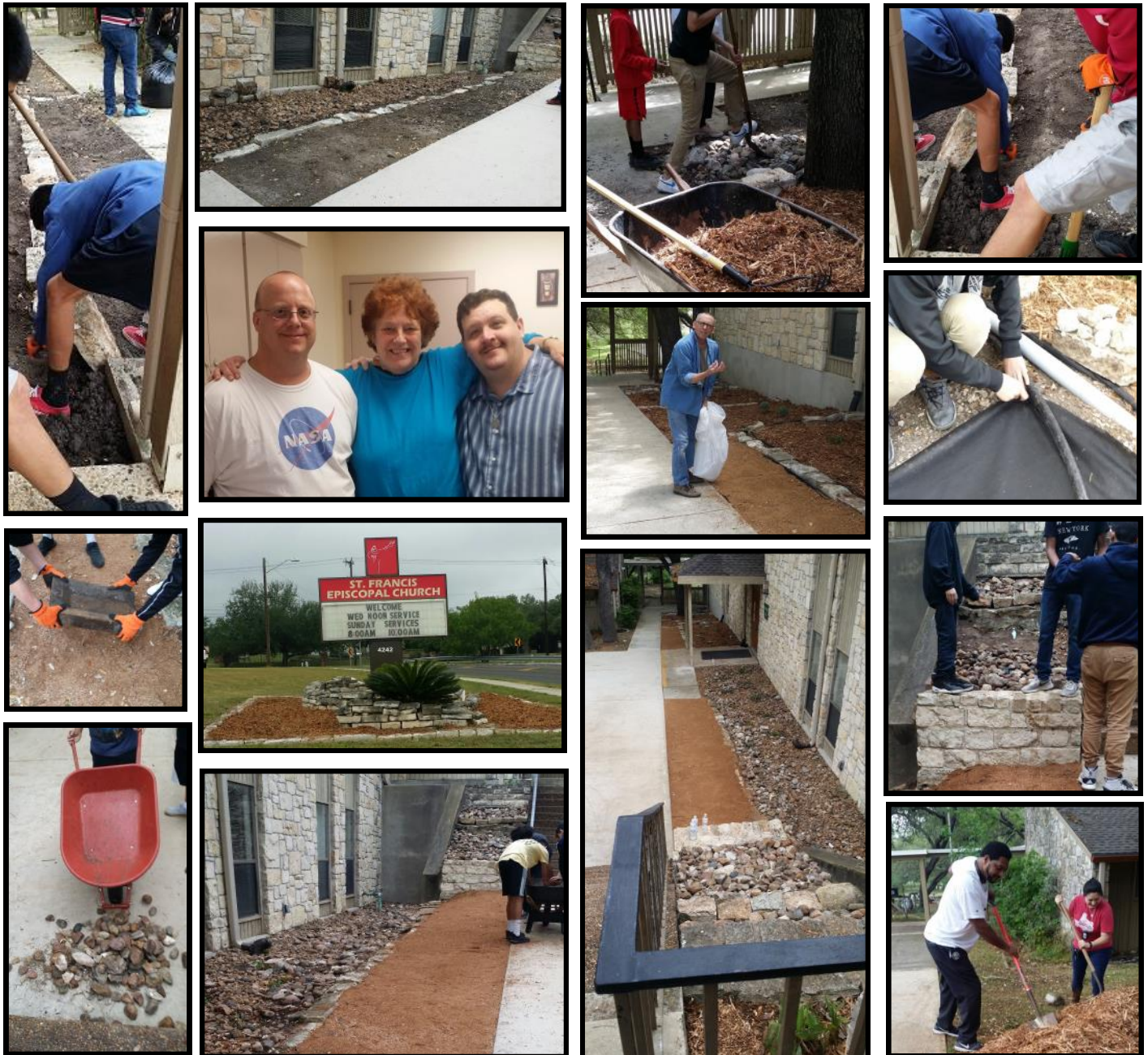
Youth Put In Weed Barrier

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eral grounds were spruced-up. CSR Specialist, Joe Villescaz, was project lead. Rev. Patricia Riggins and Mike Staples served as St. Francis' project contacts.

Youth and staff from TJJD's Parole Services and Ayers House also joined in on the fun. Their participation was secured by Patty Garza, TJJD Community & Family Relations Coordinator. Special thanks go to Bexar County Public Works for donating and delivering three cubic yards of mulch; Judge Daphne Previti Austin (289th District Court) who came by the project site on April 21st to thank the youth for their community service; and, to the Texas Community Service Association for making a \$300 grant award to this project. ■



BBQ Fundraiser

Our 9th annual BBQ plate fundraiser took place on March 22nd. As customary, chicken, sausage, rice, and beans were on the menu. This year, part of the proceeds went to Bexar County Partners for Youth who helped to sell tickets.

Much gratitude goes to department staff who supported the event. In particular, we extend sincere thanks to the following probation staff who helped to serve plates and much more: Celia Eureste, Gloria Casillas, Maricela Morales, Marisol Quinones, and Paula Martinez. Their help was sorely needed and appreciated.

Of course, the fundraiser took a lot of hard work on the part of all CSR staff. Teamwork abounded as staff did an extraordinary job in helping each other out. Lots of positivity.

Keeping in mind that every BBQ begins and ends with the cooks, special recognition goes to the Pit Crew: Arturo Gutierrez, Joe Villescaz, and Melanie Castro. Even some of our harshest critics from past years gave the cooks props this time. We do, however, apologize for turning away some of our colleagues the day of the event, but we had limited plates available for walk-up sales. Having said this, next BBQ don't forget to buy pre-sale tickets.

Finally, no BBQ takes place without ample pits. Many thanks to Legacy Gutters & Coatings for lending us two high capacity pits.



*Chief Wilkerson Helping Out the Cause
with Marisol*



*Pit Crew (Pictured L to R): Arturo, Joe V., and Melanie
Get "Moral" Support from Deputy Chief Johnson*



*Serving Line (Pictured L to R): Paula, Sylvia,
Lillie, Carmen, & Deputy Chief Morales*

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Here's looking forward to next year's fundraiser, and once again thank you everyone for supporting our department's youth and program. ■



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The newest addition to our unit is Sonia Benavides. On January 29th, Sonia officially joined CSR. She is a part-time CSR Specialist assigned to our



weekend work crews. Sonia comes to us with a sound education and experience background.

Sonia has a Bachelor's degree in Education from the University of Texas – San Antonio. Currently, she is working full-time as a Behavior Support Specialist at San Antonio ISD where she has been employed since 2005. Given the preceding, she is particularly well-equipped to work with some of our more behaviorally challenged youth.

Sonia is indeed a welcomed addition to our team. ■



Julysa Sosa, St. Philip's College Staff Photographer, teaches basic camera technique

Photography Project

After a short hiatus, photography has been added back to our menu of service learning projects. We kicked-off this project on April 2nd. CSR Specialist, Melanie Castro, an amateur photographer herself, is project lead. She is ably assisted by part-time CSR Specialists, Pablo Villanueva and Sonia Benavides.

This project introduces kids to different genres of photography while emphasizing the basics of poise, position, background and lighting. It is taught through a combination of classroom instruction, field trips, and student projects.

A mandatory component of any credible service learning project is the participation of partners from the community. Particularly those with subject-matter expertise. We are, therefore, very thankful to Tricia Buchhorn, photography instructor at San Antonio College, and Julysa Sosa, staff photographer at St. Philip's College, who have been kind enough to share their expertise with our kids.

Next month, a field trip is planned to San Antonio College where photo editing will be taught. In specific, youth will be able to use state of the art photography equipment and software.

The project finale will entail our kids applying skills learned by taking photos of abandoned dogs and cats at God's Dog Rescue. These photos will then be used to enhance the rescue center's Adopt a Pet efforts. ■