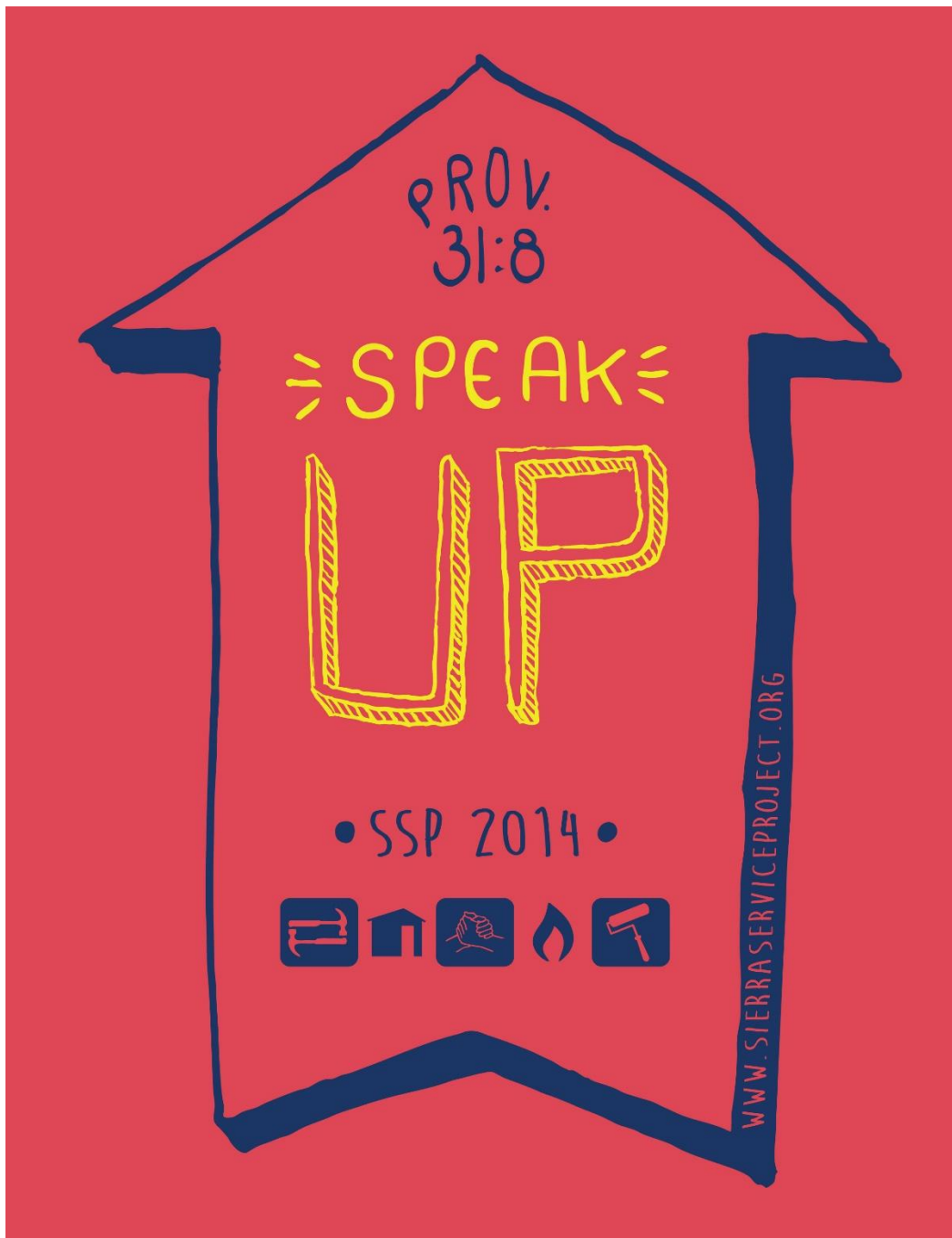

SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT 2014 PROGRAM REPORT



Contents

Summer Program 3

- Staff and Staff Training 3
- Operations 3
- Debrief 4
- Five Year Assessment Trends..... 4
- Construction Program 4
- Food Program..... 7
- Spiritual Life Program 8
- Review of the 2014 Summer Program 9

Site Locations

- Chiloquin, Oregon 11
- Walker River, Nevada..... 13
- Smith River, California..... 15
- Stockton, California 17
- Los Angeles, California 19
- Tsaile, Arizona 21

Weekend of Service Program 23

Alternative Break Program 25

Nicaragua Program 25

Summer Program

SSP got its start in 1975 when a small number of youth and a few adventurous adults gathered in Big Pine, California, to repair homes, worship and enjoy each other's company. Much has changed since those early days! This year, 1,816 youth and adult volunteers spent time at six different site locations in Nevada, California, Oregon and Arizona. Together, these hard working volunteers completed 113 repair projects, learned about the communities in which they served, and grew together in their faith and social skills.

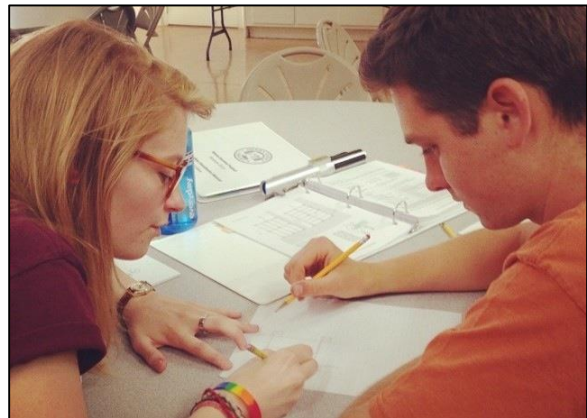
Staff and Staff Training

This year's staff consisted of 42 individuals, 26 of whom were first-time SSP employees, 4 of which had no prior experience with SSP. During the hiring process, we had a limited pool of applicants and opened up a second round of applications to fill positions of individuals who turned down their job offers for positions on our staff teams. We hope to build up our staff leadership capacity this year by introducing the Leadership Academy.

Unfortunately, one employee resigned during the summer. We were able to replace that individual with a veteran staffer.

Training took place at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Sacramento over an intense ten-day period and followed much the same pattern as the past few years. Highlights included attending church at SSP participating churches and a reception with a food truck at SSP's new office in North Sacramento.

Megan Walsh took led cook training with the help of one Site Director and one outside volunteer. Pascal Domicone led construction training with the help of three Site Directors and two outside volunteers. Two site directors led Spiritual Life Coordinator training which focused on what SSP is and the role of the SLC due to two of these leaders being brand new to SSP.



Operations

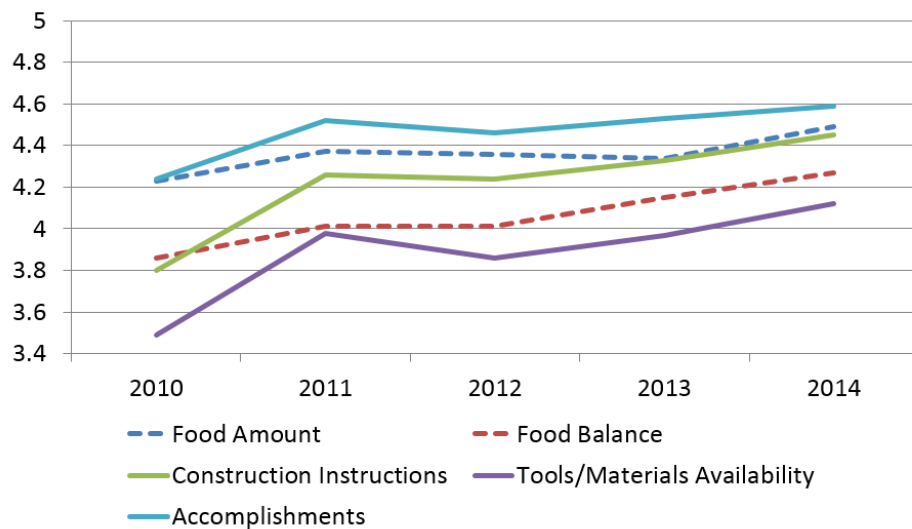
Rick Eaton, Megan Walsh, Pascal Domicone and Jake Bailey shared responsibility of the summer operations. Jake was on call throughout the summer for finance related calls while Rick, Megan and Pascal split the after-hours coverage for site issues and emergencies. Each of them were able to make site visits this summer, and all sites were visited at least once by a central staff person. Rick also acted as the Volunteer Coordinator while the position remained unfilled.

Debrief

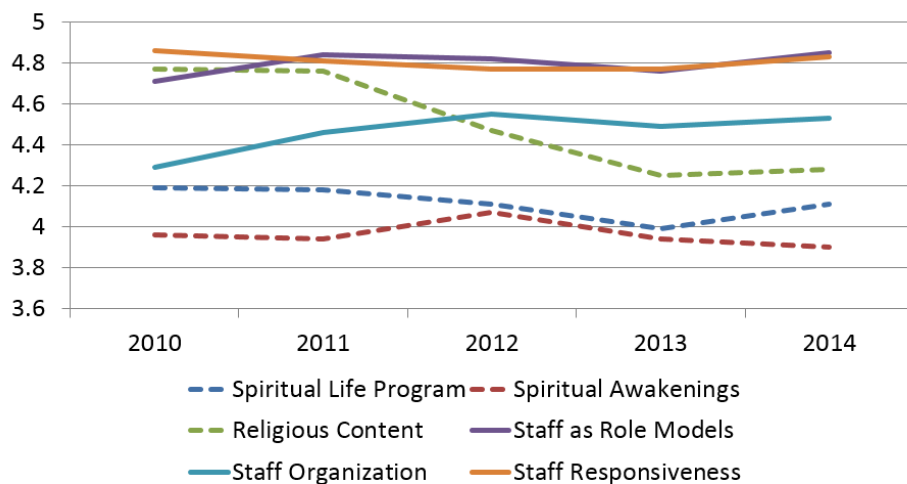
Once again, Point Pleasant United Methodist Church hosted our end-of-summer gathering. Over 3-1/2 days, we were able to do exit interviews with all staffers, review the summer's activities and make recommendations for next year. Those recommendations are all documented within this report.

Five Year Assessment Trends

One of the tools that SSP uses to assess the quality and effectiveness of its activities is the end-of-week evaluation that each participant fills out. This survey has been largely unchanged for several years, which provides us the opportunity to do year-to-year comparisons. These scores are for high school only.



Both food and materials scores have improved steadily over the past five years.



SSP's spiritual programming scores have actually declined in the past five years. Scores related to staff have been flat, but remain very high.

Construction Program

Pascal Domicone took on the responsibility for training the construction teams this year. He updated the online training, construction manual and hands-on training. As in prior years, all construction staff members were required to take and pass an online course prior to their arrival at staff training. Megan and Pascal were each in communication with three site teams to review their project plans, budgets and purchases. This worked very well to divide the work between two people instead of having one point person for all of the sites.



Bulk Purchases

This year bulk purchasing was done slightly different than in the past. Based on a recommendation from a Home Depot store that we purchased from in 2013, we made the majority of our bulk purchases locally at site instead of in Sacramento. This gave business to the local stores as well as allowed us to purchase lumber and concrete based on 75 percent of the 2013 average consumption of these materials. This created a lot of advance work for Pascal securing purchase orders, but decreased the pressure on teams during preparation week to estimate and purchase appropriately as most of the materials were already delivered. A few sites did not use the bulk materials, but they were able to be returned and now that we have experience doing this, we will be better prepared for next year.



Projects

Each year, SSP builds wheelchair ramps and porches, repairs and replaces roofs, paints houses, and does other types of home repair projects that make homes safer and more comfortable for low-income residents. Of the 113 repair projects that were completed in 2014, 30 percent of our volunteers worked on community based projects while the remaining 70 percent worked for homeowners.

In 2014, SSP:

Built 7 wheelchair ramps

Repaired 5 roofs

Built 12 sets of stairs and 3 porches

Painted the exterior of 22 homes the interior of 12 spaces.

To complete all of these repair projects, SSP spent \$56,837 last year on building materials:

To build a wheelchair ramps, it costs an average of \$1,130

To repair a roof, on average we spend \$2,115

New stairs and porches average over \$1,000

Paint for a house averages \$500.

Wednesday Projects

Instead of going out to work sites on Wednesday mornings before an afternoon of relaxation, high school sites were encouraged to find creative opportunities to serve and learn about the community as a full group or broken up into smaller groups. This has been the model of our urban sites previously and translated well to rural sites. The only site that was not able to find an appropriate activity was Walker River, Nevada. Each site found something unique that enhanced the local SSP experience.



Recommendations for Next Year

In order to take on more extensive projects like roofing, we need to increase the construction materials budget. These projects will add value to our volunteers' experience and better serve the severe needs some of our homeowners have.



If we can do more planning with our site liaisons before the summer, we can better purchase materials in bulk and prepare a project plan. Lining up projects in advance will help our staff be prepared and prevent midsummer scrambling to find quality work projects.



We are aware of the high demands that we ask of our staff and are looking for ways we can decrease the stress and pressure off of their jobs. Over the years we have asked more and more from them with the same hours in a day. This summer we had a major accident where a staff member fell asleep at the wheel. We are actively looking for solutions to prevent this from happening again.



Food Program

Megan Walsh for the second year took on training the cook teams this year. She updated the online training, recipes, meal plan, cook manual and hands-on training. As in prior years, all cooks were required to take and pass an online course prior to their arrival at staff training. Megan was in communication the cook teams throughout the summer to review their purchases, inventories and budgets. Site visits were also an important time to give feedback about food safety.



Bulk Purchases

Bulk purchases were made from four stores in Sacramento and transferred to site in site vehicles. This spending represents one quarter of the \$52,954 total food spending. Over 100 dry food and hygiene items were purchased in bulk to provide savings and to specify the right quality and type of food (i.e. no high fructose corn syrup). Storage at site can sometimes be difficult for these items, but it saves the cooks from needing to purchase all of these items themselves.



Changes

Site-wide changes this year included two serving lines and two work teams to clean the kitchen and do everyone's dishes. These changes were made to minimize the time waiting in line and maximize the time eating with friends and free time after dinner. Both were well received and will be continued in the future.

Breakfast	Main Dish	Sides
Monday	Pancakes	Sausage, Applesauce, Yogurt, Granola, Fresh Fruit
Tuesday	Scrambled Eggs and Breakfast Potatoes	Sausage, Yogurt, Granola, Fresh Fruit
Wednesday	Oatmeal	Breakfast Breads, Hardboiled Eggs, Yogurt, Granola, Fresh Fruit
Thursday	French Toast Casserole	Sausage, Yogurt, Granola, Fresh Fruit
Friday	Breakfast Burritos	Sausage, Yogurt, Granola, Fresh Fruit
Saturday	Cereal	Leftovers

Recommendations

The meal plan will continue to evolve to provide healthy, exciting meals for our volunteers. Next year we plan to change lunches to reduce the number of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and add cold cut sandwiches to a rotation.

Snack	
Sunday	Veggie sticks and hummus
Monday	Potato wedges and fruit slices
Tuesday	Bean dip and tortilla chips
Wednesday	Oat balls and breakfast breads
Thursday	Popcorn and veggie sticks
Friday	Leftovers

We had great success working with local farms in Smith River to provide high quality produce, meat and cheese at prices we could afford. We plan to invest time into building these relationships for other sites in the future.

Dinner	Main Dish	Sides
Sunday	Baked Potato Bar	Chili, Green Salad, Fresh Fruit
Monday	Spaghetti	French Bread, Green Salad, Fresh Fruit
Tuesday	Burrito Bar	Spanish Rice, Leftover Chili, Green Salad, Fresh Fruit
Wednesday	BBQ	Pasta Salad, Veggie Sticks, Watermelon
Thursday	Stir Fry	Rice, Peanut Noodles, Green Salad, Fresh Fruit
Friday	Pizza	Leftovers, Green Salad, Fresh Fruit

Spiritual Life Program

The 2014 program theme was “Speak Up”. It comes to us from Proverbs 31:8-9.

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,
for the rights of all who are destitute.
Speak up and judge fairly;
defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

As we have for the past two years, a team got together for a day-long workshop to develop this theme into a set of integrated program ideas and activities. The program outline that this team created was the jumping-off point for the Spiritual Life Coordinators to develop their own, local program.

Program Boxes

Based on a recommendation from a 2013 SLC, standardized program supply boxes were purchased for the summer. Each included a brand new set of games, balls, craft supplies and digital camera. Some of these supplies will be replenished each year, but many items will last for years to come and be replaced as needed. This allowed us to purchase items in bulk and saved the SLC time.

Changes

Every year, things change at Sierra Service Project. It is absolutely critical that SSP changes and innovates each year in order to keep our programs fresh, exciting and relevant. We encourage our SLCs to try out new ideas and make changes to the standard schedule.

- 1) This summer we introduced a morning program time of about 10 to 15 minutes in the High School program (already exists in the Middle School program). The purpose was to introduce the day’s programmatic theme, get the groups ‘centered’ and sent off for their day of hands-on service. This tied together the day of service work, the spiritual sandwich, and the evening program. To make a little bit of time for this, morning devotion was eliminated.
- 2) In the Spiritual Sandwich discussion, quotes from “modern prophets” were added from Dr. Martin Luther King, Gandhi and others. This was a way to show that the spirit is alive in the world today!
- 3) Some sites found that the traditional Friday night program activities of candle and love feast did not fit into their program because they weren’t engaging, inclusive or didn’t work for space issues. Many sites conducted an activity that focused on anonymous affirmation of individuals instead. This was well received. In the future we will continue to empower SLCs to decide what SSP traditions fit into their program, and to explore including alternate activities that may work better.



Review of the 2014 Summer Program

Although our staff was new and enrollment lower than anticipated, we believe that the 2014 summer was a success in that we explored many new ideas and expand our program offerings with great results.

Combined Program

Due to group request, we piloted two sessions of combined middle and high school groups. These took place in Walker River and South Los Angeles during week 6 and had 102 participants. There were far more high school youth than middle school youth (7:1) present during these weeks, so these sessions ran very similar to a typical high school week. In the future we anticipate a higher ratio of younger youth, but as each week will be different the staff will need to cater to the specific needs of each group. This program works well for youth groups who do combined activities during the rest of the year and who don't have enough resources to send two separate teams to SSP. It isn't targeted for youth ministries who have specialized programs for each age group. We plan to expand this program next summer.



Individual Program

We also piloted a program this year for individual youth unattached from a youth group. This program works especially well for: youth unconnected with a church or youth group, youth whose churches do not have youth groups, youth who are unable to attend the week that their group is scheduled and youth who want to attend more SSP than once. There were three participants who attended SSP through this program in 2014, and we expect more in the future with more publicity and outreach.



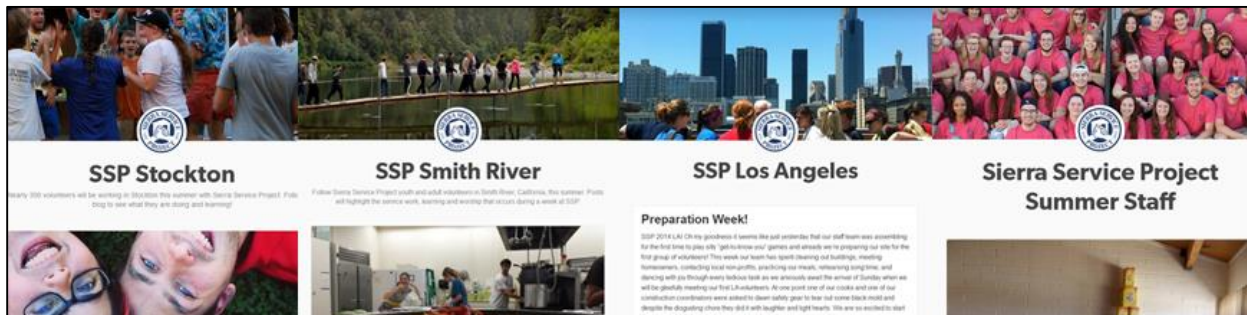
Scholarships

In 2014 we gave almost \$50,000 in scholarships and discounts, our largest amount ever. This enabled 800 youth and adult leaders to attend SSP. Although this depleted our scholarship fund, we consider this a major success in making SSP accessible to all youth regardless of their financial needs.

Tumblr Blogs

This summer we introduced four Tumblr blogs to capture the voices of participants relating their experiences while they were happening. Three sites had their own blog (Stockton, Los Angeles and Smith River) in addition to a blog for all staff across the six sites. Each day a staff member, youth or counselor created a post. With pictures and text, they related something noteworthy about their work projects, new friends they have made, or interactions with the community.

Staff organized this activity rotating the opportunity daily among work teams. Posts were queued and didn't go live until they were reviewed and released by Megan or Pascal. Blog entries were cross posted on Facebook, Instagram and our newsletter. We found that this was a great way to tell the SSP story directly, when it was happening instead of days or weeks after the fact.



After seeing this I felt angry. How can we turn our backs away from others who need us? How can we call ourselves human when we at times can lack humanity? Mother Teresa once said "I alone cannot change the world but I can cast stones in the river to create many ripples".

I learned on that trip to Skid Row that if we want change we need to be willing to allow a ripple effect to take hold of us and allow for change. - Melissa, Week 2 LA Youth

Chiloquin, Oregon

We were warmly welcomed back to Chiloquin, Oregon in 2014. Our site was based out of Chiloquin United Methodist Church for the first time as part of a long-term relationship between Sierra Service Project and the church. Volunteers stayed in the basement and sanctuary, while staff stayed at the parsonage where meals were prepared and served. The parsonage was significantly improved from the 2013 summer which is thanks to the hard work of Kathy Erion and A Woman Called Sam, our main contacts in Chiloquin. Everyone ate outside, and fortunately it only rained once.

Showers were located a short walk away at the school's big gym. While the facilities were centralized, bathrooms were limited so porta-potties were rented. The church was often very warm because there was not good ventilation.

We work with all members of the community. Based on the 2010 census, 734 people live in Chiloquin. Over 33% of the families in Chiloquin live below the poverty line.

The Staff

Site Director: Grace Whitmore

Spiritual Life Coordinator: Charli Lighty

Cooks: Teddy Snyder and Megan McCarthy

Construction Coordinators: Leah Booth, Henry Foote, and Dedrick McCord

Participants

A total of 318 people from 30 different groups participated in Chiloquin this summer. Of these, 67 were adults and 251 were youth.

Program

Chiloquin's spiritual program followed the "Speak Up" theme. During most weeks, a community member came to talk to the group about the history of Chiloquin, including our hosts Sam and Kathy who were very well-received. On Wednesday mornings, high school groups went on a photo scavenger hunt to learn about the community and meet local people. On Thursday evenings the staff held a Community Dinner night which was attended by 10-15 community members.



Work Project Summary

Volunteer teams completed 25 projects this summer and spent \$8,230 on construction materials. This included eight painting projects, one wheelchair ramp, five stairs and two fences. In addition to working on homes, teams worked on the local United Methodist church's parsonage, built 20 bunk beds (with donated lumber) and painted the nearby park's playground equipment.

Budget Summary

The site spent only 72 percent of its material budget; this is largely because they started with Junior High groups for the first half of the summer and did not take on major projects like roofing. Food spending was 10 percent over budget, similar to the other sites'.

Challenges and Responses

Challenge: The sanctuary was often too warm for program and sleeping.

Response: Fix the windows in the sanctuary so they can open and provide adequate cross-ventilation.

Challenge: The church can only accommodate so many people without feeling crowded.

Response: We will limit the number of participants to about 50 and explore other places to do program like the nearby gym and park.

Challenge: Internet via a hotspot device or going to the community center was limiting and did not work well for sharing photos and completing SiteManager.

Response: Investigate a better internet option.

Recommendation for Next Year

The community is very welcoming and we should continue to build relationships within the Chiloquin area. There is still a lot of need in the community for SSP repair projects. The staff recommends a full summer high school site to allow for more complicated projects to be addressed like roofing.



Walker River, Nevada

After four summers away, SSP returned to Schurz, Nevada to serve with the Walker River Paiute Tribe. Based on the 2010 census, 658 people live in Schurz. Over 26% of the population live below the poverty line.

Volunteers stayed and showered at the large tribal gym, while staff stayed at the Schurz United Methodist Church where meals were prepared and served a short walk from the gym. The decentralized facilities were a major challenge for the staff. The kitchen facilities were divided in four locations and there were not adequate appliances. Everyone ate outside under tarp canopies, which was a challenge in dusty and rainy conditions. The best part about the facilities was a pool next door to the gym that was open to our volunteers.

The Staff

Site Director: Nicole VanDewerker

Spiritual Life Coordinator: Hannah Halpern

Cooks: Aidan Paulk and Riley Toll

Home Repair Coordinator: David Gorman

Supply Coordinators: Erin South and Clay Attig

Participants

A total of 269 people from 32 different groups participated in Walker River this summer. Of these, 61 were adults and 208 were youth.

Program

Walker River's spiritual program followed the "Speak Up" theme. Each week community members came to share Paiute songs and dances with our groups. In the case where a community member wasn't able to be there, work teams participated in a culturally informative scavenger hunt. The staff was not able to find a large group service project or learning opportunities for our volunteers on Wednesday morning. Thursday evenings were spent overlooking Walker Lake.



Work Project Summary

Volunteer teams completed 14 projects this summer and spent \$11,155 on construction materials. This included five painting projects, two wheelchair ramps, two roof repairs and two porches. There are many more requests for work that were not addressed in 2014. The tribe is welcoming and easy to work with, and most projects are very nearby. The staff recommended that Walker River be a high school site in the future to be able to take on more complicated projects.



Budget Summary

The site spent just over their material budget. Food spending was nine percent over budget, similar to the other sites'.



Challenges and Responses

Challenge: There were not enough appliances to adequately prepare meals.

Response: The team took a refrigerator and chest freezer with them to site and we purchased a propane stove in the middle of the summer.

Challenge: Decentralized facilities made it difficult to keep organized and clean.

Response: We hope to be housed in the local school as we have in the past. We will be proposing this to the school board with the support of the tribe and Jim Euler, one of our contacts.



Challenge: Internet via a hotspot device or going to the community center was limiting and did not work well for sharing photos and completing SiteManager.

Response: Investigate a better internet option.

Recommendation for Next Year

The tribe is eager and welcoming of SSP and we should return in the future. There is still a lot of need in the community for SSP repair projects. The staff recommends a full summer high school site to allow for more complicated projects to be addressed like roofing. If we can get housing at the school, that will solve most of our challenges from 2014.

Smith River, California

This was our second summer in a row serving on the far North Coast in Smith River. Based on the 2010 census, there are 866 residents in Smith River. One third of the population is Hispanic. Our services are open to the entire community. Lorie Poole, our contact at the waste management company Recology, connected us with many local people who helped us find work. She got us on the radio to advertise our services and coordinated beach clean-ups for us.

Volunteers and staff were housed at the Smith River United Methodist Church where we ate, slept and enjoyed fellowship together. Half-way through the summer we gained access to the school across the street to house our volunteers. Although this decentralized our facilities, it decreased the pressure on the small church.

The Staff

Site Director: Evan Griffiths

Spiritual Life Coordinator: Hana Richardson

Cooks: Natalie Kirsten and Nathan Theobald

Construction Coordinators: Riley Taylor, Michael Mulder and Nathan Sandford

Participants

A total of 353 people from 30 different groups participated in Smith River this summer. Of these, 71 were adults and 282 were youth.

Program

Smith River's spiritual program followed the "Speak Up" theme. Each week community members came to share about the Tolowa tribe or the community as a whole with our groups. On Wednesday morning the full group participated in a beach clean-up or removing invasive beach grass with the Tolowa Dune Stewards. Thursday evenings were spent at the Crescent City Overlook.



Work Project Summary

Volunteer teams completed 23 projects this summer and spent \$12,948 on construction materials. This included eight painting projects, two wheelchair ramps, two roof repairs and four sets of stairs. We publicized our services on the radio this year so we received requests throughout Del Norte County. Almost one third of our projects in Smith River was for community buildings including two fire stations, the community hall, hatchery, cemetery and church.

Budget Summary

The site spent five percent over their material budget. Food spending was just over budget. This site worked with three local farms to provide high quality produce, meat and dairy for our volunteers.

Challenges and Responses

Challenge: The church was too small to host all of our volunteers.

Response: After two years of working with the local school, we were finally gained access to some classrooms to host our volunteers.

Challenge: Having multiple contacts within the community to find work requests is challenging for our staff.

Response: Continue to build relationships with community members and encourage good communication in advance to plan projects before the staff arrive at site.

Recommendation for Next Year

There is still an enormous amount of need in Del Norte County. With continued use of the church and school, and various locations for showers, we anticipate similar facility arrangements next summer. Smith River continues to be one of our most popular site offerings. We plan on returning to Smith River in 2015.



Stockton, California

This was our first full summer serving in Stockton. Stockton is surrounded by farmland in the California Central Valley an hour south of Sacramento. During the summer of 2012, the city of Stockton filed for bankruptcy. With the highest foreclosure rate in the nation in 2008, there is a large need for home repairs as well as a shift in the perception of this city.

We were housed at Central United Methodist Church across the street from University of the Pacific. The accommodations are very nice and centralized. We shower at the University.

The Staff

Site Director: Wendy Gorman

Spiritual Life Coordinator: Steven Mion

Cooks: Mackinna Hart and Kori Jones

Construction Coordinators: Jacob White, Bret Frangipane and McKenna Culbertson

Participants

A total of 280 people from 17 different groups participated in Stockton this summer. Of these, 52 were adults and 228 were youth.

Program

Stockton's spiritual program followed the "Speak Up" theme. Each week Jerron Jordan, an ex-convict and community organizer, came to speak to our group about efforts to revitalize Stockton. On Wednesday mornings everyone was divided into three groups and would visit either the Stockton Shelter for the Homeless, Boggs Tract Community Farm or participate in a community clean-up with Jerron. The last two weeks the full group did a community clean up.



Work Project Summary

Volunteer teams completed 16 projects this summer and spent \$7,243 on construction materials. This included four fences, five painting projects, and some minor carpentry work. Almost one third of our volunteers worked at Boggs Tract Community Farm doing work that ranged from building adobe walls to planting and harvesting produce. We also worked with Visionary Home Builders who we plan to partner with again and they will supply the materials.



Budget Summary

The site spent almost all of their material budget. Food spending was seventeen percent over budget, more than the other sites.

Challenges and Responses

Challenge: Hard to find adequate work for our volunteers.

Response: We will spend more time in the off season visiting and preparing for the summer.



Challenge: Many projects in Stockton are for rental properties. The process can be time consuming and challenging to get a project approved.

Response: Working in advance with the community, hopefully we can identify projects well before the summer to start the process earlier for work to start in early July.

Recommendation for Next Year

There is a lot of work SSP can do and places and people we can learn from in Stockton. If we spend more time becoming connected within the community we can have a very strong program here. The facilities are fantastic and we plan to return in 2015.



Los Angeles, California

This was our ninth full summer serving in South Los Angeles. This year our facilities shifted to be based out of Wesley United Methodist Church. Our volunteers stayed in the basement adjacent to the kitchen where meals were prepared. The staff stayed across the street at the Rakestraw Center where the showers were located. This arrangement proved to be difficult because the street between the buildings is fairly busy.

The communication between the local pastor and SSP significantly impacted the site this summer. Between other groups being hosted in the facility to broken hot water heaters, the facilities caused major stress for the staff.

The Staff

Site Director: Robbie Frederiksen

Spiritual Life Coordinator: Tom Fendt

Cooks: Nicole Cuadras and Amanda Weinland

Construction Coordinators: Laura Sieling, Will Tipping and Hannah Floren

Participants

A total of 268 people from 26 different groups participated in Los Angeles this summer. Of these, 57 were adults and 211 were youth.

Program

Los Angeles' spiritual program followed the "Speak Up" theme. Each week Joanna Farrias talked with the group about her experiences creating and managing community gardens. On Wednesday mornings included full group lot of alley clean-ups with Coalition for Responsible Community Development. After that groups would split up to visit Watts House Project, Midnight Mission, First to Serve, etc. The second half of the summer they focused their outings on food justice issues and watched the documentary *A Place at the Table*. Thursday evenings were spent doing a "Spirit Drive" through Skid Row and downtown, ending with a debrief discussion.



Work Project Summary

Volunteer teams completed 12 projects this summer and spent \$11,262 on construction materials. This included nine painting projects, two floor replacements, a storage shed, and community garden work. Over half of our projects were for local nonprofits or community centers. Fifty volunteers painted the storefront of a small business – this project was sponsored by the Coalition for Responsible Community Development who has been a long-time SSP partner.



Budget Summary

The site spent five percent more than their material budget. Food spending was seven percent over budget, similar to the other sites.

Challenges and Responses

Challenge: Without one liaison in the community, it can be difficult to find work projects.

Response: We will spend more time in the off season visiting and preparing projects for the summer.



Challenge: Decentralized site facilities proved to be challenging for the staff and volunteers.

Response: We have already made an agreement with the pastor to resume using the Rakestraw Center as our main base for the LA site.

Recommendation for Next Year

We plan to return to Los Angeles if we can secure good facilities to house our volunteers and find good work projects for our teams to complete. We are confident that these tasks can be done and we plan to return in 2015.



Tsaile, Arizona

This was second summer in a row serving in Tsaile, Arizona in the Navajo Nation. SSP has a long history of working in the Navajo Nation. The Navajo Nation today is the largest Indian Tribe in the US with 17.5 million acres of reservation land across portions of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Based on the 2010 census, 1205 people live in Tsaile. Over 63% of the population lives below the poverty line.

We stayed at the Diné College which is the first tribal college. We use two dormitory buildings which have large sleeping rooms that open up to a common space where we eat and have program. Bathrooms with showers are attached, as well as kitchens where we prepared meals.

The Staff

Site Director: Jessie Fossenkemper

Spiritual Life Coordinator: Catie Lycurgus

Cooks: Travis Bricker, Heather Coleman (first four weeks), and Jessica Henderson (last week)

Construction Coordinators: Johnny Fracchiolla, Ryan Cernik, Chloe Parker (first four weeks), and Amanda Patt (last two weeks)

Participants

A total of 328 people from 22 different groups participated in Tsaile this summer. Of these, 73 were adults and 255 were youth.

Program

Tsaile's spiritual program followed the "Speak up! Find your words!" theme. On Wednesdays the group spent the full day in Window Rock learning about Navajo culture and history. In the morning they visiting the Navajo Nation Zoo and Navajo Nation Museum and in the afternoon they hiked up to Window Rock and relaxed at a nearby park. Thursday evenings were spent at Canyon de Chelly.



Work Project Summary

Volunteer teams completed 18 projects this summer and spent \$9,878 on construction materials. This included nine painting projects, two storage sheds, two wheelchair ramps, two sets of stairs, two drywall projects, and a porch. In addition to working for local homeowners, we also painted portions of Diné College and worked at their Land Grant Farm.

Budget Summary

The site spent only eighty-five percent of their material budget. Food spending was eleven percent over budget, similar to the other sites.

Challenges and Responses

Challenge: Staff changes midsummer disrupted the team dynamic.

Response: In the future we will continue to turn away applicants who are unable to work the entire summer. We can also improve our communication with new staff members about the challenges of the job, as well as the joys.

Recommendation for Next Year

The experience working on the Navajo Nation is both fulfilling for staff members and our volunteers. The culture is rich and there is a lot we can learn from the community. The facilities are some of the best on the Navajo Nation and there is plenty of work for us to do. We plan to return in the summer of 2015.



Weekend of Service Program

2014 was Sierra Service Project's fourth year offering Weekends of Service for youth groups. We hosted 7 weekends for 244 youth and adults in Vernonia, Portland, Sacramento and South Los Angeles. Each weekend starts on Friday evening and ends on Sunday afternoon. We enroll between 25 and 45 volunteers total in each session. All weekends are combined middle school and high school youth.

Weekend projects range from full group community service activities to standard SSP repair projects. In most cases youth teams are working with local nonprofits and not individual homeowners. This provides learning opportunities for youth to learn from the nonprofits about the work they are doing in the community and why it is important.

Los Angeles Projects

- Alley clean-up with Coalition for Responsible Community Development
- Tree planting with City Plants

Sacramento Projects

- Gleaning fruit from backyard trees to donate to the food bank with Harvest Sacramento
- Site clean-up and beautification at Sacramento Valley Conservancy's Camp Pollock

Portland Projects

- Constructing stairs, installing insulation and drywall at Dignity Village, a homeless community
- Community garden work with Wisdom of the Elders and Northeast Emergency Food Program

Vernonia, Oregon Projects

- Community garden work for the Vernonia Schools
- Painting at the American Legion Hall



Weekend Staff

Regional Coordinators are our local leadership for the Weekend of Service Program. They act as Site Directors, but also planning projects, meet with local contacts and do some outreach work.

Portland and Vernonia RC: Robbie Frederiksen

Los Angeles RC: Allison Kielhold

Sacramento RCs: Jenn Wong in preparation for the weekends, Drew Izzo for the execution of the weekends

The cook and construction staff primarily come from our pool of former staff members. Between two and four staff outside the RC are hired depending on the size of the weekend. If needed we also invite former staff-in-training to work and learn more about what being on staff is like.



Budget Summary

Weekends of Service and Alternative Breaks combined brought in \$55,110 and had expenses of \$39,570 not including any overhead.

Challenges and Responses

Challenge: Weekends of Service require significant communication, preparation and debriefing to be successful. This can be difficult with an irregular schedule of weekends throughout the year for a part-time Regional Coordinator position.

Response: Incorporate more paid time before and after a weekend for the Regional Coordinator to adequately prepare for a Weekend of Service. Develop a timeline and expectations that are easy for the RC to execute.



Recommendation for Next Year

Having Regional Coordinators makes this program thrive. We will continue to hire RCs to run the Weekend of Service programs. We recommend reaching out to more communities like Phoenix in the future.



Alternative Break Program

Sierra Service Project offers customized programs for middle school and high school youth groups, college groups and intergenerational teams at our South Los Angeles and Portland site locations throughout the school year. These sessions range from long weekends to six-night programs. Common to all sessions are combining challenging community service work with a series of visits, tours and guest speakers aimed to give participants real insight into the dynamic communities where they are serving. Sessions are scheduled by request only.

In 2014 we hosted eighty-three participants from six college groups. They came from Cleveland State University, Claremont McKenna College (two teams), Bridgeport University, University of Arizona and Central Washington University. Two of the sessions were held in Portland with work projects at Dignity Village, with the remaining sessions in South Los Angeles.

Our Region Coordinators also led these sessions which are staffed similarly to the Weekends of Service.

Nicaragua Program

SSP has a ten-year history of sending teams to learn and serve with the poor in Central America. For the second year we sent teams to serve in Nicaragua. We run this program in partnership with Seeds of Learning (SOL), a nonprofit organization with over twenty years of experience working in Nicaragua. In 2014, we sent two teams, one was a group from Washington State University and the other was an open group that had older youth and young adults. The first team was led by Alissa Bertsch Johnson, Board Member and campus pastor, and the second team was led by SSP counselors Jeremy Wells and Melanie Branson. Thirty-seven individuals participated in this program in 2014.



**SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
SEPTEMBER 30, 2014**

Assets

Current assets:

Cash and equivalents	\$ 191,661
Accounts receivable	1,917
Inventory	10,259
Prepaid assets	<u>8,473</u>
Total current assets	212,310

Fixed assets, at cost less

accumulated depreciation of \$63,352	45,257
--------------------------------------	--------

Cash - permanently restricted	<u>67,625</u>
-------------------------------	---------------

Total assets	<u><u>\$ 325,192</u></u>
--------------	--------------------------

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current liabilities:

Accounts payable	\$ 8,258
Accrued expenses	<u>35,409</u>
Total current liabilities	43,667

Net assets:

Unrestricted	176,375
Temporarily restricted	37,525
Permanently restricted	<u>67,625</u>

Total net assets	<u>281,525</u>
------------------	----------------

Total liabilities and net assets	<u><u>\$ 325,192</u></u>
----------------------------------	--------------------------

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2014**

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Support and revenue:				
Participation fees	\$ 829,746	-	-	\$ 829,746
Donations	241,917	\$ 23,820	\$ 2,500	268,237
Interest revenue	123	-	-	123
Other revenue	489	-	-	489
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>17,600</u>	<u>(17,600)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
 Total support and revenue	 <u>1,089,875</u>	 <u>6,220</u>	 <u>2,500</u>	 <u>1,098,595</u>
 Expenses:				
Program services	923,583	-	-	923,583
Management and general	137,586	-	-	137,586
Development	<u>36,850</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>36,850</u>
 Total expenses	 <u>1,098,019</u>	 <u>-</u>	 <u>-</u>	 <u>1,098,019</u>
 Change in net assets from operations	 (8,144)	 6,220	 2,500	 576
Loss on disposal of assets	<u>(3,966)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(3,966)</u>
 Total change in net assets	 (12,110)	 6,220	 2,500	 (3,390)
Net assets, beginning of year	<u>188,485</u>	<u>31,305</u>	<u>65,125</u>	<u>284,915</u>
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 176,375</u>	<u>\$ 37,525</u>	<u>\$ 67,625</u>	<u>\$ 281,525</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2014

	Program Services	Management and General	Development	Total Expenses
Salaries & wages	\$ 291,847	\$ 55,864	\$ 20,264	\$ 367,975
Payroll taxes	22,737	4,352	1,579	28,668
Employee benefits	18,409	3,524	1,278	23,211
Workers compensation insurance	26,444	5,062	1,836	33,342
Other payroll expenses	3,954	757	274	4,985
Total personnel costs	363,391	69,559	25,231	458,181
Building materials & tools	67,567	2,575	-	70,142
Depreciation	9,902	-	-	9,902
Donated facilities	57,564	-	-	57,564
Facility & equipment rentals	30,093	350	-	30,443
Food & kitchen supplies	63,307	958	-	64,265
Fuel	22,787	59	-	22,846
Insurance	25,438	3,505	-	28,943
International program expense	75,632	-	-	75,632
Licenses & permits	1,248	340	-	1,588
Miscellaneous	3,920	247	987	5,154
Moving costs	-	2,937	-	2,937
Office supplies	14,898	6,970	1,322	23,190
Postage & delivery	3,345	876	3,315	7,536
Printing	1,341	378	1,378	3,097
Professional fees	2,125	12,043	-	14,168
Publicity	550	1,175	3,180	4,905
Rent & utilities	12,256	18,159	-	30,415
Scholarship awards	50,414	-	-	50,414
Site start-up	15,097	-	-	15,097
Tee shirts	17,811	-	1,437	19,248
Telephone & communication	3,441	6,469	-	9,910
Transportation	12,585	6,726	-	19,311
Travel & meals	10,956	3,754	-	14,710
Vehicle maintenance & repair	25,239	40	-	25,279
Vehicle rental	29,344	466	-	29,810
Worship & study	3,332	-	-	3,332
Totals	\$ 923,583	\$ 137,586	\$ 36,850	\$ 1,098,019

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2014**

Cash flows from operating activities:	
Change in net assets	\$ (3,390)
Adjustments to reconcile decrease in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:	
Depreciation	9,902
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	3,966
Contributions restricted for long-term investment	(2,500)
Decrease in accounts receivable	500
Increase in prepaid expenses	(1,197)
Increase in inventory	(4,511)
Increase in accounts payable	4,869
Increase in accrued expenses	<u>8,002</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>15,641</u>
Cash flows from financing activities	
Purchase of fixed assets	(21,535)
Sale of fixed assets	<u>3,477</u>
Net cash used in financing activities	<u>(18,058)</u>
Net decrease in cash	(2,417)
Cash and equivalents, beginning of year	<u>194,078</u>
Cash and equivalents, end of year	<u><u>\$ 191,661</u></u>
Supplemental disclosure of cash flow information:	
Non-cash donations	<u><u>\$ 14,312</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.