

FFWPU USA: Las Vegas Shine City Project - Volunteering and Art of Sharing Love

Demian Dunkley
October 23, 2023



Photos courtesy of SCP

From saving local tortoise habitats, to preparing books for distribution to children in need, Unificationists in Las Vegas remain dedicated to serving their community in creative and meaningful ways. Shine City Project ([SCP](#)) volunteers have spent the new school year supporting a half dozen initiatives to help improve the neighborhoods and lives of their community members.



In honor of Desert Tortoise Week, which occurred the first week of October, SCP members picked up litter to protect the state reptile. "[We] gather[ed] at the Boulder City Conservation Easement," said SCP Director Jeffrey Silerio, which preserves more than 87,000 acres of Mojave Desert landscape. He said the group spent several hours collecting trash and debris that could harm the hard-shelled herbivores. The largest terrestrial turtle in the US, desert tortoises are a threatened species due to increased habitat loss and fragmentation, predation, and other factors reducing the native population by up to 90 percent.

In September, the SCP team returned to Spread the Word Nevada, a nonprofit they frequently support, to clean books in time for the 2023-24 academic year. "Spread the Word Nevada is dedicated to advancing early childhood literacy by providing books for children and households located in at-risk, low-income neighborhoods," Silerio said. "Since 2001, they've been able to distribute over 7.1 million books to 790,025 students in both Northern and Southern Nevada. On average, that's 60,000 books for students each month."

Silerio led the group in cleaning and sanitizing numerous books. "At our disposal, we had a wet and dry cloth, plastic scraper, permanent marker, scissors, tape, a couple erasers, and some goo and adhesive

remover," he said. "We had to ensure that the front and back covers and individual pages were all clean and that any stray markings, stickers, and dirt were all removed. For books that were too damaged or contained unsuitable content for children, these books had to be placed in plastic bins for recycling."



In recent weeks, the group has also helped harvest dates at Ahern Orchard, a public community garden, and plucked decaying summer squash at another location for composting. Partnering again with The Just One Project nonprofit, SCP volunteers distributed donated food to families and kids at a local middle school as well. "[We] passed out frozen cherries, walnuts, canned chicken, canned tomatoes, garbanzo beans, split peas, and other items," Silerio noted.

Protecting the environment, and supporting organizations benefiting disadvantaged youth and the elderly, among other vulnerable groups, have long been the charitable focus of SCP, which was independently founded in 2013 by a group of young Unificationists including Silerio.

"Overall, we enjoy [these] experiences," he said. "We just wanted to share some love with everyone."

You can learn more about SCP's ongoing service projects [here](#)



SHINE CITY PROJECT

FROM SIN CITY TO SHINE CITY



ABOUT

TEN YEARS AGO, A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS ORGANIZED A CLEANUP AT THE CORNER OF SAHARA AVENUE AND LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD ON **MARCH 16, 2013**. THE SERVICE PROJECT WAS HELD IN FRONT OF BONANZA GIFT SHOP, WHICH IS POPULARLY KNOWN AS THE "WORLD'S LARGEST GIFT SHOP". THIS OCCASION WOULD MARK THE BEGINNING FOR AN ORGANIZATION WHOSE GOAL WOULD BE TO TURN LAS VEGAS **FROM "SIN CITY" TO "SHINE CITY"**.

IN A CITY OF LUSTFUL DESIRES, GREEDY TRANSACTIONS, AND SELF-INDULGENCES, SHINE CITY PROJECT **CHALLENGES OUR CITY'S CULTURE OF SELF-CENTEREDNESS TO BECOME ONE OF SELFLESSNESS**. WE AIM TO **BUILD LEADERS OF HEART AND CHARACTER WHO SHARE LOVE AND COMPASSION FOR OTHERS** WHILE BEING **STEWARDS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**. TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE A MORE **LOVING AND CARING COMMUNITY** WHICH IN TURN CAN CREATE A MORE **LOVING AND PEACEFUL WORLD**. IF A CHANGE CAN HAPPEN IN LAS VEGAS, **A CHANGE CAN HAPPEN EVERYWHERE**.

OUR INSPIRATION

Rev. Sun Myung Moon and
Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon

The inspiration for starting Shine City Project came from Rev. Sun Myung Moon, and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. The two have inspired and pioneered for a worldwide movement



for peace across races, religions, and nationalities. By creating loving families and by living for the sake of others and for the world, world peace is achievable.



"Heaven is not what we are given but what we must build." – Rev. Sun Myung Moon

OUR AFFILIATES

YOUTH AND STUDENTS FOR PEACE (YSP USA)
strives to advance world peace by empowering youth and students to become global citizens through character education and peace projects supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



COLLEGIATE ASSOCIATION FOR THE RESEARCH OF PRINCIPLES (CARP LAS VEGAS)
seeks to create an inspired youth movement progressing society to become a global family united upon Universal Principles. We empower young adults to become global leaders who will contribute towards building a unified world centered upon God's love, by providing education and training based upon our core values.

WHAT'S NEXT?

10.21.23

Shine City
- Project -

Boulder Beach Campground
Lake Mead
09:00 - 12:00 pm

11.04.23

Shine City
- Project -

Warm Springs Natural Area
Moapa, NV
09:00 - 12:00 pm

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT JEFFREY SILERIO
OR EMAIL SHINECITYPROJECTLV@GMAIL.COM.

GALLERY





May 29, 2021 @ Vegas Roots Community Garden



December 4, 2021 @ Opportunity Village – Magical Forest



May 7, 2022 @ McKee Ranch Foundation



August 17, 2019 @ Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada with International Leadership Training Program (ILTP)



Shine City Project's 2nd Anniversary Celebration (March 14, 2015)



August 22, 2014 @ CARP Las Vegas House



October 2, 2021 @ Shaquille O'Neal Foundation – The Event



June 8, 2019 @ Silver Horizon Group Home



October 30, 2015 @ Haunted Harvest, Springs Preserve



September 2, 2015 @ UNLV Involvement Fair



July 31, 2015 @ Las Vegas Rescue Mission



August 16, 2014 @ CARP Las Vegas Learning Center



October 13, 2018 @ Las Vegas Wash with Generation Peace Academy



January 12, 2020 @ All Friends Animal Sanctuary



August 6, 2022 @ Ahern Orchard



October 20, 2018 @ 33 Hole Overlook, Lake Mead



July 24, 2021 @ Harrison House



Shine City Project's 3rd Anniversary Celebration (March 18, 2016)



August 15, 2014 @ Mt. Charleston



Shine City Project's 1st Anniversary



June 11, 2022 @ Spread the Word Nevada



May 4, 2019 @ Club Christ Ladies Tea



March 2, 2019 @ Las Vegas Wash



July 25, 2015 @ Clean the World



April 26, 2013 @ Lorenzi Park



November 9, 2019 @ Just One Project – Helen Marie Smith Elementary School



April 25, 2014 @ El Pollo Loco

August 9, 2014 @ Rebel Recycling Center



Shine City Project's 6th Anniversary Celebration (March 16, 2019 @ CARP Las Vegas Learning Center)



April 27, 2019 @ Pittman Wash



March 9, 2019 @ Las Vegas Community Healing Garden

(March 15, 2014 @ Sunset Park)



April 20, 2019 @ Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary



November 23, 2019 @ Green Our Planet – Legacy High School



Our First Service Project (March 16, 2013 @ World's Largest Gift Shop)

CONTACT

Interested in joining?
Have a service project
idea? Want to
collaborate? Send us
an email!

Send