

FFWPU USA: HPHC Las Vegas Shine City Project - Making Community Service a New Year's Resolution

Naokimi Ushiroda
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Photo courtesy of Shine City Project

Young Unificationists in Las Vegas rang in the new year by serving their community. The Shine City Project ([SCP](#)) team has hit the ground running with back-to-back volunteer projects lined up in January as they reflect on the great success of last year. "For 2022, it was a year of stability for Shine City Project," says SCP National Director, Jeffrey Silerio. "We continued to work with organizations that we have worked with in the past, as well as with some new ones."

SCP had more than 1,200 volunteer hours invested among the group and 52 service projects completed last year, averaging one per week. "[We are grateful] to the 98 volunteers who joined our service projects in 2022," says Silerio. "We had volunteers not just from North America, but Central and South America as well," he says, recalling a clean-up project in Uruguay in December.

[RELATED: US to Uruguay: Shine City Project Concludes 2022 Volunteer Work](#)

This year, Silerio is urging all youth to "make community service your New Year's resolution," he said, while recognizing the contributions of numerous families. "[We're thankful] to the parents for their

support for our service projects," he says.

On Jan. 7, the SCP team got to work serving the public at Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, an organization they began partnering with last year. From infants to seniors, the faith-based nonprofit offers a range of programs to those in need including shelter, food, employment support, and more.

"Our volunteers assisted with the community meal service for outside guests," says Silerio. "On the menu was roasted pork loin, mashed potatoes, and mixed veggies." Silerio said his team served food trays and refreshments, and helped with the cleanup afterward. "As people were leaving the dining facility, we thanked them and wished them a good day," he says. "We want people to feel loved and cared for no matter what."

The following weekend, on Jan. 14, the team helped plant vegetation at the Clark County Wetlands Park. "For organizations like Wetlands Park and The Just One Project, we met up regularly [last year] on a monthly basis," says Silerio, who plans to continue the trend this year. He said ongoing collaboration and partnerships with more than 20 organizations from around the community has enabled SCP to have a significant impact.

"[We've worked with] Ahern Orchard," he says, "and Friends of Sloan Canyon, Get Outdoors Nevada, GO Mount Charleston, The Just One Project, and The Las Vegas Farm." SCP has also established strong ties with the Las Vegas Rescue Mission, Opportunity Village, Las Vegas Wash Coordinating Committee, McKee Ranch Foundation, Project GREEN: Friends of Pittman Wash, and the Shaquille O'Neal Foundation, as well as Southern Nevada Water Authority, Spread the Word Nevada, and the Springs Preserve.

However, Silerio notes the great influence of the Las Vegas faith community, too. "[We] have love and appreciation for the special participation of CARP Las Vegas, Generation Peace Academy, Harrison House, Las Vegas Heavenly Parent's Holy Community, New Hope Foundation International, Youth and Students for Peace USA, and Youth and Students for Peace Uruguay," he says. And of course, "Thank you to our Father and Mother Moon," he says, "let's keep the momentum going for 2023!"

SCP will next join The Just One Project on Jan. 21 for a service project at Ed Von Tobel Middle School. You can learn more about Shine City Project [here](#), and connect with a Unificationist community near you [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?



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT JEFFREY SILERIO
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GALLERY





May 29, 2021 @ Vegas Roots Community Garden



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



January 12, 2020 @ All Friends Animal Sanctuary



June 11, 2022 @ Spread the Word Nevada



December 4, 2021 @ Opportunity Village – Magical Forest



June 8, 2019 @ Silver Horizon Group Home



August 6, 2022 @ Ahern Orchard



May 4, 2019 @ Club Christ Ladies Tea



May 7, 2022 @ McKee Ranch Foundation



October 30, 2015 @ Haunted Harvest, Springs Preserve



October 20, 2018 @ 33 Hole Overlook, Lake Mead



March 2, 2019 @ Las Vegas Wash



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



September 2, 2015 @ UNLV Involvement Fair



July 24, 2021 @ Harrison House



July 25, 2015 @ Clean the World



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



July 31, 2015 @ Las Vegas Rescue Mission



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



April 26, 2013 @ Lorenzi Park



August 22, 2014 @ CARP Las Vegas House



August 16, 2014 @ CARP Las Vegas Learning Center



August 15, 2014 @ Mt. Charleston



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



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



April 25, 2014 @ El Pollo Loco



Shine City Project's 1st Anniversary (March 15, 2014 @ Sunset Park)



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



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!

Name *	Message
Email *	
Subject	

Send



West

U.S. to Uruguay: Shine City Project Concludes 2022 Volunteer Work



Photo courtesy of Shine City Project

“Volunteering for Shine City Project this year allowed me to explore and learn more about different communities,” says Jennifer Silerio, a young Unificationist and longtime SCP volunteer. “I was able to help those who were less fortunate, as well as help take care of the environment. I also enjoyed creating friendships and working with those who had the same mindset of wanting to serve others.”

Throughout 2022, nearly 100 volunteers participated in the work of Shine City Project ([SCP](#)), a group composed of young Unificationists in Las Vegas [dedicated to serving](#) their Southern Nevada community in myriad ways. “It is so fulfilling when we are able to bring joy to others,” says Jennifer. “I am grateful for all the opportunities to help those in need and to be able to appreciate our community more.”

Jennifer and her brother, SCP National Director, Jeffrey

Silerio, as well as Hiromitsu Kosaka, [received](#) the U.S.

President's Volunteer Service Award in February 2022 that recognized all their volunteering in 2021. It inspired the SCP team to reach even greater heights this year – with more than 1,200 volunteer hours invested among the group and 52 service projects completed, averaging one per week.

"In this past year, we collaborated more with our local organizations," says Jeffrey Silerio. "We worked a lot with CARP Las Vegas and New Hope Foundation International, so members and guests of these organizations volunteered and participated more in our service projects."

The team partnered again with a number of local non-profit organizations as well, including Opportunity Village, the Doolittle Community Center, the Las Vegas Rescue Mission shelter, and Ahern Orchard, among others. Volunteers took on a range of tasks such as cooking, cleaning, serving food, picking up litter, and planting and weeding green spaces in and around the city.



Most recently, on Dec. 3, Jeffrey headed overseas to Uruguay for a joint clean-up project between SCP and Youth and Students for Peace (YSP) Uruguay. "I worked with the YSP members there to help clean up and pick up litter at Playa Capurro (Capurro Beach)," he says. "We were able to collect so much litter in a short amount of time. The amount of trash

that we collected filled the back of a small pickup truck.”

Jeffrey was among some 18 volunteers who came from the U.S., Costa Rica, Uruguay and other South American countries. They all traveled with the mission to help transform a heavily littered city beach in Montevideo. “The largest item that we found was a discarded inflatable boat, which required teamwork and efforts of several volunteers,” says Jeffrey. “Overall, I appreciated the unity that we had and how the service project involved the participation of people from across North America, Central America, and South America.”

For other SCP volunteers, like Saracelia Hardarson and Pierre Vasquez, they found it rewarding to build community bonds while making a difference, no matter how big or small. “It has not only been a real privilege to join the other volunteers in helping our city shine,” says Saracelia, “but it has also been a joy to interact with those volunteers and the communities we’ve been aiding.”

“After over a year of participating in the Shine City Project, I still look forward to it every time,” added Pierre. “It has helped make Las Vegas feel more like my home.”

You can connect with a Unificationist community near you [here](#).