



Diverting Edible Food from the Landfill

Conservation Corps North Bay's Zero Waste team has been hard at work in the food recovery space since we last shared about the grant that kickstarted this program with Zero Waste Sonoma with the purchase of a refrigerated truck. Working with partners including Safeway, Lucky's, Petaluma Market, Whole Foods, and Trader Joe's, CCNB now collects edible food that is no longer for sale and delivers it to organizations that support community members experiencing food insecurity, also helping generators meet the new state regulations requiring organics to be diverted from the landfill. Goals of the legislation include reducing the amount of organic material disposed in landfills by 75% from the 2014 level by 2025 and that no less than 20% of edible food currently disposed in landfills must also be recovered for human consumption.

The team works with partners like Zero Waste Sonoma, ExtraFood.org, and Redwood Empire Food Bank to identify and distribute unsold food to organizations like the Petaluma Bounty, West Sonoma County Community Services, COTS, and Sonoma Family Meal. Crews conduct pickups and deliveries in CCNB's brand-new refrigerated truck, giving corpsmembers the opportunity to earn new certifications in skills like food handling while providing an invaluable service to the local community.

Thanks to a collaboration with Farm to Pantry, crews also provide edible food recovery services including gleaning, which involves going to residential properties and farms that have already been harvested and picking the remaining produce to redistribute. Corpsmembers have been able to glean at several local farms, gathering thousands of pounds of produce.

Last year alone, CCNB crews rescued more than 22,000 pounds of edible food, redirecting it back into the community, and are currently on track to transport significantly more in the coming year as we hope to expand this service into Marin County.



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Training Tomorrow's Stewards

“When I came to CCNB, my goal was to obtain my High School diploma and learn more English. I wanted to gain experience and have the right attitude at work. I want to have a career that allows me to support myself and my family.” -Zicri.



The effects of climate change become more evident every year—and it is also evident we will need all hands on deck. This spring, in collaboration with the Ecological Workforce Initiative, three cohorts of corpsmembers received a series of trainings aimed at teaching the broad impact of the projects they work on daily. They are exposed to the science that explains how these projects positively impact our ecosystems, and how seemingly small changes can cause a ripple effect across our communities.

As they gain skills in forestry and land stewardship, corpsmembers create native habitats by removing invasive species and replanting native ones, and they make our communities fire-resilient by removing fire fuel. These projects substantially improve our communities' preparedness for the ever-growing effects of climate change.

These classroom and field lessons also inspire corpsmembers to do continued work in these areas. As they connect the dots, they understand the necessity of this line of work—these trainings are meant to inspire, and properly equip with skills and knowledge, corpsmembers so that they see themselves in careers in industries that get us closer to a greener, more sustainable future.



Corpsmembers who completed the Ecological Workforce Initiative training proudly share their certificates.

GREEN NOTE

Trending Now:

Because an article of clothing surrounded by plastic or even made of plastic—think “fleece”—could languish in the landfill for more than 200 years before decomposing if ever, your local consignment or thrift store is today's hottest shopping boutique.

Become a Corpsmember!

Do you know someone looking to jump-start their future? We offer the opportunity to obtain a high school diploma for those who need it, and work experience and professional development for those who want it.

www.ccnorthbay.org/apply/

The Future of Solar Panels

In light of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control's designation of photovoltaic modules (solar panels) as its eighth category of toxic waste, CCNB's Zero Waste department will launch a new recycling collection program this year, in partnership with Zero Waste Sonoma (ZWS). Thanks to a grant awarded by CalRecycle, CCNB crews will also collect residential solar panels at select ZWS-sponsored e-waste collection events throughout Sonoma County.

In preparation for this initiative, the team received training from Cow Shades

and Zero Waste Sonoma on proper recordkeeping, testing, storage, and transportation of solar panels.

Corpsmembers and supervisors will test collected solar panels with a multimeter—if the solar panels can't be reused, they will be sent to our partner, a certified solar panel recycler. If the solar panels are in good condition, they will be transported to Sonoma County nonprofits such as Cow Shades, GreenLynx, or Habitat for Humanity, which reuse solar panels for various purposes.

Accomplishments in Education

It has been an inspiring school year for the English-language learners at CCNB. Many corpsmembers join our organization needing to both learn English and complete high school, which can be a daunting challenge.

Thanks to increased resources from our partners at John Muir Charter School and support from the Lindskog Foundation, we have made investments in the education component of our program, enabling students to learn English faster while also gaining access to subject matter GED tests in Spanish to help students demonstrate their knowledge in the language they are most comfortable using. Thanks to creative planning on the part of a bilingual teacher and aides, students are now spending class time in smaller groups based on the credits they need to earn in specific subjects while simultaneously learning English. The staff has also incorporated lessons that relate the work corpsmembers are doing in the field to their learning experience.

Students are thriving in this environment, and school attendance is at an all-time high.



CCNB is also making organizational updates to facilitate communication with English-language learners in our program. The Career Pathways Coordinator, Career Specialist/Recruiter, and Administrative Associate in Marin are now all bilingual, and we held our first ever high school graduation ceremony last September that included components in English and Spanish so families and friends of our graduates could fully participate. We look forward to this fall's graduation when so many more native Spanish speakers will graduate, having successfully navigated both language and educational barriers that were impeding their progress to achieving their career goals.

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About CCNB

Conservation Corps North Bay (CCNB) is the oldest local nonprofit youth conservation corps in the country. Serving Marin and Sonoma Counties since 1982, CCNB has helped thousands of young people achieve their goals through education and job skills, while serving the environment and community. Our mission is to develop youth and conserve natural resources for a resilient, sustainable, and equitable community.

Follow us on your favorite social media channels to stay up-to-date on all our projects, corpsmember spotlights, and program announcements!



CCNorthBay.org

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