



## Piedmont Community Service Crew Newsletter November 2020

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**Please familiarize yourselves with PCSC's plans during these uncertain times. In the coming weeks, please remember that homeless and low-income Bay Area citizens need your help more than ever before. PCSC is having an extensive fall program, so read more below!**

**Green** = upcoming event

**Orange** = past event

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### ***Harbor House Tutoring - By Maya Hollingsworth***

During the very first Zoom session with Zarya, a first-grader, I could tell she was shy and nervous. Only a week later, she began engaging in our sessions comfortably. In just a few more weeks, she was no longer hesitant to ask questions or fill me in on what was going on in her life. She would show me her drawings of Cinderella (her favorite Disney princess) and tell me about her friend who lives down her street. Seeing this progression was rewarding, to say the least. Not to mention her educational progress that was completely evident as well. In the first session, Zarya dreaded reading one first-level book but by the fifth session, she was asking to read just one more story at the third-level of books. Providing support and encouragement for young students is more important now than ever.



Harbor House, a community development organization in Oakland, is working with PCSC to connect first through eighth-grade students with volunteer tutors (that's you!). This volunteer opportunity is flexible -- it should be simple for someone to help out young students. You will get to work with a student in the community around us, whose family may not have access to the internet or doesn't have adults equipped to teach. Tutors meet with their tutees for two or three sessions a week over Zoom or Google Meet. One session is usually twenty to thirty minutes long. Harbor House provides instruction and resources so us tutors are well supported, but ultimately tutors have control over what they want each session to look like. The important thing is to create an engaging and caring community to reach these vulnerable children at a critical time in their life.

Meeting Zarya over Zoom for the first time was exciting and, honestly, nerve-racking. I knew that I had to be a good role model -- these kids are going to look up to their tutors. The reward of helping students progress and grow in personal and academic confidence as they reach their potential is priceless.

Join our tutoring team!



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### **Venturing Awards:**

For those who don't know, PCSC is a Venturing Crew--part of Boy Scouts of America. Because of this, we have the amazing opportunity to earn Venturing Awards! There are 4 core awards that you can earn: the Venturing Award, Discovery Award, Pathfinder Award, and Summit Award. Once you begin them, you don't need to earn all four, but receiving the fourth one is Venturing's equivalent of becoming an Eagle Scout in Boy Scouts! These awards will help you develop leadership skills and grow as a person. In addition, they could be a great thing to put on your resume for when you're looking for a job. PCSC has a group of crew members actively working toward the awards, so message Ken Li or Klara Zietlow to find out how to get involved.

### **Chocolate Covered Strawberry Fundraiser**

Need a delicious treat or gift for a friend, loved one, or family member this Valentine's Day? The crew is having a chocolate covered strawberry fundraiser! For \$35 you can pre-order a dozen, sweet and delicate, chocolate covered strawberries, hand-selected and dipped by PCSC members.

Orders must be received by February 7th! To place an order please fill out the following form:

<https://tinyurl.com/ChocStrawberries>

Feel free to email Julia, VP Fundraising, at [jbb3047@gmail.com](mailto:jbb3047@gmail.com) with any questions!

### **Mask PPE Events:**

PCSC is hosting an ongoing event where crew members will make PPE at their homes to donate to health care workers. This is a great thing to do with a couple friends or your family over break. There are currently 2 PPE activity options: sewing cloth masks and refurbishing N95 masks. We are temporarily out of face shields. Crew members need to request a kit with materials to make the PPE. Mask kits have material for 30 masks and will take approximately 4-6 hours and a sewing machine to complete. To refurbish N-95's, crew members will need a hole puncher, and all other materials will be provided in the kit. The kit has about 200 masks and will take approximately 4 hours to complete. Please go to the [event](#) on Facebook for more information and links to signup.





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### **Upcoming Events to Watch For**

PCSC is always exploring new organizations to work with, so that we diversify who we help, projects that we can do, and what types of members would be inspired. Often, the VP Program team and Crew Advisor are working on these in the background, but we want you members and parents to know that you are invited to join us in deciding which projects we take on. Talk to us to get involved! At the end of the newsletter is a sampling of some organizations that we are talking to, the beneficiaries, and why you members might be interested. All of these are potentially viable with appropriate COVID mitigation plans! (we will cancel events if the infection rates are too high) **Please take a look at the end!**

### **Parents interested in nature?**

We are looking for a couple members and parents who would help PCSC to act as stewards of an area in Dimond Park, in the Sausal Creek watershed. PCSC will be helping to remove invasive plants and restoring native species. We'll decide when to organize events to work in that area, in collaboration with Friends of Sausal Creek. Join Ken in a tour on Wednesday 2/3!

### **February Monthly Crew Meeting**

Crew members are invited to join every monthly crew meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at 5pm via Zoom. The upcoming monthly crew meeting will be on February 2nd. Crew President Bridget Bentley leads the discussion where the VPs bring up topics that are important for our being successful and having a rich program of events and projects. We discuss new ideas for things to do, ways to improve our member experience, and anyone attending can step up to get involved in the next big thing!

### **Senior Cooking Events**

This past Friday, PCSC hosted a highschool seniors only College Ave Presbyterian Church cooking event to feed 75 homeless people. Co-VP of Administration and current senior Anne O'neil who helped to organize this event said that "Alex Kjellen and I had been missing talking to our classmates, so we came up with the idea to try out a seniors-only cooking event where we could all be on zoom while cooking and chatting together! We were able to work out any of the issues that came up and are excited to do it again. We are also thinking about trying the same idea with our grades in the future!"



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### **Volunteer Hours Sheet**

For PCSC members who are interested in learning how to input their service hours, please click on this [link](#) where you can find the official PCSC record of all of the events that you have attended through the crew and how many hours you have completed. Note that each event leader is responsible for collecting volunteer hours and then reporting those to the Crew Advisor who makes this official hours record for all our members. We also have instructions for PHS students on how to enter your service hours on <https://www.trackitforward.com/>

### **Friends of Scouting:**

As a venturing crew, we are a part of the scouting program, meaning we are reliant on the support from the Piedmont Council. So, every year we support the Friends of Scouting campaign to raise money for the Piedmont council, that ultimately benefits scouts and venturing programs directly. In each of our newsletters we are going to start highlighting families who have supported the campaign. We want to recognize the following people/families:

Lisa Ashton, Eric Bentley, Sheila Bhatia,  
Sandra Gross, Keiko Hayashi, Esther Hill,  
Paul Jahn, Midori Lambert, Dana Lung,  
Ken Li, Maria Lloyd, John McWeeny,  
Elizabeth Nixon, Gabriel Sanchez, Ray

Schnitzler, Jennifer Stahl, William Steimle,  
and Valerie Xiong. (Thank you!)

*(Note: We haven't received our January report, so for those who supported this past month, we weren't able to get you into this issue of the newsletter)*

For those able and willing to support, please pay by credit card [HERE](#), to make a donation, that may be tax deductible. (select affiliation to Venturing and mark Unit as PCSC; you can set up a recurring monthly payment too if you want to spread out your obligation)

Writing a check payable to "Piedmont Council, BSA" and note that you are a PCSC parent, then mail or drop off to the council office at 10 Highland Way, Piedmont 94611.

Please send us a reply to let us know you have donated and when so that we can track our crew's progress.



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Thank you for your interest and involvement in PCSC!!

Sincerely,  
Toshi Troyer, VP of Communications

For further information or other questions, visit our crew website, [www.pcservicecrew.org](http://www.pcservicecrew.org)

Please feel free to email any of PCSC's officers

- Bridget Bentley, President  
[bridgetbentley03@gmail.com](mailto:bridgetbentley03@gmail.com)
- Anne O'Neil, Co-VP of Admin,  
[14anneoneil@gmail.com](mailto:14anneoneil@gmail.com)
- Alex Kjellen, Co-VP of Admin,  
[theamazingalexk@gmail.com](mailto:theamazingalexk@gmail.com)
- Sofia Stahl, VP of Program,  
[sofia.stahl02@gmail.com](mailto:sofia.stahl02@gmail.com)
- Toshi Troyer, VP of Communications  
[tosh.troyer@gmail.com](mailto:tosh.troyer@gmail.com)
- Ginger Gardner & Heather Stoneman co-VPs of Accounting,  
[gkgardner919@gmail.com](mailto:gkgardner919@gmail.com)  
[hheathersttt@gmail.com](mailto:hheathersttt@gmail.com)
- Julia Banuelos, Co-VP Fundraising  
[jbb3047@gmail.com](mailto:jbb3047@gmail.com)
- Sofia Prieto Black, Co-VP Fundraising  
[sofiaprietoblack@icloud.com](mailto:sofiaprietoblack@icloud.com)
- Eleanor Hoffpauir, VP of Parent Engagement,  
[eleanorhoffpauir20@gmail.com](mailto:eleanorhoffpauir20@gmail.com)
- Ken Li, Crew Advisor,  
(510)-410-4283,  
[ken.i.li@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ken.i.li@sbcglobal.net)



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UPCOMING PROJECTS TO WATCH FOR! Volunteer to lead one of these...

PCSC is always exploring new organizations to work with, so that we diversify who we help, projects that we can do, and what types of members would be inspired. Often, the VP Program team and Crew Advisor are working on these in the background, but we want you members and parents to know that you are invited to join us in deciding which projects we take on. Talk to us to get involved!

Here is a sampling of some organizations that we are talking to, the beneficiaries, and why you members might be interested. All of these are potentially viable with appropriate COVID mitigation plans! (we will cancel events if the infection rates are too high)

**ALTENHEIM** (A retirement community): senior citizens that live there want to have more planter boxes so more of them can pursue their hobbies of growing things. *We have new project leaders (Kyra D, Ava A, Siena R) planning this project where we design and construct a few planter boxes starting mid Feb.*

**CLAUSEN HOUSE** (for learning challenged adults): they teach these adults to live independently. They have residential homes and classes for their "clients". We would like to see PCSC helping to make improvements to the homes; host interactive events where our members share their skills (art, music, crafts, fun & games) with the clients. If you'd like to talk to this org to develop a plan for how PCSC can collaborate, talk to Ken.

**CHO FAMILY HOUSE** (where families of sick children can stay while their kid is in treatment at the hospital): We are looking for project leaders where PCSC could make improvements to their backyard: install pavers; refinish a bench; repaint the railings around a deck. We might do some electrical work to improve the lighting in some of their rooms.

**ST MARY'S PRESCHOOL**: Many of you know that St Mary's Center helps low income seniors - we cook for seniors in their residential transitional housing and we host meals for local seniors, but did you know that they also run a preschool for low income family kids? Sofia Stahl did her Summit Award project by constructing some reading chairs for the kids to be able to read independently in their yard. Their play yard could use some improvements such as adding irrigation and new plants to their planter boxes which would make their yard greener. We could run a clothing drive for these kids and build storage for those items.

**YSA (Youth Spirit Artworks)**: You've seen how PCSC has built a 2nd tiny house for this organization, and many have worked on their new Tiny House Village which is about to open for





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26 homeless youth. The village still needs help to finish all the houses and add the infrastructure to support the village residents. Please let us know if you want to help with the ongoing construction work at the village. If we have interested members, we'll set up workdays.

YEP (Youth Employment Partnership): We use the kitchen in this vocational school for at risk teens. We've been invited to help them to build their own dozen tiny houses which will be offered to some of their students. Let Ken know ASAP if you want to help! We'll set up small groups to work.

FOSC (Friends of Sausal Creek): Although this organization seems like they are closed due to COVID, PCSC's relationship with them allows us to set up small groups to help to improve the environment in the Oakland hills. Notably at the Native Plant Nursery where we can help them to propagate native plants which will help to restore our local ecosystem. We'd like to start a team that will work on an area in the hills to remove invasive plants and eventually plant native species. Tell us if this is something that you are interested in.

Do you like working with little kids, being a camp counselor, babysitting? CAMP CREW is another Piedmont Council crew that plans events for cub scouts (including Cub Scout Day Camp). We're going to be hosting monthly Zoom activity meetings for cub scout girls and boys. Sign up to be the Zoom "host" that guides the kids through interactive, fun activities. After you do that, you can help to come up with future event activities. We are also looking for people interested in helping with the planning of Cub Scout Day Camp! Please contact [molly.mcweeny@gmail.com](mailto:molly.mcweeny@gmail.com) or [mollie.c.king@gmail.com](mailto:mollie.c.king@gmail.com). Thanks!