

Inspiration



14 Years and Counting

Curt Yagi, Executive Director



ROCK High School Backpacking Trip 2008

I love this time of year...

A new fiscal year has begun, programs have started up again and the weather is beautiful in San Francisco. It always affords me the opportunity to reflect on how far we've come and to think about where we are headed. This past year has been one of tremendous growth as we experienced so many accomplishments such as the following:

- Saturday program attendance was at an all-time high.
- Middle school participants experienced a new after-school volleyball program.
- The Golden State Warriors created a special "Read to Achieve" room at El Dorado Elementary School used solely for the ROCK after-school program. In addition, they treated our participants to three days of basketball camp at the Warriors practice facility.

- In partnership with San Francisco State University, our participants learned to sail at Lake Merced.

As ROCK begins its 14th year of service in Visitacion Valley, I am excited to report that we are experiencing our greatest expansion in the history of the organization. In addition to adding new staff (including high school participants)

Real Options for City Kids (ROCK) was founded in 1994 in response to the needs within San Francisco's low-income neighborhoods for enhanced public education and positive after-school activities. ROCK's mission is to nurture the healthy development of children by listening attentively to their needs and by providing opportunities to those who might not otherwise have access. ROCK aims to promote the positive development and long-term success of the youth that it serves through a combination of in-school and after school learning enrichment, sports and fitness, leadership training, outdoor adventure and community service opportunities. ROCK's programs are designed to serve girls and boys, ages 6-17, who live in or attend school in San Francisco's Visitacion Valley. To learn more, feel free to visit www.rocksf.org.

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From Frustration to Exhilaration

My first working experience with ROCK was frustrating. It was the summer of 2007 and I was hired to help manage Summer Escape, ROCK's summer enrichment program for middle school participants. Leading and planning for middle school youth is no easy task, especially when they don't know you very well. I was stressed, felt helpless and had no idea if I was making a positive impact in my students. Finally, at the end of the program in which the entire group went on a whitewater rafting/camping trip, something clicked. The trip went as smooth as I can imagine, the youth started to trust me by opening up and I had a great time. I then realized that I was doing something I loved and wanted to continue working with youth.

I am excited to begin my career at ROCK as Middle School Program Coordinator. I am scared and nervous because I only want my programs to be a great experience for my youth. Because I was

Erica Hernandez, Middle School Program Coordinator

born, raised and still reside in Visitation Valley, I realize how important ROCK is and think this is the perfect organization for me. I love the kids and am looking forward to seeing them mature over the years.

We are ready to begin ROCK's 14th year of service to the children and youth of Visitation Valley. This year, we are excited to report that we will be researching communities in the East Bay for future expansion. This means that your support is more important than ever and will make a major impact in our efforts to grow. Please help us reach our long-term goals by giving today.

Staffing Updates

Welcome to Erica Hernandez who joins the ROCK team as Middle School Program Coordinator. Previously, Erica worked as a part-time staff member in ROCK's after-school, Saturday and summer programs.

Congratulations to Teodora Idefonzo-Olmo who has been promoted to Director of Programs for ROCK. Teodora will oversee all of ROCK's programs.

Thanks to all of ROCK's part-time staff for making ROCK a safe place for Visitation Valley's children & youth: Danesha McCoy, DeJesus Liggins, Eric Subido, Johanna Medrano-Miranda, Leona Cheng, Natalie Giuliani, Robert Bristow, Stephani Paguio, Tawny Schrodetzki. Thomas Delany



Erica Hernandez



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The ROCK Team

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Sarah Schwartz, Elementary School Program Director

Erica Hernandez, Middle School Program Coordinator

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Middle School Volleyball

"The kids' enthusiasm for life is so contagious; it's hard not to feel like a kid alongside of them."

– Nardo, Volunteer



Sailing at Lake Merced

