



SAVE THE BAY

Cultivating Community Through Affinity Based Volunteer Programming

Presented by: Millie Calzada
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Save The Bay

My Background



- I've been in the environmental space for the better part of a decade now.
 - Backcountry Trail Work
 - Habitat Restoration
 - Native Plant Nurseries
- Community based land stewardship is a throughline in all my experience.
- Passion for creating pathways to land stewardship for under resourced community.

It Takes a Village





Why Offer Affinity Based Volunteer Programming?

- There is often a lack of diversity amongst volunteers in the environmental space.
 - 95% of community science volunteers were found to be white and wealthy according to a recent study.*
- Affinity based volunteer programs offer one solution to the lack of diversity in environmental volunteerism by offering space specifically for participants with shared identities (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.) to build community.



Affinity Program Launch

- January 2023 we relaunched volunteer programs including 3 affinity spaces:
 - Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)
 - Queer
 - Queer/ Trans and People of Color (QTPOC)
- Affinity programs are led by staff that share that identity.



Affinity Program Launch

- Promoted programs through social media and by reaching out to community stakeholders:
 - LGBTQ Centers
 - Environmental organizations already doing equity work (Justice Outside, Latino Outdoors, Environmental Professionals of Color)



QUEER/TRANS PEOPLE OF COLOR SUNSET ON THE SHORELINE



Thursday, August 19, 4:30 - 7:30 pm | Oakland

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Work Completed!

- Affinity program volunteers transplanted 48% of the total plants we grew during the 2023-2024 season.
- 15% of all participants have come to more than 1 program.
- 44 affinity programs with a total of 366 volunteers.
- 10,100 plants transplanted
- 2,500 pots scrubbed
- 450 grams of seed cleaned
- 1,150 plants planted



Volunteer Spotlight



"Millie is one of the most amazing people I've met! They made caring for plantitas and habitat restoration such a wonderful time in every stage I've been fortunate enough to experience. They're also directly responsible for my forming of life-long friendships with other awesome folks as a result of them starting the BIPOC affinity events. Nothing but love and respect for Millie."

-Alex (BIPOC Affinity Volunteer)

Volunteer Spotlight



"I enjoy hanging out and meeting new people within the queer community, it's a space where I can touch some grass (and look at some ass) while knowing I'm doing something good"
-Jenny

“If you build it, they will come”

