



XY-Zone Boys Build Emergency Preparedness Awareness As Part of Global Youth Service Day

YLC's Wednesday at the Square Offers Excellent Venue for Reaching the Public

04/24/2010- New Orleans, LA

A beautiful, clear sky over Lafayette Square in New Orleans, in poignant contrast to the skies of New Orleans in August 2005, gave a wonderful backdrop to the message of 14 middle school boys as they greeted concert-goers at the YLC's Wednesday's at the Square event. The boys, members of the XY-Zone, a program of Communities In Schools, chose to highlight emergency and disaster preparedness as their project for Global Youth Service Day.

When planning began this winter, the Greater New Orleans Foundation had just referred Barbara Lubran from Washington, DC to CIS as a volunteer. Using an intentional and reflective process led by Barbara, the boys recognized the anguish and fear on the faces of children as news of the Haiti earthquake streamed across the television. They wrote letters of encouragement and sent them to kids in Haiti. At the same time, early reports of hurricane predictions for the 2010 season were beginning to emerge. So Kristin Himes of the American Red Cross-New Orleans taught the boys about how to be ready and respond to various kinds of disasters. They decided they wanted to help make sure that local people knew how to get information early on when a storm is coming, and how to contact someone for help if they needed it.

With funding support from Usher's Powered by Service Foundation, the boys focused on insuring that phone numbers of key helping agencies were available. They had t-shirts made with the numbers on the back. A brochure with information from the Red Cross was made. They ordered magnets for refrigerators and file cabinets that had the same numbers. They ordered key chains with flashlights, because you never know when the power is going to go out, and if you have to evacuate, you might be gone a long time, so you need to take your keys.

The perfect venue was identified when Aaron Maggie with the Young Leadership Council offered for Communities In Schools to be the featured non-profit during the highly popular spring concert series, Wednesdays at the Square. A weekly and free event, it draws people of all ages from all parts of the city. And Aaron made sure the boys would get to hand out their items on April 21 as part of the Global Youth Service Day activities promoted this weekend.

Shayne Latter, the Communities In Schools Site Coordinator at Eisenhower Academy, noted “the boys really felt empowered and went up to visitors to make sure they got a magnet with the phone numbers. Hopefully, our neighbors won’t need them, but if they do, we know that 200 families have a better chance of surviving the next emergency.”

Thanks to all of our partners:

Greater New Orleans Foundation
American Red Cross
Young Leadership Council
Usher’s Powered By Service
Cox Charities
City of New Orleans/
Office of Community Development

Algiers Charter Schools Association
Eisenhower Academy
Fischer Academy

Volunteer Referral
Educational Program
Venue
Funding of Project
Funding of XY-Zone Program

Funding of Middle School Momentum
Project at Fischer and Eisenhower Schools
Great kids!

For more information, contact Sara Massey, Executive Director of Communities In Schools of Greater New Orleans, at smassey.cisno@gmail.com or 504-494-4435.



CIS Site Coordinator Shayne Latter and students



XY-Zone members share info.



Even Security Guards appreciate info!



Dan Forman with Lagniappe Academies stops by.