

Engaging Students in Volunteer Work in Their Community: “Keep It Clean, Oakland!”

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OPDC Background

- **Mission Statement:** OPDC engages in planning and development activities that contribute to the revitalization of Oakland
- Founded in 1980
- Three program areas are: *workforce development, real estate development, and community organizing*

“Keep It Clean, Oakland!”

- Overview of Oakland
- KICO Concept



Goals of KICO

- Remove litter
- Clean up the neighborhood
- Change perceptions
- Engage students
- Improve the quality of life



Idea to Implementation

- Early partners
- Donations
- Marketing
- Fundraising

In the Beginning...

- 11 active adopt-a-block groups
- 778 volunteers in 2003
- 158 trash bags collected from Oakland streets



Now...



- To date, over 4,500 volunteers
- 36 active adopt-a-block groups
- Over 1,900 bags of litter and debris collected from the streets
- Besides litter pickups, we also plant community gardens and parklets

KICO Accomplishments

	2004	2005	Increase
Projects	25	43	72%
Volunteers	1,015	2,010	98%
Trash bags collected	478	943	97%

Results

- Cleaner streets
- A greater sense of place
- A higher quality of life
- Students engaged in their community
- Increased awareness of litter problems



Comments from Volunteers

- **Comments from KICO Evaluation, asking volunteers if they will participate in future KICO events:**
 - “It was very easy to clean up the streets and satisfying to know they are clean again!”
 - “Yes. I live in Oakland and want to see it kept better.”
 - “Cleaning Oakland makes us happy!”
 - “Oakland is dirty. We live here and we want it clean!”
 - “It's easy. It's a sisterhood activity for our sorority. We'll continue in the future!”
 - “It really makes a difference in the community and the cleanup goes by very quickly.”

Annual Dumpster Project

Problem:

Overabundance of litter, debris, and unwanted furniture lining the streets every August when the students move back into Oakland, ready to start a new academic year.



Dumpster Project (cont.)

Solution:

- Form partnerships w/ local agencies and departments, landlords, institutions, and banks
- Place large dumpsters on various street corners throughout Oakland to mitigate trash and debris issues



Dumpster Project Results

Dumpsters	When	# of Dumpsters	Tonnage Collected
Student move-in	August 2003	5	12.2
Student move-out	April 2004	4	12
Student move-in	August 24-27, 2004	10	60
Student move-out	May 2-6, 2005	2	3
Student move-in	August 15-22, 2005	16	60.3
	TOTALS:	37	147.5

City Council Recognition

OPDC, along with other Dumpster Project sponsors and partners, was awarded with a proclamation from Pittsburgh City Council for our efforts to cleanup Oakland during the busy move-in/out period



Oakland Furniture Recycling Program and Sale

- Concept and idea
- Furniture collection
- Oakland-wide yard sale



Challenges/ Lessons Learned

- Transient population
- Changes in student leadership
- Changing the perception of littering
- Ask and thou shall receive (sometimes!)
- Importance of partnerships

Adapting KICO to Your Community

- Assess resources
- Build on what already exists
- Start small

“YAY KICO” CHEER

We like to plant. We like to paint. We like to pick up
litter! Oakland may be dirty, but we're not bitter!

Beer bottles, cigarettes, and trash...

We'll clean it up. We'll do it for no cash!

We might find a bird, we might find a tire...

Part of a washer, or even a dryer!

We work for an hour and then we get lunch!

Those KICO girls are such a fun bunch. ☺

Questions?

