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**From Service to Leadership:  
Hands4Hope Youth Shine with Record-Breaking Achievement**

Hands4Hope - Youth Making A Difference has earned a local reputation as a meaningful way for youth to earn service hours while developing their collaborative and leadership skills. At the 13th Annual Hands4Hope Youth Recognition Event, held in late July, the organization announced that the 2023-24 program year had shattered participation records, with more youth service hours earned than ever before.

Through the Hands4Hope Education and Community Engagement Programs, Hands4Hope Youth participants logged a total of 14,769 hours served, which represents a 20 percent increase over the previous program year. These hours result in positive change for a record 14,687 people and animals in need.

“Though these numbers are indeed impressive and represent positive change to those most in need in our community, we know that at Hands4Hope, the process is even more important than the product,” said Nicole Craine, Program Director. “Youth participants experience opportunities to explore issues in our community, discover their own strengths, and build skills necessary to become the compassionate leaders of tomorrow.”

Hands4Hope - Youth Making A Difference operates as a certified organization to qualify youth to receive the President’s Volunteer Service Award (PVSA), a national program led by AmeriCorps to recognize the important role of volunteers in America’s strength and national identity. Hands4Hope youth participants qualify for the award by achieving the required number of hours of service over a 12-month time period. A total of 41 Hands4Hope youth participants received the individual award.

For the first time since Hands4Hope was founded in 2008, every member of the Hands4Hope Youth Board, a group of 18 high school youth who serve as leaders of each of the on-campus Hands4Hope Clubs and after-school Committees, each earned an individual President’s Volunteer Service Award. In addition, the group collectively logged 3,446 service hours, making them eligible as a group for the Young Adult Gold President’s Volunteer Service Award.

Some on-campus Hands4Hope Club leadership teams also qualified for group President’s Volunteer Service Awards. The Vista Del Lago High School Hands4Hope Club leaders earned a Young Adult Silver Award, with 639 hours. The Oak Ridge High

School Hands4Hope Empower Club leaders earned a Young Adult Gold Award, with 1,008 hours. Each of the leaders of those Clubs also earned their individual PVSA.

“Hands4Hope has helped me see how much need there is in our community,” says Mia George, the 2024-25 Hands4Hope Youth Board Executive Committee President, and an incoming senior at Folsom High School, in her address to the audience at the recognition event. “Through my involvement in Hands4Hope projects, I have gained friendships, a sense of community, and new skills, while making a difference. I am looking forward to the exciting opportunities that the new program year will bring.”

Hands4Hope - Youth Making A Difference is a nonprofit youth driven organization with the mission to inspire and empower youth in leadership and service. Hands4Hope - Youth Making A Difference offers hands-on education and community engagement opportunities to youth from K-12th grades through on-campus and after-school programs in Sacramento and El Dorado Counties.

Hands4Hope is now recruiting adult Board Member candidates. For more information about Hands4Hope - Youth Making A Difference, visit [www.hands4hopeyouth.org](http://www.hands4hopeyouth.org) or call [916-294-7426](tel:916-294-7426).

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