

FFWPU California FFWPU, YAM and CARP help Oakland with community cleanup

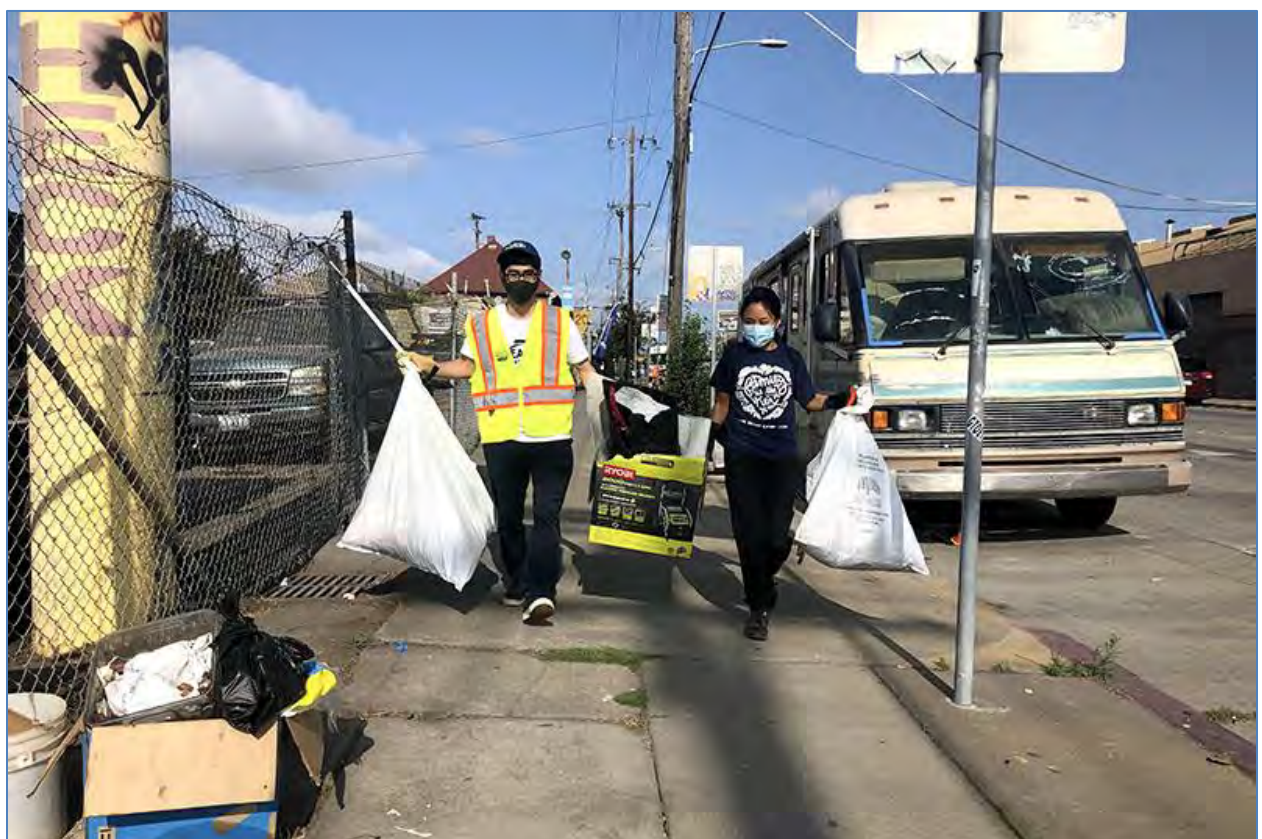
Gabriela von Euw
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As wildfires continue to burn along most of the California coast and strong pandemic restrictions remain in place statewide, that hasn't stopped a group of Unificationists from aiding the Oakland community with a street cleanup service project.

"Cleanups can create a great sense of community and responsibility to keep homes and common areas safe and clean," said project coordinator Markus von Euw.

Von Euw was among 20 volunteers from the local Young Adult Ministry (YAM) and Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) chapter of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) USA who helped Oakland city councilmember Noel Gallo with a community cleanup project on September 19.



“Serving the community is powerful and impactful,” said von Euw.

Organizers shared inspirational words with the group before hitting the streets, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere among the volunteers. Multiple teams dispersed to pick up garbage for two hours, covering much of the Fruitvale neighborhood. The personal pickup trucks of a few volunteers were then filled with large trash bags that were taken to the city landfill.



“Serving others really brings me joy and makes me feel good,” said J. Chai, one of the young adult program coordinators who shared how Mother of Peace Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and the Peace Starts With Me movement has influenced her mindset and heart of giving. “I feel that my life has purpose and that leaves me feeling satisfied, knowing I am able to give back and live for the sake of others.”

Chai explained how having a heart of service can consist of very small and simple actions and encouraged others to apply service in their day-to-day activities. Councilmember Gallo also shared his gratitude for the volunteers during such a turbulent time in the community.

“It’s important that we have people who live up to the value of their words and beliefs through actions,” said councilmember Gallo. “God chose to give each one of us this precious life, which we should use to serve others unconditionally.”

“The turnout of volunteers and their effort was very moving,” added Chai. “I believe that our little impact will make a big difference for many people. But much more deeply than that, service is truly love in action.”

Organizers said they are planning another community cleanup in Oakland in the coming weeks.

