

HPHC Las Vegas, Nevada Shine City Project - Dedicated to Serving Community

Naokimi Ushiroda
June 8, 2022



Photos courtesy of Shine City Project

Young Unificationists in Las Vegas are at it again - amassing more than 30 service projects so far this year!

The Shine City Project ([SCP](#)) team, a grassroots organization initiated by young Unificationists in 2013, frequently works with a number of local non-profit organizations. This year they have undertaken a wide range of service projects, including city and wildlife cleanup, volunteering with homeless shelters and various schools, revegetating large swaths of land in and around Las Vegas, and much more.



In May, the group teamed up with members of [GPA](#) to care for farm animals during a service project at the McKee Ranch Foundation. Established in 2004, the McKee Ranch Foundation is a working ranch open to the public that sits on two-and-a-half acres of land dedicated to preserving and promoting farm culture in Southern Nevada.

"They take care of abandoned and adopted animals such as horses, goats, alpacas, pigs and other animals," says SCP Director, Jeffrey Silerio. "Our volunteers met with the owner of the ranch, who has owned it for more than 20 years. We separated into small groups and were given different tasks."

Some 15 volunteers came out to help organize and sort a storage room, while others helped rake excess hay and debris around the ranch. Volunteers then helped disassemble and stack some moveable railing for the horses.

"We also helped unload bags of animal feed and large bales of hay from a pickup truck trailer," says Silerio. "The tasks became a little more tough and strenuous as the day progressed, but in the end, we had to work together to move all the bags of animal feed and large bales of hay since they were unwieldy and heavy ... It was hard work, but together we got the job done!"



The team moved about 30 bales of hay in total - an impressive feat, only eclipsed by more daunting projects. The group has picked up litter on multiple occasions in various parts of Mount Charleston, a national recreation area, filling up countless bags of trash. SCP has also helped plant thousands of native shrubs and grasses across the Clark County Wetlands Park, including species such as globemallow, brittlebush, desert marigold, and alkali sacaton.

Now in June, the group is on track to quickly surpass the 48 service projects they completed in 2021. Silerio says it acts as a reflection of the Unification faith and values put into action. He and members of SCP, including his younger sister, received national [recognition](#) earlier this year with the President's Volunteer Service Award for their combined 127 hours of community service during 2021.

Silerio says SCP will continue its weekly trend of service projects, partnering next with Spread the Word Nevada on June 11 to help clean and prepare donated books for Las Vegas students.

You can learn more about the Shine City Project and get involved [here](#).

SHINE CITY PROJECT

FROM SIN CITY TO SHINE CITY



ABOUT

NINE YEARS AGO, A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS ORGANIZED A CLEANUP AT THE CORNER OF SAHARA AVENUE AND LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD ON **MARCH 16, 2013**. THE SERVICE PROJECT WAS HELD IN FRONT OF BONANZA GIFT SHOP, WHICH IS POPULARLY KNOWN AS THE "WORLD'S LARGEST GIFT SHOP". THIS OCCASION WOULD MARK THE BEGINNING FOR AN ORGANIZATION WHOSE GOAL WOULD BE TO TURN LAS VEGAS **FROM "SIN CITY" TO "SHINE CITY"**.

IN A CITY OF LUSTFUL DESIRES, GREEDY TRANSACTIONS, AND SELF-INDULGENCES, SHINE CITY PROJECT **CHALLENGES OUR CITY'S CULTURE OF SELF-CENTEREDNESS TO BECOME ONE OF SELFLESSNESS**. WE AIM TO **BUILD LEADERS OF HEART AND CHARACTER WHO SHARE LOVE AND COMPASSION FOR OTHERS** WHILE BEING **STEWARDS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**. TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE A MORE **LOVING AND CARING COMMUNITY** WHICH IN TURN CAN CREATE A MORE **LOVING AND PEACEFUL WORLD**. IF A CHANGE CAN HAPPEN IN LAS VEGAS, **A CHANGE CAN HAPPEN EVERYWHERE**.

OUR INSPIRATION

Rev. Sun Myung Moon and
Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon

The inspiration for starting Shine City Project came from Rev. Sun Myung Moon, and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. The two have inspired and pioneered for a worldwide movement



for peace across races, religions, and nationalities. By creating loving families and by living for the sake of others and for the world, world peace is achievable.



"Heaven is not what we are given but what we must build." – Rev. Sun Myung Moon

OUR AFFILIATES

YOUTH AND STUDENTS FOR PEACE (YSP USA)
strives to advance world peace by empowering youth and students to become global citizens through character education and peace projects supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



COLLEGIATE ASSOCIATION FOR THE RESEARCH OF PRINCIPLES (CARP LAS VEGAS)
seeks to create an inspired youth movement progressing society to become a global family united upon Universal Principles. We empower young adults to become global leaders who will contribute towards building a unified world centered upon God's love, by providing education and training based upon our core values.

WHAT'S NEXT?



Shine City
- Project -

9 - 11 **06.11.22**
SPREAD THE WORD NEVADA



Shine City
- Project -

8 - 12 **06.18.22**
OPPORTUNITY VILLAGE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT JEFFREY SILERIO
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GALLERY



October 30, 2015 @ Haunted Harvest, Springs Preserve



September 2, 2015 @ UNLV Involvement Fair



April 26, 2013 @ Lorenzi Park



November 9, 2019 @ Just One Project – Helen Marie Smith Elementary School



August 9, 2014 @ Rebel Recycling Center



Our First Service Project (March 16, 2013 @ World's Largest Gift Shop)



October 20, 2018 @ 33 Hole Overlook, Lake Mead



July 31, 2015 @ Las Vegas Rescue Mission



August 16, 2014 @ CARP Las Vegas Learning Center



October 13, 2018 @ Las Vegas Wash with Generation Peace Academy



Shine City Project's 1st Anniversary (March 15, 2014 @ Sunset Park)



March 9, 2019 @ Las Vegas Community Healing Garden



March 2, 2019 @ Las Vegas Wash



July 25, 2015 @ Clean the World



Shine City Project's 3rd Anniversary Celebration (March 18, 2016)



August 15, 2014 @ Mt. Charleston



April 27, 2019 @ Pittman Wash



Shine City Project's 6th Anniversary Celebration (March 16, 2019 @ CARP Las Vegas Learning Center)



August 17, 2019 @ Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada with International Leadership Training Program (ILTP)



Shine City Project's 2nd Anniversary Celebration (March 14, 2015)



August 22, 2014 @ CARP Las Vegas House



April 25, 2014 @ El Pollo Loco



April 20, 2019 @ Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary

CONTACT

Interested in joining?
Have a service project

Name *

Message


Have a service project idea? Want to collaborate? Send us an email!

Email *

Subject

Message

Send



Building a world of *peace* and *unity*

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WHO ARE WE

Encouraging, Empowering, *and* Enabling

GPA is a full-time, year-long program for high school graduates to receive life of faith education and leadership training, serve developing countries, and become global missionaries.



Objectives



Embark on a Spiritual Journey

Forge a deep-rooted relationship with God and establish habits for a strong life of faith.



Cultivate Character

Exercise universal spiritual principles to drive and strengthen character.



Enroot Lifelong Friendships

Learn to lead oneself and others to create a culture of heart.

TESTIMONIALS

What Donors Say

"The young ladies representing this group today were so friendly and personable. I enjoyed chatting with them. :)"

— Mary F., Nov 5, 2019

"A girl came into my job in beavercreek selling 3D pictures and was one of the sweetest girls I've ever met. Just wish I would have caught her name."

— Michael W., Nov 5, 2019

Giving to GPA

Your tax-deductible support helps our current and future participants cover the costs of workshops, travel, and service projects. Thank you!

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West

2 Siblings, 200+ Hours of Volunteering



Jeffrey Silerio (left) and Jennifer Silerio (right) serving their Las Vegas community

“Volunteering is a lifestyle for me,” says Jeffrey Silerio. “I believe that volunteering shouldn’t be an unpleasant chore or something that we do out of necessity to fulfill volunteer hours. Rather, volunteering should be an enjoyable experience where we get to go out with friends, explore our community, and make a difference.”

Jeffrey and his younger sister Jennifer are well known in their Las Vegas community. He currently runs the Shine City Project ([SCP](#)), a volunteer initiative that first began among a group of Unificationists in 2013. Most recently, the two siblings earned national recognition with the [President’s Volunteer Service Award](#) – having devoted more than 100 hours each to volunteering throughout 2021.

“I feel grateful for the opportunity to serve my community,” says Jeffrey. “I always enjoy discovering new places where we can help out; it’s very rewarding. The desire to make a change in Las Vegas also motivates me to keep going, because as a native of Las Vegas, I hope to show others that this city is our home and we can create a more loving and caring environment for everyone.”

After connecting with SCP’s founder on campus during college, Jeffrey has remained committed to volunteering with the group for nearly a decade. Inspired by his faith and family upbringing, he says his passion for serving others was inevitable.

"In high school, I always spent my lunch time helping other students with their math questions," he says, "so I was eager to do something again for my community. Our True Parents believed that something special can happen in Las Vegas and that our city can be a model city for others to follow. I believe if a change can happen in Las Vegas, a change can happen everywhere."

Jennifer soon joined her brother in 2016 as she sought to make a difference in people's lives. "I like working with like-minded people who want to help the community," she says. "It brings me happiness and a sense of fulfillment when others are able to feel joy from the service work we do."

In 2021, SCP volunteers [ramped up their presence](#), partnering with a wide range of nonprofits and other organizations such as Green Our Planet, Ahern Orchard, and the Las Vegas Rescue Mission. By the end of the year, SCP had amassed 1,150 service hours in the greater Las Vegas area and completed 48 service projects in total – nearly one every week.

"Even though I am just one person, I've inspired others in my community to contribute even more," says Jeffrey.

"I believe that the efforts of any one person can create a ripple effect with other people."

"Through volunteering, people in the community can see that we want to help those who are less fortunate and also save the environment," says Jennifer. "Other people feel encouraged and empowered to make a difference in their community as well."

The siblings say they feel honored to be recognized by the U.S. President with a certificate from the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation. Since 2003, the President's Volunteer Service Award has celebrated the important role of volunteers in America's strength and national identity. The award honors individuals whose purpose positively impacts communities in every corner of the nation and inspires those around them to take action, too.


"These are amazing young people who are really the model people in America today," says Rev. Miilhan Stephans, president of Youth and Students for Peace ([YSP](#)) USA, which presented the award to the Silerios and seven other young people from around the country on Jan. 22. YSP is certified to give various levels of the award based on age and the amount of hours volunteered within a 12-month period.

"We're honoring outstanding volunteers and recognizing the great impact they make," says Rev. Stephans.

"These service opportunities also help them grow and find their own place in changing the world."

For the Silerios, 2022 will continue as a year full of volunteering, with each day a new opportunity to give and serve more people. "We will do our best to make Las Vegas shine and show others the value of living a life for the sake of others," says Jeffrey.

You can learn more about Shine City Project, including its upcoming service projects, [here](#).



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