

Heart For People at the Oakland Chinatown Giveaway

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Contributed by YSP and GPA representatives



On May 29th, 2021, CARP Bay Area, the hub consisting of chapters from Chabot College, California State University East Bay, and University of California Berkeley, teamed up with [Service for Peace \(YSP\)](#) and [Generation Peace Academy \(GPA\)](#) for a service project in Oakland Chinatown.



Unloading and packing bags

Service comes in many ways. On May 29, the young people of CARP, YSP, and GPA had the opportunity to help [American Clergy Leadership Conference \(ACLC\)](#) minister representatives Drs Jasper and Veronica Lowery and Elder Mark and Rowena Ellerson, Bishop Andrea Jackson, Dr. John Ching, among others, to participate in a giveaway project of food, backpacks, and school supplies that has been worked on for the past year.

Early in the morning, volunteers from diverse communities worked together to begin unloading a truck full of fresh vegetables and pastries, along with school supplies for the giveaway. In assembly lines, we passed the boxes and set them along the side walk on tables to then be opened and organized into giveaway bags. The spirit was lively with everyone moving around, working quickly and efficiently with one another to have the event prepared before 11 AM. Regardless of being strangers, our heart of service opened each other up and created a sense of community.

In preparation for the giveaway, volunteers packed bags filled to the brim with various types of foods from fresh produce, pastries, and granola bars. With so many bags to prepare, we created a quick system of filling, tying, and stacking bags to efficiently get the tasks done. On the other end of the event, backpacks were being filled with an array of school supplies, masks, and socks. With such a big task needing to be completed in a short amount of time, volunteers were working fast and in great unison.

As it came closer to 11 AM, the hustle and bustle of packing bags excited community members and a line began forming. Their curiosity had volunteers working harder to make sure all the bags would be prepared on time.

It was particularly a wonderful opportunity to practice and share our heart of service with people from all over the Bay Area community coming from different backgrounds as well as pastors coming together to feed many people.



The Giveaway

The giveaway began a little before 11 AM. The long line was packed with many people from all different backgrounds and ages. The volunteers and community members were running around busy to attend every person that was there.

It was beautiful to see that despite there being a barrier in culture or language, we could all still unite on being there to serve the community with a heart of love. Every bag given away and the thank you that followed filled the volunteers with a drive to want to give even more.

At the center of the street, many pastors, community members and a band gathered to praise God. Prayers in many different languages were offered striving to bring closer the brothers and sisters of the African American and Chinese community.

Testimonies

"Volunteering at the Oakland Chinatown Giveaway was an incredibly enjoyable experience to start off my Saturday morning. I fell in love with the idea that people from different backgrounds, communities, and ethnicities can come together with one goal in mind: to serve with a true heart of love. This service project showed me that service is able to transform a complete stranger into a new friend." - Julia Chai

"It was really fun interacting with the citizens of Chinatown! Especially because they all have different cultures from one another. Trying to communicate was also fantastic because I got to try different things to help them understand one another and making a silly dance for all of us to laugh was so fun. Trying to direct the crowd on what to do and where to go made me feel like a leader and a helper. With everyone getting together, it was a great experience!." - Maddie