

**Go full circle with YU: Tips for keeping your momentum**

Featuring Youth United of Portland/Metro East and Greater Los Angeles

**YOUTH UNITED of PORTLAND/METRO EAST HFH**

Although recruiting can be challenging during summer break, youths have just the right energy and creativity to turn things around. Youth United Portland/Metro East beat the odds by organizing and holding their first meeting in summer 2009. Realizing how hectic things can be between August and September, summer break has proved to be a great time to plan fall events. Summer also provides the opportunity to begin auditions for their Battle of the Bands fundraiser. Youths as young as 5 have the opportunity to showcase their talents while supporting Habitat’s mission.

Marianne McClure, Youth United adviser, said momentum is key. She found stopping often makes it difficult for youths to get started back up in the fall. “One unique way the youth boost our Youth United is through ‘Latte and Learn’ interest meetings,” she said. “After one of our steering committee members attended a similar event, the youth used their resources to create a successful tool for our YU. We hold Latte and Learn monthly at a local coffee shop because it is a more casual, attractive atmosphere and youth feel more comfortable interacting.”

Action steps:

*Latte and Learn is a not a difficult event, but some planning is involved.*

- Schedule local coffee shop.
- Publicize through word of mouth, social media and other organizations.
- Develop agenda.
- Decide who will present about Habitat and Youth United.
- Provide time for questions and answers.
- Hand out volunteer descriptions and applications.



**You may find that some years are more challenging than others, but Youth United does not have to stop. Learn how to re-evaluate what your YU can accomplish — don’t just give up on YU.**

Going full circle with YU

**YOUTH UNITED of GREATER LOS ANGELES HFH**

When youths can make a personal connection with what Habitat is and the ways they can get involved, affiliates will find building a solid Youth United program much easier. The YU of Greater Los Angeles has placed special emphasis on this as they reach out to friends and classmates who can get involved. “Using their own interests and regular activities as a guide, our members have come up with effective ways to engage other youth,” said Melissa Killian, YU adviser and AmeriCorps member. Some YU members have a heart for music and have found creative ways to promote Youth United by incorporating music into fundraising, advocacy, and education — and it is working out very well.



Action steps:

**Foster leadership**

Youths who are empowered will realize their personal leadership qualities. Empower them to share their knowledge.

**Stay active**

During summer break, individual schools and groups still have the opportunity to create ways to stay involved.

**Create a sense of family**

Youths truly embrace one another and provide needed support for all members. Allow youths who have participated for several years to offer support to new Youth United advisers.

**Provide consistent affiliate support**

Back the Youth United group and help promote its events. Welcome youths to participate in affiliate events.

**Celebrate**

Have an end of the year party for outgoing members and to welcome new members — everyone will feel part of the bigger picture.

**Keep at it**

Although the economy may challenge fundraising, our main focus is to help change the way youths think. By making work as realistic as possible, youths can better understand what we are doing and why, as they brainstorm plans to meet their fundraising goals.

**Let the youths know that they have the power, strength and capability to accomplish whatever they set out to do. Have faith in them and show it — not just once, but consistently reaffirm your faith.**