



SAN JOSE CONSERVATION CORPS+CHARTER SCHOOL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Midpen receives award for partnership connecting local youth to environmental career training

Los Altos, CA [April 25, 2019]— The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District received a community partnership award today from the San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School for assisting local youth in learning job skills while earning an education and paycheck in Midpen's public open space preserves.

"For many of these students, it's their first introduction to their public open space preserves," said Midpen's General Manager Ana María Ruiz. "We hope the experience plants seeds for deeper connections to nature, and opens doors to careers in the environmental field for the next generation."

Next week, Corps members are beginning a new project in partnership with Midpen, helping to restore redwood forests in Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve by removing invasive, non-native plants. Each night, Corps members will camp under the stars at Midpen's nearby Black Mountain backpack camp and enjoy presentations by Midpen staff on the natural environment and conservation careers. For many, it's their first time camping.

Last fall, a team of Corps members worked alongside Midpen staff to create a fuel break in a closed area of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve for increased community wildfire safety.

"Our partnership with Midpen offers a unique experience to inner city youth and helps give young people the skills they need to live healthy, productive lives," said SJCCC Operations Director Sal Munoz. "The projects in Midpen open space preserves are part of the students' one year personal transformation process, and are experiences they will remember for the rest of their lives."

The San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School provides a free, comprehensive high school curriculum to local youth, ages 18-27, who have become disconnected from mainstream education. The students have opportunities to participate in paid job training in the fields of environmental conservation, recycling, green energy and construction.

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The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is a public agency created by voters in 1972. Its mission is to acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity, protect and restore the natural environment and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education. throughout Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. www.openspace.org