



Silicon Valley Conference for Community & Justice

An Interfaith Camp **Everytown**

June 15-19, 2008



SVCCJ's *Camp Everytown* is a research proven youth leadership development program specifically designed to address and reduce inter-group prejudice and conflict. For more than 50 years nationwide and more than a decade here with Silicon Valley and Bay Area schools, this intensive residential experiential learning program has been highly successful in both

changing the lives of individual youth participants and in preparing them to be leaders for our diverse communities.

Adult participants are equally impacted. In fact, law enforcement and educational institutions use Camp Everytown as an effective training tool. It significantly and positively impacts police relationships with youth, as well as teacher effectiveness and retention.

SVCCJ's Camp Everytown has been so successful that it has been featured on NBC11, Comcast, on radio, and in the San Jose Mercury News and several other Bay Area newspapers. Research in Silicon Valley has demonstrated over time that between 80-94% of youth participants not only change their attitudes toward people different from themselves, but also learn to be leaders for this kind of social change.

This year SVCCJ Silicon Valley is offering a special **Interfaith Camp Everytown** for the major faith communities that have adherents in our region. The target is high school students attending religious or public schools and/or who are involved in their religious community's education or youth group programming. Their teachers and/or youth leaders are also intended participants, one adult leader per 5 students. This Camp is excellent training for teachers and youth leaders in creatively addressing adolescent issues and really boosts their ability to reach and mentor their young people back in the religious community setting.

Camps run between 50-85 students, plus the adults, whom we will train in advance of the Camp experience. This permits us to mix 5-10 faith cadres from among the many faiths represented in the Bay Area.

The program would be essentially the same as our regular Camp Everytown in terms of goals and focus - reduction of prejudice and its replacement with understanding, leadership skills development - but several exercises would be added to address religious content and issues

directly. (For a curriculum, contact SVCCJ Silicon Valley.). All basic religious dietary laws and concerns about modesty will be taken into consideration and honored, if possible.

Goals:

To help students gain the invaluable experience of exposure to other faiths in their formative years:

1. Understand their religious environment.
2. Learn how to effectively relate to peers of faiths different from their own.
3. Learn how to respectfully communicate with them.

All of this would be an essential skill set for even missionary work, and it's distinctly different from what they would receive in their usual religious education. ***Our goal isn't to prepare them religiously, but to help them navigate and lead in a multi-cultural/interfaith environment as respectable and respectful spokespersons for their own beliefs.***

Key Considerations:

- There will be ***NO proselytizing*** by anyone.
- Everyone comes and goes home with his/her own religious faith intact!
- Students don't just learn how to engage authentically with others, they also learn how to express pride in their own traditions and origins joyfully, while being equally respectful of the traditions and origins of others.
- Because this is a religiously oriented camp, accommodations for prayers, modesty concerns, and most religious dietary laws will be provided to the fullest extent possible.

Fees and Payment:

The cost of this SVCCJ Interfaith Camp Everytown program will be \$450/ student participant and \$475 for adults (for all meals and accommodations for 5 days/4 nights at a fully accessible, certified campground in the Marin Headlands. Religious institutions interested in sending a full cadre of 10 students and 2 adult leaders will need to remit a deposit of \$2,000 to SVCCJ by December 15, 2007 to reserve their place. Smaller cadres or individual participants may also apply and will need to remit a deposit of \$200 each. The balance of full payment will be due by March 31, 2008. Institutions and individuals are responsible to provide transportation to/from the Camp facilities.

Schedule and Preparation:

Signed permission papers will be due for all student participants (plus alternates) and adult leaders by April 15, 2008. Adult leaders will be required to attend a pre-Camp training session in order to receive advance facilitation training and preparation.

Sponsorship:

SVCCJ's Interfaith Camp Everytown program is being sponsored by SVCCJ Interfaith Dialogue groups.

Individuals, groups, foundations or companies interested in sponsoring the camp (or tuition assistance and scholarships for students) should contact: Rev. Bruce Bramlett, SVCCJ Program Director, (408) 286-9663, ext. 330; bbramlett@SVCCJ.org.