

LEAF BLOG for Berkeley's Brower Center

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Summer 2013 LEAF Academy at Brower Center

Kudos to the wonderful Drew and awesome Jessica leading this LEAF!



More beautiful photos and videos at: <http://www.leafacademy.org/berkeley-blog/>

Berkeley Reflections

What did I expect from LEAF?

When we first started LEAF we thought that it would be a lot of science in a classroom, not out in nature learning and having fun at the same time. We expected LEAF to teach us science and it

has. We also thought that instead of being interactive in the activities we would just watch other people do it. We also thought that we would go to a museum and go on a tour, not actually go and make a difference! Overall, LEAF is a lot better than I expected!!!

Trip to SPAWN, day 1

On Monday we went to SPAWN. SPAWN stands for Salmon Protection And Watershed Network. SPAWN is trying to help the salmon to survive, by helping their environment and the watershed surrounding it. When we got off of the bus, we gathered in a clearing to meet the leaders of SPAWN. We were going to clear out all of the Himalayan Blackberries, an invasive species of blackberry that is killing all of the native plants. We helped the salmon when we cleared out the blackberries, because if the insects that the salmon eat could only eat the Himalayan Blackberries, they could not get a variety of nutrients. Some of us thought it was pretty fun, because we were doing hands-on work to cut down the bush.

We found lots of golf balls in the surrounding area, because the location we were at was a golf court. we got onto the bus, and then we took a creek walk and saw little adolescent salmon swimming in the water. We learned useful information about plants that can cure headaches and other illnesses. We then transferred small plants into small plastic pots called Deep pots. During the activity, we heard a huge cracking sound, and saw a weighted down apple tree branch falling down. We ate some of the delicious apples, and some people said it was the highlight of their day! All in all, everybody had so much fun learning and helping at SPAWN (even if our feet were sore.)

MSS (Marin Sanitation Service), day 2

The MSS (Marin Sanitation Service) was a smelly, but cool place with all the conveyer belts and other machines. There were animals on the little farm (there was a little farm right next to it with pigs, peacocks, and chickens). We began our tour in a learning center to learn about this wonderful place and about recycling. next we took a tour in the recycling center and after we went to the mini-farm and we played with peacocks and chickens. Then, we went back to the learning center to play a few games: spinning wheel trivia, scavenger hunt, and spin it to win it. We had learned a lot about reusing and recycling trash from a nice lady name Devi (our tour guide). Afterward, we went to the bus and it took us to Arizemendi Bakery and Pizza. We were able to do a few taste tests and learned about the process of turning produce we like into other combinations and treats. Finally, we got to eat the pizza. It was really good. Though some people didn't like it. The bus picked us up a couple hours later and came back to the David Brower Center, which is basically is our "home room" and took a walk around the Cal campus. We went back to do appreciations and that was it for the day! What a day!





DAY 3: OAKLAND FARMER'S MARKET

Week one and LEAFS theme is food. Today we went to a farmer's market in Oakland. We did a scavenger hunt within the farmers market to learn more about organic fruits and vegetables. We met lots of nice farmers who were happy to answer our questions; we learned a lot more about organic fruits and vegetables available at the farmer's market. We were allowed to buy something if we wanted to. There was a man who sold honey, many fruit and vegetable vendors, a flower stand and people selling baked goods. After buying what we wanted from the farmers market we went to a park to eat lunch. It was really pretty in the park, and it was a very, very fun trip.



DAY 3 Continued, FOOD BANK

The Alameda County Community Food Bank serves about 50,000 people every week. We helped pack about 2,085 pounds of carrots for people in need. The food bank doesn't serve people directly they send food to other organizations that pass out the food. In the past, the food bank processed 1 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables every year, but now they process a quarter million pounds of food a month, that's 3 million pounds of fruits and vegetables a year! They have tripled their productions to get nutritious and healthy food instead of canned foods that have lots sugars and preservatives. After visiting the food bank, I realized how lucky we are to have good fresh foods.

SAGE Day 4

Sage farm was a very good experience because we had never been to a farm, and we couldn't believe how much they could have on that farm. They had us plant lots of squash in about 7 rows and it was a dirty job, but it was still fun. We learned how to water and plant plants correctly, because most kids do it wrong until they learn right. We also thought that it was so cool that they had a river on the farm. We learned how they planted plants on the side of the farm would soak up the water because they don't want the manure that they use for fertilizer to get in the river.





We were very impressed that they had a whole crop of strawberries on the farm. They also let us taste a few strawberries, and they had grapes for us to munch on at lunch. After that, we visited the chickens and some of us were scared. We chased them and there was a rooster that was hairy named Mr. Miyagi. We walked around the farm several times and every time all of us saw something different. The water temple was amazing to know that lots of people in the bay area's drinking water comes from there. Which is awesome! Then we got on the bus to come home. We all learned a lot at the Organic Agriculture Farm.



Eco – SF, Day 5_

Today LEAF went to a farm run by the organization ECO SF. The farm was on the campus of SOTA- School of Theater Arts. First we took a hike into Glen Canyon, where we picked blackberries and talked about the fact that because of streets and drains the watershed is losing water. After the hike we toured the farm and learned about the plants they grow. We learned about which ones cured bee stings, which ones live in symbiotic relationships with one another, and which plants they used as a cover crop to put nitrogen into the soil.



We then turned manure into a patch of soil to amend and fertilize it, and planted different types of carrots in a prepared soil bed. For lunch we made a salad with kale and the blackberries we picked. We also harvested zucchinis to go on miniature pizzas. After lunch came the long awaited visit with the farm chickens. Finally, with full bellies and minds, we headed home.

– Josiah

Stay tuned for week 2 uploading soon to a screen near you!

More beautiful photos and video at:

<http://www.leafacademy.org/berkeley-blog/>

Also check out:

LEAF Blog for Children's Day School <http://matteroftrust.org/5736/leafcdspictures>

LEAF Blog for Presidio Hill School <http://2013leaf.blogspot.com>

More PHS photos at <http://matteroftrust.org/6283/leaf-blog-for-presidio-hill-school>

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