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Moraga Teens Collect for Underprivileged Kids

By Sophie Braccini



MYIC displayed the supply they need at the Park Foundation Life Member reception. Photo Kimberley Nelson

is also a great way to inform Moragans of the hardships people face within our Contra Costa community."

Members of the Moraga Youth Involvement Committee (MYIC) will go door to door on April 16 to ask for donations and school supplies. The MYIC is comprised of about a dozen middle school and high school students who serve the community at Town functions, organize children's activities, and every year choose a local social justice issue they want to work on. This year, in partnership with Shelter Inc., they plan to donate 20 backpacks full of necessities that will be given to children whose families cannot provide them. "A meaningful charitable drive," commented Moraga Mayor Karen Mendonca.

"These kids are great, they impress me more and more," says Kimberley Nelson, the Recreation and Facilities Coordinator for the Town of Moraga who is in charge of the MYIC organization, "they are committed to school, sports, then they come to the MYIC meetings and they want to do more." The idea came up as part of a group discussion, "We all agreed that it would be a memorable year if we could take on a large-scale project," says Layth Ramatala, Campolindo student and chair of the MYIC, "We originally had a few options and then narrowed it down to this backpack drive."

According to Shelter Inc., on any given night in Contra Costa County there are almost 7,000 homeless men, women, and children; 68% are part of a homeless family with children. Shelter Inc. provides them with a roof and helps the children get to school every morning.

"As always, it is difficult to understand that just 20 minutes away from us, people are struggling to make a living," says Ramatala. "I am sure everyone can agree that living in a safe place like Moraga is wonderful, but a lot of us fail to recognize that just outside of our town, people are just above or even below the poverty line. This backpack drive is not only a great way to donate to people in need, it

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

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