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## Students and disabled adults create crafts for 1st Annual Peace and Kindness Carnival

By Jenn Freedman



Students help each other make beaded bracelets. Photo Jenn Freedman

The local nonprofit Mindful Littles brought together 10 disabled adults from Las Trampas School in Lafayette and 22 students from Carondelet High School in Concord Oct. 10 to create mindful crafts, like beaded bracelets, lavender sachets, and painted pots, which will be sold at a Peace and Kindness Carnival on Veterans Day at Orinda Community Park.

Tanuka Gordon, founder of Mindful Littles, explained the inspiration for this partnership: "My own 11-year friendship with a woman who has cerebral palsy has been the inspiration for creating more and more organic opportunities between people who have special needs and those who do not. There is nothing more powerful than the beautiful expression of love and inclusion that can naturally emerge when you bring such groups together."

Integrating these groups was a natural extension of their existing partnerships with the nonprofit already: Carondelet has been working closely with Mindful Littles's youth leadership program, and the school had specifically offered up students to volunteer with the organization as part of their Day of Service program on this particular day in October. In addition, Mindful Littles has an ongoing program with Las Trampas, teaching yoga and mindfulness at the school for developmentally disabled adult students every Friday. The weekly yoga class at Las Trampas is now open to the public as well. This experience lends itself to a natural opportunity for opening up a diversity dialogue with children at home.

Initially, both the Carondelet and Las Trampas students felt unsure of what to expect when they gathered to make the crafts. But as soon as they began working together, both groups were naturally helping each other. "Quite honestly, I was moved to tears as I saw the students help each other, laugh, share stories. By the end of the morning, the groups were eating lunch together and even gave each other high-fives and hugs before they left. If we can create more and more of these immersion opportunities, our world would start looking like a different place," Gordon said.

The crafts will be sold at the First Annual Peace and Kindness Carnival, a fundraiser for Mindful Littles. Its mission is to spark children and families to engage in mindful, compassionate action through service learning experiences, creative yoga and mindfulness programs, and heartfelt parenting resources. Mindful Littles is a small and fast-growing nonprofit, and fundraising has become a critical need to enable long-term sustainability.

The carnival will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mon., Nov. 12 at Orinda Community Park and will include a live band, bouncy house, face painting, balloon artist, kindness games, carnival games, food trucks, and a chance to meet and help real veterans on Veterans day. Tickets are \$40 per child, free for adults and children under 2. For tickets, go to [mindfullittles.org](http://mindfullittles.org) and click the upcoming events tab.

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