



Environmental
Charter Schools

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Volunteers Fulfill Dreams for A Sustainable Community in Gardena with Green Apple Day of Service

Partners Join Forces to Celebrate Completion of Community Building and Kick Off Prop K
Project at Environmental Charter Middle School – Gardena

Saturday, December 6, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Photo/Interview Opportunities Available

WHAT:

[Environmental Charter Middle School-Gardena](#) (ECMS), with financial support from [US Green Building Council-LA Chapter](#) (USGBC) and volunteer support from [Boeing](#), is hosting a [Green Apple Day of Service](#) (GADOS) to celebrate the completion of phase two of the campus renovation, which transformed a dilapidated church into an environmentally friendly community building and classrooms; and to kick off its [City of Los Angeles Prop K](#) Urban Greening Grant. Green Apple Day of Service is a national USGBC program that gives parents, teachers, students, companies and local organizations the opportunity to transform schools into healthy, safe and productive learning environments through local service projects. This Saturday, community and corporate volunteers will be planting trees on the school campus and in the neighborhood with help [From Lot To Spot](#). Volunteers will also help install a rain garden designed to mitigate erosion and urban run off on the campus. In addition, attendees along with [LA Commons](#) artists will create a sustainable art project inspired by the [Gardena Willows](#).

WHEN:

Saturday, December 6

8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.: Kick-off ceremony

9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m.: LEED Campus Tours

1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.: Ribbon-cutting ceremony (*Time approximate*)

WHERE:

Environmental Charter Middle School – Gardena

812 W. 165th Place Gardena, CA 90247

WHO:

Dozens of volunteers from ECMS-Gardena, the Harbor Gateway community and Boeing.

WHY:

The third Environmental Charter School campus, ECMS - Gardena is a free, public middle school in South Los Angeles that offers students a small, caring educational environment supporting their transition from elementary school to a college preparatory high school. The



rigorous academic program prepares students for a college-prep high school and places an emphasis on social responsibility. When the campus opened in spring 2013, it was a beacon for the community through its environmentally sustainable campus features and play space. Saturday's Green Apple Day of Service is an opportunity to kick off ECMS-Gardena's Prop K project, and help transform the campus into an even healthier, safer and more productive learning environment through planting trees and the creation of a sustainable work of art. Prop K created a citywide assessment district that funds the acquisition, improvement, construction and maintenance of City parks, recreation facilities and other projects. ECMS-Gardena received a Prop K grant in the amount of \$649,000.

Combining art and science, the campus art project is inspired by the neighborhood's local wetland, [Gardena Willows](#). Environmental Charter High School Green Ambassadors Interns toured the wetlands with Cal State Dominguez Hills professor Kelly Dawdy, who taught them about the wetlands role in our watershed and how its ecosystem works and is threatened. The interns then taught ECMS-Gardena students as they led them through the wetlands. The middle school students, working with artists from LA Commons, designed an art project inspired by the wetlands and based on the theme: "What makes a community sustainable?" The students will be interviewing volunteers at the December 6 event to find out how they view their community and everyone will participate in completing the artwork.

For the tree planting, the ECHS Green Ambassador interns researched solutions to an erosion and water run off problem that plagued the campus. They applied that research in deciding to put in a rain garden at ECMS-Gardena, which will be installed on Saturday with [From Lot To Spot](#).

VISUALS:

- Before and after shots
- Volunteers digging holes, transporting and planting trees
- Students interviewing community members, then painting wooden cutout pieces with inspirational words
- Ribbon-cutting ceremony to dedicate the new community building

Environmental Charter Schools (ECS)

Environmental Charter Schools (ECS) is a network of free public schools in underserved communities of South Los Angeles. It prepares students for 4-year colleges through a unique program that focuses on experiential learning and uses the environment as a way to both engage students and prepare them to become leaders in their communities. The neighborhoods served by ECS have crime rates that are twice that of the national average, low levels of educational attainment, and high levels of poverty. Even so, 98% of ECS High School graduates complete the coursework necessary for admission to a four-year college or university compared to about 35% statewide. For more information, visit <http://www.ecsonline.org>.