



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**For more information contact:**  
Allison Johnson, 512-914-2451  
allison@littlehelpinghands.org

**LITTLE HELPING HANDS HONORS NEARLY 200 AUSTIN YOUTH  
FOR SUMMER VOLUNTEERING**

*Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event Celebrates Children Ages 3-15*

**AUSTIN, TX– September 1, 2014** – This Sunday, September 7, [Little Helping Hands](http://www.littlehelpinghands.org) will honor Austin’s youngest volunteers and their families at its annual Volunteer Appreciation Celebration at West Lake Beach on Lake Austin.

The organization will recognize and thank families who participated in Little Helping Hands volunteer activities over the past year as well as this year's Summer Volunteer-a-Thon participants, who took part in community service and tracked their volunteer hours this summer.

“To celebrate our five-year anniversary in June, we challenged Austin children to volunteer extra hours over the summer and be rewarded for their efforts,” said Marissa Vogel, founder and executive director of Little Helping Hands. “With kids out of school and sports commitments low, the summer season is a great time to volunteer in our community.”

This year’s Summer Volunteer-a-Thon included 196 children ages 3-14, who participated in volunteer activities in June, July and August through Little Helping Hands, as well as through other organizations, schools, churches, synagogues and activities of their own initiative.

Special awards will be presented for:

- Top Volunteer Award – most volunteer hours from June 1 through August 31
- Top Monthly Volunteer Award – most volunteer hours in June, July and August
- Top Fundraiser Award – most dollars raised for Little Helping Hands or other charity
- Innovation Individual Award – Most creative individual or family service project
- Innovation Group Award – Most creative group service project organized
- Voyager Award – Volunteer activity or project furthest away from Austin

In addition, for every service hour the children earned this summer, Benchmark Bank will donate \$1 to support a favorite Little Helping Hands activity. At the Volunteer Appreciation Celebration, children will get to choose which service category and organizations they want their money to go toward.

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Summer Volunteer-a-Thon and Volunteer Appreciation Celebration sponsors include Benchmark Bank, ThunderCloud Subs, Jim-Jim's Water Ice and West Lake Beach. The event will include swimming, face painting, arts & crafts and a performance by JD Stewart MD (Magic Dude), along with the Summer Volunteer-a-Thon award presentation.

Founded in 2009, Little Helping Hands is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides opportunities for young children to get involved in community service through family volunteering. Each month, Little Helping Hands creates and manages approximately 50 hands-on volunteer activities with more than 50 non-profit organizations in the Austin area.

“We aim to encourage and teach children how to give their time and effort and to instill the value of community service among Austin’s youngest,” said Jenny Brannen, Little Helping Hands Board President. “At [www.littlehelpinghands.org](http://www.littlehelpinghands.org), parents with young children can sign up for volunteer opportunities that fit their families’ interests and schedule to help them engage in our community.”

Later this month will be the third annual [Big Night Out for Little Helping Hands](#), a fundraising event on Saturday, September 27, 2014, at the Getaway Motor Club in Austin. With an expected attendance of over 200 people, the evening will feature live music by Hotwax as well as a silent auction and other opportunities to support the organization.

“Funds raised by Big Night Out for Little Helping Hands will help us continue offering age-appropriate, hands-on volunteer activities to families around Austin, enabling children to learn the value of helping others while providing a service to the community,” Brannen said.

Little Helping Hands’ mission is to engage young children and their families in community service and inspire lifelong volunteerism.

### **About Little Helping Hands**

Little Helping Hands provides meaningful volunteer experiences for Austin families, engaging young children in community service and inspiring lifelong volunteerism. Through age-appropriate, hands-on volunteer activities, families learn the value of helping others while providing a service to the Austin community. Since its inception in 2009, Little Helping Hands has organized over 1,600 volunteer activities that engaged more than 11,000 children and their families, logging more than 25,500 total volunteer hours serving 60 Austin-area non-profit organizations and groups. To learn more about Little Helping Hands or join a volunteer activity, visit [www.littlehelpinghands.org](http://www.littlehelpinghands.org).

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