

Walt Disney World Resort Hosts Nonprofit Volunteer Engagement Training

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., March 13, 2014 – Walt Disney World Resort today hosted 26 Central Florida nonprofit organizations for *Ready, Set, Go!* training by generationOn, the youth division of Points of Light, with support from Hands On Orlando. Designed to help community groups more effectively engage youth volunteers and offer new family-oriented service activities, the training workshop provided nonprofit organizations with ideas, tips and resources to enhance their recruitment efforts.

“As more and more parents search for service opportunities that enable them to volunteer with their children, we wanted to help nonprofits explore ways to accommodate adults and kids working side by side,” said Nancy Gidusko, director of community relations at Walt Disney World Resort. “Our Cast Members teamed up with generationOn to give Central Florida groups the tools they need to develop family volunteer activities.”

Representatives of local nonprofits such as Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida, Heart of Florida United Way and the Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida attended the training event at Disney’s Grand Floridian Resort. In addition to hosting the workshop, Walt Disney World Resort will donate \$5,000 in total seed money to help the organizations implement what they’ve learned with new family-friendly service events.

“As an organization that relies on volunteers, we’re always open to new ways of expanding our base of support,” said Jada Smith, chief executive officer for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Florida. “Thanks to generationOn and Walt Disney World Resort, we’ll benefit from increased volunteer service and families will benefit from spending more meaningful time together. It’s truly a win-win for Central Florida’s community.”

Ready, Set, Go! highlights the value of providing quality family volunteer opportunities, training nonprofit staff members to create specific ideas for family and youth engagement in their organizations. The workshop builds on generationOn’s expertise based on past trainings that drew hundreds of nonprofit participants from 10 diverse communities across the country.

“As any parent with young children knows, the availability of family volunteer activities is limited,” said Amy Smith, president of Points of Light’s generationOn. “Our *Ready, Set, Go!* training helps nonprofits design volunteer activities for the entire family. Through the generous support of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, we will be able to bring this program to multiple cities around the U.S. this year.”

In addition to the *Ready, Set Go!* training in Orlando, Walt Disney Parks and Resorts recently sponsored a similar event in Anaheim, Calif. and will support workshops in other communities, such as Honolulu. The training programs align with Disney’s approach to community engagement, which emphasizes the benefits of strengthening relationships between children, parents and other adult role models.

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