
AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



Project Title:	Amanave mo Taeao – Amanave for Tomorrow
Award Amount:	\$35,802
Type of Grant:	SEDS - Urgent Award
Project Period:	Jul. 2010 – Mar. 2011
Grantee Type:	Government Agency

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 20 elders involved
- 20 youth involved
- \$6,600 in resources leveraged
- 6 partnerships formed
- 3 people trained

BACKGROUND

American Samoa, comprised of seven islands in the South Pacific Ocean 2,300 miles southwest of Hawaii, is the size of Washington, DC, and has 65,000 people in 71 villages. Tutuila, at 56 square miles, is the largest island, and is made up of steep volcanic mountains surrounded by coral reefs. Tutuila has 74 percent of American Samoa's land area and 97 percent of its population.

On September 29, 2009, an 8.1 magnitude undersea earthquake southwest of American Samoa produced a series of tsunamis that caused over 150 deaths in American Samoa and the nations of Samoa and Tonga. Thirty-one of these deaths occurred in American Samoa. Despite losing all but two homes in the village to the tsunami, Amanave, a village on the southwestern tip of Tutuila, experienced no loss of life. Morale in Amanave, however, was low, as almost

everything there was destroyed. In addition to the structures wiped out by the tsunami, the village park at Amanave Beach was also destroyed, rendering a valuable community gathering place useless for recreation and community social activities.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose and sole objective of the “Amanave mo Taeao” project, devised by staff members from the American Samoa Government's Department of Parks and Recreation with input from Amanave village leaders, was to restore Amanave Beach Park for the 300 people living in the village. This would provide a place to draw the community together, where families could support one another in overcoming the trauma and fear caused by the tsunami.

To accomplish this, project staff, a local contractor, and community members worked together to re-create, and improve upon, the pre-tsunami version of the park. First, the project coordinator ordered a pre-made play structure, a play pirate ship with a twisting slide, textured incline, sandbox, portholes, and pirate's flag, from a vendor in Michigan, and had it shipped to American Samoa. While the ready-made structure was en route, local youth groups and community members, including the local community

police, worked with project staff to clean up the beach, carry sand to the park in buckets, and prepare the park grounds. Local women also assisted with the landscaping, planting coastal shrubs around the park grounds. When the kit arrived, the project coordinator hired a carpenter, oriented him to the project, and provided him with instructions on where to place the structure. Two days later, he had assembled the entire play structure. Next, staff from the Department of Parks and Recreation purchased and installed picnic tables and trash cans.

During the project period, over 300 Amanave villagers participated in the revival of the park, either cleaning up, planting, bringing sand, supervising, participating in youth programs, playing on the basketball or volleyball court, using picnic shelters, or keeping watch over the park. According to Leilani Ripley, the project coordinator, “This process really helped bring people together, and it was heartwarming when it was finally finished.”

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

On April 4, 2011, the people of Amanave celebrated the opening of their new playground, along with the Governor of American Samoa, the High Chief of Amanave, and various public officials. According to Ms. Ripley, “As the playground was unveiled, parents, village elders, community members, and the assembled leaders watched as village children ran to the pirate ship, jumped on, and began to play. Everyone watched and celebrated; there was a very strong spirit of gratitude.”

Through 30 surveys conducted with local youth groups, discussion with Amanave villagers and leaders, and simple observation of how the park was being used, project staff concluded that the project has had a very significant impact on the village, facilitating social cohesion in Amanave, making people

feel more embedded in the community, and making life feel normal again. The park is viewed as a safe, healthy gathering place for youth after school, a place where families and children can go to relax, have fun, or have a picnic. The project coordinator observed, “Many people enjoy the park while waiting for the bus, and the businesses adjacent to it are also benefiting. When women come to use the laundromat or visit the convenience store, for example, they drop off their kids, with an older child to supervise, and go inside to run their errands. The whole community uses the park, and quite a few people from other villages come here, too.”

“The park is good for my business and good for the village, too. In the evening after school, it gets really crowded with kids. Even the older kids, including high school and college kids, hang out there.”
 Susan Taifane, Convenience Store Owner

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES



Project Title:	Recovery and Empowerment Project
Award Amount:	\$72,454
Type of Grant:	SEDS - Urgent Award
Project Period:	Jul. 2010 – Mar. 2011
Grantee Type:	Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 full-time equivalent jobs created
- 4 Native consultants hired
- \$17,500 in resources leveraged
- 45 individuals trained
- 5 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

The American Samoa tsunami of September 2009 took 32 lives and wiped out several villages, destroying homes, roads, churches, and schools. Additionally, many businesses were destroyed, harming the livelihood of community members. That same month, one of the island’s two tuna canneries closed, resulting in 2,000 jobs lost.

In American Samoa, Catholic Social Services (CSS), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency, provides social services and community-based education programs for in-need and at-risk populations. After the tsunami, CSS worked with Catholic Charities USA’s disaster response team to provide immediate relief and support services to tsunami victims. To promote long-term recovery and address economic issues affecting low income and unemployed islanders affected by the

tsunami and the poor economy, CSS staff members developed this project.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to empower community members, particularly tsunami victims, with traditional skills needed to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Through this undertaking, CSS staff hoped to improve the health and well-being of affected islanders and provide a source of income for their families. The project’s objective was to provide traditional skills training in farming and handicraft making to low income community members affected by the tsunami and cannery closing. The desired outcome was to train and build the capacity of 100 community members, enabling 40 of these individuals to increase their household income by 30 percent.

Project staff commenced activities by identifying individuals and organizations to provide the handicrafts, farming, and home business management training. The American Samoa Community College (ASCC) Natural Resources Center provided an agricultural trainer. Two local handicraft experts were selected as handicraft trainers, and the project coordinator served as the home business management trainer.

Next, the project coordinator reached out to the community, publicizing the project through a television news interview, radio talk show interviews, and a newspaper article. Five days after the outreach campaign began, he hosted a community forum, along with the project's agricultural and handicrafts trainers, at the public pavilion in Fagatogo, one of American Samoa's main business districts. At the forum, they gave community members an overview of the training to be made available. Thirty attendees registered for the project, and 15 others joined the project over the next month. Thus, at the beginning of the project, 45 community members, including 23 women taking part in traditional crafts workshops and 22 men in agricultural workshops, were ready for training.

To assist participants in safely and reliably getting to the workshops, the project team utilized an innovative transportation plan, hiring two local buses starting at opposite points on the island, picking up participants each day, and dropping them off at the CSS training site, located on the property of the Archdiocese of American Samoa. Men's agricultural workshops were held at a large garden plot there, while women's crafts workshops were held at the Hope House, the Archdiocese's residential elder care facility.

Handicrafts trainers facilitated women's traditional craft workshops twice a week, on Monday and Tuesday mornings. There, the women learned traditional weaving and other skills, including how to make baskets, hats, and other handicrafts. Over 11 weeks, 22 workshops were held. The workshops began with 23 women, 13 of whom completed all 11 weeks of training. Men's agriculture workshops were held with the ASCC trainer each week on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings, three times per week for the same 11 weeks. During this period, using the CSS garden plot,

participants learned the science involved in planting, gardening, and environment; how to prepare a land plot, plant crops, use pest and disease control; and to utilize various hands-on traditional and contemporary farming techniques. The workshops began with 22 men, and 13 completed all of the training. Most of the men who left the workshops did so because they had found work. For both the agriculture and handicraft groups, the project coordinator provided home micro-business management training, enabling participants to learn how to market and sell their products.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Though project staff was unable to recruit the anticipated number of participants during the project period and unable to measure the increase in their household incomes, the project resulted in many positive outcomes for community members involved. Women in the handicrafts workshops gained valuable crafts making skills, and according to Project Coordinator Tony Langkilde, "They are able to make really beautiful baskets and other crafts. They know which materials to use, and which trees to get the materials from." He added, "They are using their new business skills as well; they've formed a women's craft making network, and they use the network to obtain raw materials. Also, some are selling their goods together at the community market in Fagatogo."

The men who participated in the agricultural training have benefited as well, gaining useful farming skills, acquiring tools and seeds, and developing a mentality of becoming self-sufficient. "Some of the men are using their own land to grow crops rather than leasing it out to others," Mr. Langkilde stated, "and some are using what they grow to supplement their families' diets, and in some cases, we have seen them selling vegetables at stands in their villages."

INTERSECTIONS, INC.



Project Title:	Le Nuanua Connections
Award Amount:	\$972,764
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	Sept. 2008 – Dec. 2011
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 7 full-time equivalent jobs created
- 4 Native Samoan consultants hired
- 15 elders involved
- 92 youth involved
- \$65,298 in resources leveraged
- 132 individuals trained
- 22 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

Intersections, Inc. is a nonprofit faith-based organization founded in 2002. Its mission is to make a lasting positive difference in the lives of families, empowering them to break the cycle of poverty and improve the social, physical, and spiritual aspects of their lives. Since its start, Intersections has maintained programs in performing arts, counseling, education, job training, and computer learning, to address community needs, generate social and economic opportunities, and promote sustainable job creation.

From 2004 to 2007, Intersections implemented an ANA-funded “Crossroads Theatre for Youth” (CTY) project, using community theater to raise public awareness on social issues faced by American Samoan

youth, including substance abuse, child abuse, teen pregnancy, and suicide. During the project, the CTY performed plays for over 14,000 people, illuminating how certain aspects of Samoan culture give rise to a “culture of silence” among young people, leading to many of the social problems noted above.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The project’s purpose was to strengthen the social and cultural fabric of the community, developing a media project, “Le Nuanua Connections” (LNC), to improve the job and leadership skills of 50 native youth between the ages 12 and 23, integrating the wisdom of elders to sustain cultural values and protocols among youth and families. The project plan called for the production of six films by Samoan youth to educate 6,400 youth and family members in the Western District’s 15 villages on how Samoan and western perspectives shape the attitudes of youth towards their culture and influence their daily lives.

The first objective was to develop the media project, hire and train media specialists, develop a job and media skills training curriculum for youth, and work with local partners to develop an internship program for youth. After purchasing professional

equipment and hiring the project team, six staff members, including three media specialists, took part in 640 hours of training with a local media company, gaining skills in interviewing, story development, and presentation. After a disagreement with the company on the pace, methods, and tone of the training, Intersections ended the partnership and focused on other types of training, working with a local nonprofit to receive leadership development training and with an elder cultural expert to receive training on Samoan cultural protocols. Later, the team found a new media training partner, Olelo TV, a community television station in Hawaii, which provided airfare, lodging, and 10 days of free hands-on training in video development and production, camera backdrop and operation, audio and light for video, content development, and other skills. Utilizing this training, project staff crafted a youth job and media skills curriculum for use in project years two and three.

The second objective, in years two and three, was to mentor and train 50 youth, produce six new films (three per year) developed by youth trainees; and present the films to 6,400 youth and family members. The project plan called for the involvement of elder mentors and for the placement of youth trainees in local internships. Each year, staff recruited youth and elder participants and worked with partners and elders to mentor and train youth, holding workshops, culture camps, and activities on cultural and youth issues, cultural protocols, leadership, financial literacy, job skills, and film work, food preparation, identity building, and service activities. Some service activities assisted families affected by the September 2009 tsunami that struck American Samoa.

Training in film work allowed youth to take part in the entire documentary production process, including brainstorming ideas for short films, researching and scriptwriting,

creating story boards, recruiting actors, selecting film sites, directing films, editing film, doing post-production work, and completing short video pieces.

After demonstrating the capacity to make short video pieces, some youth developed longer feature films. In year two, youth developed feature films on traditional Samoan dance and social identity, child abuse, and the role of village police in the community. These films were shown to community members and presented on local television. In year three, youth developed feature films on teen pregnancy, domestic violence and suicide, and peer pressure. In both years, youth feature film makers were honored in well-promoted “Tautua Award” ceremonies, in which the best film each year, as chosen by the community, was honored. Short films were similarly honored in “Premiere Events” bringing together family and community members for viewing. Near the end of year three, 10 youth filmmakers were chosen for Intersections media internships.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

According to project staff, the 92 youth involved in the project, normally expected to quietly adhere to family and village rules, used the opportunities afforded by the project to express their voice, listen to others’ voices, increase their understanding of Samoan culture, build self-esteem, and enhance their social identity. Whether conducting an interview, working with elders, collecting food for tsunami victims, or making a film, participants learned about commitment and responsibility, serving their community, and expressing themselves responsibly. They served in leadership roles, reflected on wide-ranging social issues, and learned valuable life and work skills. Many youth involved in the project improved their grades, are going to college, or work as community volunteers.

INTERSECTIONS, INC.



Project Title:	Nuanua Recovery Project
Award Amount:	\$106,750
Type of Grant:	SEDS - Urgent Award
Project Period:	Jul. 2010 – Mar. 2011
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 6 full-time equivalent jobs created
- 20 elders involved
- 165 youth involved
- \$23,226 in resources leveraged
- 27 individuals trained
- 6 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

Intersections, Inc. was one year into a three-year ANA-funded “Le Nuanua Connections” youth development and media project when the September 2009 tsunami struck American Samoa. At this point in the project, Intersections had already made strong community partnerships and provided significant leadership and media training for island youth. Full of youthful energy and technical assets, Intersections was well-equipped to assist island communities in recovering from the disaster.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to facilitate the mental and emotional recovery of tsunami-affected community members, promote stability in the lives of disaster-affected youth, and provide the opportunity for youth to contribute to recovery efforts.

The first objective was to assist 100 youth tsunami survivors in expressing themselves and overcoming fear of natural disasters, by utilizing community youth recovery groups and elders to provide disaster support and facilitate sharing, communication, and active listening in four villages. Project staff began work on this objective by identifying 10 junior leaders, most of whom had previously participated in Intersections’ youth film and theater programs, to lead the project. Next, they partnered with Calvary Chapel of Samoa, receiving donated tsunami relief supplies from this organization. After inventorying supplies, orienting staff and junior leaders on the goals, objectives, and activities of this project, brainstorming ideas for documenting the process and outcomes of the project, and training the youth in active listening, leading recovery support groups, and surveying community needs, the team began conducting outreach in Afao, Poloa, Afano, and Leone villages.

Next, youth leaders worked with project staff and village leaders to find community elders with whom to partner, identified supplies needed in the villages, and determined the locations and schedule for the four recovery group meetings. Following this assessment, project staff and youth leaders distributed canned goods and

supplies to 120 households in the two villages most in need, and held youth recovery group meetings in all four villages, with a total of 20 elders and 155 youth participating. In these meetings, staff and youth leaders provided village youth with various avenues, including games, artistic expression, and discussion, to assist them in communicating and managing their feelings, grief, and trauma. Following each meeting, youth leaders and staff members conducted “video surveys,” allowing many participants to share their stories and to create positive messages to share with the community.

The second objective was to conduct three community forums to develop a disaster recovery plan for local organizations and the community, and to work with communities to create community recovery gardens. Staff began by identifying village coordinators from Leone, Poloa, and Afao, working with them to create forum protocols. Next, project youth, staff, and the coordinators made plans to create recovery gardens. Though a misunderstanding on land use issues resulted in the Leone portion of the project being cancelled, project youth, staff, and community leaders in Poloa and Afao hosted recovery forums and worked together to create two recovery gardens.

In addition to the two village forums, the project team held two additional forums, a youth forum and a family forum. In total, 100 people attended the four forums, discussing how the communities should prepare, respond, rebuild, and recover if another tsunami struck, and devising a 10-point recovery plan stressing education and preparation, transportation and early warning systems, utilizing local structures, and drawing upon the Fa’a Samoa (Samoan way of living) as a source of strength.

The third objective was to design, record, and produce a DVD documenting the stories of tsunami survivors. While working on the

first two objectives, project youth interviewed 20 community members and recorded their recollections of the tsunami and its aftermath. Of the 20 detailed interviews, excerpts from 12 were included in an emotionally powerful DVD titled, “American Samoa Tsunami: Storytelling for Healing.” The DVD, which included positive messages from an additional 25 community members, was shown at two large screenings, and 1,000 copies were distributed to islanders.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

According to staff members, large groups of community members attending screenings of the “Storytelling for Healing” DVD were outwardly profoundly affected by the film. “Because the film focused on the experiences of regular people,” stated Project Director Gloria Mane-I’aulualo, “community members who watched it felt it told their story. It reminded them of what they’d been through, made them reflect on how we were all in this together, and how we could start becoming well again.” The youth recovery groups, recovery gardens, and forums also provided avenues for youth and community members to spend time with one another, reflect on their experiences, work through personal issues, manage grief and trauma, and feel greater stability in their lives. Ms. Mane-I’aulualo added, “The gardens and other activities helped set the foundation for their togetherness, then they could establish their own ways of working together.”

Project Coordinator Ema Tupuola discussed other benefits of the project: “I think the forums were very empowering, because they gave people the chance to share ideas on how we can be ready next time. Also, for the youth and staff that participated in the project, we had the chance to help others, learn what it takes to help others, and develop a sense of humility.”

NATIVE AMERICAN SAMOA ADVISORY COUNCIL



Project Title:	Back to the Land
Award Amount:	\$55,595
Type of Grant:	SEDS - Urgent Award
Project Period:	Jul. 2010 – Mar. 2011
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 full-time equivalent jobs created
- 3 Native Samoan consultants hired
- 57 elders involved
- 189 youth involved
- \$4,795 in resources leveraged
- 95 individuals trained
- 5 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

The Native American Samoan Advisory Council (NASAC) is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1993 to promote the general welfare and education of American Samoans, preserve and protect the cultural values of American Samoa, and promote better understanding between American Samoans and fellow citizens of the U.S. Since 1996, NASAC has implemented projects addressing community needs in cultural preservation, public health, and business development.

In response to the September 2009 tsunami that struck American Samoa, NASAC partnered with a disaster relief coalition of U.S.-based American Samoan nonprofits, businesses, and individuals, receiving cargo containers of food, clothing, and medical

supplies, to distribute the supplies to the affected communities.

One of the places most severely hit by the tsunami was Tula, a small, remote, low-lying village of 30 extended families on the eastern end of Tutuila Island. The tsunami completely destroyed 15 homes, damaged many others, and left people feeling fearful, given the frequent aftershocks, that another tsunami was imminent. In response, with permission and land granted from the village ali'i (highest chief), Tula's pastor mobilized villagers, including many youth, to cut a path up the mountain slope and to build a temporary refuge, with several small shelters, for the village. Recovering from the tsunami was otherwise slow; in the 14 months following the disaster, only three homes had been rebuilt. While distributing relief supplies in Tula and witnessing the recovery work done by villagers, NASAC staff discussed partnering on further recovery efforts with Tula's leaders. In these discussions, they expressed the need to expand planting done at the refuge, to establish fruit and vegetable gardens there.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project, in line with the community's expressed desire to establish the gardens, was to enhance Tula's food

security, nutrition, and self-sufficiency as part of the village's recovery efforts. The project's objective was to implement a farming project using traditional Samoan farming methods, training 30 families in growing fruit and vegetables.

Before the project began, it was beset with many obstacles. Project staff received late notification of the project, nearly nine months after the initial planning sessions in Tula (and not until the end of the first month of the project's first quarter). This caused a late start to the project and necessitated new planning meetings to reacquaint villagers with the project and reconfirm their commitment. The project team also encountered another challenge; the initially planned site for the gardens became inaccessible due to erosion of the mountain along the road to the refuge site. Finding new land to replace the site was difficult, due to the complicated land tenure system in American Samoa, in which 90 percent of land is communally owned by aiga (extended families). To address this challenge, six village matai (aiga heads, or chiefs) offered parcels of land within the village for the project, and before long, 15 families and village youth were working, along with trainers hired for the project, on various plots of land.

Despite the difficulties, NASAC staff and the Tula village coordinator (the village pastor) worked with staff from the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) Farm Services Extension Office, a local botanist/businessman, and a traditional farmer hired for the project, to provide training in fruit tree planting and vegetable gardening to 95 villagers, including hands-on training with families and youth. These trainers provided not only instruction, but vegetable seeds, traditional staple seedlings, and 90 seedling fruit trees. During the project, star fruit, mangoes, bananas, pineapples, various yam varieties, mandarin

oranges, avocados, malabar chestnuts, mountain apples, cabbage, cucumbers, eggplants, tomatoes, peas, and many fruits and vegetables were planted.

As the project progressed, continuing disputes over land rights and boundaries hindered some families from participating and forced others to transplant their gardens to smaller locations at homes in the village. The village pastor's garden served as a holding area while people figured out where to replant, and most of the small plots were managed by youth from the participating families.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

As the project came to an end, 15 extended village families, including many youth, had learned much about how to grow local, traditional, sustainable crops; to practice appropriate soil conservation techniques; and to perpetuate time-honored Samoan agricultural practices, setting the stage for the restoration of a healthy, stable, culturally-based food system for Tula. Such a system would enable villagers to consume locally grown fruit and vegetables rather than costly imported crops, and would serve as a model for other villages.

On January 23, 2011, Hurricane Wilma roared through American Samoa, destroying most of the gardens in Tula. Fortunately, some of the vegetables had already been harvested and shared amongst the villagers prior to the hurricane, motivating many villagers not to give up on the gardens. Despite land tenure issues, natural disasters, a general weariness amongst villagers dealing with disaster recovery, project staff, partners, and the people of Tula demonstrated continued resilience, and are confident that they will continue and expand their gardens in the future.

PACIFIC ISLANDS CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Project Title:	Youth Serving Samoa
Award Amount:	\$42,004
Type of Grant:	SEDS - Urgent Award
Project Period:	Jul. 2010 – Mar. 2011
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 1 full-time equivalent job created
- 7 elders involved
- 73 youth involved
- \$9,624 in resources leveraged
- 75 individuals trained
- 9 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

Founded in 2001, the Pacific Islands Center for Educational Development (PICED) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in the U.S. territory of American Samoa. Offering a wide range of services for youth, PICED encourages youth development in academic, personal, and social realms.

Following the devastating tsunami of September 2009, PICED staff designed a project to assist villages deluged by the tsunami, educate the island community in disaster preparedness, and provide youth with an opportunity to serve affected communities. Staff selected six villages for assistance based on the scope of devastation in each village, the feasibility of carrying out project tasks during the project period, and the extent to which the village was overlooked in initial disaster relief efforts.

The villages selected were Faga'itua, Tula, Alofau, Asili, Poloa, and Amanave.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The project's purpose was to help restore the six villages, prepare citizens and youth to respond to future natural disasters, and build leadership skills in Samoan youth. The first objective was to train 55 village youth to conduct a beautification project in each of the six villages. To begin, PICED staff conducted an outreach campaign at American Samoa's seven high schools, recruiting youth for the project's nine leadership positions (six village cleanup leaders and three disaster preparedness campaign leaders). Staff received 245 applications, interviewed 122 youth, and selected nine as project leaders.

The selected youth, guided by PICED staff, met with district and county leaders, and village pulenu'u (mayors) to conduct assessments, listen to needs expressed by village leaders, discuss project goals and objectives, and sign memoranda of understanding. Next, they participated in three weeks of leadership training, including goal setting, leadership basics, project management, team building, and Samoan culture, ethics, and language. Through collaboration between PICED, the village mayors, and the American Samoa

Department of Education, 66 additional youth, including 56 taking part in village cleanups and 10 working on the public awareness campaign, were brought into the project. These youth, along with seven youth leaders, took part in safety and disaster preparedness training hosted by the American Samoa Department of Health and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Next, the youth went to the six villages to conduct the clean-ups. In each village, they scoured beaches, shorelines, and ditches for trash, removing 7,810 pounds of garbage and debris, and collecting over 1,000 pounds of scrap metal. Furthermore, they painted curbs, bus stops, and tire planters, installed signs, weeded and cleared overgrown areas, and planted coastal shrubs, including 250 plants in the village of Tula.

The second objective was to design and launch an island-wide youth-to-youth disaster preparedness media and outreach campaign, preparing at least 100 youth to respond to natural disasters. To accomplish this, three youth leaders researched the types of disasters most prevalent in American Samoa—tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes—and studied the preparedness measures used with each kind of disaster. Then, they created the campaign, themed “Code Alert: Aware Today, Prepared Tomorrow,” developing content to educate community members on the characteristics of each disaster and on how to prepare for each. Next, they created a strategic plan for conducting the campaign. Media and activities to spread the message included flyers, banners, brochures, t-shirts, radio and newspaper ads, and outreach presentations at local elementary schools.

To implement the plan, 17 project youth, including the seven project leaders, gave tightly-scripted, highly interactive disaster preparedness presentations at 10 local elementary schools, reaching 1,293 children.

The youth also created five different flyers, posting 600 copies in public locations across the island, and seven banners were also posted and hung around the island. They produced three newspaper ads, which were published 31 times in the *Samoa News*, the island’s main newspaper. Additionally, the youth created four one-minute radio public service announcements (PSAs), which received 1,149 plays on three radio stations in three months, and two video PSAs, which aired frequently on local TV over one month.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

According to Piced staff, the project’s outreach and village clean-up campaigns reached community members of all ages throughout American Samoa. Of 600 community members surveyed about the media campaign, 54 percent said they had heard of the campaign, and 47 percent felt it improved their capacity to deal with disasters. Of the 629 elementary school students surveyed after the disaster preparedness presentations in their schools, 96 percent felt better prepared to cope with natural disasters. In the six villages where youth implemented clean-ups, village pulenu’u expressed gratitude to the youth and stated that the clean-up efforts helped boost community morale in their villages.

While working with the pulenu’u, project youth indicated that they learned a great deal about Samoan culture and political structures. The project also enabled them to learn about the value of community service, team work, and work ethic, and to gain important life and leadership skills. Piced staff member Jessie Weber averred, “The kids felt that their service was truly valuable to the community, that the experience was a positive investment of their time. They learned a lot about the villages and learned that to be a leader, you must first serve, even if it means getting your hands dirty.”