

The Defenders Paper Co.

Entrepreneurship for Teen Boys

The Defenders Paper Company is a local social enterprise run by middle and high school boys from at-risk communities in southern Marin. As members of The Defenders leadership program for boys age 11-18, these young entrepreneurs benefit from the behavioral health expertise of Marin City Health & Wellness Center. Through sales of cleaning and paper products – sourced from a toxin-free, African-American-owned manufacturer – young members of The Defenders learn entrepreneurship, work skills, public speaking, and financial management.



A Behavioral Health Program

Our Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) community clinic saw a need to provide Marin City teens with positive role models and year-round behavioral health services. Of the 50 boys currently participating from Bayside/MLK and Willow Creek Academy (Sausalito/Marin City), 98% lack a father figure in their home. This program brings together parents, teachers, guidance counselors, school administrators, and behavioral health experts to support young boys as they become young men.

Order Products from The Defenders Paper Company

To learn more about buying products for your home or business from *The Defenders Paper Company*, contact Zared Lloyd, Program Facilitator, at Zared@MarinCityClinic.org or 415-870-5311. See a sampling of our products online at www.defenderspaper.org.

Impact on Young Lives

Program activities focus on long-term improvement in behavior and learning. Since 2015, teachers report behavior in school improved by 92%, and academic performance improved by 84%. Parents and guardians report 95% improved behaviors at home. Participants develop self-esteem, self-discipline, respect for family, academic progress and citizenship.

Each Defender commits to regular participation, as well as hands-on entrepreneur activities that teach him to run a business. Earnings raise funding for the program and give the boys an opportunity to put money in their pockets. Activities include:

- Weekly business meetings for the Defenders Paper Company
- Bimonthly Leadership meetings in Sacramento
- Martial Arts self-defense training
- *Golden Gate Give-Back* volunteer excursions in the Bay Area
- Speakers and experts on leadership topics
- Social gatherings that focus on developing courtesy and manners of “gentlemen”
- *Quality of Life Road Trip*, a 30-day journey by van that takes teens from poverty and public housing to meet leaders in business, education and community in 25 cities across the U.S. and Canada.

Youth Served

The primary audience is middle school boys with no adult male living at home. *The Defenders* program is active in the Sausalito Marin City School District, where boys from 5th to 8th grade participate, and at Tamalpais High School in Mill Valley. Any young man in the community may apply, regardless of school.

Stronger families – and more secure households – produce productive and self-sufficient boys and men. *The Defenders* involves parents and guardians in the activities that are shaping their sons into leaders and standard bearers for young men in their community. Whenever possible, we refer Defender families to resources for social services, employment counseling, nutrition, education, housing and transportation.

Partners

The Defenders partner with the County of Marin, Marin City Community Development Corporation, Marin City Community Services District, Marin County Sheriff's Department, Marin Housing Authority, the Sausalito Marin City School District and Tamalpais Union High School District.

Support this Program by:

Purchasing paper products for office or home from The Defenders Paper Company. Each member of *The Defenders* commits to selling items, to learn entrepreneurship and to fundraise for the program. A variety of paper, cleaning and personal care products are available online at defenderspaper.org.

Donating to the *Quality of Life Road Trip*. In summer 2017, 20 Defenders will travel by bus to 25 cities in the U.S. and Canada. Tax-deductible donations pay lodging, meals and transportation expenses that cost \$100 per participant per day. The 2017 program budget is \$150,000.

Hiring a graduate of The Defenders for an internship or afterschool job. *The Defenders* learn business, communication and interpersonal skills. Real time experience in a professional setting can launch these young men into productive and rewarding careers.

Referring a teen to The Defenders. This program offers youth leadership activities for at-risk teens. Let MCHWC use our program and referral network to help a young person in need.

About Marin City Health & Wellness Center

Marin City Health & Wellness Center provides services in San Rafael, Marin City and San Francisco's Bayview Hunters Point. Founded in 2007 to provide affordable and accessible healthcare services to residents of public housing, we are uniquely located in the communities where our clients live. As a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), MCHWC provides primary medical, dental and behavioral healthcare, as well as educational and leadership programs for healthy teens and adults.

Contact Us for More Information

Zared Lloyd, Program Facilitator

415-870-5311 or zared@marincityclinic.org.