

JANET MOYER LANDSCAPING WINS 2010 HUMANITARIAN TROPHY AWARD

The Humanitarian Trophy Award, sponsored by the CLCA Women's Auxiliary, recognizes projects that benefit a worthy cause.

Who won: Janet Moyer Landscaping, an 11-employee design, build and maintenance firm founded in 1990 and headquartered in San Francisco.

For what project: Installation of a children's teaching garden at the Mission Branch Library, 300 Bartlett St. in San Francisco.

Why did you decide to take on this project?

"We were contacted by someone at the library — our offices are close to it," says Janet Moyer. "We went to take a look at (the space). It was in the back of the library and definitely not very aesthetic. It was all concrete slab — about 50 feet long by 15 feet deep — that nobody used at all."

What were some of the project goals for the garden? "We wanted it to last, we wanted it to be used and we wanted it to teach the children about sustainability."

Who participated? "My partner, Michael Hofman, along with our employees Michael Padgett, Caleb Goodwin and Andrew Zeller." Volunteers from the library also pitched in.

What were some of the major tasks? The people at the library organized approvals from the city, including installation of a protective Plexiglas shield along an existing wrought-iron fence that would protect

the area from things being thrown through the fence from the alley. Attractive and durable redwood planter beds were constructed right on top of the concrete slab. "We put in one long bed with a cap on it so the kids could sit on it. Now, people actually do sit out there, and they have activities where the kids help amend the soil and harvest for salads and things like that."

One of the first tasks Moyer addressed was the irrigation system. "It's in a hot part of San Francisco (believe it or not, there is a hot part), and so I wanted to make sure the garden wouldn't dry out and discourage the kids. So we put in a drip irrigation system with smart controllers so nobody has to remember to adjust it or fuss with it. Volunteers from the library helped us put in the system. We could have just done it ourselves, but we wanted them to know how it worked so they would be able to take care of it themselves."

How long did installation take? Three days.

What kinds of plants did you put in? "There are some flowering plants, but mostly edibles. — We worked with a group called Garden for the Environment, a non-profit that does educational outreach for the community. They brought in the seedlings. I think there was lettuce, spinach, beans, radishes, carrots and other plants — and the kids planted the seedlings as part of an after-school program."

Who else helped out with the garden installation? "We donated our time and some materials, and we were able to get some of our suppliers to donate materials too," Moyer says. Other donors included: Ewing





Irrigation, Broadmoor Landscape Supply, Sierra Point Lumber and Toro Irrigation Products. “These are vendors that we have long relationships with, and they have been very supportive. The library paid for the Plexiglas shields on the fence and plumbing — they had their people do the work.”

What was the reaction? “We actually had a news station come out and interview us and the children at the garden. They were there for the planting day, so we got great publicity.”

How’s the garden doing now? “I drive by every once in a while, and they are still using it. The children’s reading room is next to where we did our planting, so they may be combining it with reading materials as well as with after-school activities. It still looks great.”

By Joan Waters

