



Mayor Paul Cuellar presented Randa Bruce Gonzales and Pete Gonzales of the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department with the Global Youth Service Day Proclamation that proclaimed April 20 as GYSD in the city of Somerset. (Photo by Alicia Ramirez)

## Global Youth Service Day participants to help clean up Somerset's city park

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Roughly 50 juveniles will descend on the city of Somerset this Saturday in honor of Global Youth Service Day clearing brush and debris from the wooded area adjacent to the park.

"The official celebration for GYSD is April 26 through April 28, but as you all know in San Antonio I think there's like a Fiesta or something that week," said Program Supervisor Pete Gonzales. "We all have priorities I think and GYSD allows for any project in the month of April to be counted as a GYSD project."

The project will be completed by roughly 50 juveniles from the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department and the Ayers Halfway House from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on April 20.

"We've enjoyed a really good working relationship with the city of Somerset as a probation department and we're very thankful for that," Gonzales said. "In 2011, our youth performed about 291 hours of community service within the city limits of Somerset. Last year we had 477 hours that were performed and this first quarter we've had 66 hours, but we have our busy summer months around the corner."

Counting the volunteer work at the minimum wage, the city has received over \$6,000 in volunteer work from the BCJPD work crews, but Gonzales said that it is not just the city that benefits from the work, but also the juveniles enrolled in the program.

"They need to know that there's an atonement when one commits an offense, but we also try to incorporate some learning," he said. "Today's young people [do not have] the knowledge base that some of us had growing up, but for our kids that's learning how to operate a lawn mower and a weed trimmer. It's those kinds of things."

With the invitation extended to the full council to visit with the juveniles during their volunteer time, Mayor Paul Cuellar proclaimed April 20 as Global Youth Service Day.