



Central California Consortium



PROGRAM UPDATE
FALL 06/WINTER 07 EDITION



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Directors Message



"The CCC has been very busy in the community these last few months. This past fall the CCC participated in community events like Making Spirits Bright and the Hmong New Year. Our Generation Green club students experienced the wilderness through Wildlink and participated in leadership opportunities. We are looking forward to the 2nd Annual Fresno FHYS. I would like to welcome our new staff members and thank all my staff for their hard work and dedication."

**- JAMES OFTEDAL
CCC DIRECTOR**

2007 Fresno Hispanic Youth Symposium

- Denny Mar



Typical Fresno summers bring long days, scorching heat, and high air-conditioning bills. However, the summer of 2006 brought something different to the Central Valley, the first ever Fresno Hispanic Youth Symposium (FHYS).

On August 4-6, 2006 the first Hispanic Youth Symposium on the west coast was held in Fresno, Ca and brought together more than 100 youth from across the Central Valley to the California State University, Fresno (CSUF) campus where the messages of culture, higher education, and success were echoed for 3 days and 2 nights. Central California Consortium (CCC) Director, James Oftedal, Co-chaired the event and played a vital role in bringing this nationally recognized conference to Fresno. Due to the success of the 1st Annual FHYS this past summer, Fresno will host the 2nd Annual FHYS August 3-5, 2007. The CCC will once again be a key participant in the event, as the CCC Director will serve as Chair.

The FHYS brings together high school juniors and seniors from various Central Valley high schools to the CSUF campus where they live on campus and learn about careers, college, and what it means to be Hispanic. This 3 day, 2 night event exposes students to prominent and strong Latina/o leaders from the local and national level who share their stories of challenges and success with students. The FHYS not only gives students the tools needed to succeed, but teaches students that their Hispanic heritage should be something to be celebrated and embraced.

James Oftedal will once again Chair the event, and the CCC looks forward to building tomorrow's leaders today. For more information on FHYS please visit the Hispanic Youth Symposium website at hispanicyouth.org.



2006 Making Spirits Bright

- Julissa Gonzalez

Making Spirits Bright has been a joyous holiday occasion for many underprivileged children in Fresno, CA for the past 13 years. On December 2, 2006 children's smiles filled the cafeteria at Mayfair Elementary in Fresno during yet another wonderful Making Spirits Bright charity event. This year the event hosted 30 economically disadvantaged students and their families. The festivities included a full turkey feast and entertainment by community volunteers which included a magician, gospel singers, a high school dance team, and a Spanish music band.



Sierra National Forest (SNF) has been a partner in this coordinated effort every year since its commencement. This year Sierra National Forest made a large contribution by providing 30 Christmas trees and donating gifts. Fifteen families were sponsored by the SNF, totaling 53 children who received presents from Sierra National Forest employees. In addition, Generation Green students and Central California Consortium staff members helped prepare for the big event the day before by decorating the Cafeteria and preparing food.

James Oftedal, Eileen Mora, and Michael Perez attended and assisted during the event. Teri Drivas and Teresa Caballeros attended with their Families. These Forest Service volunteers helped serve food and accompanied families during the event.

2006 Among New Year

- Blong Vang

The Fresno Hmong International New Year celebration was held December 26, 2006 through January 1, 2007 at the Fresno Fairgrounds in Fresno, CA. This international event brought together Hmong people from throughout the world to the Fresno fairgrounds to celebrate the history and beauty of the Hmong culture. This year there were 3,000 new Hmong refugees, along with friends and families from all over the nation at the event. Even though Fresno has one of the largest Hmong population in California (30,000), attendees stretched beyond California borders to include Laos, Thailand, France, and Australia.



The Sierra National Forest (SNF) Fire Prevention Team and the Central California Consortium (CCC), held an information booth at the Fresno Hmong New Year. The SNF Fire Prevention Team and CCC staff answered the public's questions and provided valuable information on recreation, job opportunities, and campfire permits. CCC Asian Community Liaison, Blong Vang helped organize the Forest Service's information booth and also served as Hmong translator.



Blong Vang stated, "I think the community sensed that we wanted to be there to help them better understand the Forest Service. The fact that we were able to communicate in the Hmong language really helped us break the ice."

The Central California Consortium and the Forest Service would like to thank everyone who contributed their time and effort during the Hmong New Year. We could not have done this without your help and support!

Meet the CCC Staff

- Denny Mar

The success that the Central California Consortium (CCC) has achieved over the past 11 years can not be attributed to the efforts of just one person, but the combined efforts of the young, bright, and talented staff that make the program what it is today. The doors at the CCC have welcomed and developed many of our Central Valley youth into future leaders, some of which have moved on to other positions; while others have gone on to receive permanent positions working with the Forest Service. Over the past few months, the CCC has gone through some changes, and we would like to take some time to introduce to you the CCC family. Some of the faces of the program have changed while others have remained the same, yet one thing that has not changed is the programs focus and commitment to the community.



TOU THAO
ASIAN LIAISON

Tou is our newest staff member and one of the Hmong communities up and coming young leaders. Tou is currently a California State University (CSU) Fresno student, pursuing his Bachelors degree in Business Administration, and is president of the Hmong Student Association on campus. Tou is our new Asian Liaison and serves as a bridge between the Forest Service and the Hmong community.



JUANA ROSAS
RURAL
COORDINATOR

Born in Mexico and raised in Orange Cove, Juana served as the very first Generation Green president at Reedley high school. With the help of her community and the CCC, Juana went on to pursue her Bachelors degree in Latin American studies at the University of California, Berkeley. After completing her degree, Juana returned to the Central Valley to give back to her community and now serves as the new Rural Coordinator for the program where she provides guidance, mentorship, and environmental education to Central Valley youth. Juana is a great example of how the CCC grows its own employees.



LILY NIEVES
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Lily began her career with the Forest Service over 5 years ago working for the CCC. She was raised in Laton, Ca, and completed her Bachelors in Education and Masters in Public Administration from CSU Fresno. Her leadership, hard work, and dedication over the years has helped her grow professionally. Today she serves as the CCC Assistant Director. Lily is responsible for writing program reports, proposals, and grants, as well as assisting the Director with overall program coordination.



After working as the Sierra National Forest Fire Training Assistant for more than two years, Julissa now joins the staff as our new Job Placement Coordinator. Coming from the small town of Soledad, Ca, Julissa came to Central Valley to attend CSU Fresno and graduated with her bachelors degree in Business Administration. Julissa is responsible for providing career guidance and development for students, as well as helping place students in our annual summer internships.

JULISSA GONZALEZ
JOB PLACEMENT COORDINATOR



DENNY MAR
OUTREACH
COORDINATOR

Denny has been involved with the CCC for over 3 years, and was one of the programs first student liaisons, where he outreached to the student body at CSU Bakersfield. Coming from McFarland, Ca, Denny completed his Bachelors in Criminal Justice from CSU Bakersfield and moved to Fresno where he is now pursuing his Masters in Criminology at CSU Fresno. He now serves as the programs Outreach Coordinator. Denny is responsible for conducting presentation, attending college internship/career fairs, and overseeing the programs student liaison component. Denny is also responsible for the creation of the programs outreach materials and maintains the programs website.



JAMES OFTEDAL
DIRECTOR

With more than 25 years of experience with the Forest Service, Jim has been one of our communities strongest advocates for the needs for the Latino community educating them on how to take care of our natural resources. Over the past 11 years, Jim has served as the CCC director, giving the underserved communities a voice. His efforts have gained the CCC local, regional, and national recognition. Recently the program expanded, and now there is a Northern and Southern California Consortium who share the message of higher education and environmental awareness throughout California.

Wildlink 2006

- Julissa Gonzalez



One of the greatest advantages of living in the San Joaquin Valley is having over 2 million acres of spectacular views and forest lands in arms reach. However, for ten Reedley and Orange Cove students, this fall was their first experience with our forest lands as they stepped foot into the wilderness for the first time.

On October 2006 the Central California Consortium (CCC) hosted their semi-annual Wildlink expedition for Generation Green students. The CCC sent 4 Reedley High school students and 6 Orange Cove High school students on a four day, three night wilderness backpacking trip. Students left their comfortable living conditions to embark on a new journey venturing the Sequoia National Forest.

hosted two parent meetings which allowed parents to learn about the trip and reassure them about their children's safety. The meetings also prepared students for the expedition. Students learned what to take on the trip, what to wear, and how to prepare for the conditions they would face.

Guided by Wildlink Educators, Stephanie & Myles and accompanied by CCC staff Julissa Gonzalez, and volunteer Sara Rios, students were able to experience the great outdoors by learning how to set up camp and how their actions impact the environment. Most importantly, students were able to reflect on their own lives and grow as individuals. The group hiked a challenging yet rewarding 5 miles, and were rewarded with the breathtaking scenery of Twin Lakes. At the end of the trip, students became "stewards of the land" and left with a better understanding of what our National Forests and Parks can offer. The Generation Green Club will take its next Wildlink expedition May 4th-7th, with a new group of students getting the opportunity to learn and enjoy the beauty of our forest lands.



Picture Above From Left to Right: Ana Hernandez (Reedley High), Sarai Huante (Orange Cove High), Claudia Garcia (Reedley High), Hugo Cortez (Reedley High), Myles (Wildlink Educator), Marisol Murillo (Orange Cove High), Maria Guerrero (Orange Cove High), Adrian Perez (Reedley High), Diego Valencia (Orange Cove High), Maria Mendoza (Orange Cove High), Sarah Rios (CCC Volunteer), Julissa Gonzalez (CCC Job Placement Coordinator), Nadia Andrade (Orange Cove High).

Generation Green Stars

- Juana Rosas

The Central California Consortium (CCC) takes great pride in building future leaders, and for 12 years the Generation Green (GG) Club has shaped and molded many of our rural youth into leaders and productive citizens. It is for this reason that the Generation Green Club would like to highlight two students for outstanding achievements and efforts; Noe Olvera and Joanna Funes.



Joanna Funes has been an active member and role model for GG for two years. She is currently a sophomore at Reedley High and has been actively involved in her school and community. Joanna's drive to become a leader has led her to become Generation Green

club president, as well as an officer in the Bilingual Club. Joanna has participated in various activities to better herself and her community by taking part in events such as the Sacramento State Fair Leadership Camp and the Reedley Fiesta Parade. She hopes to continue to give back to her community through the Generation Green Club until she graduates and plans to attend college afterwards. Joanna's older sister was apart of GG, and Joanna is an example of a student who has followed the foots steps of someone before her, making the program a family tradition.



As a senior at Reedley High, Noe Olvera has been a GG Club member for four years he has attended Reedley High school. He has served as a leader among his peers by participating in events such as Wild Link, Buffalo Soldiers, Sacramento State Fair Leadership Camp, and many other

community activities. At the Sacramento State Fair, Noe showed his responsibility, maturity, and leadership ability by being a crew boss leader and a role model to fellow students. Noe has shown to be motivated and hardworking by holding down a partime job, helping his parents provided for the family, and participating in various school activities. Noe plans to go to college and major in environmental science. He is excited about fighting fire for the Forest Service this summer. Noe will be the first generation in his family to attend college and is a positive role model for his little brother who is also a Generation Green member at Orange Cove High School.



Upcoming Events:

2/15/07 ---UC MERCED CAREER FAIR

2/27/07 ---PRESENTATION IN CSU SACRAMENTO

3/8/07 ---PRESENTATION AT DeWolf High School

3/13/07 ---CSU FRESNO CAREER FAIR

3/27/07 ---CONNER ELEMENTARY TRACK MEET

3/30/07 ---GG UC SANTA CRUZ TRIP

4/14/07 ---ORANGE COVE HARVEST FESTIVAL

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5/5/07 ---CINCO DE MAYO TORTA SALE AT ORANGE COVE

5/4/07 - 5/7/07 ---Wildlink

6/29/07 - 7/1/07 ---SAN FRANCISCO HISPANIC YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

7/5/07 - 7/7/07 ---WASHINGTON D.C. HISPANIC YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

8/3/07 - 8/5/07 ---FRESNO HISPANIC YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

SUPERVISORS... ARE YOU LOOKING FOR AN INTERN???

STUDENTS... ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A PAID INTERNSHIP???

For over 10 years the CCC has provided quality interns to work in a variety of Forest Service position throughout California, as well as other states. If you are a supervisor and are looking for a bright and talented intern to work for you during the summer, let us find you that intern!

Students, if you are looking for summer employment where you receive great work experience all while getting paid, our summer internships are for you. We offer positions in a variety of fields, that span many majors.

If you are a supervisor or student, and are interested, please contact Julissa Gonzalez, CCC Job Placement Coordinator at 559-297-0706 ext. 4962.



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Visit us on the Web:
[www.fs.fed.us/r5/sierra/cc_](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sierra/cc_consortium)
consortium

The CCC is a minority outreach and recruitment program funded by the USDA Forest Service, serving the San Joaquin Valley. Since its inception in 1997, the CCC has placed over 450 minority and women both regionally and nationally.