

# CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM

## 3RD ANNUAL GREAT OUTDOORS AT GRIZZLIES STADIUM

BY WENDY REYNOSO

Over 12 community partners and more than 500 underserved multicultural youth and their family members from surrounding Fresno County came together to participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Great Outdoors event. It was held at the Fresno Grizzlies Stadium on July 8, 2005 and included a natural resources information fair to educate the public on fire prevention, water safety, outdoor recreation, food safety, educational and employment opportunities. The event was sponsored by the Fresno County Economic Commission (EOC), the Central California Consortium (CCC) and agency partners.

The Grizzlies concourse looked great, as more than booths with matching Great Outdoors banners, which served to engaged students in educational activities and games. For example, the Sierra National Forest booth provided giant sequoia planting trees and educational materials. In addition, the event included a Forest Service fire truck, North Central Fire prevention trailer, and Discovery Center van, which were open for students to explore as well.

The most memorable moment of the evening was during the game when Smokey Bear arrived by Forest Service helicopter and threw out the first pitch. Student participants were from the Fresno County Boys and Girls Club and Economic Opportunities Commission (EOC) Sanctuary between the ages of 8 and 12. For many of the students and their families it was their first time attending a Grizzlies baseball game.

“Organizing the Great Outdoors event is one experience I will never forget! I was able to gain vital experience in networking, working individually and as a team, and develop strong organizational skills. Most importantly, I was able to bring an enjoyable outdoor experience to these students and their families from rural communities,” said Wendy Reynoso, CCC Environmental Educator Assistant and coordinator of the 2005 Great Outdoors event.



## 9TH ANNUAL CCC INTERN AWARDS CEREMONY

BY ELVA PEREZ

“I learned...” “We worked on...” These phrases resonated throughout the evening as we celebrated the Central California Consortium (CCC)’s 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Intern Awards Ceremony. The event took place on August 10, 2005 at the Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) in Clovis, CA.

The night celebrated the students’ success in completing ten-week internships, as well as the partnerships that have helped make the CCC a success. Many interns shared their summer experiences with their family, friends, Forest Service personnel and community partners. They expressed their new awareness and appreciation for the outdoors. Zaneng Yang considered herself an “indoor person,” however now considers herself an “outdoor person.” Some have plans to continue with higher education and to pursue positions with the Forest Service, such as Kyle Brisendine who plans to become a firefighter. The wealth of knowledge the interns attained was incredible. Audience members were impressed with the well-prepared and information-filled presentations.

The success of the consortium is very evident from the experiences shared this evening and because over 90 students were employed this past summer. A special thanks to the Fresno County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) and Fresno County Youth Service Providers: SER and ACS.

**Pictures:** A - CCC Director, James Oftedal, and Generation Green students, Rogelio Abraham and Ricardo Cortez. B - Recreation Crew: Bao Vue (crew leader), Mai Lee, Marilyn Santos, Bao Thao, and Charlena Garcia.



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## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

"This summer has been full of exciting events.

We celebrated the placement of over 90 students in Forest Service summer internships and our partnerships at our 9th Annual Intern Awards Ceremony. We had 45 diverse high school students from Reedley, Parlier, Dinuba and Fresno high schools participate in our Generation Green Leadership Camp at Cal Expo. It was great to see the students grow so much. The CCC also participated in local and national youth conferences, serving to encourage higher education. I am proud that we have served so many youth and my staff and I will continue to do provide not only employment opportunities for youth, but also mentoring and encouragement".

~ James Oftedal  
CCC Director



## GENERATION GREEN GOES WILD AT WILDLINK

By WENDY REYNOSO

On May 13-16, 2005 seven Generation Green students attended a three-day backpacking trip into the Sequoia National Forest. The students had the opportunity to experience wilderness firsthand. With the help of the WildLink instructors, the students learned how to use a compass in the back country, backpack using Leave No Trace principles, and learned much about the existence of the Sequoia trees.

For many of the Generation Green students it was their first true wilderness experience and first time away from home. "WildLink was a great outdoor learning experience that I will never forget," said Mindy Funes (pictured 3rd from left), a senior at Reedley High School. She plans to continue being involved with Generation Green and encourage other students to participate as well.

Through this WildLink experience students accomplished a rough 4 mile hike into South Fork and hiked back in rainy weather. Students made water quality and environmental observations. They carried out a water invertebrate survey and made maps of the area. Students also recorded their thoughts and observations on journals. Students ended every day star gazing. It was an experience that they will always remember.



## CCC YOUTH SPEAK AT RECREATION SYMPOSIUM

By MARTHA MACIEL

Central California Consortium (CCC) Director, James Oftedal, and two local Valley youth traveled to Los Angeles in May to attend the 2005 Symposium "Connecting Californians to the Outdoors". The event was hosted by the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism.

CCC interns, Blong Vang from Fresno and Alba Mercado from Dinuba, served as two of five youth panelists from California. As youth panelists, they spoke on the value of outdoor recreation, barriers limiting outdoor recreation experiences in their communities, and offered solutions for how recreation professionals can better connect with California's youth and diverse populations. "It was rewarding to give the Hmong community a voice," Blong Vang stated. James Oftedal served on the planning committee and accompanied the youth as moderator for the youth panel.

The Symposium examined the need to serve California's diverse and growing population by educating people of all ages and backgrounds on the value of the outdoor experience. Attendees included 100 representatives of public recreation agencies, non-profit organizations, and private industry. Symposium speakers included; America Bracho, Latino Health Access Executive Director; Derrick Crandall, American Recreation Coalition President/ CEO; and Charles Thomas, CA State Parks Deputy Director.

**Pictured above** (left to right): Youth panelists: Alba Mercado, Blong Vang, Juan Herrera, and youth panel moderator, James Oftedal.



## CCC IMPACTS LOCAL AND NATIONAL YOUTH

BY LILY RAMOS

The Central California Consortium (CCC) continues to participate in local and national youth conferences. The CCC recently participated in the Greater Washington D.C. Hispanic Youth Symposium, the Maryland Youth Symposium, and locally, the San Joaquin Valley Chicano/Latino Youth Leadership Institute in Fresno, CA.

The **Greater Washington D.C. Hispanic Youth Symposium (HYS)** was held July 11-13, 2005 at Marymount University and the **Maryland Youth Symposium** was held July 13-15, 2005 at the University of Maryland. These conferences focused on “empowering youth for success”. CCC Director, James Oftedal, served on the planning committee and as moderator of the “Issues to Action” session. The session challenged the students to find solutions to current political and social obstacles faced by their communities. CCC staff member, Fabian Garcia, served as a resident assistant and moderator.

On a local level, the CCC participated in the **San Joaquin Valley Chicano/Latino Youth Leadership Institute (SJVCLYLI)** held June 10-12th at Fresno Pacific University. The conference focused on encouraging higher education, community involvement, and cultural and family values. Oftedal served as a career panel speaker and CCC staff members Lily Ramos and Elva Perez served on the conference planning committee.

**Pictures:** A - Greater WA DC HYS Scholarship Banquet, where over \$50,000 in scholarships was awarded to selected participants who competed in various conference competitions. B - SJVCLYLI students express their gratitude for the conference during the closing ceremony.



## CAL EXPO LEADERSHIP CAMP

BY FABIAN GARCIA

This year 45 Generation Green (GG) students were selected from Reedley, Parlier, Orange Cove, Sanger, and Fresno area schools, to attend the rigorous ten-day Generation Green Leadership Camp from August 11<sup>th</sup> to September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at the Sacramento State Fair. Students were divided into three groups, each spending 10 days working at Camp Smokey—an interactive fire prevention exhibit run by the USDA Forest Service and partners such as the California Department of Forestry (CDF), Bureau of Land Management. Camp Smokey consists of 5 stations, including 4 mini-houses, a trail, and a puppet show. Station topics included: keeping a house “fire-safe”, consequences of fire, dialing 9-1-1, learning about forest fire lookouts, and the “pack it in, pack it out” concept at the puppet show.

“Coming to Camp Smokey is like getting a practice for college,” said GG student Enrique Cabello. For many of these students, this was their first time away from home for more than a week. The students wore Forest Service uniforms and were responsible for maintaining a professional appearance each day. Students had an opportunity to learn about various careers from National Park Service and Forest Service during daily “career talks”. Students were required to keep daily journals, complete school homework, and practice their public speaking. Through speaking to thousands of people at the fair, students gained self confidence and greatly improved their English and public speaking skills.

On their time off students were taken to the State Capitol to meet elected officials and learn about the state government and legislative processes. A group of GG students met the newly elected Mayor of Los Angeles, Antonio Villaraigosa, at a reception held in his honor at the Capitol. The students also enjoyed a barbecue and pool party which was hosted by Forest Service employee, Kimo Kimokeo and his wife Deborah. Special thanks to the Kimokeo’s for opening up their home for the third year!

**Pictures:** A - GG student, Elia Carrillo, teaches children how to be fire safe in their homes. B - GG students invite children to sing along during the puppet show and to learn how to take care of our natural resources.

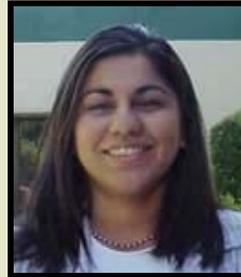


## CCC WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBER

BY LILY RAMOS

The Central California Consortium (CCC) welcomes new staff member Elva Perez, who will serve as the CCC's Job Placement Coordinator. Ms. Perez will be helping place students in Forest Service positions and updating the CCC's website.

"We are fortunate to have Elva join our team. I am confident that she will do a great job for us," stated CCC Director James Oftedal.



Ms. Perez is a graduate of California State University, Fresno where she earned a Bachelors in Business Administration, with a concentration in Finance. She is currently studying Graphic Design at Fresno City College and has plans to pursue a Masters degree at California State University, Fresno.

## CENTRAL CALIFORNIA 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 400 minority and women both regionally and nationally.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 9/13/05 Central Valley Women's Conference - CCC staff will attend various seminars on career building and help staff a Forest Service booth.
- 9/9/05 -09/24/05 CCC Interpreters for Hunting Season - CCC students will serve as translators to educate a more diverse population on safety regulations.
- 10/6/05 Generation Green (GG) Leadership Camp Banquet - 45 Generation Green students will be recognized for their participation in the State Fair.
- 10/25/05-10/27/05 Forest Service R5 Women's Conference - CCC staff will listen to keynote speaker Dolores Huerta, attend various workshops on career building, and network with Forest Service leadership and colleagues.
- 11/4/05 - Boalt Center for Justice at UC Berkeley - CCC Director, James Oftedal, will speak at the "The New Face of California: The Great Central Valley" Symposium.



## SUPERVISORS

### Looking for student interns?

If you are a supervisor and looking to hire interns, please contact: Elva Perez, Job Placement Coordinator at (559) 297-0706 Ext. 4962



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