



# Central California Consortium



Summer 2006 ♦ Program Update

## REGION EXPANDS THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM

BY LILY RAMOS

The Central California Consortium (CCC) was established over ten years ago and it has been recognized as a model program locally, regionally, and nationally. Since its inception, the CCC has placed more than 450 students in Forest Service internships over the past ten years. This past summer, the CCC placed over 75 students in Forest Service temporary and permanent positions.

Due to the success of the CCC, the region has expanded the program to include two additional locations, creating the new California Consortium program; which will focus on the following four mission areas:

- Establish trust and strengthen relationships with the Hispanic and other diverse communities,
- Increase the awareness of opportunities provided by public lands through environmental education,
- Provide programs to develop employment opportunities in natural resource management for members of the Hispanic community, and
- contribute to the Regional Recruitment Plan goals by providing job placement opportunities for program participants from the Hispanic community with the Forest Service and other land management agencies and organizations.

James Oftedal has been the Director of the CCC for over ten years (pictured above, first person from left). Oftedal and his staff have been providing support for the two new Consortium sites. Oftedal states, *“By expanding the CCC both the community and the Forest Service will benefit. The community will gain through environmental education, community outreach, and employment opportunities. The Forest Service will gain access to educate the underserved communities on public lands, preservation and conservation, while also creating a diverse applicant pool”*.

The Director of the Northern California Consortium (NCC) is Guadalupe Hernandez (pictured above, second to left). The NCC main office is located at the Mendocino National Forest in Willows, CA. The NCC is in start up mode and thus Ms. Hernandez is focusing on building relationships with community based organizations, universities and other partners. The Southern California Consortium (SCC) is located on the Angeles National Forest in Arcadia, CA. Jim Hall is (pictured above, third person from left) is currently the Acting Director, alongside Jim Russell who is the Acting Program Specialist and Star Juarez who is the Acting Administrative Assistant. The focus is to make the community aware of its mission, strengthen relationships, and build on pre-existing partnerships in southern California.

The Region is committed to supporting the newly formed California Consortium program, as it has committed to funding it for the next five years. Regional Forester, Bernie Weingardt, recently stated in the R5 Newslog, *“The Regional Forester Team and I are excited about the expansion and are committed to the long-term success of the Consortia. We encourage you to get involved and support this Region-wide outreach effort so that together we can continue caring for the land and serving people.”*



Pictured above: CCC Director, James Oftedal; NCC Director, Guadalupe Hernandez; and SCC Acting Director, James Hall.

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USDA Forest Service

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



"This summer has been very exciting and very busy for the CCC. The region has expanded our program to two new sites, creating the new California Consortium Program. We also had the 4th Annual Great Outdoors event at Grizzlies Stadium and the first ever Fresno Hispanic Youth Symposium (HYS). They were both rewarding because we shared with underserved youth how to care for our natural resources and the importance of education. We also encouraged them to consider careers in public service. We also had over 75 students complete Forest Service internships."

- James Oftedal  
CCC Director



## 4TH ANNUAL GREAT OUTDOORS EVENT

BY MARIA HERRERA

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Outdoors event took place on July 21, 2006 at the Fresno Grizzlies stadium. The Great Outdoors is organized by CCC each year. The event was informative and educational due to the natural resource information booth fair. More than 12 community partners and 100 underserved multicultural youth participated in the event. Youth, ages 8 to 16 years old, learned about food safety, outdoors recreation, water safety, endangered species recovery plans, and to take care of our public lands.



In addition to the baseball game, educational informative booths, and delicious snacks and food, over 50 youth had the unforgettable experience of camping overnight on the stadium field. At night Arlene Mendoza, Boys and Girls Club of Fresno counselor, coordinated educational activities and games for the youth to enjoy.

Chely Herrera, CCC event coordinator, stated, "It was very rewarding to see the smiles on the faces of all the adult and youth who participated. We made the day special for them. The event was made possible due to the team work of partners such as the Fresno County Economic Commission (EOC), Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), and Blue Cross, just to name a few."

Pictured above: Valerie McKay, US Army Corp of Engineer Park Ranger, educates youth on how to care for our public lands.

## 10TH ANNUAL INTERN AWARDS CEREMONY

BY MARIA HERRERA

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Award Ceremony was held on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at the Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) in Clovis, CA. More than 70 students were recognized for successfully completing 10 week Forest Service paid internships.

Sandra Wallace, Region 5 Civil Rights Director, did a great job as the keynote speaker. Francisco Javier Lopez Mireles, Univision 21 News Anchor and reporter, served as the master of ceremony and motivated everyone with his personal story.



The students shared their summer work experience with their peers, supervisors, parents, community partners, and Forest Service leaders from the Regional Office. It was clear that the students had acquired knowledge, experience, and skills that they can apply in their future careers. Many of the students stated that this was their first job and that they enjoyed it. For example, Chua Vue, stated, "I wanted to do something meaningful in the summer and I achieved that through this internship. As a member of the recreation crew, I worked outdoors, earned money, and met many wonderful people. I am very thankful that the CCC gave me such a wonderful opportunity. I am also thankful to have had a great crew members and supervisors. After working in the outdoors and enjoying it, I am now considering a career in natural resources."

Pictured above: CCC interns, Sebastian Alcantar and Joshua Smith, share their experience going through the Wildland Fire Regional Occupation Program (ROP) at Reedley High School and fighting fire over the summer with Teri Drivas, Sierra National Forest (SNF) Recreation and Lands Officer.

## FIRST EVER FRESNO HISPANIC YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

BY LILY RAMOS



The first Hispanic Youth Symposium (HYS) in the Western U.S. was held this summer at California State University, Fresno. James Oftedal, CCC Director, served as Co-chair of this event. The symposium was a 3 day 2 night event with a theme entitled, "Raices y Alas" ("roots and Wings") because students were encouraged to embrace their unique cultural roots and explore their wings through pursuing higher education. Oftedal and his staff played a key role in the Greater Washington D.C. HYS since its inception in 2004 and also provided support during the 2005 Maryland HYS.

Oftedal stated, *"This was an opportunity to spend quality time with over 100 Hispanic youth from our valley. Imagine being a high school student and spending one on one time with professionals who are there for one reason, to help you succeed. It is powerful and life changing"*.

Sierra National Forest Supervisor, Ed Cole, stated in the Fresno HYS press release announcement, *"We are proud to have helped bring this unique program to Fresno. Through this partnership we are helping the youth of our community continue their education and learn about Forest Service opportunities."*

The conference was made possible due to the CCC's efforts, as well as the contribution of various community partners. The CCC would like to thank key committee members from CSU, Fresno, including: Frances Pena, Tony Garduque, and Hernan Maldonado, as well as Diane Sorondo from Fresno County. The HYS is a program of the Hispanic College Fund (HCF), who is a CCC partner. HCF is a private nonprofit organization focused on developing the next generation of Hispanic professionals in the United States.

Top left picture: Fresno HYS student participates in the speech competition in an effort to earn a scholarship for college. Right picture: Fresno HYS students learn about public service careers.



## GENERATION GREEN LEADERSHIP CAMP

BY FABIAN GARCIA

The Generation Green Cal Expo Leadership Camp took place from August 10<sup>th</sup> through September 4<sup>th</sup> this year. The students of Generation Green (GG) obtained leadership experience as they worked as Forest Service volunteers spreading the message of fire prevention to fair-goers, young and old.

The 45 high school students spent 10 days in Sacramento and worked alongside Forest Service professionals while at Camp Smokey. Camp Smokey is an interactive exhibit consisting of 6 stations that encourage fire safety inside the home and in the forest.

The leadership camp also serves to develop these 45 high school students in character, confidence, and public speaking. A strong emphasis was placed on developing the students public speaking skills, which in turn helped boost their self confidence.

The leadership camp will culminate on October 4<sup>th</sup>, as the students of GG will be hosting a Banquet in honor of their mentors, administrators, and parents who made this experience possible.

Doreoteo Resendiz (pictured at right), GG member, educated youth and adults on fire safety and how to take care of our natural resources.

Cynthia Torres, also a GG member, stated, "The Generation Green Cal Expo Leadership Camp taught me how to be independent because I had to take care of myself, iron my own clothes, and be responsible for being on time. As a crew boss, it was up to me to help guide, organize work schedules and make sure everything was running smoothly."



## CCC STAR INTERN

BY LILY RAMOS

The CCC staff would like to congratulate Cynthia Kanagui for successfully completing an eight week internship with the CCC. Her primary projects included guiding youth through the Fresno Hispanic Youth Symposium (HYS) application process and serving as a chaperone for both the Fresno HYS and the Generation Green Leadership Camp at the Sacramento State Fair.



CCC Director, James Oftedal, stated, "Cynthia is a very hardworking, intelligent young lady who always wears a smile. She serves as a great role model for valley youth. Si se puede, Cynthia!"

Cynthia grew up in Dinuba, CA and graduated from Dinuba High School. She will soon start her sophomore year at Princeton University in New Jersey, where she majors in Economics. The CCC staff wishes her the best of luck and thanks her for her valuable contribution over the summer.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 9/27/06 CCC meets with Luther Burbank High School Fire Science Teacher
- 9/27/06 CCC attends California Consortium (CC) meeting in Sacramento, CA
- 10/2-3/06 Wildlink Parent Meeting at Reedley High School and Orange Cove High School
- 10/4/06 Generation Green Cal Expo Leadership Camp banquet at Reedley High School
- 10/12/06 Dept. of Fish and Game Workshop at the SNF Supervisor's Office
- 10/13/06 Reedley High School Career Day in Reedley, CA
- 10/18/06 Career Day at Washington Intermediate High School in Dinuba, CA
- 10/19/06 CCC and the Stewardship Council make a presentation to the California Public Utilities Commission in Fresno, CA
- 10/24-26/06 R5 Forest Service Women's Conference in Sacramento, CA. CCC staffs booth on 10/25/06.
- 11/3-5/06 CSU Fresno Math, Engineering, and Science Program (MESA) Retreat
- 11/8/06 CCC Staff attends Stewardship Council workshop in San Francisco, CA

## SUPERVISORS

### Looking for student interns?

Serve as a role model/teacher to interns

## STUDENTS

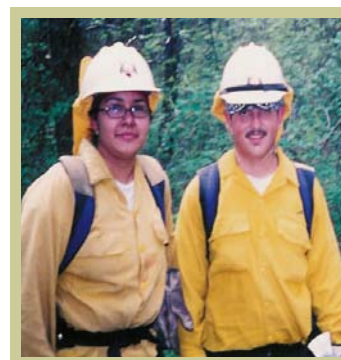
### Looking for a paid summer internship?

Eligible students:

- 2.0 GPA or better
- Currently enrolled in 6 or more units

Supervisors and students please contact:

**Denny Mar, Outreach Coordinator**  
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## 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 450 minority and women both regionally and nationally.

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