

# CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM

## WASHINGTON D.C. CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

BY LILY RAMOS

On January 3-6, 2005 the USDA Forest Service Washington Office held a Centennial Congress commemorating "100 Years of Service". The event addressed current challenges and opportunities. It also provided a forum for discussion regarding the agencies' past, present, and future.

As testimony to the success of the USDA Forest Service Central California Consortium (CCC), the program was well represented at Washington event. The CCC Director and four student participants traveled to Washington D.C.; two as Region 5 delegates and two as youth panelists.

Alyse Charley (Picture B) and Alba Mercado (Picture C) were among the six diverse youth selected throughout the nation. Martha Maciel and Bao Vue were selected to represent Region 5 as delegates. CCC Director, James Oftedal (Picture D), was a Committee Member for the Centennial Congress Youth Panel. He also selected to serve as the youth moderator for the Washington DC event.

Alyse Charley served as a Centennial Congress Youth Panelist. Alyse represented the high school component, discussing how the Forest Service can better connect with the Native American community and its youth. She is currently a Reedley High School student and a member of the CCC's Generation Green Club.

Alba Mercado served as a Centennial Congress Youth Panelist representing the college component.



Alba highlighted the need for more programs like the CCC, which work to connect the youth to the Forest Service and provide environmental education. Alba completed a summer Archeology internship through the CCC. She continues to work part-time for the Forest Service and is currently a student at the College of the Sequoias in Visalia, CA.

Martha Maciel served as a Region 5 delegate (Pacific Southwest Region), where she provided insight on the needs and recommendations of Region 5. She began her career with the Forest Service as a CCC intern and she is now a Regional Office (RO) Public Affairs Specialist on the Sierra National Forest.

Bao Vue served as a Region 5 delegate (Pacific Southwest Region), where she provided input on how Region 5 connects to the underserved community. Bao has worked for the CCC for over 5 years and is currently an Asian Liaison on the Sierra National Forest. In addition, Bao serves as the Reedley Community College Liaison, where she is currently a student.



James Oftedal, CCC Director served as the Centennial Congress Youth Panel Moderator. James introduced each of the six youth panelists from throughout the nation (Picture A). He encouraged the Forest Service to invest in youth and stated,

***"By allowing students to join the discussion, encouraging them to contribute their ideas, and listening to their concerns, we are ensuring that they'll take care of our public lands today and tomorrow. We must continue to invest in our youth, as it will benefit us all."***

USDA Forest Service



## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

“The CCC strengthened its outreach component through hiring additional student liaisons. We’ve been active locally, regionally, and nationally this quarter. Locally, we’ve been busy helping organize the RHS Fire ROP course and outreaching to the underserved community. The CCC went on Hmong Radio and Radio Bilingue to encourage the Hmong and Hispanic communities to consider Forest Service careers and educate them on rules and regulations. Regionally, we’ve begun placing student interns throughout the region in an effort to help diversify our workforce. Nationally, we participated in the Forest Service’s Centennial Congress in W.A.D.C. by having two of our students serve as Youth Panelists. I also had the honor of serving as the Youth Panel Moderator. We’ve done a lot and we’re looking forward to doing a lot more.”

- James Oftedal  
CCC Director



**Bao Vue**  
Reedley  
Community College



**Denny Mar**  
CSU Bakersfield



**Nicole Mashore**  
Cal Poly San  
Luis Obispo



**Kari Young**  
CSU Stanislaus



**Eileen Vidales**  
Merced College

## CCC STUDENT LIAISONS

BY FABIAN GARCIA

The USDA Forest Service, Central California Consortium (CCC) has been successful in conducting outreach and recruitment at local colleges and universities. A CCC student liaison was first placed at Reedley College at the programs inception in 1996 and it proved to be a valuable position. As a result, the CCC has expanded its geographic area by building relationships with colleges and universities up and down the Central Valley and Central Coast. Within the last year, the CCC has added four new student liaisons at the following Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI): CSU Bakersfield, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CSU Stanislaus, and the most recently, Merced Community College.

The current Reedley College student liaison is Bao Vue. She has held the position since the fall of 2004 and continues to do a great job in connecting students with Forest Service careers. Bao also serves as one of the CCC’s Asian community liaisons, working to inform the Hmong community about the Forest Service and employ students. Bao is currently pursuing an AS in Urban Forestry and plans to transfer to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Bao has been working with the CCC for over 5 years.

For over a year, Denny Mar has served as the CCC student liaison for CSU Bakersfield. Denny works closely with the Title V program to actively recruit students for Forest Service summer internships and careers via the CCC program. The Title V program provides supportive services to minority students on campus. Denny is currently a junior pursuing a BA in Criminal Justice and plans to pursue a Masters in Criminology.

Nicole Mashore is the CCC student liaison for Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Nicole works closely with the Agriculture Department and efficiently utilizes resources from the Multicultural Agriculture Program (MAP) Center. The MAP center hosts multicultural students who are interested in careers in Agriculture, Forestry, or Natural Resources. Nicole has been with the CCC since the spring of 2004 and has already connected many students with the USDA Forest Service.

The CCC student liaison at CSU Stanislaus is Kari Young. Kari works closely with the Agriculture department on her campus and holds office hours in the Career Center. Since this is her last year at CSU Stanislaus, she is currently working hard to establish the foundation for the CCC program on campus so that students may continue to have a connection with the Forest Service. Kari is a senior pursuing a degree in Forestry and Natural Resources Conservation. In the past, Kari has worked as a National Park Service Ranger, where she enjoyed educating the public on natural resources.

The latest CCC student liaison is Eileen Vidales and she is located at Merced Community College. Eileen is a returning college student with great work ethic and a lot of enthusiasm. She works closely with the Title V program on campus to provide services to potential summer interns. The Title V program provides supportive services for minority students.

The new CCC student liaison staff will assist the CCC to diversify the Forest Service workforce in Region 5. The CCC welcomes all of our new student liaisons to the Forest Service.

## FIRE ROP PROGRAM CONTINUES

BY WENDY REYNOSO

Due to the huge success of last year's first pilot program, the Valley Regional Occupational Program (VROP) in partnership with U.S. Forest Service again presents the Wildland Fire Science course for the spring semester 2005 at Reedley High School (RHS). Student participants are from various high schools including Reedley, Sanger, Parlier, Kingsburg, and Selma. The Fire ROP program provides an intensive course, which prepares students with basic firefighting and conservation entry-level skills to enter employment with the United States Forest Service firefighter positions. Last year, six students from the course were employed by the U.S. Forest Service upon graduation. After suc-



successful completion of the course, students are granted certification in I-100, S-190, S-130, S-212, First Aid, CPR, pack and physical test. Wildland Fire Science lead instructor, Richard Halstad, stated, "The course is definitely growing, as an extra month was added to the course regarding leadership, decision-making and dealing with stress as recommended by the National Interagency Fire Center." The VROP and U.S. Forest Service plan to add another course in the fall semester, offering an introduction to fire and all aspects of personal management. The course is also fortunate to have Dave Kohut and Less Olvera as experienced assistant instructors.

Wildland Fire Science student, Kaleb Krogen, stated, "I am learning a lot in the class. I would definitely recommend this course to others because of the training and certifications." He is currently a RHS senior and plans to become a Forest Service firefighter.

The course provides mentoring, guest speakers, and recruiters such as captains, firefighters, and engine crews from various national forests. Shasta-Trinity National Forest Captain, Steve Diaz stated, "We come to Reedley to recruit students. I've worked with these students since 1999 and I've consistently found students who are good workers. As a result, we will keep coming back."

**Pictures:** A - Students prepare for hand on training out in the field. B - Fire ROP students cut a fire line.

## CCC ON HMONG RADIO

BY BAO VUE

On January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005, the USDA Forest Service, Central California Consortium (CCC) was once again invited to go on KBIF 900 AM Hmong Radio by producer and Hmong community leader, Ben Vue. This was the fourth time that CCC has been on Hmong Radio and had an opportunity to address the Hmong community. The CCC makes it a priority to go on Hmong Radio and outreach to the Hmong community. Specifically, the CCC provides information concerning fire prevention, employment opportunities, as well as hunting and fishing regulations.

Jim Oftedal, CCC Director; Blong Vang, CCC Asian Liaison; Bao Vue, CCC Asian Liaison; and Martha Maciel, Public Affairs Specialist were among the Forest Service employees who went on the air to share information about upcoming CCC events and how the program is reaches out to the Hmong community. They also shared information on the CCC internship program for high school and college students. In addition, the CCC provided hunting and fishing regulation booklets so that they could be distributed in the community. The CCC address the concern of hunting regulations in California; a conversation which was sparked by the Wisconsin hunting incident which involved a Hmong Hunter. The CCC discussed their projects in the Hmong community including: Hmong New Year, the Hmong National Development Conference, and building partnership with Hmong community leaders.

Hmong Radio is one of the most listened to radio stations among the Hmong Community in the Central Valley, as it reaches the Hmong community from Merced to Bakersfield in California.

**Pictured above:** Bao Vue and Blong Vang at the Hmong Radio Station.



## 2005 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### APRIL

- April 2<sup>nd</sup> **Harvest Festival and Float Parade** in Orange Cove Generation Green Students and A.L. Conner Elementary Garden Club students participated
- April 5<sup>th</sup> **KCUSD School Board Meeting** - Generation Green student, Alyse Charley, spoke on her experience as Centennial Youth Panelist in WA DC
- April 8-10 **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Hmong National Development Conference** celebrated "30 years in America" in Fresno, CA; CCC staff presented a workshop and attended the Awards Banquet
- April 11 **Pre-Sci-Con** at Reedley College - Over 200 Citrus Middle School students participated
- April 23 **Adelante Mujer Hispana Conference** at Fresno City College - CCC Staff presents a workshop, Generation Green students will attend
- April 23 **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Higher Education Conference** held by the Hmong Association Club at CSU Fresno - CCC staff attended

### FUTURE EVENTS

- May 6 **Southeast Asian American Year End Reception at Fresno City College**
- May 13-16 **Generation Green at Wildlink** - CCC staff to serve as chaperones for 10 Generation Green students
- May 16 **University President's Service Award Reception at CSU, Fresno** - CCC Director invited to attend
- May 25 **CA Roundtable on Recreation, Parks, & Tourism - 2005 Symposium** in Los Angeles - CCC Director to serve as Youth Moderator, CCC students to speak
- June 10-12 **San Joaquin Valley Chicano/Latino Youth Leadership Institute** at Fresno Pacific University- CCC Director to serve on Career Panel
- June 19-25 **Generation Green at RAP Camp** in Oregon - CCC staff to serve as chaperones for 10 Generation Green students
- July 8 **3rd Annual Great Outdoors at Grizzlies Stadium** in Fresno - Fresno County EOC, Forest Service, and other partners outreach to public in attendance

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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.

## SUPERVISORS

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