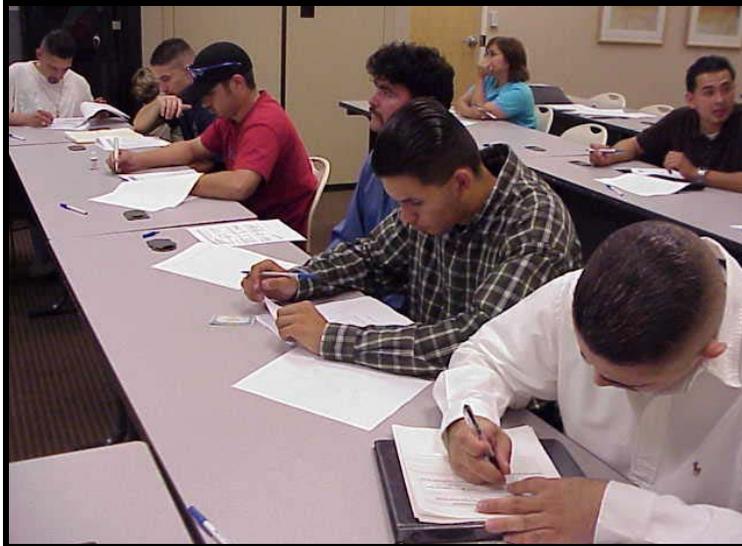


# CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM

## CCC HOLDS REGIONAL JOB FAIR IN FRESNO

BY MICHAEL MAGAÑA



Above: Firefighter applicants attend learning lab and get answers to their questions.

Over 250 visitors attended the Job Fair held by the Forest Service Saturday, April 24, 2004 at the Manchester Center Mall. The Central California Consortium team, headed by James Oftedal worked proficiently to put this event together in such a short period of time. The consortium's staff took action at the event by serving as Spanish and Hmong translators. The CCC Staff also promoted the event via interviews by Univision Channel 21 and Hmong radio.

The conference included staff from Sierra, Inyo, Sequoia, Shasta Trinity, Stanislaus, and Klamath National Forests. Julena Pope from the Regional Office also attended the Job Fair. The Forest Service distributed applications, informational materials, and provided application workshops to help attendees with the application process. Participants had a chance to try on firefighting gear and view some of the fire vehicles. Florence Pruitt and Jane Fertig, from Sierra National Forest Supervisor's Office headed the Learning Lab. Applicants were able to gain valuable information during the application sessions, which were offered every half-hour.

These sessions also provided time for attendees to get their questions answered in regards to the application process. About 125 applications were turned in at the event.

The Forest Service looked to fill at least 300-500 entry level firefighter positions for the Wildland Firefighter Apprenticeship Program. This program is designed to prepare applicants for permanent firefighter positions within the agency by incorporating formal training with paid work experience.

Bao Vue, CCC Staff, enjoyed attending the Job Fair. Bao stated, "The job fair was very successful. We were able to have skilled staff helping run the job fair and serving as translators."

The Central California Consortium would like to thank all the Forest Service employees that came out to assist at the Job Fair. Jim Oftedal, Director of the CCC stated, "We worked proficiently distributing applications and informational materials. Our diverse staff was able to communicate with the community in their native language. The learning lab was great because it allowed applicants to go through the application and ask questions. The job fair was truly a team effort." The CCC would like to thank those who helped in the planning of the job fair.

Below: Joe Reyes, Fire Specialist, talks about a Forest Service career in fire with an interested applicant.



USDA FOREST SERVICE



## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

*"The CCC's staff has grown to better serve the community and the mission of the Forest Service. Our goal is to reach out to the underserved community, sharing opportunities within the Forest Service. This quarter we have organized a very successful regional job fair, served as presenters for youth and professional workshops, and celebrated our first Fire R.O.P. Class' graduation. I was honored to represent the Forest Service as the keynote speaker of the College: Making It Happen Conference and as a workshop presenter at the 9th Annual Hmong National Development Conference. But I am most proud of my young creative staff."*

*- James Oftedal  
CCC Director*



## JIM SERVES AS KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR VALLEY YOUTH CONFERENCE

BY ARACELI HERRERA

On Saturday, February 28, 2004 CCC Director James Oftedal served as the key note speaker at the annual "College: Making It Happen Conference" held at California State University, Fresno. The conference focused on encouraging, inspiring, and educating middle school students and their parents to start thinking about future higher education. The conference brought in 150 students from eight middle schools in the Fresno, Clovis, Sanger, and Central unified school district, as well as, 300 parents and school counselors.

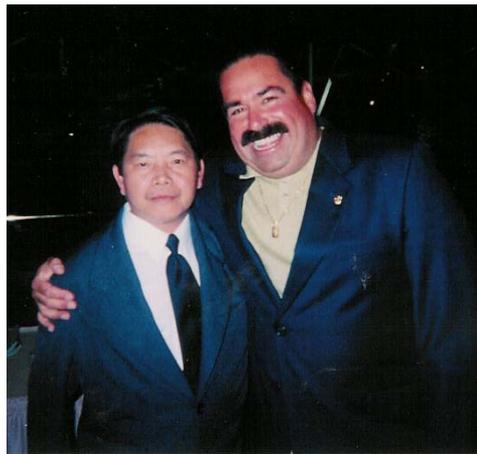
His words motivated students to continue their education and parents to start thinking about their children's education. James stated, "Parents, I know you had other things to do today, but your being here shows that you care about your children's future. Thank you for supporting your

children and their dreams for the future." Students and their parents received important information on topics such as, financial aid, loans, scholarships, grants, and college requirements.

CCC staff members Araceli Herrera, Bao Vue, and Victor Chavez served as workshop presenters, sharing their career, educational, and personal experiences with the students. Victor stated that education is a powerful tool that will help you work whenever you choose. He stressed, "Education has given me the opportunity to work where I want. I am happy that you are here today and that you have started thinking about your future in college."

## HMONG NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

BY LILY RAMOS



The Central California Consortium (CCC) participated as a workshop presenter at the Hmong National Development (HND) Conference, which was held April 2-4, 2004 in Charlotte, North Carolina. The CCC partnered with HND to benefit the Forest Service in increasing diversity within its workforce and the Hmong community by seeing Hmong role models such as Bao Vue and Blong Vang.

The CCC held a two hour workshop entitled "How to succeed in the workplace when you are the minority" which focused on giving young professionals tools to succeed in the workplace.

The workshop had components like breaking the ice, networking, how to look and act professional, and the importance of follow up. The CCC workshop included role playing, and a short film which showed the importance of staying focused on goals and overcoming obstacles.

The CCC's workshop included the CCC Director, James Oftedal who shared his experience in working for the Forest Service. He also shared how he went from an entry level position to a program director. Oftedal met with many Hmong community leaders, including Mr. Kao Xiong from Minnesota (pictured at left). CCC Asian Community Liaisons Bao Vue and Blong Vang shared their personal stories in overcoming adversity as first generation Hmong students in this country, as well as their educational and career goals. CCC Rural Coordinator, Fabian Garcia, shared his experience in working for the Forest Service.

The CCC recognizes the importance of working with the Hmong community and conducts outreach to make them aware of the opportunities within the Forest Service. Fresno has the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest Hmong population in the country. The CCC is looking forward to participating in the next HND conference, which will be held in Fresno, California in 2005!

# 1ST FIRE ROP CLASS GRADUATES

BY LILY RAMOS

On April 30 2004, the first Reedley High School Wildland Fire Science Regional Occupation Program (ROP) class graduated. There were 14 students in total from 4 school districts including Kings Canyon, Parlier, Sanger, and Kingsburg Unified School District. A total of 167 hours were completed in the program that was hosted by Reedley High School. The CCC funded the program its first year. Next year the program will be funded through state funds by Valley ROP.

The Wildland Fire Science ROP Program introduced the students to topics such as: basic fire suppression techniques and field exercises such as: chainsaw operation, hand tool use and maintenance, and hand line construction. Students were required to complete intense comprehensive course work which emphasized safety. The students have completed Introduction to Fire Behavior and

Weather, Introduction to ICS, Basic Firefighting, First Aid, CPR, and basic Wildland power saw qualifications. They also took a physical endurance test (pack test), which requires the students to walk 3 miles carrying 45 pounds within 45 minutes.

The students will meet entry level requirements as Firefighter Interns and will earn 3 units of college credit at Reedley College. Many students will be entering the Forestry Program at Reedley College. The CCC will continue to mentor the students by providing college and scholarship information. In addition, they will have access to summer employment and workshops such as how to make a presentation and resume writing.

Six of the students from the ROP program were offered permanent positions with the Forest Service through the Apprentice and Student Permanent Employment Program (SCEP). Dave Kohut, ROP Instructor and retired Forest Service Fire Chief stated, "It was very exciting to see how far along the students came from showing up the first day, to cutting line, and even running a chainsaw. I am very proud of all them."



**Picture A:** Instructor Dave Kohut conducting a lesson in fire; **Picture B:** ROP class learning hands on; **Picture C:** ROP Fire Class with Instructors Dave Kohut and Richard Halstead. Not pictured is Instructor Pete Marquez.

## CCC OUTREACH

BY ARACELI HERRERA & NANCY PACHECO



On March 12th, 2004, Central California Consortium (CCC) staff members Araceli Herrera, Esveida Lopez, and Lily Ramos participated as workshop presenters for the West Fresno Middle School Career Day. The Career Day included three forty-five minute sessions, where CCC staff members shared their personal, educational, and career experiences.

During the workshop, Esveida stressed, "Going to college is more than just studying. It is where you can meet your best friends and build a life long network. You will gain valuable knowledge and you'll be able to apply it wherever you may go."

The CCC also participated in the 20th Annual Career & Education Conference

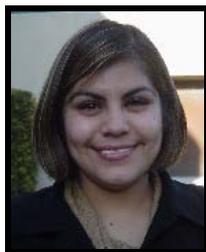
for Hispanic Teens & Women "Adelante, Mujer Conference" which was held on March 27, 2004. The keynote speaker was Assembly Women Sarah Reyes. The CCC sponsored ten Reedley High School students to attend the conference. The CCC also provided a career workshop, "Women Working in Government," where CCC staff members Lily Ramos, Nancy Pacheco, Maria Herrera, and Esveida Lopez served as presenters; sharing their government career experiences.

These events are important because they allow students to learn about opportunities that exist within the USDA Forest Service and assist to increase diversity within the agency.

## WELCOME NEW CCC STAFF



Araceli Herrera  
Human Resource  
Intern



Claudia Arciniega  
Human Resource  
Intern



Manuel Cardoza  
Accounting  
Technician



Victor Cardoza  
Environmental  
Education  
Coordinator



Esveida Lopez  
Marketing  
Intern



Michael Magaña  
Outreach  
Coordinator



Denny Mar  
CSU Bakersfield  
Liaison



Fabian Garcia  
Rural  
Coordinator

### 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.

#### For more information:

Central California  
Consortium  
1600 Tollhouse Road  
Clovis, CA 93611

(559) 297-0706 Ext. 4962  
(559) 294-4809 FAX

Program Director  
James Oftedal  
joftedal@fs.fed.us

Newsletter Editor  
Lily Ramos  
lramos@fs.fed.us

[www.fs.fed.us/r5/sierra/  
cc\\_consortium](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sierra/cc_consortium)

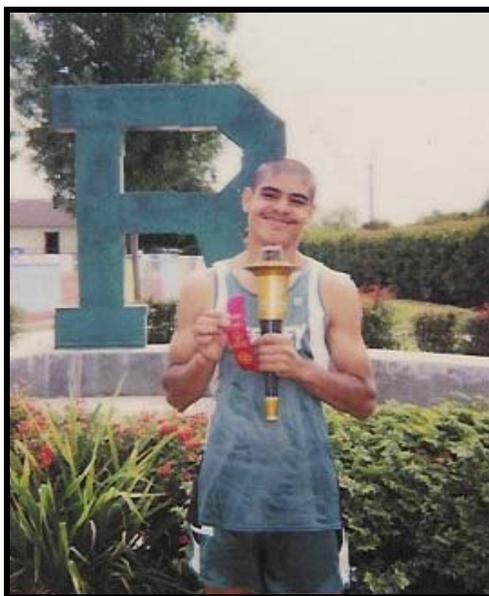
## GENERATION GREEN PARTICIPATES IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS

BY FABIAN GARCIA

On Friday May 16<sup>th</sup>, students from Generation Green (GG) volunteered and participated in this years Special Olympics event at Reedley high school. Several students volunteered their time in the food booths while others actually ran in the races. Ruth Mendoza, a freshman at Reedley High School and Generation Green club member, said, "It was very rewarding for me to volunteer . I enjoyed helping with the In'N'Out truck."

The Special Olympics took place during school hours and several area schools were invited to attend. The athletes were rewarded with a free burger after their event.

A major highlight of the event was GG's own runner, Jose Farias. Jose ran in the 100 meters race and the 400 meters race, and earned a red second place ribbon in both events. When asked how he got energized for the race, Jose said, "I ate chips and a soda



that morning." Jose was happy with his awards and plans to enter the race again next year.

It was an event worth remembering as Jose Farias (pictured above) proudly wore both of his second place ribbons. Jose was applauded by his fellow GG club members.