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Alameda County
Supervisor Keith Carson, Fifth District

For Immediate Release
Press Release

August 28, 2009

Federal Stimulus Dollars Help to Prepare Youth for Employment and Community Service



Photo (left) – “I hella [heart] S.A.Y.L.E.C.” t-shirts we scattered among the crowd of 181 predominantly Asian youth who participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program during the 14th Annual South East Asian Youth Leadership Empowerment Conference.

Photo (right) – Left to right: Lao Family President and CEO Chaosarn Chao, Supervisor Carson’s Aide Mina Sanchez, and Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson were among the special guests at the 14th Annual Southeast Asian Youth Leadership Empowerment Conference. Mr. Carson spoke of the importance of leadership in the community and expressed his admiration for the accomplishments by the youth for completing the Summer Youth Employment Program.

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Higher education, violence and racism, legal rights, sex education, and drug and alcohol abuse were among the workshop topics during the Lao Family Community Development, Inc.’s 14th annual Southeast Asian Youth Leadership Empowerment Conference in Oakland on Tuesday, August 25. Sixteen youth lead the organization efforts of the conference as part of their summer job placement.

Alex Banh, Lao Family’s Youth Director, said that the conference is designed to give participants from the Summer Youth Employment Program a way to develop new skills through work that benefits their community. “All of our youth have plenty to say when it comes to describing the violence and poverty that surrounds them, but are at a loss for words when you ask them about solutions. This conference aims to empower the youth with both knowledge and skills to make positive change in their communities.”

There were 181 conference participants ranging from 14-24 years old. A vast majority of the youth were part of the Summer Youth Employment Program that received Federal stimulus funding. The program gave an opportunity to 1,000 youth to participate in employment training and work experience in non-profit organizations and private corporations. The Lao Family Center placed 150 youth in 40 worksites around Oakland.

“Getting a summer job is a major statement,” Supervisor Keith Carson said during his keynote speech. “You have made a huge step by sticking through the program. It’s not always easy to make the right choices in life and sometimes we don’t see opportunities even when they’re right in front of us. Today, you are on your way to making right choices.”

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