

Contact: Bobbi Palmer
LMCHD
Phone 925-432-2200
Fax 925-427-1669
bpalmer@lmchd.org

2311 Loveridge RD
Pittsburg, CA 94565

LMCHD

Press Release

Los Medanos Community Healthcare District's 2015 Summer Interns Get Hands-On Experience in the Real World

Local Foster Care Youth Diabetes Awareness Campaign won California Special District's Exceptional Outreach and Advocacy Award

Pittsburg, CA—This summer 7 transitioning foster care young adults were given a rare opportunity to put their education to work in the real world by developing a diabetes awareness campaign. Over the course of 6 weeks, the group "Healthy Youth Council" created the 'Impact Project: Impacting Our Community to Stop Diabetes.' The Healthy Youth Council researched diabetes in Contra Costa County, evaluated the

community's knowledge surrounding the issue, and conducted a focus group to gather the community's insights on what was needed to help those with diabetes and how to prevent future generations from being affected by Type 2 diabetes.

"Our mission is be the change we want to see by making a difference in our community," said one intern Annyanna McDuff. The group set out to increase awareness and measure the community knowledge on diabetes, provide diabetes education materials, and support Assembly member Beth Gaines' bill AB 572 which calls for the California Department of Health to create a Diabetes Action Plan for California. Justin Montanez summarized the goal of their project, "According to Contra Costa Health Services, diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in Contra Costa, so we are naturally concerned about diabetes in our community. We want to send the message that diabetes is not a death sentence."

The LMCHD location was the ideal environment to conduct the diabetes awareness campaign. And, who better to communicate to the community about diabetes prevention than a group of young adults. The Healthy Youth Council had the opportunity to design an integrated marketing campaign (IMC) aimed at increasing awareness against diabetes. Awareness efforts completed by the Healthy Youth Council included: information table events to survey community residents, distribution of flyers for local diabetes prevention programs, conducting a focus group at the Pittsburg Senior Center, gathering signatures in support of AB 572, and filming a PSA regarding diabetes awareness. The group outreach efforts targeted residents of Pittsburg, Bay Point, Antioch, and surrounding areas. Additionally, The Healthy Youth Council decided to go where the people were and utilized the following community locations: Pittsburg Health Center, La Clinica, and the Pittsburg Senior Center.

Jules McClary stated "We surveyed over 200 residents and collected 128 signatures for the petition. Many residents shared personal stories on how living with diabetes affects them or a loved one."



The Healthy Youth Council (HYC) took their message to Sacramento and met with Assembly members Jim Frazier and Beth Gaines offices.

The program culminated in formal presentations by the Healthy Youth Council to the Pittsburg City Council, Assembly Members Jim Frazier's office and Beth Gaines' office at the State Capitol in Sacramento, and LMCHD's Board of Directors. The presentations were a unique opportunity for the young adults to develop public speaking and presentation skills, in addition to building self-confidence. To view the Health Youth Council's Public Service Announcement visit www.lmchd.org.



HYC held a focus group to discuss diabetes at the Pittsburg Senior Center

“For a young person, it is a life-changing experience to provide service on a project that carries not only personal meaning but concrete benefits to the community and our local government bodies as well,” stated Melinda Harris, LMCHD's Intern Program Coordinator.

As a collaboration between Los Medanos Community Healthcare District, CCC Children & Families Services, CCCOE Foster Youth Services, and EMQ Families First, LMCHD's Summer Internship Program provides an opportunity for young adults transitioning from foster care into independent living to participate in its District sponsored summer internship program. Bobbi Palmer, LMCHD CEO stated, “This was an excellent opportunity to begin living out the District's Living Well, Living Long Resolution. Our Board of Directors are fully committed to preventative and public health efforts that promote and protect our residents' health.” LMCHD's Summer Internship Program is designed to provide the young adults with an opportunity to participate in a project that will help bring awareness to their community, develop personal growth, and generate ideas on how the community can build a better tomorrow.

On August 20, 2015, The California Special District Association notified LMCHD that their 2015 Summer Internship Program's Impact Project is the recipient of the 2015 Exceptional Public Outreach and Advocacy Award. LMCHD representatives and the Healthy Youth Council will accept the award during the CSDA Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at the Monterey Marriott Hotel, in Monterey.



Healthy Youth Council at LMCHD collecting signatures for their petition supporting AB 572. Left to Right: Charles Finney, Annyanna McDuff, Justin Montanez, Blanca "Rocky" Montanez, Estela Barrera, Juels McClary, and Melinda Harris (LMCHD Program Coordinator)

Witten By: Melinda Harris, LMCHD

Contact: mharris@lmchd.org

###