



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
May 7, 2008

Contact: Katy Pasini
e-mail: kpasini@sierrahealth.org
Phone: (916) 922-4755 x3304

Program Improvement grants to fund 10 capital-region youth projects

Sacramento, Calif. – Through projects including a youth soccer league in Woodland and anti-bullying campaigns in Placerville, youth and their adult allies will create positive opportunities for young people in their communities with Program Improvement grants, recently awarded by Sierra Health Foundation.

Through its REACH youth program, Sierra Health awards Program Improvement grants up to \$10,000 to nonprofit organizations working to improve the quality of youth programs in the capital region. Since 2006, Sierra Health has awarded 54 Program Improvement grants totaling \$525,000. Applications for the next grant cycle are due May 15. Visit www.reachyouthprogram.org for more information.

Following are the 10 recent grant recipients and their projects:

Cottage Housing, Inc./SKYLAB Youth Development Program

Project: SKYLAB Cool Crew Enhancement

With a focus on physical health and healthy communities, SKYLAB will enhance its current “Cool Crew” youth programming by establishing structured group sports and fun nutrition education activities for youth in Cottage Housing’s Serna Village project in North Highlands. Youth will learn proper exercise techniques, healthy eating habits and meal preparation.

Family Connections El Dorado, Inc.

Project: Let’s Get Real

High school students who have graduated from Family Connections’ Mentors Plus program will take the lead in designing lessons using the Let’s Get Real anti-bullying curriculum. Working with middle school students, they will facilitate classroom lessons and activities at two school sites, and help students create art for posters, bumper stickers and a calendar.

Herbert C. Green Middle School

Project: SPIRIT Anti-bullying Program

The middle school will increase the number of students and staff involved in the SPIRIT (Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together) program, as well as increase student and adult awareness of negative behaviors and attitudes that contribute to prejudice, interpersonal divisions and negative school climate.

NorCal Center on Deafness

Project: Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Youth Development

Deaf and hard-of-hearing youth will be engaged in the assessment of current programs and the design of improved and expanded programs to reach a greater number of deaf and hard-of-hearing youth. This project will enhance, expand and formalize the curriculum and activities of Camp Grizzly, the center’s annual youth leadership training program.

-more-

North Valley Sponsoring Committee

Project: Yuba City Youth Organizing Project

NVSC will develop a youth organizing committee made up of 10- to 15-year-old youth from Yuba City. Through this action committee, youth will be able to exercise leadership among their peers and in the community to find positive alternatives for concerns such as gang activity, teen drug and alcohol abuse or other priorities determined by the committee.

Roberts Family Development Center

Project: Developing Service Leaders

This project will engage youth in activities to inspire them to participate in community improvement now and into adulthood. Students will assess the needs of the community through personal accounts and surveys, and will have an opportunity to attend town hall meetings and school board meetings. Youth then will design and implement three projects.

Rural Innovations in Social Economics, Inc. (RISE)

Project: RISE Esparto – TEEN/LAIR Training Program

RISE will expand and enhance its middle school training program's three pilot programs: the Recreational Leadership Program, which provides training for teens to facilitate activities with elementary students, the Middle School After School Program, which builds adult skill sets, and the Community Bike Clinic, offering teens hands-on skill projects.

Sacramento City Unified School District, Healthy Start Teen and Family Resource Center

Project: Teen Outreach and Assessment for Youth Supports

This project will include developing a self-assessment tool for students at Will C. Wood Middle School and Hiram Johnson High School to identify their progress toward meeting personal and academic goals. Students also will be engaged in promoting Healthy Start's supportive services to other students, including production of marketing materials.

St. John's Shelter Program

Project: Teen Program

Youth in the Teen Program will convert the shelter's computer lab into a teen center for classes and activities, deciding on the décor, atmosphere and equipment for the center. Also, the Teen Program will be enhanced to help youth set and reach goals, and give them a voice and a chance to become productive and self-sufficient members of society.

Yolo County Housing

Project: YCH/Migrant Education Youth Soccer League

This joint effort between Woodland Coalition for Youth partners will connect youth residents of Yolo County Housing sites in Winters, Madison and Woodland to low-cost recreational opportunities. The three sites will form teams that will compete in a weekly round-robin format. Parents will provide coaching and support at practices and matches.

###

Sierra Health Foundation is a private philanthropy investing in and serving as a catalyst for ideas, partnerships and programs that improve health and quality of life in Northern California through convening, educating and strategic grantmaking. For more information about Sierra Health and its programs, visit www.sierrahealth.org