



News and Views

Nuevos Líderes para una Salud Mejor son Reconocidos en Ceremonia **New Leaders for Better Health Recognized at Awards Ceremony** ***Ua Kev zoo Sab Tsuas Cov New Leaders for Better Health***



Dr. Bob Ross, President and CEO of The California Endowment (far right), and Walt Parry (center) congratulate New Leader Consuelo Sanchez and over a hundred other New Leaders receiving recognition for their leadership in advocacy for improving health and quality of life in the Fresno community.

El Dr. Bob Ross, presidente de The California Endowment, felicita a la "Nueva Líder" Consuelo Sanchez y a mas de cien Nuevos Líderes que recibieron reconocimiento en liderazgo. Los "Nuevos Líderes" han trabajado para mejorar el sistema de salud, y la calidad de vida, en la comunidad de Fresno.

Yawm Txawjtxug Bob Ross, thawj tsaavxwm hab CEO ntawm California Endowment, zoo-sab txug tug coj tshab Consuelo Sanchez hab ntaw tshaaj ib puas tug thawjcoj kws tau txais kev txajnrig rua puab tej kev cojnoj coj-ua kws tau sivzug hab tawm suab lug has kuas muaj kev nojqaab haushuv hab nojqaab nyob-zoo nyob rua huv nroog Fresno.

One hundred twenty New Leaders received certificates of recognition in June for their contribution and participation over the past eleven months. Members of the group speak Hmong, Spanish, Russian, Laotian and English. During the Awards Ceremony, Consuelo Sanchez, New Leader from Burroughs, reflected on her experiences over the past year: "During the New Leaders meetings we heard testimony of the many bad experiences and poor treatment our fellow New Leaders had endured at local hospitals and clinics. But we have also met directly with hospital administrators that have told us that they will try to solve these problems, and that they are committed to working with us to find solutions."

Last October, New Leaders identified inadequate access to health care, hunger and nutrition, and poor air quality as crucial health issues to be addressed in our community. Over the past months, they have taken the following steps to address these issues: advocated for clean air at the state capitol during "Air Quality Action Day," met with Fresno County Public Health Officer Dr. Edward Moreno to discuss improving health care access, met

with UMC administrators to work on solutions that would improve patient care, met with Fresno County Supervisor Susan Anderson to discuss the social service needs of the community, and rallied with Assemblymember Sarah Reyes behind a fair and balanced budget.

Ramona Vivas, another New Leader from Burroughs, summed up the experience: "I think that we have all learned a lot about what we can do to help our community." One of

Continued inside on page 11.



Josefina Bernabe, recipient of a "Media All-Star" Award, addresses 120 New Leaders at Awards Ceremony.

Josefina Bernabé, de Burroughs Elementary School, da un discurso a 120 Nuevos Líderes, después de recibir un premio de "Media All-Stars"

Kaiser Child Health Plan — Un Nuevo Plan de Salud para Niños

!Hay un nuevo plan de salud para niño, dependiendo del ingreso de niños! ¡Su estado de inmigración la familia. Pueden conseguir aplicaciones en la oficina de Fresno permanente, una organización de salud que tiene sitios en Fresno, Selma, y Coarsgold. Los niños tienen que tener menos de 19 años de edad, y no calificar para Medi-Cal o Healthy Families. Es para familias cuyos ingresos están bajo el 300% nivel de pobreza. El costo mensual sería \$8.00 o \$15.00 por

Children age 19 and under who are not eligible for either Medi-Cal or Healthy Families and are in families with incomes under 300% of poverty (under \$56,550 for a family of four) are eligible for a new capped Kaiser Permanente health insurance plan. The monthly premiums would be either \$8.00 or \$15.00 per child enrolled. Applications can be secured from the Metro office. Immigration status is not a barrier in eligibility. For questions and to enroll, contact carmena@fresnometmin.org or call 485-1416.

Fresno Metro Ministry Welcomes Carmen Arambula



Fresno Metro Ministry would like to welcome Carmen Arambula, Special Projects Coordinator. Car-

men is a University of California, Santa Cruz graduate in Community Studies with a focus on public health and health activism, and more than ten years of experience in community outreach and education, including work at Planned Parenthood, Fresno County, Santa Cruz Alternative Education Department, Group homes, Dating Violence Intervention Project, EMT instruction- Northeastern University, and Reproductive health outreach worker in Mexico.

During the next six months, Carmen will be working on the Kaiser Child Health Plan, a domestic violence project, and helping the Fresno Metro Ministry team with the New Leaders for Better Health. Carmen is currently expanding our outreach techniques, recruitment and enrollment for the Kaiser Child Health Plan. We are delighted to have Carmen Arambula join Fresno Metro Ministry, and look forward to the upcoming collaboration and success. If you have any question, would like to volunteer on any of these projects or are just interested and would like more information please email Carmen Arambula at carmena@fresnometmin.org.



It is a sweltering Fresno afternoon as a couple with their family walk into the Fresno Metro Ministry Offices. They have traveled more than an hour and a half on public transportation with their two daughters to arrive here. When they arrive they are polite and reserved as they enter the room. They have come to fill out the Kaiser Permanente application for the Kaiser Child Health Plan. As the mother speaks to me, she is holding one of her daughters in her arms explaining that she has had a persistent cough for over four months. The daughter looks tired, and labors for breath in the heat. The oldest daughter sits in the corner, and shyly colors. The father explains that she needs glasses. She is having difficulty learning to read due to her vision problems, but that they just haven't been able to afford the eye appointments or glasses.

When the application has been filled out they profusely

Continued on page 10.

Cross Cultural Clusters Work in the Workplace

The Cross Cultural Clusters have moved into the employment arena as a diversity-training tool, and are continuing to receive positive reviews, according to Rev. Kenn Smiley, Project Facilitator. Over the past few weeks Cross Cultural Clusters have been held in two new venues: University Medical Centers and Fresno County Juvenile Hall. Like preceding clusters groups, recent participants have discovered how much they have in common and have been able to share without fear their differences and the benefits of the clusters exposing them in a non-threatening way. One woman reported she wished the cluster training had been part of her marital counseling.

A participating supervisor commented recently that the clusters have “already proven to be a

very worthwhile training effort ... I have seen (the participants) work more collectively ... those who were initially reluctant seem to be reaping the most benefit from the sessions.”

So although the setting has changed, the anticipated outcome of the sessions continue to yield positive results. The questions devised by the cluster curriculum-builders continue to foster productive conversations, the results of which are consistent and remarkable.

— Kenn Smiley



Fresno Metro Ministry Staff:

Rev. Walt Parry

Executive Director

Laurie Primavera, RN, MSN

Healthcare Coordinator

Carmen Arambula

Special Projects Coordinator

Rev. Kenn Smiley

Cross-Cultural Clusters

Edie Jessup

Hunger and Nutrition Coordinator

Phoua Moua

Hunger and Nutrition Assistant

Jeremy Hofer

Hunger and Nutrition Assistant

Carolina Simunovic

Environmental Health Coordinator

Socorro Gaeta

Environmental Health Assistant

Carmen Pauls Wiens

Office Manager

Ellie Stokle

Bookkeeper

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INITIATIVE (CHI) IN FRESNO

Fresno Metro Ministry funded by First 5 Fresno County and the California Health Care Foundation continues to lead a county-wide planning process to insure that 26,000 children currently without health care insurance can receive health care benefits and be linked to a medical home.

Moving uninsured children into coverage requires enrolling them and keeping them insured. If every child kept their coverage for a full year, the number of low-income, uninsured children would decline by 40%. Continuous coverage means taxpayer dollars are put to better use. Children with continuous coverage have better ac-

cess to care and are healthier.

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation conducted a recent evaluation on Santa Clara County's Children's Health Initiative. Findings from the enrollment analysis (for the period 1001-220) include:

CHI led to large enrollment increases in both Healthy Families and Medi-Cal by 28%.

CHI enrolled a similar number of children in the new county-based program, Healthy Kids.

Enrollment gains were most pronounced by groups most likely to be affected by outreach, i.e. Healthy Families-eligible children and those cov-

ered by the poverty-expansion categories in MediCal.

CHI increased state and federal funding in Santa Clara County for Medi-Cal and Healthy Families by an estimated \$24.4 million during the initiative's first two years.

The California Endowment, California Health Care Foundation, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, First 5 Commissions, United Way and others are leading these efforts with the belief that Children's Initiatives will eventually influence health policy reform in a more compassionate and equitable manner.

— Laurie Primavera



Jeremy Hofer: Presente!

Fresno Metro Ministry Welcomes Jeremy Hofer

I've been active and involved in the community of Fresno for the last five years. In addition to serv-

ing on Metro's board for two years, I co-founded the Fresno Earth Day Festival, played in the musical group 'Waddama', and hosted a radio show on Community Radio KFCF 88.1. My mission over these years has been to bring people together by combining art with information to motivate and empower individuals. Information without passion is just words on paper; we need action to make our dreams a reality, and it is passion that motivates people to act. That is what I love about Metro. By

combining faith and passion with a strong social justice message Metro has moved mountains.

The Hunger and Nutrition Project is a great fit for me; community gardens, farmers markets and food cooperatives have always been an interest of mine. By working for change at the public policy level and changing the way we think about poverty and hunger (our consciousness), I believe that we can achieve a fundamental change in the way our food system works. I will be continuing Community Food Assessment which Metro started over a year ago. I will also be working with farmers markets and produce vendors in the Central Valley to get them involved in the new electronic food stamp system (EBT). I am also in the process of bringing together a

community coalition aimed at developing and sustaining Community Gardens in Fresno and Clovis.

Much of my extracurricular activity ended when my son, Jeronimo Alma Hofer was born on February 4th of this year. Here was this brand new being, a ball of energy looking at me like I was the only thing in the world that mattered. While I've had to realign many of my priorities in the balancing of work and family, here at Metro I have discovered a renewed energy to work on the things I am so passionate about: social, economic and environmental justice. I look forward to working with Metro's great staff and the Fresno Community as we build our future together.

— Jeremy Hofer

Healthy School Environment Policy Committee

On June 9th, Fresno Unified School District Board of Trustees unanimously passed the Child Nutrition Task Group's request to appoint a Healthy School Environment Policy Committee as the most comprehensive way to address the childhood obesity epidemic in Fresno.

The Healthy School Environment Committee, with a wide diversity of community and school stakeholders, will create and recommend to the FUSD Board a comprehensive policy to address obesity that includes (but not limited to): nutrition standards for

snack food and beverage sales; proposals to mitigate fiscal impact of restrictions on sales; steps to increase consumption of fruit and vegetables; steps to increase participation in reimbursable meal programs expansion of nutrition education efforts; and establishment of a process to assess physical activity programs.

This is a wonderful opportunity for FUSD, the 4th largest school district in California, to lead the Central Valley in addressing complicated issues of child health, physical activity, and fiscal responsibility with a comprehen-

sive policy that assures our kids' good health.

Fresno Metro Ministry and a community steering committee are convening the group of FUSD Board approved stakeholders. Currently the committee is in the process of appointing stakeholder members to the committee, researching policy and implementation issues,



Continued on page 10.

Welcome to US Congressional Hunger Fellows Laura Tatum and Dennis Barrett

The Hunger Fellows will work on a joint project with Fresno Metro Ministry, Community Food Bank, Tulare County Foodlink, and the USDA Western Regional Office finding ways to expand Food Stamp participation in Fresno and Tulare Counties.

Metro Contributions: Paper and Plastic

It is expected that within a month Fresno Metro Ministry will be able to accept credit card contributions over its website or by phone. We will also have the capability to bill one's credit card monthly. Plastic or paper? Metro needs both!

"Put Your Money Where Your Heart Is ..." **Metro's Annual Meeting Offers Insight into Planned Charitable Giving**



Metro's Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 24, brought together more than 60 members of the "Metro network," with a special focus on planned charitable giving. This was the second part of Metro's spring series on "Putting Your Money Where Your Heart Is." In developing the program, Metro drew on the resources of the local branch of Leave a Legacy, a group of financial professionals who volunteer their time to promote the idea that each of us can "make a difference in the lives that follow," especially through donations to local non-profit organizations.

Local attorney Judith Wright and Wells Fargo Trust Officer Katherine Coolidge narrated a power point presentation which outlined ten ways for an individual to leave a legacy:

- 1) Prepare a will.
- 2) Leave a gift in your will for the nonprofit and charitable or-

ganizations that have made a difference in your life or your community.

- 3) Name a nonprofit as a beneficiary of your pension or IRA.
- 4) Designate your favorite charity as beneficiary of an unneeded life insurance policy (or a newly purchased one for that purpose.)
- 5) Consider giving appreciated assets, such as real estate or stocks, to a charity.
- 6) Remember loved ones with memorial gifts to a nonprofit.
- 7) Encourage family and friends to leave gifts to nonprofits in their wills.
- 8) Ask your financial advisor(s) to include charitable giving strategies as part of their planning efforts.
- 9) Visit with local charities to learn how a potential gift can help.
- 10) Invite a Leave a Legacy guest speaker to address your

service organization or favorite nonprofit's Board of Directors.

One of Leave a Legacy's key messages is to "Give One." By designating just 1% of your estate as a charitable gift - an amount which will hardly be missed by your heirs - you can make a significant difference to the non-profit organization(s) of your choice.

Charitable giving strategies can have financial and tax advantages to the donor as well as to the receiving organization and may require professional assistance to put in place. Leave a Legacy has offered a free 30-minute consultation as a starting point for anyone wanting to explore how charitable giving might fit in with his/her financial and life situation. The Metro office would be happy to facilitate this arrangement for you.

— Laurie Labbitt Perry, Fresno Metro Ministry Board of Directors

Proposed plastic incinerator in Hanford would endanger entire Valley

— Carolina Simunovic

A company based in Newcastle, CA is looking to build what clean air advocates see as a potentially dangerous plastic “catalytic cracking” plant near Hanford. The Kings County Planning Commission rushed to give them the OK, after exempting the facility from CEQA review (Calif. Environmental Quality Act). This plant proposes to burn plastic in order to generate low-sulfur diesel fuel, but burning plastic releases harmful chemicals into the air that are known to cause cancer. The most dangerous of these toxics is called dioxin, and is one of the strongest carcinogens known to humankind. Hanford residents, as well as health and environmental justice advocates from across the Valley, have



Hanford residents take action against proposed plastic incinerator

kicked off a community campaign against the proposed plastic incinerator. There is good news...on August 4, 2004 the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District suspended the plant’s permit, and has formally disagreed with Kings County for exempting the plant from CEQA review. CEQA review will allow the public to participate, comment, and learn about the project. Keep posted for more news on this important issue.

View from the Metro Board of Directors: Reflections on Asthma Activism

By Terry Winant, PhD

We ought to organize as asthma activists. Asthma is a hub in a large net of issues that bring us together. These issues concern our environment and our health, of course. Asthma is directly in the pathway when we aspire to put prevention first in our health-care system. Asthma is a doorway to prescription medications, and thus to the politics and economics of the pharmaceutical companies. Asthma (along with nutrition) is a major stumbling-block in the attempt to ensure that children are in school ready to learn. If you are asthmatic or you live with asthmatics, then you already know that asthma is something we have in common. I believe our asthma is already helping us seek justice in many directions toward which asthma points us.

Terry Winant has served on Metro’s Board of Directors since 2003. Having grown up in an asthmatic family in New York City and suburbs, she moved to Fresno County in 1991 where asthma rates are some of the highest in the nation. One in six children in Fresno County suffer from asthma. This is the highest rate in California, and is more than three times the national average. (California Health Interview Survey, 2002). In the article, Terry reflects on her experience as a person with asthma, and as an activist – one of many “asthma activists” whose voice and actions can make a difference in the quality of life in the Central Valley. Terry is a professor in the Department of Philosophy, California State University, Fresno. She is also a member of Temple Beth Israel.

To request the complete article, email Carmen@fresnetmin.org, or find it on the Metro website: www.fresnetroministry.org.

Fresno Metro Ministry Welcomes Socorro Gaeta

frustrated with the violence and crime that was taking over her neighborhood. Socorro lives in the Jefferson Neighborhood near downtown Fresno, an area that had been ignored by police and elected officials for far too long, according to Socorro. She joined in the effort to make the neighborhood safer, and soon became one of the lead coordinators for the Jefferson “Parent Patrol,” organizing 18 parents per day to patrol the streets near the schools so that children could walk home safely. At one point the “Parent Patrol” was



even joined by the Army—a testament to the gravity of the problem facing the community. Socorro then became a regular volunteer at Jefferson Elementary School as a cafeteria worker and noontime aide. It wasn’t long until she became involved in other projects in the neighborhood, including the creation of the Jefferson Area Neighborhood Association. Socorro has coordinated workshops for parents, taught “Parenting Partner” classes, and even trained other

Cont. on page 10.

Wasco residents can take a stand against 104,000 dairy cow invasion

— Carolina Simunovic

Residents in the small town of Wasco are taking action against thirteen proposed dairies that will bring over 104,000 cows into the area. In November, the community will have the chance to vote as to whether or not they support the “dairy invasion.” The ballot initiative demands a minimum ten mile buffer zone between any new dairy and Wasco city limits. Unfortunately, the vote is non-binding because it is the Kern County Board of Supervisors, not the City of Wasco, that has the authority to allow/disallow the citing of the new dairies.

Wasco’s City Council and it’s Mayor Danny Espitia all oppose the dairy invasion, but they wanted their message to be loud enough for Kern County Supervisors to hear. The Board has in the past given a deaf ear to similar pleas from other small towns, like Shafter. However, Shafter did not take their “dairy invasion” to the ballot box, and the Board of Supervisors approved new dairies, and 50,000 and some cows, without

any sort of buffer zone, for the area. In fact, the Supervisors denied the requests of Shafter school and city officials for a three mile buffer zone from the dairies. Shafter residents now live a dramatically different life than they did three years ago. Fly infestations, foul odors, headaches, nausea, and higher asthma rates have plagued the small town since then. Wasco residents do not want to have that happen to them.

There have been two community meetings in Wasco to discuss this issue. The first was a Senate Select Sub-Committee hearing convened by Senator Dean Florez (D – Shafter), whose own experiences with dairies overrunning his home town have led him to become a champion for clean air. The second meeting was held on the evening of August 12. Residents had the chance to hear from environmental agencies, physicians, dairy consultants, and concerned residents, about how the dairies might impact the area’s air, water, health, and economy.

After attending the meeting, it is clear to me that Wasco residents do not want to risk contaminating their water, polluting their air, and damaging their health, for the benefit of a few dairy owners. Kathy, a resident of Wasco is most concerned that the city is exactly downwind of the proposed sites. She is optimistic that County officials will hear the plight of Wasco and act.

Unfortunately, recent actions by the Kern Supervisors make us think the contrary might happen. On August 28, the Supervisors voted 3-2 against a moratorium on new dairies, and in favor of processing the 24 pending dairy applications (nine of which are destined for Wasco). Individual applications still may be denied, though we will have to wait and see.

By the way, these are not local dairy-people that want to come into town; these are dairy-people that have been kicked out of Chino Hills in Southern California after severely polluting the area.

Not your “Mom-n-Pop” Dairy

A few fun facts about new industrial sized mega-dairies:

- There are thousands and tens of thousands of cows.
- Each cow releases about **120lb** of excrement a DAY!
- Dairy farms have manure lagoons—not for swimming!— that are as large as football fields (uncovered and releasing odors and chemical into the air).
- Nitrates and other chemicals from the urine and manure contaminate the air in the form of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) which cause smog, & in the form of ammonia, which causes Particulate Matter (PM).
- Large dairies can also contaminate water. Surface water and ground water nitrate levels get to be above the safe level, and the water can become too salty to grow crops (salinization).

To see a fun animation on the internet about contained animal facilities check out: www.meatrix.com.



Fresno Metro Ministry Board Members and Staff are available to speak in your congregation...

Metro staff are available to address topics including: hunger and nutrition in Fresno County, community gardens; air quality, dynamics of communication and relationships across cultures, and theology and public policy related to California’s working poor.

We are also willing to participate in your congregation’s worship service. If you would like to invite Metro staff to address your adult education program, or to visit your congregation, please contact Carmen Pauls Wiens at ph. 485-1416 or by e-mail at

Carmen@fresnometmin.org

Metro Ministry Updates

Rev. Walt Parry, Executive Director

"Working together
to build a
better community"

New Members Join Metro Board Under Leadership of Tony Gonzalez

Nineteen members of Metro's Board of Directors crowded into Metro's Conference Room August 26 for the Board's second meeting since new members joined July 1. The new Board members include The Reverend Steve Ratzlaff, pastor of Menonite Community Church and Attorney Patience Milrod, a member of Temple Beth Israel. Maureen Moore is principal at Sequoia Middle School. Hengameh Akhtar of the Islamic Cultural Center works at Children's Hospital, and Ruth Obel Jorgenson is a Graduate Student in Social Work at California State University, Fresno. Jim

Grant is a member of St. Paul Newman Center and hosts the Grapevine and New Forum For Better Understanding on Channel 49 KNXT. Dr. Jane Middleton is Chair of the Fresno State Department of Social Work.

Board members began the August session by each telling something about their name. That's the first question in Metro's Cross-Cultural Cluster curriculum. Tony Gonzales is the Board's new President, and Rev. Floyd Quenzer is Vice-president. Pat Pickford is Secretary, Alan Peters is Treasurer, and Forouz Radnejad is Development Officer. These officers make up the Ex-

Metro's 34th Anniversary and Awards Dinner

will be held on Thursday, December 2, 2004 at Hope Lutheran Church. Join us in honoring Ralph and Polly Victor, Honorable Carla Jo Dakin and Ed Perez, Assemblywoman Sarah Reyes, Sr. Ruth Marie Nickerson, and the Hope Lutheran Church. To sponsor the event or place an ad or message in the Anniversary Dinner Program, contact Carmen@fresnetmin.org.

ecutive Committee. Other Board members are Rev. Lu Parks, Mary Ellen Clay, Rev. Pierre St. Fleur, Rev. Bryan Jessup, Laurie Labbitt, Susan Moran, Francine Oputa, Alice Rocha, Ruthann Evans, Rev. Mike Rogers, Dr. Vida Samiian, and Dr. Terry Winant.

Task Group to Be Created to Explore Heart Hospital Issues

Is the cardiac surgery unit at non-profit Fresno Community Hospital being sacrificed to save the life of the for-profit Fresno Heart Hospital? That's a question that has been informally discussed for several months.

Community Medical Centers' hospitals provide more charity care than any hospital in Fresno. CMC has the County contract for Indigent Care, and is 51% owner of the for-profit Fresno Heart Hospital. The for-profit heart hospital does not serve uninsured patients, nor patients with only Medi-Cal. Fresno Community Hospital accepts heart surgery patients from all payer mixes -

private insurance, Medi-Cal, Medically Indigent (MISP), and totally uninsured.

The cardiac department at Fresno Community Hospital has traditionally been a primary money-maker for the non-profit's total operation. But things may be changing. Does the recent merger of Fresno Community Hospital's and Fresno Heart Hospital's heart surgery nursing staffs help or hurt the services at Fresno Community Hospital? The two hospital's share the same Surgery Group, whose members are investors in the for-profit. How does their availability or lack of availability at the downtown site affect the long-term capa-

bility of Fresno Community Hospital to meet low-income medical needs? Does the surgery equipment purchased by the non-profit and transferred to the for-profit place Fresno Community Hospital at risk? Are insured patients who prefer to have surgery at Fresno Community Hospital being diverted to the Fresno Heart Hospital?

The length of time that Medi-Cal, MISP, and uninsured patients have to wait for heart surgery at Fresno Community Hospital is another question. If it is true that all financial losses at Fresno Heart Hospital are covered by

Continued on page 9.

Hospital Issues (cont. from p. 8)

Community Medical Centers but that all profits are shared on a 51% - 49% basis between CMC and private investors, does that place Fresno Community Hospital at an even greater disadvantage?

To determine the impact upon the ability of Fresno Community Hospital to provide long-term heart care and surgery for those not fully insured or insured through Medi-Cal, a task force will be formed through the Local Health Care Coalition. Leadership from Community Medical Centers will be invited to either be a part of the task force or to meet with the task force. Anyone who has an interest in the topic is invited to contact the Metro office at phone 485-1416 or

metromin@fresnetmin.org.

Grants End, Grants Begin

The California Endowment's three-year grant to Fresno Metro Ministry for its health care advocacy and its New Leaders for Better Health ended July 31. Metro is reapplying to the Endowment for a smaller grant that will take the New Leaders project to its next level, helping New Leaders navigate and improve the health care system that is intended to serve them. During 2004 Metro received a three-year program grant from the California Wellness Foundation, and a one-year grant from the Women's Foundation of California and from Kirsch Foundation, all related to air quality. Funds have also been received from Kaiser Permanente for health and hunger/nutrition projects. Metro has funding this year from First Five of

Fresno County and from the California Health Care Foundation for the planning for expansion of insurance coverage so that all children can be insured. The California Nutrition Network's funding for our Hunger and Nutrition project is completed the end of this month, but the U.S.D.A. funding continues through September of 2005. Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger, California Food Policy Advocates, and Mental Health Joint Powers Authority provide project revenue. We appreciate all those organizations that partner with us in fulfilling our community goals. Of course we also appreciate the ongoing support of individuals and congregations.

METRO BOARD AND LOCAL HEALTH CARE COALITION ENDORSE PROPOSITION 72

A "yes" vote on Proposition 72 on the November ballot will give the state the "go-ahead" to implement Senate Bill 2 that passed the legislature and was signed into law by former Governor Davis in the last weeks of his administration. A "no" vote on 72 will repeal SB2 before it is implemented.

SB2 has three parts. Part 1 requires employers with 200 or more employees to provide health care insurance to its employees and their dependents, or to pay into a state pool that will provide health care insurance. This part would be implemented in January of 2006. Part 2 requires employers of 50 to 199 employees to provide health care insurance to their employees, or pay into a state fund, beginning in January of 2007. However, it

does not require them to provide coverage for employee dependents. The enactment of Part 3 requiring employers of 20 to 49 employees to offer coverage to their employees, not dependents, will be dependent upon the state providing subsidies to partially offset employer cost.

Both the Metro Board and the Local Health Care Coalition expressed their support of Proposition 72 reasoning that its passage will expand the number of Californians who will newly secure health care insurance. The Central Valley Health Policy Institute in its August 2004 Policy Brief projects that 89,5000 San Joaquin Valley workers would get insurance under part 1, 24,000 under part two, and 28,500 under part three, for a total of 142,000.



The coalition supports Proposition 72 as the best we can get at this time. However, members regret that the proposition does not fix a broken, expensive, and fragmented health care system. They reason that what we really need is governmental or non-profit health insurance for everyone accompanied by a health care delivery system of private and public providers that can make appropriate preventive, primary, and acute care accessible to all populations.

Other health-related propositions on the November ballot include funding for Children's Hospitals, mental health, and Emergency Medical Services.

Healthy School Environment Policy Committee (continued from page 4)

and developing the policy recommendations for Fresno Unified School District. The commitment is to a diversity of stakeholders and community members creating a positive Fresno solution to a complicated problem.

Confirmed Stakeholders on the Healthy School Environment Policy Committee: (the balance will be appointed by 8/23, when school begins): Chairperson: Helen Jones, MD, President of the Fresno/Madera Medical Society; Students; Parent: Deborah Johnson, PTA President; Alicia Infantes, Burroughs School Parent; FUSD Site Administrator: Principal Bob Reyes, Fresno High; FUSD District Administrator: TBA; FUSD Food Services: Billie Richardson, FUSD Food Services Director; Physical Education: Joe Herzog, Chair, Region 28 CAHPERD/Fresno Alliance for PE and Athletics/Mayor's Fitness

Council; Nurse: Barbara Miller, R.N., FUSD School Nurse; Physician: Dr. Robb Smith, Internist; Dentist: Clarence Chau, DDS; Hospitals: LeeAnn Parry, Kaiser Permanente; Counselor: Kathy Phillips, FUSD Mental Health Coordinator; Teacher's Union: Brenda Emerson, Fresno Teacher's Association; Public Health: Ed Moreno, MD – Fresno County Public Health Officer; Kathleen Grassi, Community Health; Education/Research: Dr. Constance Schneider, CSUF; School Finance/Contracting: Frank Morales, FUSD; Community Based Organization: Edie Jessup, Fresno Metro Ministry Hunger & Nutrition Project; Brandi Caporusso, American Cancer Society; Nutrition Education Collaborative: Vera Ibarra, UCCE, Fresno-Ca. Nutrition Education; Sharon Owyang FUSD Nutrition Projects; Registered Dietician: Angel Ponce, RD, Central Ca. Die-

tetic Association; Farming Community: Gwen Huff, Community Alliance with Family Farmers; Local Government: Cynthia Sterling, City Council Member District 3; Sue Swanbeck, Pre-Cal. School Employee Association.

We are thankful for the foresight of the FUSD Board and Administration in proactively addressing this issue, and involving the community in making this possible. We would also like to thank the large number of community, school organizations, and individuals who worked on this request and supported the adoption of a Healthy School Environment Policy Committee. Each Stakeholder will convene study/recommendation groups for input to the Healthy School Environment Committee on policy issues. For further information, contact Fresno Metro Ministry, at 485-1416, or on the web at www.fresnometroministry.org.

— Edie Jessup and Phoua Moua

Metro Welcomes Socorro Gaeta (continued from page 6)

parents to teach those classes. In 1998, it was Socorro and a handful of others, including the Principal of Jefferson Elementary whom she considers a great friend, that successfully advocated for a classroom for parents at Jefferson, similar to those at other schools in the District. The Jefferson Community Based English Tutoring (CBET) has become one of Metro's groups for New Leaders for Better Health. In fact, it was through New Leaders that we met Socorro. When Socorro was

working part time for One by One Leadership, she found out about the New Leaders for Better Health meetings and brought community members from the Jefferson area to participate. At Metro, she will be working with Carolina on the Environmental Health Program, teaching others about how air pollution affects our health, and what we can do about it. Socorro is a mother of six, and has a loving husband of thirty-three years. We are all very excited to be working with Socorro and look forward to learning a lot from her this year.

Reflections (continued from page 2)

thank me for this service. When they leave it is with a little more joy and a bounce in their step. The following morning during a routine check of my voicemail I received a message with the two little girls singing a song in Spanish and yelling thank you's into the phone. The mother then gets on the phone to once again express her gratitude.

This is a day when your belly fills with the joys of the world, and you are grateful for the work that you are able to do.

— Carmen Arambula

New Leaders (cont. from front page)

the major accomplishments of the New Leaders in the past months has been their role in providing summer lunch, a much-needed meal, to fifty off-track children each day at Burroughs Elementary School. Josefina Bernabe, New Leader from Burroughs, said: "Thank you Metro Ministry for these many opportunities, because of this program we have been able to manage a school lunch site at Burroughs Elementary for the summer, and this has been a great help to the families that need this service from my community."



Liab Lis hab Liag Vaaj tau txais dclaim ntawv Certificates of Recognition rua obtug txuj kev txawbnqaa hab kev ua nyob rua Hunger Action Day huv Sacramento thaus lub 5 Hlis.

Lia Lee and Liag Vang with certificates of recognition for their participation on Hunger Action Day in Sacramento in May.

Fresno Metro Ministry is applying for a grant that will fund a project where New Leaders will navigate and improve the health care system that is intended to serve them.

New Leaders for Better Health is a project sponsored by Fresno Metro Ministry in cooperation with CBET Burroughs, Fresno Adult School Cesar Chavez, Fresno Interdenominational Ministries (FIRM), Fresno Center for New Americans, FUSD Parent Engagement Center, Fresno Health Consumer Center, Fresno County, Families First, Fresno Barrios Unidos, and CBET Jefferson. Funding for Fresno Metro Ministry's Health Care Project has been provided by The California Endowment, Fresno Metro Ministry donors and supporting congregations, Kaiser Permanente and St. Agnes Medical Center. Air quality issues addressed through New Leaders received funding from the California Wellness Foundation, the Women's Foundation, and the Kirsch Foundation.



"Las clases de la liderazgo me han ayudado a enterarme de los problemas en nuestra comunidad, y cómo puedo ser parte de la solución."

"The advocacy classes have helped me become aware of the problems in our community, and how I can do my part to solve them."

— Alicia Infante

Save the date:

Crop Walk to End Hunger

Sunday, October 24

To participate, contact edie@fresnetmin.org

Thanksgiving Concert

Sunday, November 21

To become a friend of the concert, contact Carmen@fresnetmin.org

Metro's 34th Anniversary and Awards Dinner

Thursday, December 2

For information on advertising and sponsorship options, contact Carmen@fresnetmin.org.



Conversation with Dave Schlicher (cont. from back cover)

Transformation at Eastern Mennonite University. Join us in welcoming Dave and Anne to College Community Congregational Church, the Fresno Metro Ministry network of friends and advocates, and to the Fresno community!

Social Justice Curriculum Available for your Congregation.

The California Council of Churches and Catholic Charities of California present a six-week curriculum "First Fruits for California's Working Poor" for use in congregations. Topics include: Personal and Theological Values, Public Policy, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKS). More information and copies of the curriculum are available through Fresno Metro Ministry. Contact Carmen@fresnetmin.org or phone 485-1416.

Conversation with Pastor Dave Schlicher



**Anne W. Jenny and
Dave Schlicher**

Rev. Dave Schlicher began in June as pastor at the College Community Congregational Church, United Church of

Christ. Following a “first career” in the field of engineering, Dave trained for the ministry at Iliff School of Theology in Denver. “I felt a call to the ministry over a long period of time,” Dave recalls. “The social justice witness is one of the areas which really turned me on to the church. There is so much more to the church than one hour on Sunday mornings. Instead, the ministry of the church, for pastors and lay persons alike, is what gives meaning, direction and purpose for our days.”

Since 1989, Dave has served congregations in Englewood, Colorado, on the Island of Kauai, Hawaii; and in Hagerstown, Maryland. Dave is new to the Fresno community, but not a stranger to social justice issues. His excitement about getting involved with church and community response to local social justice issues is obvious. “I am excited to be in a leadership role at College Community Congregational Church, learning and becoming part of the Fresno community. I am excited for new opportunities to work with other committed people. Involvement

with the social justice aspects of ministry – this is where I am personally fed.”

Dave attended Metro’s Annual Meeting in June, and was impressed with the broad range of participation across denominations and faith backgrounds. “You really have the sense of bringing the community together.” He also appreciates Metro’s emphasis on a wide range of issues in the community, especially the focus on air quality. “Many people probably do not view air pollution as a social justice issue. But when you consider the disparities in availability of healthcare to treat even basic health concerns related to poor air quality (like asthma), and disparities in where air pollution is at its worst, it is clearly a social justice problem.”

What does Dave see as the greatest needs in term of social justice in the Fresno Community? “As a newcomer, I am just learning about the Fresno area and needs in this community, but I think there are two underlying questions which people concerned with social justice are facing everywhere, including in Fresno. One is the question of war and peace, brought to the fore these days in the conflict with Iraq. The basic issue here is what kind of country are we going to be? The direction of our country troubles me greatly.

“The second basic question people concerned with social justice face everywhere is this: What about the distribution of

world harvest? What about the disparities between those who have and want *more*, and those who don’t have and want access to *any*. This ties into the question of war and peace.

“These are the two basic questions people concerned with social justice are asking everywhere. We don’t recognize how much we benefit from inequality. We benefit from low food prices because people who produce the food do not get paid much. We benefit from goods being manufactured overseas because this keeps the prices down. We participate in these systems and cannot claim to be innocent.”

Dave’s spouse, Anne W. Jenny, is a native of Pennsylvania. She is a commissioned minister in the United Church of Christ, a certified mediator, and pursuing an M.A. in Conflict

Continued inside on page 11.



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**Working together to build a
better community.**