

California Center for Civic Participation
Statewide Youth Advocate Network for Sustainable Communities
May 20 – 22, 2012

Southern California Kaiser HEAL Zone youth had the unique opportunity to travel to Sacramento and meet with their local representatives to share their strategies on how to create sustainable communities. On May 20, 2012 students from the Hollywood High School Healthy School Partnership joined their peers from the Long Beach, Ontario and Riverside HEAL Zones at the California Center for Civic Participation (CCCP) Statewide Youth Advocate Network for Sustainable Communities (YANSC) conference. The mission of CCCP is to empower youth to be vital participants in decision making processes at all levels. The three day convening culminated in a presentation to elected officials at the State Capitol. The group shared their top priority strategies in the areas of transportation, land use, food access and education for creating sustainable communities.



Top Left to Right: Jose Bautista (Riverside), Catherine Duran (Riverside), Jason Hernandez (Ontario), Issac Leyva(Ontario) and Linda Hernandez (Ontario). Bottom Left to Right: Chris Zermeno (Long Beach), Leonarda Lara (Long Beach), Dulce Gutierrez (HHS), Yasuein Reyes (HHS), Isaiah Blevirs (Long Beach) and Nadia Smita (HHS). Not pictured Andrea Leanna (Riverside).

In preparation for the presentation at the State Capitol, the youth worked together to develop their vision for sustainable communities. They interviewed policymakers and statewide advocates with expertise in food systems, land use and community design, transportation, and education to deepen their understanding of the steps needed to create sustainable communities, and to propose polices to advance their vision. Although the presentations were based on research, the participants also shared personal stories from their communities. The Hollywood High contingent presented on the food panel,

and stressed the saturation of unhealthy food establishments surrounding the school remained a significant challenge in the school's efforts to promote a safe and healthy environment.

Following their presentation to policymakers, all participants had the opportunity for face-to-face meetings with their local representatives and offered their perspectives on the creation of healthy, active environments for community residents. Senator Curren D. Price Jr. met with the students from Hollywood High School. Senator Bill Emerson met with the youth of Eastside Riverside. Senator Alan S. Lowenthal met with the youth from North Long Beach. The youth from Ontario met with a representative from Senator Gloria Negrete McLeod's office.



Nadia, Senator Price, Dulce and Yasuein from Hollywood High School.



Catherine, Senator Emerson and Jose from Riverside.



Chris, Leonarda, Senator Lowenthal, Isiah and Jenifer from Long Beach.

A two day planning process prior to the presentations proved inspirational to the Southern California Kaiser HEAL Zone group, as they worked side-by-side with their more experience peers from across the State. The East Bay, Fresno, Santa Ana, and Sacramento youth have been active in the YANSC program since 2011. The students will continue to meet throughout the next year to work on healthy eating and active living issues in their HEAL Zone communities, with a goal of expanding participation within their HEAL Zone sites and spreading their model to new locations.



Ruth (HHS), Catherine & Jose (Riverside), Yasuen, Dulce, Nadia and Ryan (HHS) in front of Capitol Hill.



Jason, Virginia, Issac and Linda from Ontario in front of Capitol Park.