



Alameda County District 5 Fall Newsletter

# Supervisor Keith Carson

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## All Politics are Local: The Impact of Health Reform at Home

For months now we've been hearing the endless and confusing debate about health insurance reform. Right now there are so many different plans and options on the table that the public is having a hard time figuring out what is actually being discussed. At the time of writing, there are 12 proposals (<http://www.kff.org/healthreform/sidebyside.cfm>) in Congress, they vary widely and are plagued by misconceptions over their key elements.

According to the California Health Interview Survey in 18% of Alameda County residents are uninsured and 20% are on public insurance programs such as Medi-Cal and Healthy Families, most of these people are employed, they are the "working poor". Approximately 30% of Alameda County's working uninsured population are employed by small businesses, which don't offer health insurance or offer coverage that is too expensive. These uninsured Alameda County residents turn to our safety net of community clinics and hospitals for free and low-cost health care.

health programs, the community clinics and hospitals local governments ensure that those who do not have access to health insurance still have access to care. All of these programs cost money, and in these times of economic crisis local governments are struggling to make ends meet

just like individuals except as the economy gets worse the need for healthcare and other county services grows. Local governments just don't have the money to meet the demand. If everyone had access to health care then the County would not have to worry about trying to fill in the gap for

those who don't.

We in County government know that our whole community would do better if everyone had access to health care, especially during times like these. We try to be there for those in our community

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## The Transformative Manhood Group: Helping Young Men Become Positive Contributors to our Communities

On Tuesdays, the Mentoring Center hosts The Transformative Manhood Group where young men, listen, talk, learn and share; the goal is to understand what it takes to be a responsible young man. The program helps

young men learn about life and making the right decisions by sharing their ideas and concerns with men older than them who have walked in their shoes. The sessions are a combination of history lessons, chillin' out, skill building and

a dose of common sense.

The Lead Facilitator Achebe Hoskins sees the program as a way to assist young men in their journey to adulthood by recognizing the principles and

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# Ready to Learn Fun Fair

4th Annual

Saturday October 10, 2009  
Manzanita Community / SEED School  
2409 E. 27th Street, Oakland

FREE BOOKS, RESOURCES & GAMES  
MEET CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG  
& WYATT FROM SUPER WHY!

FREE FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY



10AM-1PM

Local government is responsible for maintaining the safety net. Through public



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## Our Future Workforce



Early childhood education is the cornerstone to building a foundation for a child's educational experiences and their future contribution to the workforce.

According to H.T. Epstein, a psychological researcher, early childhood development has revealed that 75 percent of brain growth occurs between birth and the age of 6 and that without sufficient mental stimulation,

children may fail to develop the brain synapses that facilitate learning throughout their lives .

Preparing children so that they are socially, emotionally, and academically ready to learn is the gateway toward success. Educating parents about different options to assist them in selecting child care programs, kindergarten and other educational resources is essential to helping our youth to reach their full potential. Many families lack access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education

programs. Today, only 58 percent of all 3 and 4 year-olds are in pre-kindergarten, family day care, or some type of Head Start program.

The challenge of identifying resources that assist in enhancing a child's educational experience can be a bit overwhelming for some families. In understanding the need to provide supportive services to families, on Saturday October 10<sup>th</sup>, our office will host the Fourth Annual Ready to Learn Fun Fair at Manzanita Community/

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*Health Care Reform... continued from page 1*



who have nowhere left to turn but we cannot handle it along any longer. We need the support of the federal government.

Any federal reform plan will be implemented at the local level, most specifically by counties. We will be responsible for making sure that the

changes required by reform are carried out. Since the responsibility of protecting the public's health and providing health care to all those who have no other option belongs to the County the County is in the trenches of health care delivery and financing, it is essential that we let our federal lawmakers know what is needed and what will work. Local government's voice must be at the table to ensure that national health reform truly serves the needs of the people. Federal health insurance reform must reduce costs for

individuals, businesses and government, guarantee choice including a public option and ensure quality care for all. This month the topic of my podcast "Information is Power" will be health insurance reform. Don't miss the lively discussion on the hottest topic today about the latest developments in Washington, the details of the plans in Congress and how we here in Alameda County will benefit. You can subscribe through iTunes or go to the podcast section at [www.acgov.org/board/district5](http://www.acgov.org/board/district5).

## Alameda County and the California Highway Patrol Team-up to Support Seniors

Stretching, eating healthy, staying calm and driving defensively are just some of the reminders given to participants at the West Oakland Senior Center during the California Highway Patrol's Senior Driver Traffic Safety Seminar on Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup>. The seminar, sponsored by Alameda County District 5 and State Farm Insurance, is a peer-facilitated presentation about normal age-

related physical changes and how to adjust to become better, safer, and more alert drivers in order to continue enjoying the freedom that driving allows. The California Highway Patrol Senior Volunteer Program and the Alameda County Public Health's Senior Injury Prevention Program presented the seminar.



Back row (left to right): Arthur Cossey, Capt. Don Morell, Officer Sam Morgan, and Officer Thomas Wishom  
Front row (left to right): Colleen Campbell, Jovine Hankins, Frank Young, and Matt Lifschiz

## Federal Stimulus Dollars Prepare Youth for Employment

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 14<sup>th</sup> 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.

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.

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



Photo (above) – "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 14<sup>th</sup> Annual South East Asian Youth Leadership Empowerment Conference.

### *Transformative Manhood... continued from page 1*

practices of manhood. Everyday issues of pop culture and fashion are examined and dissected. The topic of discussion during one meeting was "sagging." "Why do you young brothas walk around with your pants sagging" was a question raised by Darcell Harrison a Facilitator for the group. The general response was cause it's cool or I don't know, many young people found themselves struggling to defend the fashion statement, allowing the adults in the room to inform the youth about the history of sagging. For those who didn't know (like me) sagging started in jail, certain inmates were not given belts, and thus the tops of their pants were hard to keep above their bottoms.

The sagging lesson is only one example of what makes the program successful, instructors promise the young people that the discussions will be relevant. Those that were there for the sagging lesson are

forced to contemplate if they want to facilitate the jailhouse culture on the outside, and if so what message does that send to other people and what are the ramifications. Balance in the lessons are key, successful African Americans and



Africans are highlighted, well known and not so well known successes in African American history are also talked about. Young men are taught that those that have gone before them were able to persevere in spite of overwhelming obstacles. These men were intelligent, fearless and pillars of our community,

there are role models and examples to follow.

Exploring the relationships young men have with adults is discussed consistently. What is going on in your household that you don't like? Does it cause you to act out? Is that the best way to handle it? What about the women in your lives? How would you feel if someone treated your mom as badly as you treat your girlfriend? These are all serious issues which are explored from every angle and designed to have all the participants ask themselves what kind of man am I, and what kind of man do I want to be in the future.

There is no shortage of negative images or press about young people in our communities today. Yet the Transformative Manhood group is turning out leaders who are ready to be positive contributors to the community.

## Internship Opportunities

Internship opportunities are available for college and high school students year round. Our internships provide individuals with a chance to learn how the Alameda County Board of Supervisors create public policy and become involved with Alameda County services such as: health care, social services, public protection, youth, the environment and other public policy issues. In addition, working in the District 5 office gives individuals a chance to see how county government functions and the connections with federal, state and other local levels of government.

The internship provides valuable experience that employers look for and presents an opportunity to network with some of Alameda County's key decision makers including elected officials, community and business leaders.

Some of the duties include but are not limited to: constituent outreach and problem solving, attend meetings on various issues, data entry, issue research, writing letters and commendations, and a variety of other tasks consistent with a government and political environment.

## Boards & Commissions Vacancies

We are currently accepting applications from residents in the Fifth Supervisorial District who are interested in serving on a countywide board or commission. The Fifth District encompasses North and West Oakland, Montclair, Rockridge, Trestle Glen, portions of the Fruitvale and San Antonio District, and the cities of Piedmont, Berkeley, Emeryville, and Albany. The following is a list of boards and commissions that have vacancies:

### **Alameda County Advisory Commission on Aging / 1 Vacancy**

*Provide services to elderly and assist and advice in allocation of funds for the Area Agency on Aging*

Meeting Time: 9:30am, 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 6955 Foothill Blvd, Suite 300, Oakland

### **Commission on the Status of Women / 1 Vacancy**

*Represents the women of Alameda County in an effort to target issues affecting women and maximize social equality for women of all ages.*

Meeting Time: 5:30 p.m., 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 2406 66<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Oakland, CA 94605

**If you are interested in applying for an internship or any Boards or Commissions send a resume and cover letter to: Mina Sanchez**

**1221 Oak Street, Suite 536, Oakland, CA 94612**

or [mina.sanchez@acgov.org](mailto:mina.sanchez@acgov.org)

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SEED School in Oakland. The event will be an opportunity for parents to receive information about programs and services that assist with the challenges of identifying child care programs, preschools and key support programs that promote healthy learning and environments for children to excel. This event is in partnership with First Five Alameda County and the KQED PBS Kids Raising Readers. Clifford the Big Red Dog and Wyatt of Super Why will both be in attendance and in addition there will be fun activities for children.

Early care and education is an investment in the economy and future workforce. The business community of the future requires an even more highly-educated and skilled workforce than is already in existence. Early educational

experiences such as participation in pre-school continue to be a fundamental step to reaching the goal of creating a well prepared workforce. According to the



National Institute for Early Education Research, children in early education programs aligned with the educational goals of early elementary school are more likely to graduate from high school and become productive members of their communities. They are also less likely to

have children during teenage years or become engaged in the criminal justice system. We must invest in our young people in order to have a competent workforce and vibrant communities. Alameda County's growth and prosperity are assured only if the next generation of children are even better educated and prepared than the current generation. Working to ensure that children have access to a quality early care and education system is critical, which will evidently lead to promising gains in future economic productivity.

For more information about the Ready to Learn Fun Fair on October 10, 2009 call (510) 272-6695.