

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom Center Visits the Central Valley

The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center, a youth leadership organization, visited Fresno on a four state tour, discussing issues on how to build a stronger democracy during the economic and education crisis.

Last week, high school and college students on a fact-finding journey visited many of Fresno's community organizations to learn more about how the economic crisis impacts residents here.

"I like that we get to learn about real issues that are happening in our communities that are affecting us as a people and that we get to speak out about the problems that we see and also connect with other organizations," says Stephanie Martinez, a 21 year old Chabot College student in Hayward, California.

On Monday and Tuesday they met with several community-based organizations, including Barrios Unidos, Service Employees International Union, The Fresno Alliance, The American Civil Liberties Union and Peace Fresno.

"While we were in Fresno we attended a tour of the Homeless Enchantment," explained 19 year old Eric Fuller, member of the MLK Freedom Center. "They were welcoming and they showed us that even in hard times they can keep their spirits up with a smile on their faces."

The students are hosted in Fresno by The Boys and Girls Clubs of Fresno County. The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center and the Institute for Community Leadership prepare youth ambassadors to

apply non-violence leadership in fostering peace, constructing community and strengthening democracy

"It's important that people that have been put to sleep be awake," says Jabari Lachaux, who will be a freshman at Merritt College this fall. "In times of oppression and in times when revolution is needed, we all need to come together and learn that our voices are weapons of creating change."

Based in Alameda County, The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center operates through its nearby high schools where administrators select students they feel exemplify the leadership skills needed to affect the lives of their classmates and their surrounding communities.

"In other words, if that selected individual led the way others would follow," says Roy Wilson, Program Director of The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center. "We then hold voluntary democracy and non-violence classes, and then from there the students advance to our second year of classes which are held outside of the school."

This 9-year old 'individual transformation program' founded by Congresswoman Barbara Lee, follows Dr. King's practice of nonviolence. The students and members work primarily throughout Alameda County. However, they have developed ties up and down the West Coast. They are currently on a seven week tour they have dubbed 'Economic Crisis + Education Crisis = Teach-ins for a Stronger Democracy.'



Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom Center youth meet with Brunette and Dian with HEAT to discuss the injustices happening in South West Fresno.



Jebari, Eric, and Stephanie



Dr. Sudarshan Kapoor, Nonviolence and Social Work Professor at Fresno State University, gives the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Youth a tour of the Fresno State University Peace Garden.

Poor Hispanic, Black Children Have Greater Health Hurdles Than White Children

BY NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHILDREN IN POVERTY

NEW YORK – Among poor children in America, race and ethnicity are significant indicators for outcomes regarding a host of health-related issues, including birth weight, exposure to lead, and access to adequate food and medical care.

A new report from the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), a policy research center at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, examines how the health of poor children varies by race and ethnicity. For example, say the NCCP researchers, "Hispanic households are significantly more likely to be food insecure (51 percent versus 36 percent for non-Hispanic whites and 35 percent for non-Hispanic blacks)."

Some other findings:

- Poor black children are twice as likely as poor Hispanic and white children to have levels of lead in their blood of at least 2.5 micrograms per deciliter (33 percent versus 17 and 13 percent).

- Twice as many poor Hispanic children have no place to go for healthcare when sick, compared to poor black and white children (10 versus six and five percent).

- Low birth-weight births are highest among poor black children (20 percent), followed by white (15 percent) and Hispanic (12 percent) children.

- Poor black children are more likely than poor white or Hispanic children to have been diagnosed with asthma (25 percent versus 16 percent and 13 percent).

- Among children ages 2 to 17, Hispanic children are most likely to be overweight (19 versus 13 percent for whites and 14 for blacks) and obese (21 versus 17 and 18 percent).

- There are some exceptions. For example, second-hand smoke exposure is higher among poor white children:

- Mothers of poor white children from birth to 15 years old are much more likely to smoke when pregnant than mothers of poor black and Hispanic children (41 versus 18 and eight percent) so their children or substantially more likely to be exposed to cigarette smoke.

The NCCP report *Who Are America's Poor Children? Examining Health Disparities by Race and Ethnicity* is available free online at: http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_1032.html.

-30-

The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) is the nation's leading public policy center dedicated to promoting the economic security, health and well-being of America's low-income families and children. Part of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, NCCP uses research to inform policy and practice with the goal of ensuring positive outcomes for the next generation.

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Senior Energy Assistance Expo

Nonprofit and government agencies will be available to help you pay your past due bill, discuss weatherization options for your home, provide energy education and conservation and rebate information. Additional information on social services such as food bank, housing, medical and rental assistance will be on hand.

Where: Cashman Center
850 Las Vegas Blvd. North, Hall A

When: Saturday, August 13, 2011
From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- TO RECEIVE PROJECT REACH ASSISTANCE:**
- ▶ You must not have received energy assistance in the previous 12 months
 - ▶ You must be a permanent residential customer of NV Energy who is at least 62 years of age or older
 - ▶ Your NV Energy bill must be in your name and you must live at the address for which assistance is requested
 - ▶ The Maximum Project REACH award is \$500
 - ▶ The maximum annual gross income of your household must be within the guidelines below:

Household Size	Maximum Annual Gross Income
1-2	\$ 41,800
3	\$ 47,050
4	\$ 52,300
5	\$ 56,200
6	\$ 60,650
Each Additional	\$ 4,200

DOCUMENTS TO BRING TO THE EVENT:

- ▶ Nevada driver license or Nevada State ID
- ▶ Your past due NV Energy electric bill in need of payment
- ▶ Proof of income or pending income. "Cash Only" applicants must provide one of the following:
 - Letter from the employer on company letterhead
 - Current bank statement showing recent deposit activity
 - Current income tax records

IMPORTANT CONDITIONS:

- ▶ If you receive energy assistance and have an unpaid balance remaining, you **must** make payment arrangements for the balance at the event.
- ▶ The energy assistance awarded at this event cannot be used to pay on closed accounts or transferred accounts, deposits, returned check fees and charges, meter damage charges, fraudulent usage fees or final bills.
- ▶ The energy assistance you are awarded cannot be used to restore service if it has been terminated due to non-payment or because of a default in payment arrangements.

Remember to bring your parking coupon for **FREE PARKING** on **Saturday, August 13, 2011**

Anyone who has received energy assistance in the previous 12 months is not eligible to receive Project REACH assistance at this event.



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