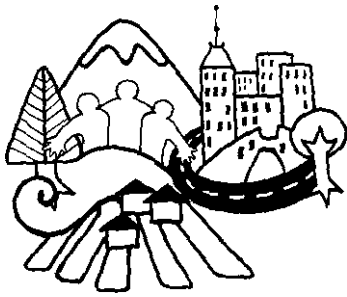


# FRESNO METRO MINISTRY

## NEWS AND VIEWS



APRIL 2002

### Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP) Saved

Currently the CHDP program provides services to approximately 1.1 million children in California. Fresno is the fifth largest provider of CHDP services in California. In fiscal year 1998-99, Fresno County served 97,535 children through this program. The program provides preventive care and well-child exams from birth through 19 years of age.

The program was targeted to be eliminated by Governor Davis who believed that more children could access health care through the Medi-Cal and Healthy Families program.

The impact to Fresno County would have been detrimental. In a recent report for fiscal year 2000-2001, Fresno County provided a total of 141, 937 CHDP visits. Of the 141, 937 visits, 37,502 visits were not covered through Medi-Cal. Many of these children would not have been able to access Medi-Cal, Healthy Families or other insurance in order to receive preventive health services. There are 113 sites where Fresno County children can receive these preventive health services. This is one of the few programs where children can access care through private physicians, community clinics, public health clinics and schools. 92 private physicians in Fresno County provide CHDP services to children who otherwise could not be seen in a private office.

Governor Davis directed the Department of Health Services (DHS) to convene a workgroup to

create a comprehensive plan to maximize the number of CHDP children who enroll in Medi-Cal and/or Healthy Families. A more comprehensive health plan has been developed that preserves CHDP and makes CHDP an effective gateway to Medi-Cal and Healthy Families by the following measures:

Building on existing technology, an Internet system can be developed by the State to allow an application for CHDP to also serve as the application for the Healthy Families Program and Medi-Cal. In addition to providing CHDP services, this system can be used to pre-enroll eligible children into Healthy Families and Medi-Cal for 60 days and start the application process for the Healthy Families and Medi-Cal.

Instead of CHDP services now being fully paid by the State, federal matching funds will be available using this system. Using CHDP as a gateway to Healthy Families and Medi-Cal will enable 760,000 children to receive full health care coverage through Healthy Families or Medi-Cal. Children who are not eligible for HFP or Medi-Cal would receive comprehensive coverage during the 60-day pre-enrollment period and would continue to receive CHDP services after that.

Without a doubt, this plan will greatly improve utilization of CHDP, Healthy Families and/or Medi-Cal services and improves health care access to more children!



## JOB OPENING

### Experienced Fund Developer

Metro is accepting applications for this position and is reviewing them on an ongoing basis. If interested, apply without delay.

You may view the job description at our website, [www.fresnometroministry.org](http://www.fresnometroministry.org). Send your resume and cover letter to Fresno Metro Ministry, 1055 N. Van Ness, Suite H, Fresno, CA 93728 or fax 559-485-9109 or e-mail [metromin@qnis.net](mailto:metromin@qnis.net). It is up to the applicant to confirm that the application has been received. Should you have questions, call Rev. Walt Parry, Executive Director at 559-485-1416.

## METRO'S ANNUAL MEETING

### Reception for Friends of Metro at Miller Clark Nursery, Tower District

Mark your calendars now, Friends, so you won't miss the reception June 27, Thursday evening. Join us in this lovely garden setting for hors d'oeuvres and refreshment. Greet old and new Metro friends, staff and Board members.

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#### NEWSLETTER

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## Donate Directly to Reduce Hunger here in Fresno County: Support the Empty Bowls Dinner

Tuesday, April 23, 5:30-8:30 p.m., a coalition of our local Hunger Fighting Agencies presents the annual gourmet dinner served in beautiful bowls, hand crafted by local students. This event this year includes a silent auction and entertainment. Fresno's finest restaurants donate the meal. The purpose is to raise money to feed the hungry among us. Sponsors are still welcomed. Tickets are \$25, and a table of 8 is \$200. Contact Margaret Hoff: 439-6571.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS  
IN APRIL AND MAY**

**April 18, Thursday 7:30-9:30 a.m.**  
**Community Health Care Roundtable**

7:30-9:30 a.m. Community Health Care Roundtable, Part 2: Valley Air, Health Despair

**April 21, Sunday Noon until Sundown**  
**EARTH DAY FAIR 2002**

Courthouse Park, Noon until sundown Live Music, Rousing speakers, Info Tables, Fun for kids & All

**April 23, Tuesday 5:30-8:30 p.m.**  
**EMPTY BOWLS**

LaRyan Event Hall, Ashlan & West (4277 N. West Ave (INFO: Margaret Hoff 439-6571)

**May 10, Mothers Day**  
**'Bread and Roses'**

Panel discussion for the public, offered by Focus on Food Stamps Task Group. The INS, County, CBO's and Immigration Lawyers are expected to speak, answer questions, and address immigrant mothers' fears of 'public charge' in applying for Food Stamps and other health programs

**May 14, Tuesday 6:30 a.m. thru 6:00 p.m.**  
**Hunger Bus Trip to Sacramento**

Trinity Lutheran Church parking lot. Advocacy training and visits to legislators to tell the story of hunger and malnutrition in Fresno County. Reservations required. Call Edie Jessup, 485-1416, to reserve space and for more information.

**May 15, No Hunger and Nutrition Forum** as the May 14 Sacramento trip replaces the May Hunger and Nutrition Forum.

**May 16 Thursday 7:30 a.m.- 9:30 a.m.**  
**Community Health Care Roundtable**

at Trinity Lutheran Church. Focus on health implications of Measure C, the half-cent tax for transportation, presentation of Board of Supervisors member Judy Case on vehicle emissions and an overview of air quality regulation bodies.

**May 21, Tuesday 5:30 p.m.**  
**Fresno City Council**

Public Hearing on Fulton Mall future.

**MAY HEALTH CARE ROUNDTABLE  
MEASURE "C" DISCUSSION  
plus SUPERVISOR JUDY CASE  
MAY 16 7:30 a.m.- 9:30 a.m.**

The May 16 Roundtable features a discussion on Measure "C" - Speakers, both pro and con, on the proposed transportation sales tax to be voted on in the next election. Come hear why League of Women Voters and five other groups oppose the proposed spending plan. If approved, the plan -which will be in place for 30 years—strongly favors freeway construction over public transportation, road repairs, and other alternatives. The relevance for the Roundtable? Air quality affects health, and the current lack of public transportation blocks many from receiving needed health care. Fresno County has until 2007 for a transportation ballot initiative to be approved by the voters. The League promoted the concept of one-third for freeway construction, one-third for road and highway repairs, and one third for public transportation and other alternatives. Metro's Board endorsed that concept. The League also advocates using existing funding for an objective study to help chart a comprehensive plan currently lacking.



In addition, Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case will provide her insights related to air quality and vehicle emissions.

All interested persons are invited to participate in the Roundtables every third Thursday, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m., at Trinity Lutheran Church, 3973 N. Cedar Avenue, Fresno. A complimentary continental breakfast is provided. Reservations are not required. Read Roundtable Notes, posted at [www.fresnometroministry.org](http://www.fresnometroministry.org) on the "Roundtable" page.

## Metro Supported, "Tabled", Learned Rally in the Valley 2002

Jeremy Hofer, Peace Fresno  
and newly elected Metro Board Member

After the events of 9/11 and the subsequent 'War on Terror', a group began to meet at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence — they called themselves Peace Fresno. Concerned with the one-sided nature of the media's portrayal of events, there was general consensus that the media had become another propaganda arm to America's 'new war'. Polls claiming 80% of Americans supported the bombing of Afghanistan did not reflect sentiments of many groups in the Central Valley working for Peace and Social Justice. These groups opposed a foreign policy which used the terrorist attack of 9/11 as a way to further militarize the planet, start drilling for oil in Alaska, pass more tax breaks for the largest corporations, and replace a sense of real security with a perpetual war against a vague enemy. A sense of fear prevailed since 9/11 — fear of terrorism, fear of appearing unpatriotic by questioning the government, and fear of speaking out against the war. It was in this climate that Peace Fresno began its grass roots coalition building. They organized weekly demonstrations at Shaw and Blackstone Avenues to protest the war. The dialogue brought up animosity and anger — some people acted as though they needed something to blame, something to attack. While protesters experienced cars honking in support of peace, they also experienced cars throwing things, yelling epithets, and spitting at them. More disheartening were threatening phone messages left at the Center for Nonviolence. The free speech actions only gained momentum and still continue Fridays, 4:30 pm.

On March 16th, Fresno witnessed community activism at its finest in Courthouse Park. Rally in the Valley was so grass-roots that there were over 10 different fliers made by separate groups. Over 60 groups from the Central Valley participated. Some provided speakers including National Organization for Women, Central Valley Islamic Council, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Amnesty International, Congregation Beth Jacob, San Joaquin Valley Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Fresno Metro Ministry, Community Mennonite Church, Center for Peacemaking, Central CA Criminal Justice Committee, St. Lucy's Catholic Church, Colacion Oaxaqueno Binacional, College Community Mennonite Brethren Church, Frente Indigena Oaxaqueno Binacional, the United Farm Workers, and many others.

Dark clouds loomed and rain threatened the morning of the 16th. Courthouse Park was filling up with people. At 1:00 the sun broke through— Mother Nature gave the green light and blue skies to Rally in the Valley. It was heartening to see the diversity. The importance of such gatherings is that they help us fight the culture of fear, making us realize that we are not alone, and giving evidence that the exercise of free speech is at least alive if not completely well. Throughout the day it was repeated over and over- we must continue to come together because it is through these gatherings and celebrations that our voices will be strengthened and heard.

### APRIL HEALTH CARE ROUNDTABLE "VALLEY AIR BRINGS HEALTH DESPAIR", Part II

Continuing attention on the health affects of bad air, the April 18 Community Health Roundtable agenda included three speakers: Chuck Sant'Agata, Executive Director, American Lung Association of Central California; Dr. Baz, Allergist; and Justina Felix

of San Joaquin Valley Health Consortium. Small groups worked to determine actions we can take to improve our air quality and to help persons sick with asthma.

**Metro advocates low cost learning tool****GOAL: BREAKFAST FOR ALL ELIGIBLE STUDENTS,  
RAISE CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE**

Edie Jessup  
Hunger Project Staff

Many Fresno County schools offer the federally assisted School Breakfast Program. It's goal—give all children access to a healthy breakfast at school to promote learning readiness. Fresno is in the top districts state-wide offering breakfast. Yet, participation is about HALF of what it could be if fully utilized. While over 111,000 low-income children in Fresno County qualify, only 49% of those who ate lunch at school also ate breakfast there. Fresno Unified School District Food Services Director Bill Richardson is committed to feeding children. It is up to individual schools and school parent site committees to advocate for their school to make full use of the USDA School Breakfast Program. Sequoia Middle School is one that has utilized the program, working with FUSD Food Services to offer nutritious food that kids like, and has seen a dramatic improvement in student behavior and readiness to learn.

This year, we Californians have a legislative opportunity to expand the School Breakfast Program as a basic tool to help children succeed in school. Assembly member Jackie

Goldberg has introduced AB 2395, Feeding Hungry Minds In Low Performing Schools Initiative. This bill would require low performing schools to offer school breakfast. Principal Moore testified to Sequoia's success in support of AB2395 on April 3 at the Assembly Education Committee Hearing.

Elsewhere, thousands of schools are missing the benefits of this basic learning tool. Studies link school breakfast participation to academic performance. California feeds breakfast to only 41% of those who qualify. One exception—testing week, most schools provide it then. But for the rest of the year, over 145,000 low-income children attend schools that do not offer the program. California ranks 25th in the nation for participation. In Fresno, Metro promotes full utilization of the School Breakfast and Lunch Programs, this resource for learning readiness.

Full Report at [www.cfpa.net/breakfastbasics.htm](http://www.cfpa.net/breakfastbasics.htm)  
For more information on AB2395, go to <http://www.cfpa.net/Agenda/2002%20Agenda/2002LegislativeAgenda.html>

**The Story Continues****Connecting the Communities-Dialogue Brings Understanding**

Rev. Kenneth G. Smiley  
Cross Cultural Cluster Coordinator

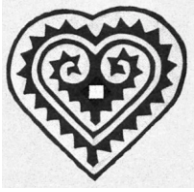
The Cross Cultural Cluster meetings between the Mixteca Tall Trees community and the African American community in southwest Fresno continue. Meetings were held between February 6, and April 10, 2002 at Lincoln Elementary School. In attendance were 7 people from the Mixteco community, 5 people from the Southeast Asian community, 1 person from the Mexican American community, and 2 people from the African American community, 3 staff, 1 student and 1 visitor from the Japanese community. This time, adding the Laotian cuisine, i.e. Cambodian, Hmong, and Lao, to the cross-cultural dinner menu, began anew our new food

adventure to everybody's delight. Throughout the six weeks the Mixteco also shared their food, whatever the menu was for the occasion.

So much of the time is spent eating, we experimented with different ways to both eat and do the curriculum. We do eventually get to the telling of stories.

Delightfully and surprisingly, participants were open and not so guarded as some had expected. Instead, we felt there was an eagerness to share responses to the questions in the curriculum. This interest and eagerness prevailed even though sessions included a student observer writing about

continued on page 6



## Hmong Health and Economic Matters Forum A Valley First

Ronna Mallios

Research Coordinator

Office of Sponsored Projects and Research (OSPR)

UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program (MEP)

There are over 35,000 Hmong residing in the Central Valley making it a natural host for the First Hmong Health and Economic Issues Forum, held in March 2002. The Hmong Business Association and California State University, Fresno joined forces with The California Endowment to present this timely community event. The meeting had many distinguished speakers and guests from beyond the county borders including a delegation from Guizhou University for Ethnic Minorities Consortium in Guiyang, China.

Local and statewide experts discussed a range of health issues crucial to the well being of this now established group of Fresno residents. Health topics included integrating traditional Hmong healing with Western health care systems, Hmong cancer rates, changing patterns of illness among the Hmong in Central California, and changing dynamics among Hmong family members.

Dr. Peter Kundstater from the UCSF Fresno Asian Health Program reported that there has been a rapid decline in infant mortality among children

born to Hmong women in California. However, the news is not so good regarding major areas of health including cardiovascular disease, diabetes and mental distress. Compared to Hmong living in the refugee camps in Thailand, Fresno's Hmong residents have higher rates of these health problems. Moreover, while it is true that over 90% of Hmong in Fresno are covered by some form of health insurance, these residents are unable to make effective use of health services. This constraint is tied to basic communication problems: the lack of Hmong language skills among health care providers as well as a lack of English language skills among elderly Hmong.

Marilyn Mochel, a Merced registered nurse and health educator, described in detail successful pilot programs that bring together shamans and physicians to serve Hmong health needs. May Ying Ly of the Hmong Women's Heritage Association in Sacramento spoke of relationship changes that need to be explored between Hmong men and women, parents and children.

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**Connecting the Communities** continued from page 5

the group and taping sessions. The sharing of stories was so forthcoming that we ran out of time on most nights before we finished the series of questions. There was much laughter and sometimes crying at the telling and the hearing of the stories. Camaraderie is building within the group; genuine relationships are being formed. At the end of some sessions participants stood in groups continuing the discussion informally. This comradeship was further demonstrated in the fact that the group unanimously decided to hold an additional session.

Among shared viewpoints was the importance of education, in obtaining it for themselves and or for their children. Also every one had some type of farm work in their present, past or heritage past. An African American woman in attendance commented,

"I wish more families from the African American community from the Westside had been there." Representatives from CRLA reported that both the indigenous peoples and the Southeast Asians who were present spoke in appreciation of the African American presence.

An added pleasure was extended to the author of this article. The Mixteco community has moved into 11 of the 22 planned new houses at the Tall Trees development and it was my privilege to bless all 11 residences and the families that would take ownership of them. One of the new homeowners who is also a participant in the cluster group said, "I can't believe it's my house—I keep pinching myself to see if it's a dream."

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## Metro's Hunger Issues Project

# AFTER COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF LOCAL HUNGER ISSUES, METRO MOVES TO COLLABORATIVE ACTION

Edie Jessup  
Hunger Project Staff

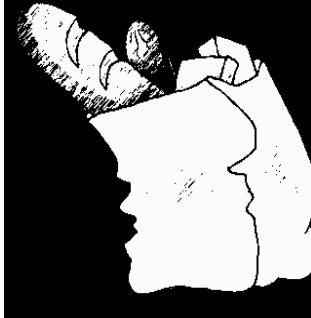
You all are invited to join Metro's collaborative efforts to help feed hungry Fresnans. This article shows several ways to help, and also summarizes the Project's multi-faceted work. It's still a startling fact that 75% of our children qualify for free lunch in FUSD schools.

The Project's 21st Forum Wednesday took place April 10. (Join this Community Hunger and Nutrition Forum monthly, every 2nd Wednesday.) Advocacy for food sufficiency has advanced from identification of issues to collaborative actions on solutions.

Last fall's Inventory of Food Resources pointed to the fact that there are not enough low barrier food pantries in Fresno. The few that exist generally give less than 3 days worth of food to a family, and can only be accessed once every 4 months. Frequently, donated food at pantries fails to make a complete meal. Recently one source, the Salvation Army, changed it's rules; hungry families can now have more access and use this resource more frequently.

The survey revealed that families' food needs are chronic and ongoing, not a single emergency event. In a recent successful effort, the Food Stamp Advocacy Group, working with Fresno County Human Services System, achieved the goal of providing Food Stamps for more than the current unrealistic 3 months in 3 years to individuals considered "able bodied adults without dependents" (or ABAWD's). This will occur through the following legal mechanism: the County is requesting a waiver through the state because of our 16% (very high) unemployment rate. Another effort currently under weigh is to urge the County to adopt other cost saving measures such as the elimination of burdensome monthly income reporting, and going to quarterly reporting. Promoting Food Stamps as a Nutrition Program is critical now, especially with Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) scheduled to replace paper coupons in March '03.

In three focus groups Metro conducted in February '02, immigrants told us that they continue not to apply for Food Stamps for fear of a getting a 'public charge' label attached to their government records which they fear will prohibit them from legal immigration (even though in many cases they can legally receive Food Stamps for their families). Food Stamps provide the best, consistent way to get adequate food to needy families.



On Mother's Day, May 10th, the Focus on Food Stamps Task Group will offer a 'Bread and Roses' Panel discussion for the public. The INS, County, CBO's and Immigration Lawyers are expected to speak, answer questions, and address immigrant mothers' fears of 'public charge' in applying for Food Stamps and other health programs. Can you or your organization help with the summer food program for kids on school break? Metro's Hunger and Nutrition Forum continues to promote School Breakfast, the Summer Food Program, offered by the federal nutrition program. Sites are still needed for this summer.

Metro is advocating that our school districts consider a School Food Policy to address the health problems created by the availability of vended candy, high fat corporate food, and soda sold at schools. Our kids face increased incidences of diabetes and obesity.

Metro's Senior Nutrition Task Force addresses the problem of hunger with a focus on the elders in Fresno. The problem is severe for both long term and immigrant Fresnans. Unbelievable but true, the numbers of homeless elderly increased by 40% in one year (since March '01). Plus, now that families are 'falling off' CalWorks, there is concern that they will move in with grandparents and further impact elder nutrition. Seniors on SSI are not able to receive Food Stamps in California under current rules. Many have to choose between paying for rent and medication (pricier all the time) and buying adequate food.

The Project recognizes the need for an organized gleaning group and increased land for community gardens. A reminder: share your excess garden produce. Contact the Community Food Bank.

Metro represents Fresno in the following State-wide venues: California Food Policy Advocates; the Nutrition Network (HSS) in the Food Security Task Force and Joint Steering Committee; Calif. Hunger Action Coalition; and, at the EBT Client Advocates Forum. Metro's Project participated in a 'Listening Session' with the Community Food Security Coalition towards developing a Food Security Summit in June; sponsors a 'Bus Trip' on Legislative Hunger Action Day, May 14; and hosts training on Community Food Assessments, May 29. Call Edie at 485-1416, or edie@fresnometmin.org to volunteer and for further information.

[www.fresnometroministry.org](http://www.fresnometroministry.org)

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 My donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. Fresno needs this good work!  
 \_\_\_\_\_ respectful, compassionate and just community!  
 Yes! I believe Fresno Metro's faith-based advocacy work is important to building a  
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