

To: **Alfredo Mendoza:** Department of Workforce Investment
From: **Rebecca Lincoln:** Merced County Office of Education
Re: **Merced County Youth Council Quarterly Report-** Younger Youth Program
Date: **February 2009:** (October- November and December 2008)

A. Overall status of the program:

There are presently 130 active participants in the Youth Opportunity Program at the end of the second quarter. There were twenty-five (25) new enrollments and three (3) exits; resulting in 100% basic skills, work readiness, and/or occupational goals attained and 67 % (2/3) of the participants exited with employment, post-secondary education, in the military &/or advance training.

B. Past quarter highlights:

1) Career Industry Day Events in 2008-2009: These ROP sponsored events provide youth with detailed information and exploration of specific career pathways. Career Industry Days include tours of local businesses, guest speaker presentations, and hands-on activities related to various careers within a pathway. Career Industry Days are held from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm at the Merced County Fair Grounds in the Exhibit Building. The YOP mentors are encouraged to invite those participants whose career goals or technical training aligned with these pathways. The following two career days were offered to our participants in this past quarter:

- a) Careers in Business, Marketing and Computer Information Systems, October 23, 2008
- b) Careers in Arts and Communications, on Thursday, November 20, 2008.

2) The Opportunity Club is an ongoing activity that provides monthly sessions on current jobs, educational, community, and leadership opportunities, as well as information regarding life skills for EMPOWER and YOP youth in Merced County. All YOP and EMPOWER participants are encouraged to attend these meetings.

On October 29th, thirty-two (32) YOP and EMPOWER participants attended a presentation called “Inside Merced Gangs” presented by Mr. Sam Rangel, co-founder of “Distinguish Outreach Services, a national speaker and educator on early warnings signs of gang involvement . Mr. Rangel shared his own life experiences and provided updated statistics on gangs in Merced.

3. **YOP/EMPOWER Winter Potluck** was held on December 10, 2008, thirty-three (33) YOP and EMPOWER participants took part in a nationwide fundraising for ‘Make a Wish Foundation’ by writing letters to Santa. Macy’s Inc promised to donate \$1 to the ‘Make a Wish Foundation’ for each letter received. Letters were delivered to Macy’s by a CAE coordinator. Overall, YOP/EMPOWER wrote 36 letters to Santa, raising \$36 dollars towards the foundation!



C. Past quarter deficiencies: none

D. Past quarter recruiting/marketing efforts:

YOP new enrollments were limited the past two program years, due to the number of exits. The referral and recruitment process was reactivated in October at the following school sites: Merced Union High School District Schools; Le Grand High School, Delhi High School, Dos Palos High School, Los Banos High School and Valley Community School at the Merced, Los Banos and Atwater school sites.

YOP orientations were conducted in the months of October, November and December 2008. The YOP Mentors will continue enrolling new participants in January after the students return from the Christmas break. .

E. Next quarter challenges:

F. Technical assistance needed: