

LMCHD Community Update Bulletin

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Growing a Healthy Community One Garden at a Time

“Los Medanos Community Healthcare District (LMCHD) had some vacant property and it came to me that a community garden would be a great idea,” said LMCHD board member and Community Garden chair, Marilyn Condit. “I wanted something that would benefit the community and also a way to utilize the property to make it beautiful. Gardens help build community and promote healthy eating.”

The garden got started six years ago; LMCHD broke ground on the community garden. It took four years for LMCHD to raise the money, rally community interest, and for the city of Pittsburg to really embrace the idea. LMCHD hired landscape architect Joel Summerhill, who was a former employee of the City of Pittsburg. Bobbi Palmer, CEO of The District said “We ended up working with a group of high-risk teenagers who actually helped to build the garden. STS Academy provided a valuable community service for Pittsburg and the teenagers were a huge help! The District bears the cost of keeping the garden thriving, while the gardeners do the hard work.

The community garden consists of 39 ground plots, 18 raised beds, and 23 circle plots. They run at maximize capacity and maintain a wait list. Linda Strong, LMCHD board president and member of the Community Garden Committee, stated that “the garden is absolutely beautiful. Great vegetables are grown in our organic garden and it’s really exciting to support our residents with access to fresh vegetables in such a practical way.”

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2014 Fall Grants Program Recipients

The Los Medanos Community Healthcare District (LMCHD) has continued to operate its Fall Grants Program to benefit the health and well-being of residents within its boundaries. The 2014 Fall awardees are as follows:

Awardees	Award
1. All Star Cheer Reaction	\$8,000
2. Center For Human Development	\$8,000
3. East County Faith Based Advisory Sub-Committee to the Child Welfare Redesign	\$8,000
4. East County Midnight Basketball League	\$8,000
5. Eddie Hart All in One Foundation	\$8,000
6. Food Bank of Contra Costa County	\$10,000
7. Get Fit Marathon Walking Program	\$3,000
8. Greater Faith Baptist Church	\$12,000
9. Lions Center for the Visually Impaired	\$10,000
10. Loaves and Fishes	\$15,000
11. Los Medanos College LVN Program	\$10,000
12. Meals on Wheels & Senior Outreach Services	\$10,000
13. STAND! For Families Free of Violence	\$8,000
14. Stoneman Village Dinner Meal Program	\$10,000

LMCHD has eight District Sponsored Programs. These health programs include:

- St. Vincent de Paul RotaCare Pittsburg Free Clinic
- Pittsburg Unified School Eyeglasses Program
- CPR Fast AED Program
- LMCHD Community Garden
- A More Excellent Way Community Baby Shower
- LMCHD Good Health to Adult Forums
- LMCHD Good Health to Youth Forums
- City of Pittsburg Swim Academy

Formed in 1948 to promote the general healthcare needs of the residents of East Contra Costa County, the mission of the Los Medanos Community Healthcare District (LMCHD) is:

Advancing Solutions to Health Disparities

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Garden plots are intended for the organic growth of edible fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Annual flowers may be included. Gardeners are expected to participate in garden work days to help with maintenance and harvesting of community plots. Steve, a Pittsburg resident, is the unofficial Mayor of the community garden and is a constant presence in the garden. He serves as official greeter and coach for new gardeners. He is passionate about vegetables and stated, "We know what we grow, and it's all natural."

The community plots are ground plots that the gardeners use to grow fruits and vegetables that benefit our "neighbors across the street." All the fruits and vegetables are picked, bagged and donated to Loaves and Fishes and food pantries within our community.

Individuals or organizations who want a garden plot attend a community garden meeting and complete the registration process. Plots are available on a first come, first serve basis.

To join the Community Garden a person must be a resident of Pittsburg or Bay Point and pay an annual membership of \$20.00. The District provides water, tools, and some seeds for garden use.

--Reprinted from the March 2014 issue of *Contra Costa Special Districts Association Newsletter*, which is published by Contra Costa Chapter of the California Special Districts Association.



2014 LMCHD Board of Directors receives Certificate of Recognition from Assemblyman Jim Frazier for receiving the 2014 Innovative Program of the Year Award from the California Special District Association. From Left to Right: Marilyn Condit, Eva Vera, Emmanuel Ogunleye, Linda Strong, and Dr. J. Vern Cromartie



LMCHD Receives an Innovative Program of the Year Award

The Summer Intern Program of the Los Medanos Community Healthcare District (LMCHD) was selected as the recipient for the Innovative Program of the Year award for 2014 from the California Special District Association (CSDA) at its Annual Conference that happened September 29, 2014 through October 2, 2014 in Palm Springs, California. The community was invited to share in this success at an award presentation on Monday, October 13, 2014. The award celebration took place in the LMCHD Board Room. Assembly member Jim Frazier's office presented each LMCHD intern with a certificate of achievement. The award presentation occurred at the beginning of the board meeting at 6:30 pm.

LMCHD has hosted young adults transitioning from foster care to independent living for the past four years in their Summer Internship Program. LMCHD's ultimate goal was to introduce the young adults to new and meaningful experiences while positively impacting their local area through community outreach. "LMCHD strives to build a better tomorrow by helping our young adults understand how community service provides the opportunity to bring awareness to community needs and develop personal growth," stated Melinda Harris, LMCHD's Intern Coordinator. The program is designed to provide the young adults with a unique work experience by creating a team based community project.

The five interns called themselves "The Longevity Seekers" and organized an outreach campaign entitled "The Heritage Project: Bridging the Gap." The project encouraged seniors and young adults to engage in a dialogue in order to "Bridge the Gap" between senior and young adults and pass down healthy lifestyle habits that will positively affect the life choices made by today's and future generations. The Heritage Project targeted seniors living in Pittsburg and Bay Point California.

"What are the chances of living to the age of 100? Our interns sought to answer that question. In doing so, they discovered the secrets of living well and living longer," stated Bobbi Palmer, CEO of LMCHD. Throughout the summer the Longevity Seekers analyzed demographic data, composed and distributed a survey regarding

healthy habits and lifestyles of senior adults, conducted on and off camera interviews throughout the cities of Pittsburg and Bay Point California. The City of Pittsburg Senior Center, Stoneman Village Senior Residence, Presidio Village Senior Housing, the Pittsburg Health Center (adjacent to LMCHD), and Ambrose Recreation Center in Bay Point was where LMCHD interns interviewed the Women in Motion Senior Group and CC Café Senior Lunch Group. The interns interviewed a total of 126 senior adults.

Using their research and focusing on public health, The Longevity Seekers created the "The Heritage Project" video which can be viewed on the LMCHD website at <http://lmchd.org/php/video.php>. The LMCHD interns completed their project and presented their findings to the Los Medanos Community Healthcare District Board of Directors and Assembly Member Jim Frazier in Sacramento. Linda Strong, Board President of LMCHD, Bobbi Palmer, CEO LMCHD and Melinda Harris, LMCHD Intern Program Coordinator accepted the award on October 1, 2014 at the CSDA conference on behalf of the passionate work the interns accomplished. Several of the interns started their freshmen year at Los Medanos Community College and will be thrilled to be honored at LMCHD's Board of Directors Meeting held October 13, 2014. Congratulations to The Longevity Seekers— Akili Bean, Carl Jean-Felix, Charles Finney, Justin Montanez, and Lamara Whitley.

--Melinda Harris, Administrative Assistant of LMCHD



Melinda Harris, Linda Strong, and Bobbi Palmer at CSDA Annual Conference accepted the Innovative Program of the Year Award



Los Medanos Community Healthcare District 2015 Board of Directors
From Left to Right: Dr. J. Vern Cromartie, Emmanuel Ogunleye,
Marilyn Condit, Linda Strong, and Arthur Fountain



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