

Third Annual Caring Youth Summit

June 23rd, 2010

Hall of Champions in Balboa Park

The 3rd Annual Youth Summit took place on Wednesday, June 23, 2010 at the San Diego Hall of Champions in Balboa Park. Organized and hosted by Mental Health Systems' Caring Helpers Leadership Training program in partnership with the San Diego Commission on Gang Intervention and Prevention. The theme of this year's summit was "Embracing Diversity".

There were approximately 500 youth, community leaders, faith-based and community organizations, adults, and family members who came together to be touched, moved and inspired. This year's youth summit showcased the most innovative programs, performers, and agencies throughout San Diego County. The event centered around-- and was led by--YOUTH.

It's hard not to try to tell every wonderful detail about this year's summit, which included dancing, steel drums, poetry, and singing. The event opened with Bonnie Dumanis' Lincoln High School Youth Advisory Council and their 4 or 40 Video; and it included Commissioner Chris Yanov's inspiring Hero presentation.

We were grateful for the presence of James Lepanto, Senior Vice President of Mental Health Systems' Mental Health Division, Alfredo Aguirre, Deputy Director of Children Mental Health, as well as Commissioners Fred Sotelo, Rosa Ana Lozada, and Benny Benavidez, who met with organizations and talked with youth. JJ Anderson assisted in event preparation with the Lincoln High School Advisory Council. Captain McKinney and other law enforcement officers from the Mid City Police Department were there in support of the Youth Voice Program. Other law enforcement officers present were San Diego's Asst. Chief of Police Zimmerman, Captain McElroy from the Southeastern Division and Sergeant Pace from Juvenile Administration.

The San Diego Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention performed a Listening Tour. They asked twelve youths what steps they planned on taking in order to be successful. All of the youths unanimously agreed that an education is crucial in order to be successful. Additionally, they mentioned having a healthy and positive support system; along with surrounding themselves with positive individuals.

Our thanks go out to everyone who supported and participated in this successful event.