

SGV REVAMPS THE FUN IN YOUTH

Kathleen Chen
Editor

As I stepped on the campus of Garvey Intermediate School on February 26, a rush of memories came crashing into my brain. I remember running around the playground during recess. I remember laughing and having fun with my friends. That's what being a kid was all about. However, when I was little, I didn't really have any role models to look up to, since I was the oldest child out of two kids in the family. Kids these days now have more people to admire, which is what the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) Youth Summit has created for the past year and this year as well. The SGV Youth Summit - created by Wenli Jen, Nancy Trinh, Garvey School District, and many others - started last year with its theme: Breaking Barriers. This year's theme is Building Strong Communities. The SGV Youth Summit's goal is to "unite youth and others to address youth leadership, education, and empowerment."

When I arrived at Garvey that Saturday morning, I was met with a crowd of kids, ambitious to go to everywhere and anywhere as soon as possible. At the stroke of 9 AM, the youth summit officially begun. Kids and even some adults were crowded in the auditorium to hear the welcoming regards. The welcoming was led by Panney Wei and Janet Chin with guest speakers, Rosemead City Council's Sandra Armenta, Garvey School District superintendent Sandra D. Johnson, Assemblymember Mike Eng, Miss Monterey Park, and Miss Friendly El Monte/South El Monte.

After a generous, warm greeting, the crowd rushed out the doors to the first session. The ses-

sions ranged from social responsibility to healthy routines as well as media arts to high school/college preparedness. The first session I attended was called "College Panel: Life and Experiences". Since I was months away from graduating high school, this session seemed pretty appropriate from my standpoint. The session was presented by Ronald Gonis, who is an alumnus of California State University - Long Beach (CSULB), and Sarah Fung, who is currently a student at University of California - San Diego (UCSD). Both of the presenters were very friendly; they didn't make their presentation too formal, which made it easier to connect with the speakers in my point of view. Now for all you almost-college-freshmen out there, here are some key points you should know that I learned from this: never think of the money aspect when picking your major, know how to control your spending (you may never know when you're going to be short on cash), get used to networking (it's motivation to leadership), don't go to college because you're forced to -- go because YOU want to, find your passion, and challenge yourself.

A brief hour later, the first session was over, and the second session was about to start. Being the lazy person that I am, I stayed in the same classroom. Despite my laziness, the next session in the same classroom was very interesting. "Careers in Science" was presented by UCSD's Sarah Fung, who is currently a structural engineer major. Fung provided brief descriptions of other types engineering: aerospace, biomedical, mechanical, computer science, electrical, and more! With a few



Ronald Gonis (CSULB) and Sarah Fung (UCSD), with the help of moderators Paul Tran and Edmund Chau (PCC), present the workshop "College Panel: Life And Experiences"
Photos courtesy of Kathleen Chen

short questions later, the presenter delved into the main topic: civil and structural engineering. This session really opened my eyes to the different types of engineering; I even thought about possibly changing my major during college. Only time will tell.

There was a short lunch break between the second and final session. The gymnasium was filled with numerous tables and chairs; it was basically crowded with hundreds of people! With some eating here and socializing there, lunch slowly ended. Then the final session of the day began. I absolutely loved the final session. Looking through the list of workshops, I realized that there was something different about these types of workshops. These workshops were all about finding our own passions. The workshops ranged from acting and singing to

dancing and self-defense, finding strength through the arts to photography. This last part of the youth summit allowed kids to show their creative side, letting us live a little on the wild side.

Now to close off the youth summit with a bang, there was a youth showcase held back in the auditorium, the place where the welcoming was given. 97.1 AMPS radio station provided some of the entertainment. The DJs from the station played trivia questions with the audience to pass the time before the showcase actually started; every winner that answered a trivia question right got a free prize. Kids from some of the previous workshop sessions gave a performance of hip-hop dancing, singing, and stage improvisation. It was a wonderful way to end a perfect day like this.

The SGV Youth Summit was definitely worth spending my entire Saturday for. It makes me realize how much I truly missed out when I was a little kid. As a kid, my life would always consist of Saturday morning cartoons, which meant Tom and Jerry, Animaniacs, etc. would be on repeat all morning and possibly all afternoon long. There were never workshops for a little kid like me. I'm just glad to see that kids now have something like the youth summit to attend. They'll be well-informed about the future at a young age, and they'll be fully prepared for what's ahead of them.

The coordinators of the event have truly outdone themselves with this wonderful youth summit. I can't wait until next year's youth summit!

Cerritos High Taiwanese Club Hosts Lantern Festival

Kent Chen
Editor

The Cerritos High School Taiwanese Club held its first annual Lantern Festival on Feb. 25 from 3-6 p.m. The festival took place in the club advisor's classroom.

As one of the officers and founders of the club, I had a large input on what happened at the festival. The officers and I met weekly for three weeks, going over logistics and details of the lantern festival. A lot needed to be planned in order to pull off such a large event.

For seven dollars, one was able to purchase a combo plate which included fried rice, chow mien, egg rolls and fried dumplings along with boba. Boba was a huge attraction among the students, drawing many athletes who had just finished their



Photos courtesy of Kent Chen

practices and many students who wanted to grab something to eat after school.

In addition to the food, students were able to make rabbit lanterns, which celebrates this year as the Year of the Rabbit. The rabbit lanterns were pieced together by many different joining paper parts, which were not that complex to assemble. After the rabbit lantern was built, a battery-powered light was attached to the inside, allowing the rabbit to light up.

Games were available for students to play too. There were games like spinning tops, dreidel, and hacky sacks. As the students partied, the movie, Cape No. 7, was also playing for the student's enjoyment.

Overall, everyone had a great time in the festival. The festival not only attracted students, but also brought in teachers and other faculty members.

The Cerritos High Taiwanese Club, in its first year of existence, is planning to hold an outdoor lantern festival next February, which will include food and game booths and traditional Taiwanese puppet shows.

A Letter to Carol



Senator Carol Liu
Photos courtesy of Vicky Wen

Vicky Wen
Editor

I took a semester of Government to fulfill my graduation requirements, and I left the class with exciting tales for an interested ear.

One of my tales involves an assignment, a letter, and a senator—Senator Carol Liu to be exact.

After learning about senators, representatives, and presidents in class, my Government teacher decided that it would be exciting to write two letters to government officials, hoping for a reply from both of them. I had a hard time deciding whom to address my letters, because I did not have an idea of what to write about. I then saw the name Senator Carol Liu on my Government teacher's list

of suggested people and decided, "Why not write to a fellow Asian?"

I asked Senator Liu about her journey as an Asian government official, and her advice for other Asians who want to be successful in America where Asians are a minority. Surprisingly, my reply letter came in less than a month, and Senator Liu answered all the questions I asked.

"My commitment to the community began when I was a teacher in Richmond, California public schools. After relocating to Southern California, I focused my time and energy on education and other issues that directly affect children. I was most passionate about serving the undeserved — those who truly needed help and representation in this day and economy," wrote Senator Liu. "What jump-started my career in government was serving on the La Canada Flintridge City Council from 1992 to 2000, including two terms as Mayor, and later on serving in the California State Assembly."

Her advice for Asian-Americans was short but powerful because she is living proof of her advice. "Being a minority Asian should not hinder your career path, use it as inspiration for new ideas and change," she recommended.

At first, when I received the letter, I was scared to open it, because I forgot that I wrote a letter to her in the first place. I thought I was in trouble and that I was going to jail or something, but when I realized that the letter was an answer to my assignment, I was grateful for the fact that she or someone took the time to answer my letter.

Now, if only President Barack Obama can do the same