



Southeast Asia Resource Action Center

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SEARAC EXPANDS SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN CENTRAL VALLEY CALIFORNIA

Sacramento, CA - SEARAC is pleased to announce that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families has awarded \$450,000 grant over three years to support the expansion of the Southeast Asian Californian Healthy Elders Leadership Project (HELP) Central Valley. HELP focuses on building the elders-programming capacity of Southeast Asian community and faith based organizations through training, technical assistance, and public education. A key goal is to help enable local organizations in the Central Valley to expand and or establish funded, structured programs for elders and their family members. There are approximately 80,000 Southeast Asian elders in California. Nearly all of these elders arrived in California as refugees fleeing the repressive governments of their home countries. Southeast Asian elders in California are more likely to be disabled than other communities, with disability rates of 63% for Laotians, 68% for Cambodians, and 71% for Hmong, compared to 42% of Californian seniors overall.

With initial major funding from The California Endowment, HELP is currently supporting six Southeast Asian community organizations in Northern California in partnership with the California Health Advocates (CHA) and the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA). Through this expansion, SEARAC will be able to support another four organizations in the Central Valley. "We are very excited about this project and believe that it is a comprehensive approach to organizational and community capacity development, particularly as they pertain to frequently underserved Southeast Asian American elders in the Central Valley of California" said Doua Thor, Executive Director of the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center.

SEARAC is a national organization advancing the interests of Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans through leadership development, capacity building, and community empowerment. Its constituents include a network of over 190 refugee-led community organizations throughout the country that can be viewed on-line at www.searac.org/maa. Founded in 1979, SEARAC focuses on building the capacity of organizations in its network, on advocating for and with Southeast Asian Americans for improvements in public policy, and on generating and presenting information about the communities.

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