



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 18, 2008

Contact: José A. Álvarez (619) 515-6635

Day-of-Event: Omar Lopez (619) 559-8165

COUNTY HELPS TEENS OVERCOME LIFE STRUGGLES *Youth Empowerment Summit to Take Place April 26;* *Teens 12 and Up Encouraged to Participate*

WHAT: Teens from throughout the County will learn important life and independent-living skills during the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA)—South Region, Youth Empowerment Summit. **The event is free and youth will receive community service hours for their participation.**

HHSA and local South Bay agencies will offer youth, 12 and older an opportunity to learn, be entertained, and become empowered. The event will include workshops on Teen Dating Violence, Hip Hop Dance, "My Fight With Fat" and more. The event is specifically designed for youth in foster care but is open to all teens.

Keynote speakers will be:

Regina Louise: A former foster youth and adult adoptee and is the author of the successful book and play "*Someone's Somebody*."

Doug E. Luffborough III: Author of "*From Homeless to Harvard*."

Participants will receive free copies of the books. To register for the Youth Empowerment Summit, call (619) 336-5782

WHEN: **SATURDAY, APRIL 26TH, 2008**
9 a.m.-4 p.m. (10 a.m. media interviews)

WHERE: **Turning the Hearts Center**
345 5th Avenue, Chula Vista, CA 91910

WHY: School completion and the ability to hold a job for at least 3 months are major indicators for youth success. Youth who have faced life's struggles face additional challenges due to multiple living environments and lack of stability early in life.

Studies have shown that mentoring has a positive impact on youth. It reduces drug and alcohol use, improves school attendance, increases academic performance, and decreases adolescent violence, while teaching teens life and independent living skills.

The Youth Empowerment Summit is sponsored by HHSA-South Region, Casey Family Programs, South Bay Community Services, Turning the Hearts Center, and San Diego County Adoptions. This event is co-sponsored by Wal Mart and Pat & Oscar's.

###

"EDITORS NOTE: Due to confidentiality concerns, please do not shoot recognizable photographs or video of foster children. Selected foster youth will be available for interviews at the event."