

# Taking the LEAP



*Providing students at California State University, Fresno with meaningful opportunities to address issues of poverty through leadership education and civic engagement.*

### University HOPE

**Phone:** (559) 224-9051  
[hope.atinet.org](http://hope.atinet.org)

### The SMILE Center

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### Fresno READS

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### Jumpstart Fresno

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### Friendly Visitor Service

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### ReadFresno

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## Construction Continues on University HOPE Project

Construction on University HOPE's ninth house- a two bedroom/two bath home in Clovis- is well underway. The house is expected to be completed around the end of the Spring 2007 semester.

The Family Selection Committee has chosen Dennis and Marlene Hancock, a retired couple from Clovis, as the new home owners. They have begun their 200 hours of sweat equity, as they participate in the work on their new home.

While work continues at the current site, plans are now being finalized for the next house, the tenth home built for a local low-income family through University HOPE.

The 2006-07 construction site is



located at 1395 4th St., Clovis, CA 93612 (the corner of 4th and Sunny-side). Workdays are generally held on Saturdays, from about 8am until 5pm.

The University HOPE (Housing Opportunities through Education) office is located in the Lutheran Campus Ministry building, across from the Fresno State campus, at 2311 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno, CA 93710.

## Cultural Studies through The SMILE Center

In the Fall 2006 semester, the SMILE Center employed 16 work study students and over 50 volunteers, working with over 50 fourth, fifth and sixth graders at two after-school sites: Vinland Elementary and Wishon Elementary.

Among the volunteers from Fresno State were students from the liberal studies department, sociology and psychology students, a handful of first year students, nursing students, and several international students, all of whom were great assets to the program.

Over the course of the Fall semester, an emphasis was placed on teaching the children about different cultures. With the help of both the work study students and international student volunteers, the children had the opportunity to learn about German, Turkish, Ukrainian, Japanese, Mexican, Jewish, and Native American cultures. In the coming Spring semester, the students at Vinland and Wishon will learn about even more lifestyles from around the world.

**Article provided by Kelly Scott.**

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Have any news or pictures of recent or upcoming events? Want to share them with your Project LEAP partners? Please send them in! Contact:

Ryan Dion  
 Project LEAP VISTA Resource Develop./ Community Relations  
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## Jumpstart to Host Renowned Early Childhood Educator

On February 3, 2007, Jumpstart will hold its Winter Future Teachers Institute, featuring Betsy Evans. Over 110 Jumpstart tutors will learn from Ms. Evans, a renowned children's author who will present an effective six-step mediation process that adults can use to support young children at these tense and emotional times. This process is now being used in public schools, early childhood centers, Head Start programs, and homes across the country, with toddlers, preschoolers, and elementary students.



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Betsy Evans holds elementary and early childhood degrees, has been working in the educational field since 1974, and spent 23 years in the early childhood classroom. She is now an Early Childhood Educational Consultant and Conflict Resolution Specialist. She is the author of *You Can't Come To My Birthday Party!* and several articles on conflict resolution and other early childhood topics, and was the co-producer and director of two conflict resolution videos.

Article provided by Amy Lukianov.

## Jumpstart Takes Part in 2006 Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure

The annual Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure was held on Saturday, October 28, 2006, at Fresno State. With a 5K Men's Race, 5K Women's Race, 5K Coed Walk, 1- Mile Fun Walk and 1/2- Mile Kids for the Cure Race, it is currently the largest foot-race fundraiser in Fresno.



Beyond the race, it is a family event with booths, food, door prizes, education, entertainment, and special recognition of breast cancer survivors. Jumpstart students volunteered their time and energy to provide activities for children and families taking part in this very important cause.

Proceeds from this Race for the Cure will fund Breast Cancer education, screening and treatment projects through grants from the Central Valley Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and will help fund the Foundation's Award & Research Grant Program.

Event photos provided by Neil Dion.



## Prize-winning Authors Speak to Jumpstart Fresno Corps Members

Jumpstart Fresno held their 6th annual Future Teachers Institute on October 7, 2006. The event included 100 Corps members from Fresno City College and Fresno State.

The training content included adult-child interactions, problem-solving and dialogic reading. In partnership with Fresno State's Library, and through an Associated Students, Inc. grant, Jumpstart Fresno provided two keynote speakers. Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy are writing partners and the authors of hundreds of prize-winning children's books. They spoke about their experiences as children's book authors and illustrators, and took the time to autograph

copies of their work.

Also in attendance were faculty, staff, and Fresno community members. After the lecture, Jumpstart was thanked for their sponsorship of the event and many audience members approached Jumpstart staff to learn more about the program and how they can be involved. One Fresno City College Corps Member shared that the lecture helped her to discover her career path— she now knows that her calling in life is to translate children's books.

More information on F. Isabel Campoy can be found at her website, [www.isabelcampoy.com](http://www.isabelcampoy.com). The website of Alma Flor Ada is [www.almaflorada.com](http://www.almaflorada.com)



Pictured from left to right: Amy Lukianov (Senior Site Director), Armida Cardona (FCC CM), Isabel Campoy, and Alma Flor Ada.

Photo provided by Amy Lukianov.

## Friendly Visitor Service Welcomes Sylvia Woodburne

The mission of the Friendly Visitor Service is to provide low-cost in-home services for seniors who require help with the activities of daily living. This nonprofit community service program sponsored by Catholic Charities Diocese of Fresno, has served Fresno County's elder population (age 60+) since 1976.

Recently the Friendly Visitor Service was given the opportunity to host an AmeriCorps VISTA. VISTAs (Volunteers In Service To America) provide service to nonprofit, faith-based and other community organizations of this nature. They help to create and expand programs that bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty.

California native Sylvia Woodburne first became a VISTA Volunteer in 2000 thru 2002 with Catholic Charities Senior Companion Program. There she worked on demographic research for proposals, presentations of the program to the public, and computer research on public law relating to seniors.

As a returning VISTA, this time with Friendly Visitor Service, Sylvia will work primarily on recruitment, outreach endeavors and fund development. As focus on gaining new care-providers is essential, she will have a heavy presence on the Fresno State campus and volunteer 30 hours to the program on a weekly basis until December of 2007.

With a background in education, as well as having traveled extensively throughout the U.S. and abroad, Sylvia brings a decidedly global perspective to community building, an asset that will undoubtedly be useful in her new role as VISTA Volunteer

**Article provided by Devoya Mayo.**

## Lindsey Marler joins ReadFresno as an AmeriCorps VISTA

A recent study by the National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice has revealed that the exit reading scores of third grade students are one measurement used by several states to determine the number of prison beds needed in the future. ReadFresno's mission is to improve the literacy rate of Fresno students in this age group, where over two-thirds of the students are reading below proficiency. This goal will be accomplished through the acquisition and distribution of books to various school sites, and also the recruitment of volunteers to read with students who are reading below grade level.

As ReadFresno's AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer, Lindsey Marler will

be working as the Book Acquisition and Distribution Coordinator. It will be Lindsey's responsibility to find sources for new and gently used books and then make sure community organizations, in need of books, receive them. After receiving her bachelor's degree in English Literature, Lindsey felt the desire to help instill the same love for books that she possesses in her community. Throughout the course of the next year, Lindsey hopes to grow as a community-minded individual, and make a small mark on the community of Fresno.

ReadFresno is located at 1727 L Street, Fresno, CA 93721.

**Article provided by Lindsey Marler.**

## Working Together for VISTA Recruitment by Ray Sever

With the fall semester already behind us, it's easy to imagine the last half of the academic year flying by. Two of our Project LEAP VISTAs have already completed half of their term of service, and we have three open positions with University HOPE, Jumpstart, and Fresno READS. It's never too early to think about recruitment, for current positions as well as vacant ones.

I have been exploring several avenues of recruitment, i.e. printed materials and presentations to groups. If you have any ideas regarding recruitment please let me know, I would love to follow up on them. If you have some potential candidates in mind, being a former VISTA, I would love to speak with them about opportunities in Project LEAP.

Another challenge that we can all put our heads together on is housing.



Having low cost or no cost housing for VISTAs would make Project LEAP positions more attractive to candidates from out of town. I would appreciate any ideas or contacts you might have regarding affordable housing.

Having all Project LEAP positions filled would be an amazing accomplishment, and I think it is a goal we could definitely achieve.

**If you have any thoughts on recruitment for VISTA positions, please contact Ray Sever at:**

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