



## \$1.4m after-school grant awarded to youth coalition

By Daily Democrat Staff

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The Woodland Coalition for Youth, a partnership of youth and adults committed to creating community change that benefits young people, has garnered a five-year, \$1.475 million grant from the California Department of Education's 21st Century After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens Program.

The Coalition's administrative sponsor, the Yolo Family Resource Center, will manage the grant funds.

"We're very excited to receive this grant because we're going to be able continue serving our students academically as well as socially," said Woodland High School Principal Evelia Genera. "This is a proactive effort in the sense that we're committing to provide support to kids outside the school day."

The grant, which provides \$250,000 a year for five years, plus \$45,000 yearly for case management and family literacy services, will further the creation a "community learning center" at Woodland High, extending hours and staffing for tutoring, exit exam preparation and credit recovery programs; provide additional group counseling opportunities; and augment extracurricular offerings such as clubs and electives.

Furthermore, the grant will support the Coalition's planned Youth Leadership Center, where young people will participate in various workshops, community service projects, job training and other

leadership development activities.

"We are honored to spearhead this after-school initiative for Woodland High students and young people in the community at large," said Coalition Coordinator Lamar Heystek. "If we want to keep youth out of trouble and on track to graduate, we must do more to provide them constructive opportunities beyond school hours."

Key partners in the grant application include several of the Coalition's constituent entities, including Woodland Joint Unified School District, the UC Davis Chicana/o Studies Department's Taller Arte Del Nuevo Amanecer (Center for Art and Culture), the Yolo County Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health's Friday Night Live program and Creative School Resources & Research.

Woodland High is the focus of the Coalition's grant application because it is Title I-eligible under the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act -- meaning that at least 40 percent of its students are eligible for free or reduced-cost school lunches -- and its most recent score on the Academic Performance Index ranks in the lowest 30 percent in the state, making the school a priority for funding.

According to the California Department of Education web site, the 21st Century High School ASSET's Program provides incentives for establishing before- and after-school enrichment programs that partner schools and communities to provide academic support; safe, constructive alternatives for high school students; and assistance in passing the California High School Exit Exam.

Each program must consist of three elements: academic assistance, educational enrichment, and family literacy services.

The Yolo Family Resource Center is a Woodland-

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