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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Central California Public Health Partnership receives \$2.6 million for obesity prevention project

The Central California Public Health Partnership announced today (Jan. 13) the creation of the Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP) and a \$2.6 million regional obesity prevention project.



The Central California Public Health Partnership is a regional

collaborative of six public health directors and California State University, Fresno. The new project is funded by a grant from The California Endowment. The goal of the program is to improve social and physical environments for healthy nutrition and physical activity through advocacy, policy and system change in Central California. Dr. Alonzo Plough, vice president of program, planning, and evaluation of The California Endowment, formally announced the commencement of the project.

"The manifestation of the national epidemic of obesity is particularly severe in California's Central San Joaquin Valley," said Plough. "The over-consumption of junk food, combined with a lack of physical activity, is a very real threat to the health and well-being of the region's residents. It is critical that through this effort we 'lift all boats' to improve the Valley's social and physical environments so that people have access to nutritious foods and safe places to play and engage in physical activity."

The regional obesity prevention initiative is administered by the Central California Center for Health and Human Services at Fresno State. Program activities include collaboration between public health departments and broad-based community coalitions in six San Joaquin counties: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced and Tulare.

The San Joaquin Valley experiences some of the highest rates of obesity, diabetes and other chronic conditions in the state. Many sources have recently documented the growing epidemic of overweight and obesity among children, adolescents and adults in the San Joaquin Valley.

CCROPP will provide project staffing to support and help coordinate county activities, develop regional San Joaquin Valley resources, provide centralized training activities and materials, resource directories, media relations and data

warehousing. Public health departments and their community partners will collaboratively plan and implement local and statewide policy and system change efforts to improve environments for healthy eating and physical activity.

The Central California Public Health Partnership formed in 1999, is a regional partnership of the county health departments in the six southernmost San Joaquin Valley counties (Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, and Tulare) and the College of Health and Human Services at California State University, Fresno. The partnership provides a forum for its members to discuss health issues affecting their service populations and to share resources. Partnership activities are designed to improve community health and population health status by strengthening regional collaboration, planning, workforce development, and training.

Speakers at the event included: Dr. John D. Welty, president of California State University, Fresno; Dr. Ed Moreno, chair of the Central California Public Health Partnership and director, health officer of the Fresno County Department of Community Health; and Plough.

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