



PRESS RELEASE – ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

For immediate release

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Network for a Healthy California Receives U.S. Surgeon General's
"Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future Champion Award"

*Award Recognizes Outstanding Organizations Implementing Innovative and Creative
Approaches to Preventing Childhood Overweight and Obesity*

Orange, California, January 12, 2009 – On January 8, 2009, acting Surgeon General Rear Adm. Steven K. Galson presented the "Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future Champion Award" to the *Network for a Healthy California (Network)*, a campaign administered by the California Department of Public Health that empowers low-income Californians and their families to live better by eating healthy and being physically active every day. The award recognizes and showcases communities and programs across the nation, like the *Network*, that address childhood overweight and obesity prevention by helping kids stay active, encouraging healthy eating habits and promoting healthy choices.

A powerful statewide movement that encourages Californians to be "Champions for Change" who make healthy choices for their families and communities, the *Network* is made up of more than 160 locally funded projects and 11 *Regional Networks* spanning California, including Orange Unified School District (OUSD), which works with low-income families throughout the Orange District community. The OUSD Network for a Healthy California conducts nutrition and physical activity outreach programs at 15 sites throughout the Orange District such as the Harvest of the Season nutrition education, Follow the Leader physical activity, and Champion Mom parent empowerment programs.

"It is such an honor to be part of the *Network* and to receive this prestigious recognition from the U.S. Surgeon General," said Kat Soltanmorad, RD OUSD Network for a Healthy California Coordinator.

“We are especially proud of the work being done right here in OUSD to turn the tide when it comes to the growing obesity epidemic facing our community’s youth. We’ve made tremendous progress at Orange USD and together with our partners around the state, we are reaching low-income California families where they live, work, go to school, shop, pray and play and empowering them to join the *Network* and our growing movement for change.”

Students are an important target of the *Network’s* outreach efforts and are engaged in *Network* activities through a variety of settings. At Orange Unified, the Network for a Healthy California reaches children through pre-school through 12th grade and after school programs.

The “Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future Award” was presented during a stop on Acting Surgeon General Galson’s nationwide tour to promote the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Childhood Overweight and Obesity Prevention Initiative.

Childhood overweight is a serious health concern for children and adolescents in the U.S. According to the California Department of Public Health, 41 percent of California children ages 9 to 11 are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight¹. Eating more fruits and vegetables every day and increasing physical activity can help reduce the risk of serious health problems, including obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers.

The *Network* is funded by the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, an equal opportunity provider and employer. To learn more, visit us online at www.cachampionsforchange.net.

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¹ 2005 California Children’s Healthy Eating and Exercise Practices Survey. California Department of Public Health.