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Youth Leadership Conference Targets Civic Engagement Gap

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California Freedom Summer (CFS), a project by UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, in partnership with Future for Lompoc Youth and Lompoc High School, will host a Youth Leadership Conference, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday Aug. 27 at Lompoc High School.

The youth-led conference will provide high school students the opportunity to engage in public speaking, nonpartisan voter registration, and workshops on college readiness.

"COVID19 has had a disparate impact in the city of Lompoc; youth being some of the most impacted," said Gaona-Macedo. "Conferences like this allow students to re-engage in community while also building important life skills to fulfill their fullest potential."

All participants will receive a free t-shirt, lanyard, lunch, and an opportunity to win prizes such as iPad, iPods, and gift cards.

In response to the high civic engagement gap among young people (ages 18-34), UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center launched California Freedom Summer to address civic disengagement. Overall, 114 young people enrolled in the course throughout California.

In Lompoc, eight students took the course, via concurrent enrollment at Allan Hancock Community College (AHC); each fellow will receive two units from AHC for successfully completing the course. The eight Lompoc fellows have been learning about voter rights, voter engagement, and learned leadership skills.