

## Conference Inspires Youth to be Hep B Leaders

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One hundred students from all over the nation will learn about the fight against hepatitis B and how to educate their community at the 6th Annual Youth Leadership Conference on Asian and Pacific Islander Health at Stanford University on Aug. 14 to 17.

Over four days, participants will

learn how to plan culturally sensitive community outreach events, develop marketing and advertising campaigns, and foster leadership skills.

Students will also be able to explore and learn about community health outreach from doctors, policy makers and public health activists including Assemblywoman Fiona Ma, Stanford Asian Liver Center Director Dr. Samuel So and California Refugee Health Coordinator for the California Department of Public Health Laura Hardcastle.

Conference attendees will apply their newfound knowledge by working in teams and designing their own outreach event from conception through implementation, then present it to a panel of judges.

The program, designed to empower high school students to make change, has been very successful, according to Alena Groopman, the Asian Liver Center's Global Community Health Coordinator.

Many YLC attendees have become members of the Jade Ribbon Youth Council, summer interns at the Asian Liver Center or founders of Team HBV chapters at their high schools and universities. Some ideas generated at YLC are even incorporated into ALC outreach events and activities - for example, the Jade Ribbon LIVERight awareness bracelets.

"The youth are the future, and we want them to take what they learn and apply it to their schools and community," said Groopman.

For Jonathan Chen, 21, who attended the conference in 2003 when he was 16, the experience has been life changing.

After learning that the disease affects 1 in 10 Asians, Chen knew he wanted to actively educate the community about hepatitis B. He soon became a member of the Jade Ribbon Youth Council, which aims to mobilize and educate API youth to become leaders in the prevention and eradication of hepatitis B.

He took a break from college after his freshman year to travel to China with the Asian Liver Center to vaccinate over 56,000 children for hepatitis B.

Chen, a student at the University of California, San Diego, has also helped start a Team HBV chapter at his campus that will launch this fall to educate fellow students about the disease.

“Hepatitis B is a silent epidemic,” said Chen, now an intern at the Asian Liver Center. “I hope we can lower transmission rates and get rid of this disease.”

For more information about the Youth Leadership Conference visit [liver.stanford.edu](http://liver.stanford.edu).  
For more about the S.F. Hep B Free campaign: [sfhepbfree.org](http://sfhepbfree.org).