



Volunteer
Center

Giving From the Heart

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." - Aesop



Pictured (from left)" Simeen Mansuri-Pino, Fabian Ramirez, and Michelle Tavarez

On Wednesday, April 25th, S.O.U.L seniors Fabian Ramirez and Michelle Tavarez, LCC's Simeen Mansuri-Pino, and Foster Grandmother Tauv Soy were recognized for their dedication and commitment to making their community a better place during Volunteer Center of Fresno County's 39th annual Volunteer of the Year Awards luncheon.

S.O.U.L. senior Fabian Ramirez was presented with the *2007 Inspiration to Youth Award*. Last year Fabian volunteered a total of 1,000 hours — including 500 hours as a teacher's aid for Head Start, 250 hours as a recreation leader for his church, and a combined 100 hours for serving as a camp leader for Sanctuary's Safe Place outreach program and teacher's aid at S.O.U.L.

The outstanding 18-year-old does not use his adversity-filled past as an excuse, but rather as a motivation to press forward and succeed. He says, "I did not have role models to follow, so I become my own."

LCC's Fresno Safe and Proud Neighborhoods alumnus Simeen Mansuri was this year's *Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award* recipient. She was recognized for her public safety outreach efforts including the development and implementation of her "Kindergarten 911 Program" — in which she taught nearly 3,000 students how to use 911 in case of injury, fire, or stranger danger — and the "Water Safety-Canal Awareness Project", a plan to stencil new "Danger-No Swimming" warning signs on over 30 canal bridges.

Grandma Soy was honored and recognized as a finalist for the Outstanding Senior of the Year Award. Grandma Soy spends her mornings volunteering at F.I.R.M.'s preschool where, she helps children with puzzles, teaches them how to build with blocks, and shares her culture with the students and staff through food, photographs, and music. In addition to her "regular" duties, Grandma Soy enjoys attending evening preschool events, lends a hand to staff working in the classroom on the weekends, and helps maintain the playground area.

Also honorably mentioned was S.O.U.L. senior Michelle Tavarez for unselfishly volunteering endless hours at a local thrift store sorting donations, stocking merchandise and waiting on customers; raising funds for the Rogue Festival — an annual event that celebrates independent performance and arts in the Tower District; and providing day care services for neighborhood families.

Please join us in congratulating all of our wonderful volunteers on a job well done!



Pictured above: Foster Grandparent Tauv Soy