



## Chinatown Leaders Tour SMHA Communities

Thursday, September 2, 2010

**T**wenty leaders from the Chinatown Community Cultural Center in San Francisco recently toured two of the properties of Sacramento Mutual Housing Association (SMHA) to learn how resident organizers help residents from diverse backgrounds integrate into a cohesive community. They spent the day at Lemon Hill and Greenway Village.

Lemon Hill residents are mainly from Laos, Vietnam, China and Latin America. Greenway Village residents are primarily African-American, Hispanic and Lao heritage as well as recent immigrants from the Marshall Islands.

SMHA relies on community organizers who contact families individually as well as conduct resident council meetings, community meetings and unity-building events such as tree-plantings or parties where children in traditional costume perform.

At meetings, native speakers translate so that all the residents can participate in the process. Although time-consuming, this inclusion builds trust among people of diverse backgrounds, races and religions, which eventually leads to a sense of community.

“We meet and talk and get to know each other, learning words from each other’s languages at our community meetings,” said Pa Phang, SMHA community organizer.

“Even though we have people speaking many different languages—we have five for sewing classes—we are very patient and find ways to communicate so that we can be on the same page.”

Lemon Hill is located at 6000 Lemon Hill Avenue. Greenway Village is at 6311 Sampson Blvd.

With 15 communities in the region, Sacramento Mutual Housing Association develops and operates well-designed, affordable rental housing to the diverse local households. With a focus on leadership, the nonprofit also provides leadership training and mentoring as well as educational programs, community-building activities and services for residents and neighbors.

For more information on Sacramento Mutual Housing Association, visit [www.mutualhousing.com](http://www.mutualhousing.com).



Sacramento Mutual Housing Association develops housing that is affordable to a diversity of households. Our housing builds strong and stable communities through resident participation and leadership development.

For more information, call (916) 453-8400 or visit our website at [mutualhousing.com](http://mutualhousing.com).