

# Young Vietnamese woman takes honors in essay contest

A young Vietnamese woman—who came to the U.S. for burn treatment and lived in a Mutual Housing community—has been given an honorable mention in a local college essay contest.

Nhi Vo's essay on her struggle to survive a family fire in 2000 that killed her mother and severely burned Vo and two of her sisters recently took honors in the "Sacramento News & Review" 2011 College Essay Contest.

Vo recently was accepted into the University of California, Davis, where she will study cellular biology. She plans to become a doctor.

"Becoming a doctor would allow me to give back all the love and kindness that has been shown to me by my parents, sisters, doctors and counselors, social workers, and

people in the community," she wrote in the winning essay.

After her father's death of cancer in late 2009, Vo raised her sisters while attending high school and continuing medical treatment.

When her family of six first moved to California, they were able to live at Lemon Hill in South Sacramento, one of Sacramento|Yolo Mutual Housing Association's communities for low and modest-income residents.

In high school, she also joined the South Sacramento Coalition for Future Leaders. The coalition creates a community where youth can be safe, able to grow and realize their full potential.

"We are so proud of Nhi, not just for the wonderful essay she wrote, but for who she is and what she has done with her life," said Emily Bender, Program Coordinator for the coalition who works for Mutual Housing.

Students from every high school in the region submitted essays to the Sacramento News & Review. The May 5th issue featured the top finalists. The winners received \$2,011 for the first-place, \$750 for the second-place and \$250 for each third-place winner in a three-way-tie.



South Sacramento Coalition for Future Leaders

Vo was one of two given an honorable mention for her essay entitled "The world I come from".

The South Sacramento Coalition for Future Leaders is partially funded by a drug-free communities grant from SAMHSA. For more information, visit [www.samhsa.org](http://www.samhsa.org).

Through Mutual Housing's focus on leadership, the nonprofit also provides training and mentoring as well as educational programs, community-building activities and services for residents and neighbors.

For more information, visit <http://www.mutualhousing.com>

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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).