

**Location: County of Sutter**

**Issue: Youth Programs to Reduce Gang Involvement**

**Methodology: Facilitated Meetings**

**Davenport Institute: 2009 Public Engagement Grant Recipient**

Sutter County is primarily rural and agricultural. It is also very ethnically diverse. Like many rural areas in California, the county faces perennial high unemployment rates, which had lead to an increase in gang violence, especially among Latino youth.

Although the County Government was eager to provide programs for youth development that would reduce the draw of gangs, it was also well aware that those who knew best what youth needed were the families and the young people themselves. What services could the county provide that residents would actually utilize? How could the county support families and teens?

To receive input on these questions, the County worked with Francisco Reveles, Ed.D, a specialist in educational leadership and policy studys/youth advocacy and delinquency research from CSU Sacramento. Reveles worked to engage the local Latino community in a series of forums which would seek input regarding specific activities and approaches that the community believed would reduce gang involvement.

The meetings were bilingual to encourage input from the Spanish-speaking community.