

Student winner donates \$250 to OC Human Relations Youth Programs

Corin Ramos – OC Ethnic Community Examiner

When 14-year-old Kathy Tran learned she was the recipient of a \$1,000 Violet Richardson award from Soroptimist International, her first reaction was to scream with joy. Since one-half of the monetary award was to be donated to the student's charity of choice, Tran's next step was to decide which non-profits would benefit. She chose to split the \$500 between her Girl Scout troupe and OC Human Relations.

Tran has been involved in OC Human Relations' BRIDGES School Inter Group Relations and Violence Prevention program for the past three years. The goal of the BRIDGES program is to empower students to create safe, equitable and inclusive school campuses. Tran's involvement started at Garden Grove's Irvine Intermediate School where she quickly became one of the program's student leaders. It was her exposure to issues of poverty in Orange County that led her to organize her peers in BRIDGES to put together a canned food drive that brought in over 2,500 items. Tran was inspired to write her essay because of that experience.

In her award winning essay, Tran wrote, "Being a young female, I sometimes felt underestimated by society, but through O.C. Human Relations and Girl Scouts, I have learned that with the will and knowledge, I can empower anyone including myself. Entering my first year of high school, I used my new confidence and strength, to be active in the Human Relations Program at a high school level." Tran is now a freshman at Los Amigos High School in Fountain Valley.

Tran was recently invited to an OC Human Relations Community Partner breakfast meeting.

When she presented the \$250 check to OC Human Relations Executive Director, Rusty Kennedy, Tran said, "I chose to give the money to the BRIDGES Program because without its influence I wouldn't have had the confidence to become a leader."

The Violet Richardson Award recognizes young women who make the community and world a better place through volunteer efforts such as: fighting drugs, crime and violence; cleaning up the environment; and working to end discrimination and poverty.

About OC Human Relations

Since 1971, OC Human Relations has worked to build bridges of understanding to promote a vision of our community where all people are valued and included and our diversity is realized as a source of strength. For more information, visit www.ochumanrelations.org.



Kathy Tran with OC Human Relations Executive Director, Rusty Kennedy. OC Human Relations