



CITY OF
San Fernando
Historic & Visionary

MEDIA RELEASE

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Mayor Ruelas Attends NLC Summit

Shares Experiences, Learns New Strategies for Helping Children and Families

San Fernando Mayor Julie Ruelas joined over 400 city leaders from across the country in San Antonio, Texas, to learn and share strategies for helping children and families succeed at the *2007 National Summit on Your City's Families*, which was held September 30-October 2. Local officials from more than 100 cities gathered to learn first-hand how other communities are successfully solving key problems, such as:

- Reducing youth violence;
- Improving public schools;
- Building citywide afterschool programs;
- Helping families become financially stable;
- Enhancing school readiness among young children;
- Combating childhood obesity; and
- Reengaging dropouts, youth involved in the child welfare or justice systems, and other disconnected youths.

Said Mayor Ruelas, "It was inspiring to see that so many city leaders are making progress toward improving the quality of life for children, youth and their families. We all have much work ahead of us, but with the cooperation of community leaders and members, a lot can be accomplished."

Sponsored by the National League of Cities' (NLC) Institute for Youth, Education and Families (YEF Institute) in collaboration with the City of San Antonio, the *Summit* is the nation's largest gathering of municipal leaders who are working to improve the lives of children, youth and families in their communities.

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“Municipal leaders increasingly recognize that the vitality of their cities depends on the ability of children and families to thrive,” said Clifford M. Johnson, executive director of the YEF Institute. “Cities benefit when local officials learn how their peers are effectively addressing common problems and can bring home new ideas for strengthening families in their communities.”

The *Summit* focused on a theme of “Building Stronger Communities: City Partnerships for Children, Youth and Families,” highlighting the importance of community-wide collaborations and the unique roles city officials can play in bringing key stakeholders together to strengthen families and improve opportunities for children and youth. *Summit* participants had the rare opportunity to participate in a poverty simulation exercise, which cities have used to engage local leaders in anti-poverty efforts, and to visit innovative programs developed by the City of San Antonio to support young people and their families.

Mayor Ruelas also participated in sessions with noted speakers who have demonstrated strong leadership on behalf of children, youth and families, including: NLC First Vice President and Madison (AL) Council Member Cynthia McCollum; Denver (CO) Mayor John Hickenlooper; Baton Rouge (LA) Mayor Melvin L. “Kip” Holden; Charleston (SC) Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr.; former Seattle (WA) Mayor Charles Royer; and many others.

The National League of Cities is the nation’s oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunities, leadership and governance. NLC’s YEF Institute helps municipal officials take action on behalf of the children, youth and families in their communities. More information on the *Summit* and the work of the YEF Institute is available at www.nlc.org/iyef.

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