

'Across the Waves': Stories of Asian Americans

Farmers Insurance produces educational DVDs for schools

by CYNTHIA DE CASTRO
AJPress

FARMERS Insurance Group, one of the nation's largest property and casualty insurance companies, released a documentary video highlighting the history of the Asian Pacific community, entitled *Across the Waves*. Designed to teach middle and high school students across America about the history and diversity of the Asian American community, *Across the Waves* will be provided free of charge to educators nationwide by Farmers Insurance.

Across the Waves features eight 14-minute oral histories from APA leaders representing APA ethnic groups that have contributed to the rich culture

of America, including Cambodian Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Asian Indian, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese. Featured in the documentary are interviews with visible and respected leaders in the Asian American communities such as Congressman Mike Honda, 15th District of California, former Washington State Governor Gary Locke, Minnesota State Senator Mee Moua and the Filipino Administrative Law Judge for California, Casimiro Tolentino.

The episodes bring together members from the different Asian Pacific American communities who share their struggles and triumphs in their own words. With all-original interviews never



before seen with stories that are fundamental to understanding the Asian-Pacific American community, *Across the Waves* provides insights and information not found in middle and high school history books.

The DVD will be accompanied by materials and curriculum developed by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center. The comprehensive lesson plans were written by Filipina Cheryl Matias-Padua and Don T. Nakanishi.

Produced and directed by Randy Rice, executive director of education programs at Farmers, *Across the Waves* captures the essence of Asian Pacific American history that cannot be com-

municated through textbooks. It is the latest in a series of educational programs produced by Farmers Insurance, including the award-winning *Freedom's Song*, which highlights the African American experience, and *The Bronze Screen*, which celebrates 100 years of Latino influence in Hollywood.

"At Farmers, we take great pride in the work that we have done to support educators and diverse markets," stated Faye McClure, Farmers VP of Strategic Marketing.

For more information regarding *Across the Waves* or how to obtain a copy, contact Randy Rice at (323) 930-4995. ■

Schwarzenegger signs Calif. budget 85 days late

by JUDY LIN
AP Writer

SACRAMENTO—Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the most overdue state budget in California history Tuesday, September 23, skipping the usual fanfare because he said the Legislature's efforts on the \$144.5 billion spending plan were nothing to celebrate.

Nearly a quarter of the way through its fiscal year, the state finally has freed up billions of dollars to pay medical clinics, nursing homes, daycare centers and contract vendors. The 85-day impasse stemmed from a partisan legislative standoff over how to close California's \$15.2 billion deficit.

The governor signed the budget bills in his office, rather than the Capitol rotunda where budgets are usually signed.

"Why I didn't feel like celebrating in the rotunda is that it is inexcusable to have a budget that's three months late," Schwarzenegger said after signing the budget before a small gathering of local officials. "It's three months late because both of the parties stayed in their ideological corners and refused to come out."

Legislative Republicans opposed any tax increase, while Democrats sought to combine budget cuts with higher taxes on corporations and the wealthiest Californians.

Schwarzenegger had offered what he considered a compromise proposal involving a temporary 1 cent increase in the state sales tax that would drop after three years. That plan failed to gain support from Republicans, which meant it would not be able to generate the required two-thirds vote in the Assembly

or Senate.

The final version approved by the Legislature last week includes \$7.1 billion in spending cuts, which advocates say will trigger deep cuts to health care programs. Critics also said the plan relies on accounting tricks to inflate revenue and makes permanent some tax breaks that will lead to larger deficits.

Schwarzenegger trimmed another \$510 million through line-item vetoes Tuesday, but a leading Democratic legislator said that in doing so he effectively raised taxes for senior citizens by cutting tax credits geared toward them.

"That seemed unconscionable to me," said Assemblyman John Laird, who chaired the Assembly Budget Committee. He called the governor's line-item vetoes a "disaster" for eliminating the tax credits and for cutting certain methamphetamine and HIV prevention programs.

Lawmakers met the governor's demands for a stronger rainy day fund and authority to make spending cuts during the year, but they did not address the imbalance between revenue and spending.

And the budget battle isn't quite over. The changes to the rainy day fund require voter approval, as does a plan to borrow \$10 billion from future lottery revenue to help stabilize the next two state budgets. Schwarzenegger said a special election is likely to be scheduled for June.

Democratic Assembly Speaker Karen Bass reiterated her call to have a commission review the state's tax structure, while Republican leaders pledged to fend off tax increases in the next fiscal year that will start July 1.

Those negotiations are expected to be just as frustrating as this year's, as the state's economy continues its tailspin. Lower tax revenue and automatic spending increases are expected to produce a deficit of at least \$1 billion in the 2009-10 fiscal year.

The governor's finance director, Michael Genest, said revenue

projections were based on the belief that the state's economic troubles would bottom out by the end of the fiscal year and begin to recover in the second half of 2009.

Next year's shortfall will grow significantly if voters reject the lottery proposal, which is expected to add \$5 billion annually for the next two years. ■

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speed and determination will give him the edge," said Arum. "And Freddy Roach and I see this fight the same way that Manny will win the fight and it won't be close. He'll win it decisively."

Tickets are priced at \$1,500, \$1,000, \$750, \$500, \$250, and

\$150.

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