



For immediate release:

November 16, 2009

Media contact:

Soo Ji Min, 312-427-4460 x225; cell 312-671-0612

Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health Executive Director Named 2010 Chicago Community Trust Fellow

CHICAGO – Soo Ji Min, executive director of the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, has been selected as a 2010 Chicago Community Trust Fellow. The competitive Trust Fellowship program, now in its second year, serves to increase the quality and diversity of Chicago's non-profit leaders.

"I am incredibly honored to be among the public sector professionals selected to receive a yearlong fellowship from the Chicago Community Trust," says Min. "I look forward to enhancing my non-profit leadership skills and further contributing to the fields of adolescent sexual health advocacy and reproductive justice."

The Trust Fellowship is funded by the Chicago Community Trust, the region's community foundation providing grants to organizations working to improve metropolitan Chicago. The Trust Fellowship is a significant investment in the leadership talent for non-profit organizations and supports excellence in the sector. The Fellowship is designed to elevate the careers of Chicago leaders and increase their future impact on the Chicago metropolitan area.

"At a time when innovation is vital to keep Chicago competitive in this global economy, each of these Trust Fellows represents the next generation of nonprofit leadership," says Terry Mazany, president and chief executive officer of the Trust. "Each Fellow not only has enormous talent and passion, but the imagination and agility required to adapt to these ever-changing times. We are excited to see the leadership that they bring to their field and to the Chicago metropolitan area."

Min was one of nine fellows selected from an applicant pool over nearly 100. Fellows—six emerging and three experienced—were selected for their demonstrated leadership and commitment to their field. The new class of Fellows are leading organizations spanning the non-profit sector that include housing, policy, science and theater.

Since joining ICAH as executive director in 2006, Min has focused the agency's programming to develop leadership among youth from underrepresented and underserved communities of color, advocate for changes benefiting low-income and marginalized communities, and build a grassroots network of allied social justice organizations.

Prior to leading ICAH, Min was the executive director of Korean American Community Services, a comprehensive social service agency based in Chicago's Albany Park neighborhood. Min has served on the board of the Asian Health Coalition, which presented her with its Outstanding Community Health Advocate award for 2008. She has also served as a member of the United Way Chicago Council and the Chicago Commission on Human Relations Mayor's Advisory Council on Asian Affairs. Min is a 2007 Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership delegate and a 2006 Leadership Greater Chicago fellow. A graduate of Barnard College, she holds master's degrees from Northwestern University and The University of Chicago.

The Trust Fellowship offers the opportunity for Fellows to take a leave from work or continue to work while engaging in professional development activities. The Fellowship provides financial resources which can cover current salary and benefits for time off, costs related to academic courses, coaching, learning from other practitioners and other associated expenses.

Min will receive \$30,000 to fund a professional development plan focused on the reproductive justice movement. Reproductive justice is a human rights and social justice framework focused on equipping people with the economic, social,

and political power and resources to make healthy decisions about their gender, bodies, and sexuality for themselves, their families, and their larger communities.

“Reproductive justice is rooted in the belief that we can not focus solely on one social identity or issue,” says Min. “Instead, we need to address the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, immigrant status, ability, and age as they relate to our sexual and reproductive lives. In our public interest work, we must acknowledge and understand the relationships among these identities to create systemic social change.”

The Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, in partnership with youth, advocates sound policies and practices that promote a positive approach to adolescent sexual health and parenting. Through youth leadership development, grassroots organizing, youth and adult training, policy analysis and development, and legislative advocacy, we advocate for access to sexual health care services, access to sexual health education, and support for pregnant and parenting youth in completing their educational goals. In all our projects, we focus on building youth leadership skills and serving marginalized adolescent groups, including low-income, immigrant, homeless, LGBTQI, and pregnant and parenting youth. To learn more, visit www.icaah.org.

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