

Letter to the Editor, NY Times
September 3, 2009

Dear Editor,

As academic partners with the City of Fremont, we felt that Patricia Leigh Brown's article ("Invisible Immigrants, Old and Left with 'Nobody to Talk To'", August 30, 2009) told only the setting-sun half of the story. In fact, the City has implemented several programs to overcome elder immigrants' isolation and barriers to social services. The Community Ambassador Program for Seniors, for instance, has trained nearly 100 volunteers from seven ethnic and faith communities in information, referral, and counseling skills. These volunteers – many of them senior immigrants – have assisted more than 600 seniors with referrals to services ranging from food stamps to low-income housing. Similarly, Fremont's Human Services Department partnered with the Afghan Elderly Association to train bicultural health promoters for Afghan elders. By glossing over these achievements, the article missed an opportunity to offer Fremont as an example to communities who share its problems, but have not yet implemented solutions.

Sincerely yours,

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