

## Women's Leadership Project and Young Male Scholars Updates:

February-March 2019

**On February 27, 2019**, students from King-Drew Medical Magnet's Women's Leadership Project (WLP) and Young Male Scholars' (YMS) programs presented on sexual violence prevention and media literacy to tenth and eleventh grade English classes. The group utilized study guide material from the recent Lifetime documentary *Surviving R Kelly* to discuss the disproportionate effect of sexual violence and abuse on black girls and women. Students Cheyanne McLaren (12<sup>th</sup> grade), Jae-lonn Blackmon (10<sup>th</sup> grade) and Tyler Wilbert (10<sup>th</sup> grade) instructed students on key warning signs of sexual predator grooming, victim-blaming and victim-shaming, coping with survivor trauma, and social media predation. The peer training was part of a series of Women's History Month presentations on gender roles and feminist violence prevention strategies.



**On March 13th**, WLP students from Gardena HS mounted an Art and Poetry Women's History Month event in the school library. Ninety students from English and Business education classes attended. WLP students read poetry and prose and presented artwork addressing such themes as contemporary politics, sexism in the media and community, life aspirations, and the criminalization of black youth. The event was emceed by twelfth graders Nigia Vannetty, Cera Randle, and Zorrie Petrus, and WLP-GHS alumnus Clay Wesley. Writer-performer Scott St. Patrick Williams performed his solo spoken word piece commemorating the lives of police violence victims Sandra Bland, Philando Castile, and Eric Garner.



**On March 20th**, youth from King-Drew's YMS program presented to forty Life Skills' students on challenging toxic masculinity, analyzing cultural expectations for young men of color, addressing homophobia, and ending sexist violence against women. In their first presentation of the year, tenth graders Tyler Wilbert, Eddie Perry, Osahon Ero, and Max Icheannor discussed the 2006 Byron Hurt documentary *Beyond Beats and Rhymes*, led gallery walk charting, and unpacked strategies for ally-building across gender lines. YMS' weekly sessions are developed in partnership with Peace Over Violence.



**On March 21<sup>st</sup>**, forty-five students and adults from Dorsey, Gardena and King-Drew High Schools attended a day-long Feminist of Color Mental Health institute at the County's Stoneview Nature Center facility. Students participated in adult and youth-led workshops on art therapy, journaling, movement therapy, and transgender mental health. Community practitioners Shaunelle, Curry, Jaden Fields, Katrina Long, and Susie Parras from Media Done Responsibly, Love With Accountability, and Manifesting Wellness Associates provided skills-building training on self-care and trauma reduction for youth participants. The institutes are quarterly convenings for WLP youth leaders.

**On March 28<sup>th</sup>**, Sikivu Hutchinson and Clay Wesley led trainings on feminist violence prevention, gender stereotypes, and the social construction of sexism for

approximately one hundred students during two sessions at Diego Rivera Learning Complex. Students watched the WLP video “Black Girls Step Forward” on the normalization of sexual harassment and sexual violence. Students of all genders completed and discussed a gender stereotypes quiz and unpacked how cis/straight young men of color can step up and intervene in harassment as well as establish boundaries in every day relationships. Ongoing WLP sessions at Diego Rivera begin in April with the Communications and Technology Academy.