2016 Report of our Annual

OC Human Relations
Building community by fostering respect, resolving conflict and pursuing equality

BRIDGES YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP

"Raise your voice, take a stand."

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BRIDGES Youth Leadership Camp

July 11-13, 2016 • South Jr. High School

What is the BRIDGES Leadership Camp?

The BRIDGES Youth Leadership Camp is an intense, weeklong camp that brings together youth from diverse backgrounds to develop their leadership, facilitation, youth organizing and human relations knowledge and skills. At BRIDGES Camp students learned how to organize their peers to take a stand against hate and violence and to combat prejudice while participating in fun hands-on activities, multi-media presentations, role playing and skill-building activities.

Who attended Summer Camp?

Sixteen students from across Orange County joined in and became part of camp. Camp attendees are asked to contribute $250 towards the cost. However, this summer 80% of the students were from low-income families, therefore they were provided partial to full scholarships. Graduates of the camp are invited to participate in OC Human Relations' year-long youth internship program, OC Human Relations Youth Ambassadors.

Camp Overview

Monday, July 11

Day 1 - Community Building

Students were welcomed to camp by BRIDGES staff. Introductions were made and students were walked through the camp goals, objectives and community guidelines, as well as values they all wanted to follow for that week. Throughout the rest of the day students began a conversation about social justice issues and participated in a series of ice breakers that allowed them to become comfortable with each other. In turn, this created the foundation for them to interact with each other and express themselves throughout them rest of the week.
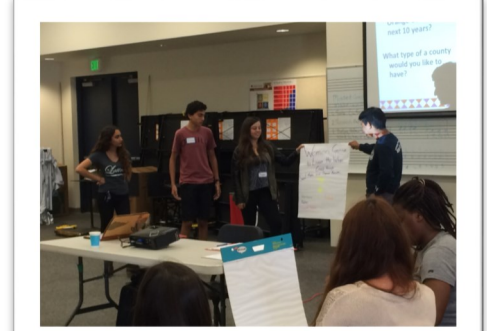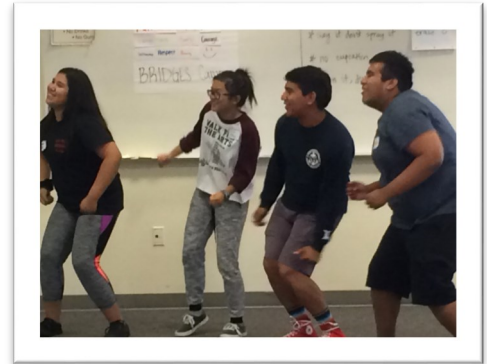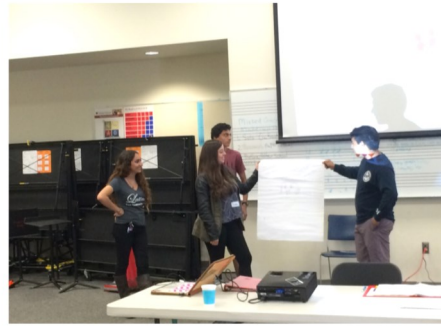
Day 2 - Identity and Social Consciousness

"This camp was such a memorable experience."

The day began with a community building circle where students shared personal stories that helped them bond together. Afterwards they learned about Orange County's history and injustices that have occurred throughout the years. Through different activities such as "Identity Corners" and "Horatio Alger," students were able to understand and further explore their identities. The day ended with a presentation about "School-to-Prison-Pipeline and School-to-Deportation-Pipeline" by Dr. Quaylan Allan from Chapman University.

"This experience made me realize the positive impact I can have on my community."

Day 3 - Organizing and Student Activism

Students began the day with a reflection about what was learned the previous day. Afterwards they were engaged by a presentation about "Urban Development and Education" by Francisco Aviles from OCCCO, as well as an Organizing 101 session by Norma Lopez with OC Human Relations' Community Building team. Students finished the day by Participating in interactive community building activities.

"This camp was one of the best experiences of my life."

"Camp was such an amazing experience. It helped meet other students that are passionate about social justice ."
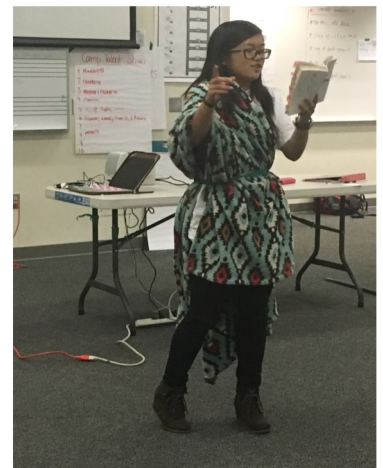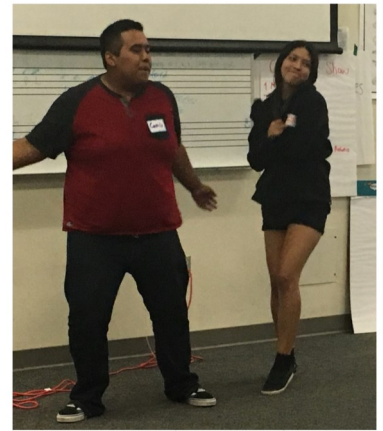
Day 4 - Facilitation

It was during this day that students had the opportunity to break into teams and plan a campaign that they were passionate about. Topics like closing the wage gap, LGBTQ rights, cultural awareness and education were brought to the table. After lunch, students had the opportunity to present their campaigns to OC Human Relations' Board Members, Community Partners, interns and staff. Students received feedback and input on how to better their public speaking and presentation skills. The day ended with a picnic at Boysen Park where students had a chance to bond and have fun.

Day 5 - Appreciation and Reflection

As the week came to an end, students were able to enjoy their last day by putting together a talent show, providing each other with positive affirmations and debriefing about the week. At the end of the day, students graduated while their parents and fellow camp goers celebrated as they receive their certificates of completion.

"This camp helped me overcome my fear of public speaking. I feel like I can express myself now."