



MEDIA ALERT

Contact:

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Richmond-Area Middle School Students Gain Awareness of Diversity and Respect at 11th Annual Prejudice Awareness Summit

What: Prejudice Awareness Summit

When: Thursday, October 20, 2011 from 8:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Where: Virginia Commonwealth University, Harris Hall, 1015 Floyd Avenue (Corner of Harrison and Floyd), Richmond, VA

Who: Around 200 7th and 8th grade students and educators from nearly 25 Richmond-area public and private middle schools, including schools from Richmond city, Fredericksburg city, Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico counties, will come together in a hands-on workshop setting to learn lessons about diversity, discrimination, and respect to bring back to their peers at school. The Summit is sponsored by the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities and Wells Fargo. Coalition partners Communities in Schools of Richmond, Hope in the Cities, the Junior League of Richmond, Partnership for the Future, and the Richmond Peace Education Center help to create this opportunity for Richmond-area middle school students. The Summit was founded by Jewish Women International

How: Students will view the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities' keynote presentation, "Break the Cycle: Be the Change," a fast-paced, interactive presentation that examines the concept of prejudice. Beginning with the roots of prejudice, the program demonstrates clearly the progression of prejudice from thoughts to words, to actions. Using humor, role playing, audience participation, and real-life examples, "Break the Cycle: Be the Change" motivates students to consider the ways in which they may have contributed to prejudice and helps them to assume the responsibility to work for change. Using concepts from the presentation, students will break into teams to develop achievable, believable, and concrete solutions to the tough challenges that they face at school each day. Students will identify resources, allies, and timelines to achieve change and to spread the PAS message effectively to their larger middle school body. Students will return empowered and skilled agents of change and unity, with the goal to reduce conflict and prejudice in their schools.

Web Information: <http://www.inclusiveva.org/pas.php>

Interview Opportunities: Parents/guardians have granted permission to photograph and interview students. Please contact Alicia Thompson by telephone at (804) 515-7950 ext. 23 or by e-mail at athompson@inclusiveva.org.