

DC HUMAN RIGHTS LEARNING PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT

Friends,

It is with profound gratitude that we at the DC Human Rights Learning Project of the American Friends Service Committee submit this annual report.

With your support, we were able to advance the cause of peace and justice in the District of Columbia by engaging young people to learn about human rights, and get the support they need to become educated and engaged citizens. Below are some of the accomplishments:

Original Objective: In the 2010-2011 school year, at least 150 D.C. youths will receive human rights training in order to engage their peers and communities in Human Rights Action projects with an emphasis on influencing local policy. **This school year we more than doubled the number of students served from 75 per semester to 166. We served students from two D.C. public schools, and one public charter school. In addition, we provided one time workshops to over 200 students from Fairfax County.**

Original Anticipated Outcomes in the 2010-2011 school year:

1. Participating students will show increased knowledge of human rights. At least 75% of participants will increase overall proficiency by at least 20% in comparison between pre-tests and post-tests. **Students showed a sharp increased knowledge of human rights in comparison between pre-tests and post-tests. A pre and post-test analysis report conducted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS, www.aaas.org) showed that students who participated in the human rights learning project increased their knowledge of human rights by at least 80% compared to the pre-test level.**
2. Participants will increase their belief in themselves as agents of change. All participants will write letters to political or community leaders about human rights violations occurring in their city, neighborhood or school. **Students increased their belief in themselves as agents of change and actively advocated for social at their schools and at the city level. This year, students from Cardozo High School who participated in our human rights learning project successfully advocated for the continued application of the D.C. Language Access Act (LAA), which is a local law aimed at providing greater access and participation in public services to D.C. residents who have limited or non-English Proficiency. Students from Wilson High School and Friendship Collegiate Charter School wrote an advocacy letter to the Mayor to advocate for full democratic rights for D.C. residents. The Mayor has promised to use students' efforts to advance legislative efforts for full democracy in the U.S. Congress. Of the 166 students who participated in the human rights learning project, twenty two were selected to engage in public speaking by attending the Model UN's Global Classroom Conference at the U.S. State Department last Spring. They actively took stands in global affairs using their increased knowledge of human rights, acting as country representatives.**
3. All participants will complete a Human Rights Action project in order to engage the community in changing local policy. Each school group will select a human rights issue (past examples include education, immigration, racial equity and nonviolence). They will

create an advocacy plan with a public speaking component (in 2009 some students offered testimonies at City Council and others petitioned their school board). **See Above.**

4. Two students from each participating school will be chosen to plan and lead a summer Human Rights Summit. Participants will challenge at least 50 people in their community to examine policies and practices that do not promote human rights. **During this summer of 2011, we extended our services to more than 50 middle school students from an additional public school, in Southeast D.C., one of the most underserved areas by local organizations. We believed that it was important to test the program with a younger age group.**

Additional accomplishments:

- We hired 12 interns from area law schools to help with the weekly teaching. Interns received a weekly stipend for transportation and a meal while working with the project.
- The program achieved stability with the hiring of 12 interns and employment security of the program director. Interns received a weekly stipend for transportation and a meal while working with the project. In the current environment of financial uncertainty, the support from your Foundation was critical in maintaining the employment status of the program director, thus providing much needed stability to the program.

Regards,

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