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Empowerment Conference Inspires Lynwood Middle School Female Students to Break Barriers

LYNWOOD, CA – Lynwood Unified School District’s female students were empowered to push boundaries and pursue their dreams during the District’s inaugural Girl Empowerment Conference on March 30, when students participated in workshops, received advice from alumni and connected with women who have broken cultural barriers.

“You’re never going to stop being afraid, but it’s what you do even when you’re afraid that makes a huge difference,” said keynote speaker and LAX Police Captain Karla Rodriguez, who shared her struggles growing up as an immigrant and defying cultural expectations as a captain charged with protecting the fourth busiest airport in the world and second busiest in the United States.

“If I was able to get from where you are now to where I am today, you can do the same,” she said.

The Conference was organized by students from the Empowerment Clubs at Lynwood and Firebaugh high schools and aimed to inspire girls from Hosler and Cesar Chavez middle schools to break barriers and conquer their fears.

Middle school girls heard from speakers like Giselle Carrillo, who, in 2017, founded Los Courage Camps, which has provided hundreds of Los Angeles-area youths with the opportunity to learn the foundations of surfing.

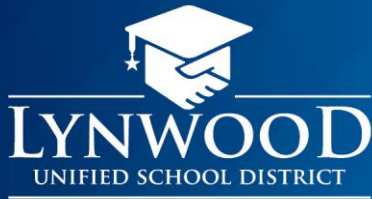
“This was an opportunity to teach other children how to tap into something – courage,” Carrillo said. “We started to really see something light up inside of them after just one day in the ocean. Surfing has taught me that it is okay to live a life that brings you joy.”

Firebaugh High School alumna and founder of Speaking4Change Denise Gomez shared her inspiring story about her long battle with mental health, as well as her dedication to building healthy and strong communities that provide equal opportunities for success.

MORE

The **Lynwood Unified School District** is dedicated to offering students a world-class education to prepare them for success in college and career in the 21st century. Under its Achieving Greatness Initiative, the district is realigning all aspects of its organization to strengthen and expand instructional programs, enrichment and extracurricular activities, and support system for students and staff. For more information, visit www.lynwood.k12.ca.us.

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PRESS RELEASE

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During the event, students engaged in breakout discussions, where they explored how to maintain a healthy mindset, avoid toxic friendships and stay motivated as they advance in their academic journeys.

After a lively lunch session, students also participated in a wide variety of workshops, including a vision board station, friendship bracelet crafts, painting and more, providing students with an opportunity to foster creativity and explore self-expression. Students also received an empowerment journal to help them document their progress and set goals.

“Empowering all students – but especially our female students – to believe in their own potential to achieve greatness is critical for our District in helping to develop tomorrow’s leaders,” Superintendent Gudiel Crosthwaite, Ph.D. said. “I want to thank our partners and speakers for sharing their stories, helping our young female students to feel empowered, confident and equipped to achieve their dreams.”

The event was supported by the Lynwood Partners Education Foundation and Lynwood Alumni Association.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

LUSD_GIRLSCONF_1: Keynote speaker Giselle Carrillo shares her inspiring story during the Girl Empowerment Conference, held March 30 at Bateman Hall.

LUSD_GIRLSCONF_2: Lynwood Unified Students participate in a stone-painting craft during the Girl Empowerment Conference, which aims to uplift young women and inspire them to pursue their goals.

LUSD_GIRLSCONF_3: Lynwood Unified students and alumni prepare for a Q&A session during the Girl Empowerment Conference on March 30.

The mission of **Lynwood Unified School District**, the cultivator of innovative thinkers, is to ensure each student fearlessly achieves his or her highest academic and personal aspirations while contributing to the greater society through a unique system distinguished by:

- ★ People of great character who inspire and lead by example
- ★ The instilling of courage to be creative
- ★ The transformative uses of technology
- ★ Safe and clean environments
- ★ The honoring of all voices of our community