



Press Release

For Immediate Release:
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Bell Gardens Intermediate Hosts Sold-Out National Teen Leadership Program Diversity Day

Bell Gardens, CA – More than 200 middle- and high-schoolers from throughout Southern California along with parents, counselors, teachers and Montebello Unified Board members, came together on Feb. 21 for the sold-out National Teen Leadership Program (NTLP) Diversity Day.

“Workshops such as Diversity Day, together with our newly passed Ethnic Studies resolution and other efforts, illustrate our steadfast commitment to promoting a message of tolerance, understanding and unity,” said Montebello Unified School District Board President Edgar Cisneros, who participated in the event. “Diversity, cultural competency and respect resound with clarity in our communities – not only today, but throughout our history – and we continue to incorporate these virtues throughout our District.”

The day-long workshop was designed to enlighten and instill in students the importance and benefits of diversity in their schools, community and beyond. The workshop also sought to assist participants in dealing with such complex and divisive issues such as violence, hate speech, bullying and prejudice through experiential activities and group and break-out sessions.

Calvin Terrell, a charismatic and renowned diversity awareness speaker of NTLP, was the keynote speaker and reminded students of his exhortation that ‘to be a warrior in the face of adversity is hard but it’s better than being a coward’ resonated greatly with both students and adults in the audience. Terrell’s dynamic presentations brought both laughter and tears to those in attendance.

The NTLP also offers Teen Leadership Camps over the summer for intermediate and high school students throughout Montebello Unified.

“To bring students from all backgrounds and cultures onto our campus to bond and empower themselves was an amazing and powerful experience for the participants,” Superintendent of Education Susanna Contreras Smith said. “We are so honored to have partnered with the National Teen Leadership Program, and are humbled that they chose one of our sites to host this special and moving workshop.”

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The National Teen Leadership Program is a nonprofit organization that offers leadership camps and one-day workshops to instill important leadership concepts in our youth. The program, created in 1992, began as a modest three-day camp at California State University, Sacramento that was attended by 185 students. It has since grown to accommodate more than 12,000 teens and has raised more than \$160,000 in scholarships.

Photo Captions

Diversity Day1: From left: Calvin Terrell, MUSD Board Clerk Lani Cupchoy, Bell Gardens Mayor Jennifer Rodriguez, BGI teacher and Bell Gardens City Councilmember Priscilla Flores, BGI teacher and Bell Gardens City Councilmember Jesse Mendoza, and MUSD Board President Edgar Cisneros participated with more than 200 middle- and high-schoolers from throughout Southern California who came together on Feb. 21 for the sold-out National Teen Leadership Program (NTLP) Diversity Day at Bell Gardens Intermediate.

Diversity Day2: More than 200 middle- and high-schoolers from throughout Southern California along with parents, counselors, teachers and Montebello Unified Board members, came together on Feb. 21 for the sold-out National Teen Leadership Program (NTLP) Diversity Day at Bell Gardens Intermediate.

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Montebello Unified School District is a dynamic learning institution employing top-quality educators. It is the combined work of many that allows the District to continue educating more than 30,000 students every year using the 40 Developmental Assets at all of our school sites. It is through everyone's efforts – students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators – that we are achieving the District's number one goal of raising student achievement. Learn more online at www.montebello.k12.ca.us.