

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2016

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African American Male Summit Offers Pomona Students Career Advice, Inspires Self-Empowerment

POMONA – Close to 75 Pomona Unified students and parents learned the importance of higher education and achieving self-empowerment, personal growth and academic development during the Pomona Alliance of Black School Educators' eighth annual African American Male Summit on Feb. 20 at Village Academy High School.

Sponsored by the Pomona Alliance of Black School Educators (PABSE) and Pomona Unified, the summit, themed "Boys to Men: Stepping into Manhood," was open to African American males, as well as other males of color, in grades seven through 12 and their parents.

Held every year during Black History Month, the summit provides information on college and careers and explores topics relevant to the African American experience. Neighboring middle and high school students and their parents also were invited to attend.

"The African American Male Summit is a culmination of months of planning by retired and current PUSD educators, who work tirelessly to present a well-rounded and comprehensive day of community outreach," Board President Adrienne Konigar-Macklin said. "Events like these are important for the young men in our community to receive guidance and support throughout their education, setting the foundation for their continued success."

The keynote address, titled "Through Adversity the Impossible is Possible," was delivered by guest speaker and former student-athlete at Azusa Pacific University Oliver Petty. Breakout sessions focused on building dreams, entrepreneurship and the need to aspire for greatness rather than success.

"Our hope is that all of our young men went away with a feeling of pride for who they are and what they represent," PABSE President Angelique Butler said. "It is our hope that they see their value and feel that they matter. We want to provide them with the tools and resources for success."

Students and parents listened to a distinguished group of current and former PUSD educators, alumni and board members, as well as African American male professionals. Exhibitors included AVID, Bright Prospect, Cal State Fullerton and National College Resource Foundation, among others.

Participants also toured the African American Museum of New Beginnings, located adjacent to the Village Academy.

The summit – known in prior years as the African American Male Jamboree – was conceived by Gloria Prentice, a former PUSD educator and parent. Prentice saw the necessity for a dedicated forum for discussion that focused solely on African American males and the urgent need to support and inspire them.

“This summit personifies the deep commitment Pomona Unified makes to provide our students all available educational and extracurricular support and resources, enabling them to reach their maximum potential,” Superintendent Richard Martinez said. “These are our future community leaders and their impact will be significant.”

PHOTO CAPTION:

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