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LOCAL NEWS

Urban League of Broward County gives new meaning to Spring Break Vacation!

From A. Brown, Urban League of Broward County

Originally posted 5/5/2010

The Urban League of Broward County's Spring Enrichment Camp is designed to provide students with a safe and educational alternative to Spring Break. Each program offers a wide range of activities to keep the day action-packed and FUN!

"The event was a wake up call to let us know that adults want us (kids) to make the right decisions so that we can be successful and live a good life." - Blake Cotmon, 17

CRIME PREVENTION, INTERVENTION AND DIVERSION

SPRING BREAK 2010 kicked off to a great start with 36 Diversion participants graduating from the Crime Prevention and Intervention Program. "This program gives our youth a seldom-afforded second chance and gives them an opportunity to develop positive attitudes about their future." - Vincent Ware, Program Manager of Prevention, Intervention and Diversion.

YOUTH AND EDUCATION

Spring break offered ABLE (Asset Building Leads to Excellence) and SAP (Sub-stance Abuse Prevention) participants the opportunity to spend a fun-filled week at The African Heritage Cultural Arts Center in Miami. Participants had the opportunity to experience a variety of artistic activities, including: dance, chorus, fashion design, drama, modeling, percussion, creative writing, among many others.

The Creative Program Series allowed students to awaken their artistic abilities through various workshops including drawing, creative writing, poetry, music and dance.

"I loved the Cultural Arts Center because it had me doing things that I really thought I couldn't do. It made me believe that I can follow my dreams" -Fredline Dagobert, 13

Many participants enthusiastically reported that they had developed a new interest after first experiencing the activity at the center, including ABLE's Arthur Ashe participant Mercedes Allen. Ms. Allen quickly realized that she was a talented seamstress and proudly showcased her masterpiece—a brightly colored formal gown to her counselors and fellow participants.

The Life Skills & Excursion Series provided challenge and excitement with different activities each day! Excursion provided new adventures for kids who enjoy traveling and outdoor activities.

The male participants attended the No Excuses young men's conference.

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The conference featured three guest speakers that focused on healthy living, empowerment and obtaining success. The presenters kept the males engaged by facilitating an interactive presentation.

Homicide Detective William DeJesus from the Fort Lauderdale Police Department and Andre Newton, Student Services Coordinator from Whiddon Rogers delivered a message about the value education and planning for the future. He based his presentation on an "RIP" t-shirt of a young man he once mentored.

One of the student tours included a stop at Best Buy. Participants learned about Best Buy's Brand Statement and Core Philosophies. The group then participated in the customer walk experience where they toured the different departments of the store. Finally, they were split into smaller groups and visited those same areas for a more in-depth tour. The tour ended with participants being informed of career opportunities at Best Buy.

"Honestly, I thought this year's Spring Break Camp was one of the better ones. Before Spring Break our participants complained about having to spend their week off from school to attend camp. But as the week progressed, we noticed a shift in attitudes and that the kids were excited and engaged in every activity. They were happy to make new friends and experience new things." - David Young, Youth Development Counselor, Crime Prevention/Intervention/ Diversion

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