

Making a Difference...



Renaissance Scholars (RS), launched in 2002, is a comprehensive program who's purpose it to **empower former foster youth through higher education**. It draws on the Education Opportunity Program (EOP) and the Casey Family Programs' *It's My Life* framework for transitioning youth.

Values

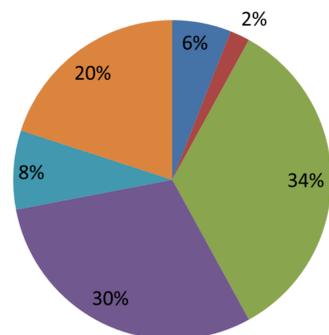
We emphasize **Learning**, demonstrate **Resiliency**, encourage and model **Wellness**, act with **Integrity**, exemplify personal and social **Responsibility**, and cherish **Relationships** with others.

2012-13 Renaissance Scholars

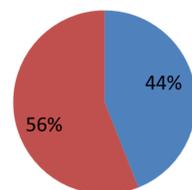
Freshman: 18
Sophomores: 6
Juniors: 7
Seniors: 19

TOTAL: 50 Scholars

Ethnic Breakdown



Gender Breakdown



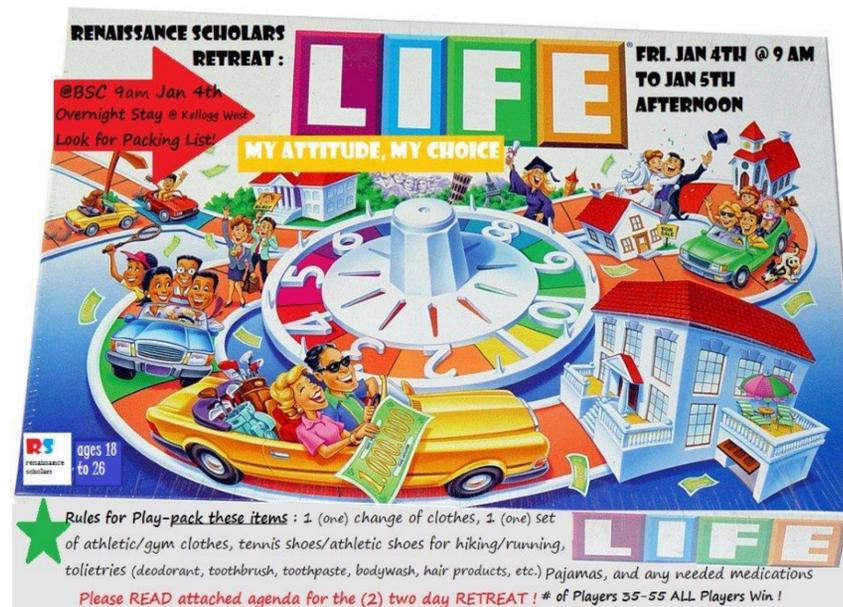
Learning Objectives

The annual Renaissance Scholars Retreat is intended to provide students with an opportunity to enhance and develop their personal, social and intellectual skills, while helping to build a strong sense of community.

Retreat Theme

"L.I.F.E.: An Attitude of..."

(L)abor, (I)nfluence, (F)orgiveness, (E)xperiences



DESIRED OUTCOME:

The desired outcome for the retreat was for students to raise their level of empowerment, sense of community, understanding of the concept of Social Code Switching, and raise their level of interest in giving back and serving our community.

Methodology

Evidence of Learning was gathered by collecting the following:

Pre/Post Assessment

Students submitted a pre and post assessment after at the beginning and end of the RS Retreat.

Anecdotal Data:

Comments were gathered from individual meetings between the students and staff as well as via email.

Results

Results show that at the conclusion of the retreat there was an increase in student's levels of empowerment, sense of community, understanding of the concept of Social Code Switching, and a higher level of interest in giving back and serving our community.

PRE Assessment: N=36

Using a likert scale of 1 – 10 (1 being the lowest and 10 the highest) the following participants rated low levels of:

Empowerment - 11%
Sense of community within RS - 22%
Understanding of the concept of Social Code Switching - 58%
Interest in giving back and serving the community - 8%
Their responses ranged between a 1-5 level.

POST Assessment: N=18

Using a likert scale of 1 – 10 (1 being the lowest and 10 the highest) the participants rated as follows:

Empowerment - 17% (6-7 range), 83% (8-10 range)
Sense of community within RS - 17% (6-7 range), 83%(8-10 range)
Understanding of the concept of Social Code Switching - 6% rated a 4, 17% (6-7 range), 72% (8-10 range)
Interest in giving back and serving the community - 6% rated a 7, 93% (8-10 range)
Most responses ranged between a 6-10 level.

What Students Are Saying About Their Experience

"I think that everything was perfect. All the workshops and activities helped me to become a better person and learn how to forgive someone. Best retreat ever!"

"I didn't do everything right this quarter, but I saw a difference in a positive direction. The positive enforcement had the greatest impact on me...I have seen a big change in my behavior that I have never seen in all my years of school."

Implications For Practice

Although we did not have the same number of participants respond to the pre/post assessment, the results show that we did met our desired outcome for the retreat. The low number of responses occurred because we provided the post assessment a day after the retreat, rather than at the conclusion. Adjustments in time frame need to be done next year to improve results. Additionally, suggestions offered by students to improve future retreats are to provide more social & free time for them to connect, and to mix groups up during every activity to give an opportunity for everyone to interact and help build community amongst the group.