

# PREJUDICE AWARENESS SUMMIT

A PROGRAM OF



VIRGINIA CENTER FOR  
**INCLUSIVE**  
COMMUNITIES

MADE POSSIBLE BY

Genworth 

## FINAL REPORT

### ABOUT PREJUDICE AWARENESS SUMMIT 2019 -2020

#### OVERVIEW



The Prejudice Awareness Summit (PAS) is an intensive day-long workshop for middle school students that leads to a year

of programming designed to increase awareness, knowledge, and acceptance of differences. Schools send teams of students and an educator to the forum. While there, they develop action plans to share the program message with their school community.

#### GOAL

To increase middle school youth's sensitivity to and awareness of diversity issues so that they can create school and community environments free from the distractions of prejudice, stereotypes, and bigotry.

#### OBJECTIVES

By the end of the program, participants will:

- Increase understanding of what prejudice is, decrease stereotypic attitudes, and develop an expanded awareness of discrimination and the harmful effects on individuals, groups, and communities
- Be exposed to diverse perspectives
- Build relationships with peers from a similar geographic area
- Develop an increased sense of personal empowerment and recognize the positive impact they, as individuals and as groups of students, can have on their own schools and communities

#### COALITION PARTNERS

##### Lynchburg

- Office of Equity and Inclusion at University of Lynchburg
- YWCA of Central Virginia

##### Richmond

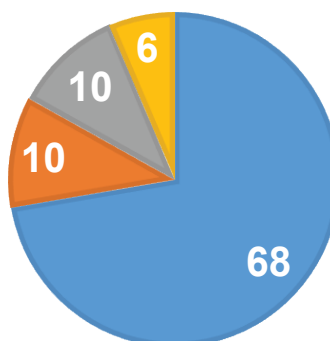
- Communities in Schools of Richmond
- Partnership for the Future
- YMCA of Greater Richmond
- YWCA of Richmond

#### WHERE

In the 2019-2020 school year, Prejudice Awareness Summit forums sponsored by Genworth took place in two regions of Virginia. On October 18, 2019, Virginia Commonwealth University hosted the Richmond program, which included attendees from twenty schools across the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, and the city of Richmond. On January 15 2020, Randolph College hosted the Lynchburg program, which included attendees from eight schools across Appomattox County, Farmville, Lynchburg City, Roanoke, and Staunton.

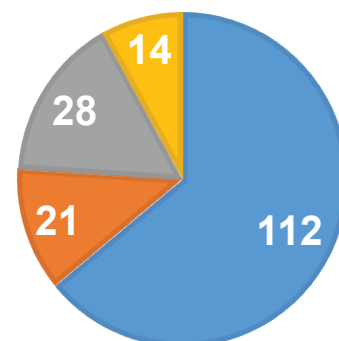
#### PARTICIPANTS BY REGION

**LYNCHBURG**  
94 participants



■ Students  
■ Educators  
■ Facilitators

**RICHMOND**  
175 participants



■ Students  
■ Educators  
■ Logistical Volunteers



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# 100%

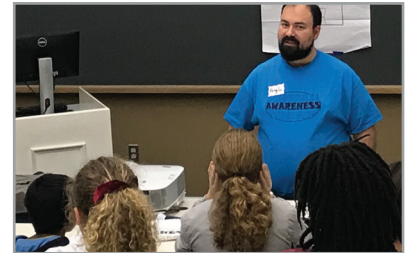
of educators said that they felt more motivated to support students to reduce prejudice in their school

# 88%

of students agreed that “Break the Cycle: Be the Change” increased their knowledge of how to reduce prejudice in school

# 88%

of students agreed that the activities helped their awareness of the experiences of people who are different from them



## FOLLOW UP

Thanks to Genworth’s support, schools were allowed to apply for funding to support their plan, or to hold follow up workshops conducted by VCIC, or both. Many schools chose both options in order to buy needed supplies and to benefit from VCIC’s experience with plan implementation. Through the follow-up workshops, students will be able to openly discuss the challenges they are facing while also tapping into the motivation sparked by the Prejudice Awareness Summit. As a result of these sessions, schools carried out plans aimed at changing their school climate for the better through poster campaigns, holding assemblies, and starting student groups that encourage inclusive action among the student body. One educator shared that their students “are much more aware of the words they use and their influences on others. I would love to bring my entire middle school [to this program]!”

## In Their Own Words:

- ▶ “I’m stronger than I think when it comes to standing up for myself and others”
- ▶ “If we really tried, we could make our school a better place”
- ▶ “I’ve learned to respect others’ race, ethnicities, and opinions”
- ▶ “I am a powerful person”
- ▶ “We can talk about our problems”
- ▶ “I should accept just who I am”
- ▶ “I’m not alone”
- ▶ “I can change the world”

## EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT

While students were in their breakout sessions, educators went through their own session. During that time, they previewed some of the activities that their students were experiencing



and considered ways to apply these concepts to their school environments through culturally relevant teaching practices. At each session, educators appreciated the opportunity to converse openly with one another about the challenges they face and the practices they have implemented in their own schools. Finally, they engaged with practical tips for supporting their students in action planning. Educators reported that the day inspired them to set aside more intentional, consistent time to open dialogue up for both students and staff groups in order to build trust. In addition, many shared that they would incorporate what they learned in the session into future professional development programming.