



PROGRAM OF

VIRGINIA CENTER FOR
INCLUSIVE
COMMUNITIES

MADE POSSIBLE BY



FINAL REPORT

ABOUT PREJUDICE AWARENESS SUMMIT 2018 - 2019

OVERVIEW

The Prejudice Awareness Summit 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. Held since 2001 in Virginia, 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. As part of that process, they identify resources to spread the PAS message effectively to their larger middle school population. The PAS was founded by Jewish Women International.

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

- Goodwill Industries of the Valleys
- HumanKind
- Office of Equity and Inclusion at University of Lynchburg

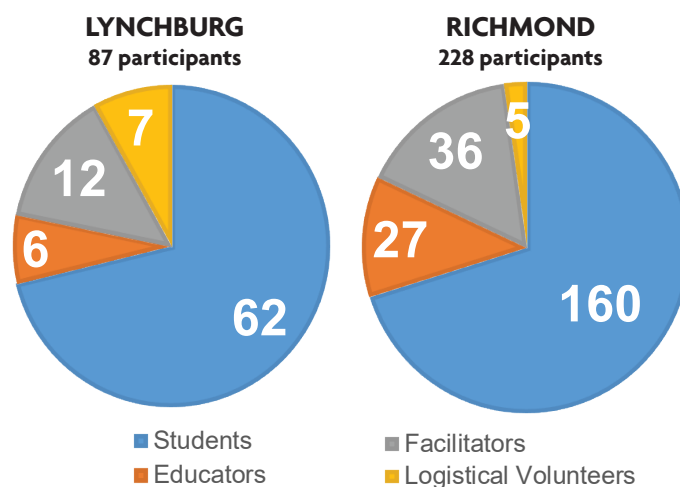
Richmond

- Initiatives of Change
- Partnership for the Future
- YWCA of Richmond

WHERE

In the 2018-2019 school year, Prejudice Awareness Summits sponsored by Genworth took place in two regions of Virginia. On October 18, 2018, Virginia Commonwealth University hosted the Richmond-area program, which included attendees from six private schools and sixteen public schools across the counties of Chesterfield, Goochland, Henrico, New Kent, Williamsburg-James City, and the city of Richmond. On January 8 2019, Randolph College hosted the Lynchburg-area program, which included attendees from six schools across Appomattox County, Campbell County, and Lynchburg City.

PARTICIPANTS BY REGION



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92%

of students agreed that the day increased their awareness of the experiences of people who are different from them.

86%

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

85%

of students agreed that the day's activities helped increase their knowledge of how to reduce prejudice.



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 were able to openly discuss the challenges they faced 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.

In Their Own Words:

- ▶ “There are a lot of things that I can change for the better at my school.”
- ▶ “Now after today I will get to know people before I judge them.”
- ▶ “People shouldn’t have to change to fit in and others shouldn’t judge.”
- ▶ “I’m powerful.”
- ▶ “I learned how I can handle discrimination.”
- ▶ “I learned that the people that came today can help make a change.”
- ▶ “I prejudge people too often.”

EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT

While students were in their breakout sessions, educators went through their own workshop. During that time, they previewed some of the activities that their students were experiencing and explored key terms and definitions related to prejudice and inclusion. They also considered ways that prejudice shows up in their schools and brainstormed ways to break down institutional bias. Finally, they engaged with practical tips for supporting their students in action planning. Educators during both sessions were very positive about the day, and appreciative of the opportunity to network with their peers from across the region. A first-time attendee said of the day:

“I’ve really enjoyed this! I’m so glad our students have been able to participate in this opportunity.” Others said “this was wonderful!” and “Keep up the good work.”

