



LIFTING
URBAN
STUDENTS
HIGHER

GUEST SPEAKERS MAKE POWERFUL IMPACT!

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Guest Speakers for Black History Career Symposium

In February, we participated in a Black History Month Career Symposium at Lakewood High with the students of the Lakewood Black Student Union. Our Senior Program Coordinator, Damian T. McCalman, brought in five career professionals from different fields to share their journey and wisdom.

Chef Denise Smith: GennieBee Catering | Private Chef | Chapter President of the National Black Chefs Association in Southern California.

Melissa Kyle Cofer: Business Strategist, Speaker, Entrepreneur, and Community Leader.

Cecilia Poindexter Harrison: Retired, worked at Northrop-Gruman and Raytheon as a Computer and Software Engineer; our very own Hidden Figure.

Glenn Allen: Facilities Services Swing Shift Supervisor at American Honda Corporate Headquarters.

Matthew Smith: Supervisor, Aircraft Maintenance at United Airlines.



Ms. Melissa Kyle Cofer



Mr. Glenn Allen



Ms. Cecilia Harrison

Each speaker shared valuable insights into their career and career path, the need for education/training at all levels, finding out that "greater purpose within," not letting a lack of finances stand in the way of accomplishing your desires, and walking in all rooms with confidence, knowing that you belong there.

One young lady stayed behind, needing to understand more about "knowing that you belong," asked speakers Melissa and Denise how to cultivate the mindset of "belonging," which has been a struggle for her. They encouraged her, emphasizing to her that she belongs in any room that she is invited to. In addition, they gave her tips on speaking confidently about herself and what she brings to the table. That young lady walked away confident in herself and her future pursuits.



Students At Black History Career Symposium



Mrs. June Davis Speaking To Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Students At Compton High School

Mrs. June Davis recently spoke to our Elevate Your G.A.M.E. students at Compton High School. During the session, Mrs. Davis encouraged students to reflect on their personal journeys and recognize the role Elevate Your G.A.M.E. plays in helping guide their path. She emphasized the importance of using the program's success plan, including reciting the Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Affirmation Statement daily and living out the "I Am's" and "I Will's." Students were reminded to put their G.A.M.E. goals into action by working hard, showing up consistently, protecting their reputation, and leading with courage. She also acknowledged that life can be challenging, encouraging students to stay resilient and embrace a positive mindset—remembering that when life gives you lemons, you can always make lemonade.



Dr. Dominique Woods

Dr. Dominique Woods spoke to the football team that we mentor at Compton High School. She is the daughter of George Woods who played football at Compton High and served as a mentor with us in our football team mentoring program until he passed away about a year ago. She engaged the young men in a conversation with her that opened their minds to all the possibilities of their future.

We greatly appreciate all of our guest speakers. Our students were "locked in" when they spoke and were challenged to think higher about their present and their future. As a result, we believe that our students will seek to follow in their successful footsteps. We look forward to the day that some of our current students will return to be guest speakers for the next generation of students.

Grateful for your partnership,

Michael Freeman
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