



d2D Program Prepares Teens for College

Autumn usually means a kickoff to the stressful college application process for many Club teens. But for ten members of the Smilow-Burroughs Clubhouse, the process is a bit easier and more exciting after their participation in the Club's dipomas 2 Degrees Program, which includes a year of mentorship and a six day college tour.

The d2D program serves thirty-three 7th-12th graders at the Club through weekly meetings with Teen Programs Director Gina Osegueda and individual research of colleges and careers. Among the many topics discussed through group and individual meetings were tuition, SATs, degree options, school size, community, location and climate.

Ten members showing the most commitment, engagement and academic effort became eligible for an all-expense paid trip through South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia led by Club staff. Guided tours included Allen University, Barton College, Belmont Abbey College, Elon University, Gardner Webb University, Greensboro College, Newbury College, Shaw University and Virginia State University. The trip introduced members to a broad range of colleges - large and small, private and public, liberal arts, historically black colleges and universities, religiously affiliated and more.

"Now I am more aware of the different types of amazing colleges to experience, and the trip helped me know that I'd prefer a smaller school to be close to professors," shared Michelle, a Bullard Havens Technical High School student participating in the college tour.

Since 2012, d2D has served more than 140 Smilow-Burroughs Clubhouse teens, with 50 teens benefiting from in-state or week long college tours. Ashli, a Fairchild Wheeler Magnet student, summed up her experience and preference for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, "The trip helped me because now I see the diversity between colleges. I learned that I would really like to get into an HBCU."

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