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Healthy Relationship Forum focuses on youth development

BY FINALCALL.COM NEWS | LAST UPDATED: NOV 4, 2012 - 12:51:37 PM

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Seventh and eighth grade students from Dunbar Pulaski Middle School attended activities on the campus of Indiana University Northwest.

GARY, Ind. - The Gary Commission on the Social Status of Black Males gave birth to the idea of a Healthy Relationship Forum and collaborated with Indiana University Northwest Brother 2 Brother College Success Program and the Gary Community School Corporation to present a Healthy Relationship Forum on the IUN campus.

The audience consisted of male and female 7th and 8th grade students from Dunbar Pulaski Middle School, with 70 students bused to IUN for the workshop. Gary Muslims participating in the forum included Sabir Omar-Muhammad, Nation of Islam Student M.G.T. Coordinator for the Gary Study Group Rosemary Muhammad and Eric Muhammad.

"We had four presenters to address the students. The students were divided into four groups. Each group sat in a classroom on campus with one of the presenters for a 40-minute session then rotated to the next classroom and presenter," said Benny Muhammad, executive director of the Gary Commission on the Social Status of Black Males and F.O.I. coordinator for the Gary Study Group. Each presenter presented four sessions and the Oct. 19 forum lasted from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Student Minister Ishmael R. Muhammad, a son of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, addresses local area students during a workshop.

The presenters and topics included Effective Communication by Dr. Dorothy Ige, Ph.D. Speech and director of IUN's Dept. of Communication; Developing Good Moral and Values by Student Minister Ishmael R. Muhammad, national assistant to the Hon. Min. Louis Farrakhan; Parenting by Mrs. Laura Smith-Wynn, founder and C.E.O., of the Indiana Parenting Institute; Keys to Developing & Maintaining a Successful Relationship by Mr. Danny Doss, B.A. Sociology and retired Dept. of Child Services Case Manager and a volunteer with the Boys to Men Mentoring Program for the last 21 years.

Student Minister Ishmael Muhammad, who was accompanied by Student Min. Jeffrey Muhammad,

NEWS SEARCH



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BY TINGBA MUHAMMAD - GUEST COLUMNIST -

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did a phenomenal job of addressing the youth in an interactive session on “Developing Good Morals and Values.” He captured the attention of the youth as he walked them into the knowledge of who they are. Get to know yourselves and discover your roots, said the Muslim minister. You are direct descendants of Almighty God, he said. Ishmael Muhammad advised the students to choose careers based on what they love doing. When he asked students what they aspire to be in life, the students replied fashion photographers, fashion stylists, carpenters, architects, railroad conductors, doctors, lawyers and policemen.

Ishmael Muhammad advised students not to get into intimate relationships during their critical education years 9th-12th grade. Serious relationships can leave you unfocused careers, he explained. Girls mature faster than boys, but boys play with toys and when boys get bored with toys, they throw toys away, and will do the same thing with you, he told the girls.

Asians think of about developing their people and their nation, he noted. You should think about reviving your community after attaining education as many Asians come to America, get educated and return to their countries to uplift their people, he said.



Activists and community members engage students at Gary, Ind. forum.

Ishmael Muhammad's last session was ending when Dunbar/Pulaski Middle School Principal, Michael Collins interjected and shared a dilemma at Dunbar, where girls are referring to themselves as “b-----s.” The student minister quickly addressed the concern by going into the etymological root of the word. He went to the black board and showed the youth that dog was G-O-D spelled in reverse. You, your eventual children, family, and communities have great value to and to Almighty God, said Ishmael Muhammad.

This was the 1st Annual Healthy Relationship Forum hosted at IUN, but the Gary Commission on the Social Status of Black Males plans to bring other educationally entertaining events to IUN in collaboration with the Brother 2 Brother student organization.

Co-sponsor at IUN James Wallace was very impressed with Min. Muhammad's presentation as well as all of the presenters. Min. Muhammad was invited to return to Gary and address the entire student body at Dunbar/Pulaski school.

Benny Muhammad and his wife Rosemary Muhammad also produce a television talk show titled “Resources for Prison Ministry Productions.” The show airs on the Gary Access Cable Channel 21 and in the Chicagoland area it can be picked up on ATT U-Verse. Guests on the show have included Ishmael Muhammad, actor Danny Glover, Student Min. Ava Muhammad, Student Prison Reform Min. Abdullah Muhammad, Student Regional Captain Anthony Muhammad, Mark Carter, a Jon Burge Torture Victim, Ameenah Matthews of Cease Fire; communications and business guru Toure Muhammad of Bean Soup Times); Dr. Larry Muhammad of Muhammad University of Islam; Chairman Fred Hampton, Jr. of P.O.C.C.), members of the National Solidarity Committee-Black Panther Party and a host of pastors and community activists. “Our ultimate goal is to position ourselves to invite the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan on our show,” said Benny Muhammad.

