July 9, 2013

“Becoming Men of Change” conference to be held at Sac State

School discipline policies, neighborhood safety and portrayal in the media are among the issues up for discussion during the second annual Boys and Men of Color Summit, set for Friday, July 12, in Sac State’s University Union Ballroom.

More than 150 African American, Asian and Hispanic males between the ages of 14 and 20 are expected to attend the free event, which was organized by a group of students to address low achievement among boys and men of color and to inspire them to improve their health, safety and educational outcomes.

“The Boys and Men of Color conference will provide young Latino and African American males with the opportunity to engage in dialogue about issues and concerns impacting them and their abilities to pursue academic and career goals,” says Dr. Vanessa Sheared, dean of Sacramento State’s College of Education.

The College of Education is hosting the summit. This year’s theme is “Becoming Men of Change.”

“We will introduce them to BMOC statistics and work to make them leaders in their schools and communities,” says Sac State student Luis Guerrero, a summit organizer and fourth-year ethnic studies major. “We honestly hope to change them.”

Summit attendees can choose to sit in on any of six scheduled workshops. One workshop will address the consequences of “willful defiance.”

“If a teacher tells you to take off your hat and you don’t, you’re suspended,” Guerrero says. “There should be alternatives, maybe counseling or other punishment that doesn’t push you out of school. This workshop is about knowing your rights.”

“A disproportionately high number of suspensions are black and brown students,” says José Cintrón, Sac State education professor and BMOC mentor, who notes that more than 700,000 California students were suspended last year.

Earlier this year, Sacramento Assemblyman Roger Dickinson introduced Assembly Bill 420, which seeks to curb the excessive use of willful defiance as a reason to suspend and expel students, noting that those students are five times more likely to drop out of school and 11 times more likely to turn to crime.
New to this year’s BMOC Summit is a second-day event for attendees and their loved ones: Saturday’s Family Day at the Teichert Branch of the Boys and Girls Club in South Sacramento.

The BMOC Summit is presented in partnership with California Endowment, Sacramento Building Healthy Communities, Sacramento Unified School District, Center for Fathers and Families, Root Causes, La Familia Counseling Center, Always Knocking Inc., Sacramento Urban League, Black Parallel School Board, Boys and Girls Club and LRG Outreach.

For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Office of Public Affairs at (916) 278-6156.
– Dixie Reid
dixie.reid@csus.edu

Sacramento State is making a difference in California’s Capital Region and beyond. We offer a life-changing opportunity for our 28,000 students, preparing them to be leaders in their professions and communities. Our professors are known for their dedication to great teaching. And our location in the capital of the nation’s most populous state allows students to pursue unique internships and research.

###

119-S13-DR