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LOS ANGELES

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# One LA Teen Program - Retreat #1

Coro Southern California's 2008 One LA Teen Program held its first retreat on the weekend of March 29th. The program's 50 participants – high school youth, ages 15-18, from throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area – were charged with looking at the political structure of Los Angeles County through the lens of the youth justice system. They focused in particular on the respective gang reduction strategies proposed by City Controller Laura Chick and Councilman Tony Cardenas.

Councilman Tony Cardenas of District 6 in Los Angeles gave a presentation to the youth at the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy. The participants also interviewed the following individuals about their work and various viewpoints of their proposed gang reduction strategies: Dimmery Davis, Lead Advisor, Gang Alternatives Program (GAP); Aquil Basheer, CEO, Maximum Force Enterprise; Elizabeth Greenwood, Deputy Los Angeles City Attorney; Sharmeen Premjee, Policy Analyst for Gang Reduction & Youth Development, Office of the Mayor, Los Angeles; Alex Carpio, Motivational Speaker, Homeboy Industries.

Over the weekend, the students discussed the viewpoints on prevention, intervention, suppression and reentry that the interviewees expressed. The retreat was the first layer of the multilayered approach to understanding youth violence prevention and the first step towards creating a shared vision for Los Angeles in the next generation of leaders.

Four youth coaches were brought in to support the learning of the youth during and between events. The youth participants were graciously lodged at the Miyako Hotel Los Angeles in Little Toyko. Coro would also like to thank the supporters of the One LA Teen Program: Weingart Foundation, Union Pacific Railroad, Boeing, LA Times, Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, Dwight Stuart Youth Foundation.

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