

REDWOOD CITY 2020

A healthy community partnership

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Redwood City 2020 Tuesday Tidbits

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Summary of March 3 Conference for Immigrants and Allies

Day of Unity, Understanding and Supportive Action: Conference for Immigrants and Allies

Redwood City 2020 partners, in special collaboration with the Sequoia Dream Club, LIBRE, and Redwood City Together, held a conference for immigrants and their allies on Saturday, March 3 from 8:45am to 2pm. Open to all, the event was held at Sequoia High School and ran parallel to and in partnership with the 6th annual, youth-focused DREAMers Unite! Conference organized by the Sequoia DREAM Club.



Designed to build unity, understanding, and supportive action, the conference included a resource fair, workshops, and a world café-style dialogue. Additionally, youth speakers shared their personal immigration stories, a young artist rapped in Spanish, and the day culminated in a communal dance.

Many thanks to all hosting partners and participants for creating a successful day of learning, empowerment, and commitment to bridging social divides to build an inclusive and equitable community in which all are welcome. The solidarity, community spirit, and empathy present were a strong response to the racism, fear-mongering, and persecution that the current political climate has engendered.

Participating Partners

Despite rainy weather and recent ICE raids against the immigrant community, 200 people attended the conference, including documented and undocumented teens, parents, immigrants, and long-term



residents. It was a peaceful and family-focused event.

By bringing together community partners who are working for equity and justice, the conference was an opportunity to share accurate information, dispel myths, and connect with others.

A total of 22 local organizations partnered in the resource fair and workshops: San Mateo County Human Services Agency CalFresh Program; San Mateo County Office of Community Affairs: Immigrant Support Services; Fools Mission; Catholic Charities: Refugee & Immigrant Services; San Mateo County Sheriff's Office: CARON Program; Upward Scholars; CASA of San Mateo County; KARA; Redwood City Public Library; San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services; Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto; International Institute of the Bay Area; Cañada College; Fair Oaks Community Center; Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County; LIBRE; Nuestra Casa; Faith in Action Bay Area; At Home Humanitarian; Sequoia High School Dream Club; the Redwood City School District; and the Sequoia Union High School District.

Resource Fair

Throughout the conference, partners working for immigrant-serving organizations staffed tables at a resource fair. Hundreds of conference participants visited these tables to learn about programs and resources available to community members ranging from legal services to adult education to grief/self-care support.



Workshops



In the morning there were two workshop tracks happening at the same time, one tailored for adults and the other for youth.

All workshops on the adult track included 10 minutes of self-care/mental health practice at the beginning of the sessions, and then contained content for immigrants and allies in the community. Topics included: Immigrants and Public Benefits in San Mateo County;

Navigating the College Application Process for Undocumented Students; Rapid Response Training; ICE at Your Door: What to Do and How to Prevent It; Family Preparedness Plan; Immigration Options; Being Budget and Resource Savvy in Hard Times; DACA and Other Immigration Remedies; and Accompaniment Training for Allies.

The youth-focused workshops attracted young people from Redwood City, North Fair

Oaks, and neighboring Bay Area communities. Youth-led workshop topics included: Telling Your Story; Activism through Theater; Emotional Well-being; How to Choose and Pay for College; Becoming an Activist; High School Alumni Panel; Know Your Rights; and Making Art Work for Your Cause.

Dialogue

Participating youth and adults reconvened for a world café-style dialogue at lunchtime that was designed to build empathy, understanding, and supportive action. The dialogue included facilitated conversation in diverse small groups of 8-10 people.



During the small group discussions, attendees shared their reflections on the conference and their hopes, fears, and experiences as a youth, immigrant, and/or ally. The conversations revealed commonalities and similarities in experiences that built a sense of community, while the diversity of perspectives present also broadened participants' awareness and compassion.

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