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Educational Partnership Brings Summer Youth Leadership Institute to Solano Students

Solano County Office of Education and Touro University Team Up to Spark Youth Leadership Around Equity and Health

Solano County, CA- This week, 21 Solano County high school students are participating in the 2022 Summer Youth Leadership Institute (SYLI), hosted by Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) and Touro University California (TUC) at no cost to the participants. The project was created by TUC and SCOE to inspire the next generation as public health leaders through five days of youth advocacy and leadership development that will be led by experts in the field of youth supports, peer education, public health, and environmental prevention*.

“Every young person possesses the potential to be a great leader. The Summer Youth Leadership Institute provides students an opportunity to build on their skills, advocate for their communities, interact with elected officials and participate in hands-on civics learning,” remarked Solano County Superintendent of Schools, Lisette Estrella-Henderson. “Our partnership with Touro University allows SCOE to amplify our youth advocacy efforts and provide a rich, inclusive and meaningful experience for students.”

“It is fantastic to have local students here on our campus for the Summer Youth Leadership Institute,” said Dr. Sarah Sweitzer, Provost and Chief Executive Officer for Touro University California. “Our ongoing partnership with SCOE aligns with our university mission to serve and is an expansion of our efforts to engage youth throughout Solano County to be agents for positive change.”

The institute, launched on August 8th and includes a virtual meeting with U.S. Congressman Garamendi and a field trip to the State Capitol. There, students will meet with leaders from agencies like the Governor’s office, California’s departments of Health Care Services and Alcoholic Beverage Control, the Center for Healthy Communities, Assemblywoman Lori Wilson’s office, and others. These meetings provide opportunities to engage with decision makers about issues that affect youth and local communities helping students actively participate in and learn about the process of policy development.

The leadership institute also focuses on health equity and is based on the principals of Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Youth-led Participatory Action Research (YPAR). YPAR is an innovative approach to positive youth and community development based in social justice principles in which young people are



empowered to conduct systemic research to improve communities and institutions intended to serve them. PYD is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, social groups, and families in a manner that productively brings about the positive change young leaders work towards.

The Summer Youth Leadership Institute will culminate in a ceremony with participants receiving certificates of completion and certificates of recognition from elected officials at the local, state, and national levels of government.

For more information about the Summer Youth Leadership Institute please visit our website at <https://www.solanocoe.net/leadershipinstitute>.

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Additional information:

*Environmental prevention emphasizes the social, cultural and institutional forces that contribute to the health issues within a community with efforts to influence community conditions, standards, systems, norms and more.