



COUNTY OF YOLO
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Yolo County DA's Multi-Cultural Community Council Offers Weekend
Youth Leadership Academy**
18 high school students completed the program over a full weekend.

(Woodland, CA) - November 2, 2017 - Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that this past Friday through Sunday, students from Woodland Senior High School, Cache Creek (Continuation) High School and Cesar Chavez Community School attended the 1st Annual Multi-Cultural Community Council Youth Leadership Academy. The mission of the Multi-Cultural Community Council is to seek fair and equal justice, facilitate understanding, ensure open communication, and promote community participation, education and diversity within the criminal justice system.

Eighteen students successfully completed the three-day program which promoted the importance of relationships, acceptance and peace within Yolo County communities. The Yolo County District Attorney Office Multi-Cultural Community Council brought in a variety of community members and organizations to discuss these topics. Presenters encouraged the students to engage and become involved in their communities. The students and facilitators discussed the importance of taking pride in community and learning how to understand the one's self. Students also learned about the criminal justice system.

Many students shared their thoughts on the positive experience they had. One student stated, “The best thing about this program was having people speak to us about their stories. We could relate to them... it just makes me look at life different.”

Another reported that “this leadership academy has really helped me and it has given me the chance to see many opportunities that are in the criminal law field...this academy is helping me to think of what I really want to do with my life....”

A third student commented, “I liked all the people the organizers brought, all the resources and everything, they actually brought real attorneys, the swat team came with their truck, they brought the K-9... that was really cool, [we] got to learn a lot.”

At this year’s event, with the collaboration of Superintendent Jesse Ortiz and the Yolo County Office of Education, students also heard motivational speakers, were offered volunteer opportunities, interacted with Woodland Police Department and the SWAT team, witnessed a mock DUI trial, heard from crime victims, and learned about community organizations.

District Attorney Jeff Reisig discussed the importance of this event. “We all want to make a difference in our community which starts with our youth,” said Reisig. “It was truly amazing to watch the student’s attitudes evolve over the three days. They were able to envision their unlimited potential.”

MCCC member and Woodland resident Griselda Castro stated “It so was impressive to see the youth participants so engaged! They had an opportunity to network and learn from the real stories and life experiences of local leaders. By sitting in an ‘Equality Circle’ with Woodland Mayor Angel Barajas, Woodland Chief of Police Luis Soler, and Juvenile Judge Sonia Cortes among others, I believe this enabled the youth to better appreciate the power of their own stories and see their life experiences as assets for future success.”

The plan moving forward is to seek input from the graduates so next year’s Academy will be even better. For more information please contact Victim Services Program Coordinator and MCCC Co-Chair Laura Valdes at (530) 666-8187 or Laura.Valdes@yolocounty.org.

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