

COR Conference

Systemic Stories

Institutional Racism

March 23, 2002

Hosted by Loyola Academy



The final COR event of the year was held at Loyola Academy in Wilmette, IL on Saturday, March 23, 2002. Throughout the 2001-2002 school year, we have examined personal, spatial and internalized racism; on Saturday we continued our exploration of racism by focusing on institutional racism as we listened to Greg Forbes Siegman, shared reactions to his story, learned about resources to help us make changes at our own institutions and enjoyed an excerpt from the new COR play Turning CORners.



The day began with students participating in activities to "break the ice" in their small groups. Students then listened to Greg Forbes Siegman-founder of the 11-10-02 Foundation (www.BrunchBunch.com) and CEO of IdeaList Enterprises Inc.

Tell Our Story, which recounts how Siegman faced stereotypes in his own life and racism against his students and how he challenged the stereotypes and racism in simple but profound ways. Siegman left students with this three-point message: 1) the only way past a stereotype is to approach it, 2) stereotypes go beyond skin deep and 3) the best way to appreciate a stereotype is to become the one subjected to it. Siegman encouraged students to keep an open mind and to never think they are too young, too poor or too dumb to change the world.

After discussing Siegman's message in small groups, students ate lunch together and then moved to classrooms to see PowerPoint presentations on resources they can use to develop diversity programs and to effect institutional change in their own schools. Students then gathered in their own school groups to develop action plans for their schools.



The entire group ended the day in the chapel to see excerpts of the COR play Turning CORners, which will be performed on April 15 & 16 at Gallery 37 Storefront Theater and April 19 & 20 at the Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Parish Center Auditorium at Holy Name Cathedral. The excerpts introduced students to the opening scene of the play, in which we meet the main characters exploring the city and voicing their old attitudes and their hope to develop new ones, and to two main characters, Chris and Marcus, boys of different races whose complex relationship develops throughout the course of the play.

Finally, the day ended with mass, celebrated by Rev. Terry Baum, S.J.

This conference included students and faculty from 15 schools in the Archdiocese. There were over 100 participants.

COR is sponsored by Queen of Peace High School, a Sinsinawa Dominican-sponsored school for young women, and Angels Studio, a communications ministry of the Chicago Province of the Society of the Divine Word.

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