

**School Name:** Rockville High School

**Organization Name:** Rockville High School Student Government Association

**Advisor's Name:** Ms. Katie Rossini

**# of members in your group:** 51 students

**# of members participating in activity/project:** 1260 students and 175 staff members

**Dates of activity/project:** December 7, 2005 – School Violence Survey administered  
February 21-24, 2006 – Violence Prevention Week  
April 26, 2006 – Anti-Violence Pledge Signed (again)

## **I. Project Summary**

### **Name of Project: Violence Prevention Week**

The Rockville High School Student Government Association (RHS SGA) culminated its year-long focus on non-violence, peaceful protest and conflict resolution with Violence Prevention Week. The week consisted of three lunch forums, a breakfast, an assembly, a student survey and a student pledge. Three graffiti walls were also posted around the school so students could express their feelings and emotions around the topic of school violence. The week was a huge success, with articles in the *Rockville Gazette* and *Rockville Rampage* highlighting the activities and survey results. The event raised awareness of school violence and gave students the opportunity to show their support for peaceful resolutions to their problems.

## **II. Project Objectives**

At the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year, one of our classmates Kanisha Neal was killed after an altercation with a group of Sherwood High School students at a football game. Following the tragic events of September 23, 2005, SGA members came together to discuss the event and to strategize about ways to peacefully respond to the incident. We reflected on this event as well as other violent events which took place in the Montgomery County high schools this fall. The SGA hoped to give students the opportunity to express themselves and to share their emotions in a safe, nurturing environment. We also hoped to teach students alternatives to violence, such as conflict resolution and peer mediation.

## **III. Project Activities**

The preliminary activity of Violence Prevention Week was a school-wide survey done in English classes on School Violence. SGA members administered the survey to their peers each period on December 7, 2005. Students were asked for their opinions on various issues effecting student safety and school security. Results were tallied and presented in the February edition of the *Rockville Rampage*.

From Tuesday, February 21, 2006 to Friday, February 24, 2006, various Violence Prevention Week activities occurred. Each morning on Ram TV, a quote from Coretta Scott King or Rosa Parks was read, reminding students of the need for non-violence.

Each day at lunch SGA members circulated throughout the cafeteria getting students to sign the Anti-Violence Pledge. Students who didn't sign the pledge during this week were given another chance to sign the pledge on April 26, 2006 during the SMOB/SGA Election. This pledge asked students to commit to non-violent means of solving conflicts.

Lunch Forums were held in room 2061 on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday to give students the opportunity to learn about non-violence and to express themselves. Tuesday's forum was led by SGA President Sonny Shah and the RHS Student Advocates. Sonny shared the School Violence Survey results while the Student Advocates shared information they learned at their training. Thursday's forum was led by Educational Facilities Officer Chris Winkler. Office Winkler shared information on school violence and school security. Attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions and to share their personal thoughts on the death of Kanisha Neal. Friday's forum was led by Peace Studies Teacher Debbie Wilchek. Mrs. Wilchek taught students about *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, *A Village of 100*, *10 Ways to Fight Hate* and the World Peace Movement. Again, students were given the opportunity to ask questions and to share their personal stories.

A school-wide breakfast and a school-wide assembly were held on Wednesday, February 22, 2006. The breakfast was free to students and staff members in the cafeteria from 7:00 AM until 7:25 AM. Students ate cereal, bagels, danishes and other treats together to show their unity and their support for non-violence. That afternoon during 7<sup>th</sup> period, students viewed An Anti-Violence Tribute to Coretta Scott King and Rosa Parks. These two women, who both died this year, were chosen as role models for peaceful protest and non-violent responses to conflict. Students watched various student speakers and student performance groups saluted Coretta Scott King and Rosa Parks, encouraging their peers to seek peaceful means to solve problems.

#### **IV. Leadership**

All 51 members of the Student Government Association worked on some aspect of this project. We collaborated with the *Rampage*, our school newspaper to publicize events online and to document the activities of the week. The Step Team, the Inspiration for People of Color (IPC) club, the Jazz Band, the Chorus, the Dance class and various teachers in the school also participated in the event. SGA President Sonny Shah worked with Officer Winkler to write survey questions. Human Relations Chair Crystel Britto, Senator Nick Towns and Senator Cornelia Poku organized the assembly and worked with other student groups to get them involved. Sophomore Class Vice President Mary Gorman organized SGA members to get students to sign the Anti-Violence Pledge at lunch during Violence Prevention Week and during the SMOB/SGA Election. Chief of Staff Jessica Chong organized the lunch forums and got speakers for the event.

#### **V. Project Results**

The efforts of the Student Government Association helped bring the issue of non-violence to the forefront. More than 80% of the RHS student body signed the Anti-Violence Pledge, promising to seek peaceful solutions to conflicts. *Time* magazine's National Student Newspaper of the Year the *Rockville Rampage* commended the SGA for their work to encourage non-violence throughout our community. SGA President Sonny Shah was awarded the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Youth Award from the City of Rockville's Human Rights Commission for his leadership in the area of non-violence. Students at the Lunch Forums thanked the organization for planning these events and for giving students a place to share their feelings. Principal Dr. Debra Munk and other staff

members commended the SGA for their programming and activities. All-in-all the events of the week were successful and well-received!

**Black History Month Assembly:  
An Anti-Violence Tribute to Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King  
Wednesday, February 22, 2006**

**Bell Schedule**

Period 1	7:25-8:05	40 minutes
Period 2	8:10-8:50	40 minutes (Ram TV)
Period 3	8:55-9:35	40 minutes
Period 4	9:40-10:20	40 minutes
Lunch	10:20-11:00	40 minutes
Period 5	11:05-11:45	40 minutes
Period 6	11:50-12:30	40 minutes
Period 7 OR Assembly A	12:35-1:20	45 minutes
Period 7 OR Assembly B	1:25-2:10	45 minutes

Above is a copy of the bell schedule for the assembly on Wednesday, February 22, 2006. Please note your assembly time and seating location on the attached page. If possible, take a few minutes to visit the auditorium to locate your seating area prior to the assembly. Please note the following assembly guidelines:

- GET TO THE AUDITORIUM AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE!!!
- Leave bookbags in your classroom.
- Have your class sit in your designated area.
- Take attendance again in the auditorium.
- Remind students of your expectations for the assembly. Students should sit quietly during the program. Polite applause is fine; yelling and whistling is not.
- If a student is disrespectful, escort the student to the rear of the auditorium and leave the student with a security team member. Return to your class.

**Black History Month Assembly:  
An Anti-Violence Tribute to Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King  
Wednesday, February 22, 2006  
RHS Auditorium**

**Sponsored by the Student Government Association**

**Violence Prevention Week Coordinators**

Crystel Britto, Human Relations Chair

Cornelia Poku, Class of 2009 Senator

Nick Towns, Class of 2007 Senator

Jazz Band plays as students enter	Phil Barnes, Band Director
Welcome Address	Sonny Shah, SGA President
Anti-Violence Tribute to Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King	Adjua Adama, U. S. History Teacher
<i>God Bless the Child</i> Jazz Band Performance	Phil Barnes, Band Director
Black Inventors Skit	Jamani Harris, IPC Advisor Dee Antonio, IPC Advisor
<i>River in Judea</i> Choral Performance	Danette Buchanan, Choral Director
<i>Gospel Melody</i> Soloists	Tawana Daniel and Brittany Ford
Step Team Performance	Christy Brannock, Sponsor
<i>Lift Every Voice and Sing</i> Dance	Debbie Williams, Dance Teacher
Closing Remarks	Dr. Debra Munk, Principal

## **Rockville High School Anti-Violence Pledge**

1. I realize that violence is never an acceptable solution to a dispute.
2. I actively encourage others to seek peaceful means to settle disputes.
3. I never condone violence as a solution to a dispute between students, and I discourage the use of violence to settle conflicts.
4. If I have knowledge of a physical confrontation planned during the school day or after school, I will notify a staff member. My anonymity will be protected.

Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Class of \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Violence Prevention Week Quotes**

Tuesday -- "I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear; knowing what must be done does away with fear." –Rosa Parks

Wednesday -- "Hate is too great a burden to bear. It injures the hater more than it injures the hated." –Coretta Scott King

Thursday -- "I thought about Emmett Till, and I could not go back. My legs and feet were not hurting, that is a stereotype. I paid the same fare as others, and I felt violated. I was not going back." – Rosa Parks

Friday -- "The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members, a heart of grace and a soul generated by love." – Coreta Scott King

# Violence Prevention Week

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**Rockville High School Student Government Association**

## Lunch Forums in room 2061

Tuesday, February 21 — School Violence Survey Results by Sonny Shah, SGA President

Thursday, February 23 — School Safety and Security by Officer Chris Winkler, Police Officer

Friday, February 24 — Working Towards World Peace by Mrs. Debbie Wilchek, Peace Studies Teacher

## Anti-Violence Pledge in the cafeteria

All week — Sign the pledge during lunch!

## Free Breakfast in the cafeteria

Wednesday, February 22 — Join us for a free breakfast to promote school unity and to show your support for non-violence!

## Anti-Violence Assembly in the auditorium

Wednesday, February 22

Peace Quotes on Ram TV all week

***February  
21-24, 2006***

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## Rockville High School

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**RHS SGA**

*What we're doing is important.  
You can do it.  
I'm not going to give up on you.*