Student Emerging Leaders Program (SELP)

Program Background: The Student Emerging Leaders Program (SELP), now in its 12th year, has served up to 1000 students. MCBRE, the host organization, partners with the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute to connect the student’s government coursework to real-world policy issues. The fall to spring program (September 2015 – March 2016), utilizes a written application process to select rising sophomores from all over the county who demonstrate qualities essential in an emerging leader. Students are mentored by professionals from Deloitte, Kaiser Permanente, HESS, Gallup, the Washington Post, and the office of Councilmember Navarro. SELP also provides workshops designed to explore and develop the student’s leadership skills in and out of the classroom. The effort culminates in an annual congressional reception on Capitol Hill with MD Representative Van Hollen with celebratory remarks from Dr. Joshua Starr, MCPS Superintendent. Many participants of SELP go on to become involved in student government and even hold leadership positions.

SELP is designed to nurture student interest in national, state, and local government by engaging and inspiring students to become the next generation of Black and Hispanic leaders. After experiencing a combination of mentoring, peer-to-peer engagement and accountability, the emerging leaders participate in an interactive debate. Teams, led by the professional mentors, prepare pro or con arguments based off of current local and federal issues in the community.

Past debates have included thought-provoking issues like:

- Is “Affirmative Action” still necessary for the individuals it was intended to benefit?
- Should police be required to wear cameras in their badges?
- Should undocumented students have access to government or publically funded education?
- Is gentrification beneficial for community development?

The highly-anticipated & professionally moderated event is heavily attended by members of the Montgomery County Board of Education, members of local & federal government, and individuals from the MCPS leadership team.

Participation in the SELP is also approved for Student Service Learning (SSL) hours. SELP covers all SSL phases of preparation, action and reflection through the following activities:

- Three mandatory debate preparation meetings with professional advisors (3 hours)
- Participation in the February debate (2 hours)
- Submit a letter to Congressman Van Hollen or another elected official advocating your position on a current issue argued during the 2016 SELP Debate. The letter must also include a personal review of the overall SELP experience; from attending the conference(s), to preparing for the debates. (2 hours)

For questions please contact:

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