

Madison County leaders host second 'Conversation Towards a Better Future' Summit Jan. 9

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EDWARDSVILLE — The Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities Foundation (MJCHF®), Madison County Regional Superintendent, and Madison County school student leaders are hosting a second “Conversation Towards a Brighter Future” summit on Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2018. The summit will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities, 1210 N. Main St., Edwardsville.

“Conversation Towards a Brighter Future” is a youth driven program that is occurring as a solution to the negative discourse that is taking place across the country among our

national leaders. The schools that are participating in the two-year project focus on the MJCH's four pillars—respect, dignity, understanding, and forgiveness. Student leaders identify issues that their schools and communities face, and then develop positive solutions. Each school is provided a \$5,000 scholarship for their two-year project. At the summit, student leaders will provide a status report on their project and use this time to collaborate with other school leaders from across Madison County.

“We are looking forward to meeting with the students on January 9, and receiving an update on their projects in their schools. “Conversation Towards a Brighter Future” is about positive communication, collaboration, and finding solutions to the problems we face as a society. Who better to lead these discussions than our future young leaders and we hope the public will stop by the MJCHF and listen to these discussions,” said Dr. Ed Hightower, Director of the Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities.

Some of the schools' projects include: Edwardsville High School's “New Student Ambassadors Project”, Liberty & Lincoln Middle Schools' “Student Appreciation and Support Projects”, Alton High School's “Bridge Project”, Alton Middle School's “Circle of Trust Project”, Collinsville Middle School's “Student Appreciation Project”, Collinsville High School's “Relationships Matter Project”, Granite City High School's “The Ripple Effect of Attitude Project”, Triad High School's “Pause Project”, East Alton Middle School's “New Students With a New Start Project”, Civic Memorial High School's “FreshMentors Project”, East Alton-Wood River High School's “Every Action & Word = Respect Program” and Roxana Junior High School's “RJHS Stomp Out Drama Project”.

Dr. Sharon Locke, Director of the SIUE STEM Center will attend the summit and speak with the students about the new Alma Irene Aitch STEM Center. Dr. Jessica Despain, co-director of the SIUE IRIS Center, will also discuss the Digital Humanities Club, which will increase Madison County students' access to technology as well as engage the students in the humanities. The Digital Humanities Club will be available to Madison County schools this year.

The MJCH and Lewis and Clark Community College have partnered with Southern Illinois University Edwardsville's IRIS Center and the Madison County Regional Superintendent to bring this initiative to life. To learn more about the “Conversation Towards a Brighter Future” and its participating schools' projects, please visit: <http://www.mjchf.org/page/brighter-future-new/>.