

CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
Ad Hoc Youth Diversity Education Team (YDET)
March 12, 2014 Minutes

The Youth Diversity Education Team of Mesa met on March 12th, 2014,
at 5:00pm at the Mesa City Plaza, 20 E. Main St. Ste. 250.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Denise Heap
Tony Liuzzo
Talmage Pearce

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Arenas
Ruth Giese
Ray Villa

GUESTS

Katie Larsen

1. Call to Order.

Dr. Liuzzo called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

2. Items from citizens present.

There were no citizens who requested to speak to YDET.

3. Approval of minutes from the February 19th, 2014 YDET meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Pearce to approve the February 19th, 2014 minutes, Ms. Heap seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Hear, discuss and take action on Mesa Police Department's M.E.S.A. program.

Mr. Villa, community liaison for the Mesa Police Department (MPD), provided an overview of the M.E.S.A. (Making Every Student Accountable) program, which currently services at-risk students a Kino Jr. High. The M.E.S.A. Program has been occurring since 2008 where students meet regularly for two hours, one hour spent on physical fitness and the other spent on life training, for nine week. On Tuesday evenings staff meets with the parents and students together to discuss their progress and offer counseling. The students have a graduation ceremony and etiquette dinner to celebrate the completion on the program. The M.E.S.A. program occurs twice a year, in fall and spring, and they currently have 27 female students (first time they have conducted an all-female cohort) enrolled.

The program is operated by one full time officer, one part time officer, a youth prevention counselor and administrative staff. Mr. Villa explained that due to limited funding, they can only operate the program at only one school, although many school principals have asked to implement it their schools as well. Ms. Heap noted that board members expressed interest in helping acquire more funds in order to expand the program. Dr. Liuzzo questioned where the current funding is coming from. In response, Mr. Villa replied that the schools provide the facility, MPD pays for staffing and the Rotary Club provides all snacks, beverages and pays for the etiquette dinner. Dr. Liuzzo asked Mr. Villa to provide a cost breakdown of the expenses for the M.E.S.A. program.

Ms. Heap suggested that the board find additional funding (whether through private donors or grants) by speaking out and writing letters promoting the program, as well as recommend to Councilmembers that they increase program funding. Ms. Heap stated that they could begin by contacting other Rotary Clubs and Mesa's Chamber of Commerce. YDET members agreed to pursue funding sources and Ms. Heap will take the lead for this task. Mr. Pearce asked Mr. Villa to supply a prioritized list of other schools where MPD feels

this program would be useful. Mr. Villa stated that he would provide requested materials by the next meeting. Ms. Heap made a motion to adopt the committee's plan of action of seeking additional funding to expand the M.E.S.A. program, Mr. Pearce seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Hear, discuss, and take action on a sex trafficking education program.

Dr. Liuzzo asked Mr. Villa to speak on the subject in order to provide better direction on how the board can assist with educating the public on sex trafficking. Mr. Villa provided the members a copy of a research report compiled by Arizona State University on sex trafficking in relation to the Super Bowl. The report demonstrates how the industry works, the role of the internet and anticipated trends for next year's 2015 Super Bowl taking place in Arizona. Mr. Pearce questioned how the Super Bowl is directly related to the growth of this industry. In response, Mr. Villa stated that any event that attracts large, concentrated groups of people, particularly men, has a higher greater probability for an increased market. Mr. Villa continued by stating that this is not an issue one law enforcement agency can tackle on their own, but if all the local agencies work together and if enough organizations can help spread the word, then maybe they will be able to curb some of the occurrences.

Mr. Villa advised of the local task force and experts in the area. Mr. Villa recommended that the board create an awareness campaign. Ms. Heap questioned if there are any groups in the area that have begun this type of work. Mr. Villa informed of a professor leading some initiatives at Mesa Community College and an Interfaith Alliance group in Tempe that are actively promoting education. Ms. Heap commented that she feels an educational campaign, particularly one that is directed towards students, is attainable given the resources of all the board members. Mr. Pearce questioned what approach they should take. Ms. Heap answered by stating that they can educate school counselors and parents, but they will be able to better determine as they develop the program.

6. Hear an update, discuss and take action on Cinema Series program in high schools as means of educating youth on diversity related issues.

Ms. Giese reminded that staff was given direction at the previous meeting to continue implementing the Cinema Series in Dobson High School for the remainder of this school year.

7. Hear, discuss and take action on getting feedback from the Mayor's Youth Committee.

Ms. Giese informed that she spoke with the Mayor's Office to get on the agenda for an upcoming Mayor's Youth Committee meeting however they have already concluded their meetings for this school year with the exception of a recognition event. Ms. Giese stated that they would be able to schedule the meeting in early fall or send a list of questions by email. Dr. Liuzzo stated that he would prefer to wait until the fall to speak with the students. Board members directed staff to schedule the meeting for the fall. In the meantime, YDET members will work on drafting questions and talking points for the meeting. Ms. Heap noted that she has a meeting with the City of Tempe's Diversity Director to discuss programs implemented in Tempe for potential use in Mesa.

8. Discuss future agenda items, meeting dates, announcements, other housekeeping.

- Next YDET meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 9th, 2014 at 5pm.

9. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40pm.

Submitted By:



Ruth Giese,
Diversity Program Administrator