

Franklin Parish High School Students Attended Envision's National Youth Leadership Forum: National Security, Washington DC

Winnsboro, LA – This summer, Bullying Report It Please (Bullying RIP) and Franklin Parish NAACP sponsored three Franklin Parish High School students to Envision's National Youth Leadership Forum: National Security. Taylor Armstard, India Doyle, and Daisha Moses from Winnsboro, LA joined outstanding high school students from across the nation and took part in a unique academic and career-oriented development experience, NYLF: National Security, on the campus of University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD.

This was an awesome experience for these students and definitely one they will never forget. Prior to embarking on this trip, students, family members and NAACP met for a grand send off. Rev. Roosevelt Grant President, Franklin Parish NAACP provided words of encouragement and prayed for a safe and rewarding trip. Parents expressed their appreciation for the girls being afforded the opportunity to go to this great program.

Enroute to the program, Daisha, India, and Taylor were mentored by Dr. Demesha Perry, PharmD, Senior Pharmacist with Walgreens. During this session, Dr. Perry provided encouragement, tips to prepare for success, and motivation to not be deterred by anyone or any situation in pursuit of their goals. Through questions and answers, she also helped them develop strategies to accomplish those goals. As part of the Bullying RIP program, she continues to mentor students, offering her expertise through life lessons. After this mentoring session, India stated "All I want to do is go to the Air Force, I didn't know I could go to college in the Reserve Officers Training Corps and go to the Air Force as an officer and make more money."

There were 108 students that attended this session. Students from across the United States partook in a six-day National Security learning adventure that included lectures, field trips, simulations and role playing. Teams were placed in challenging real-life scenarios that required higher-level reasoning, active listening, quick responses, teamwork and ultimately making world-changing decisions.

Some of the sites visited were the Lincoln Memorial, International Spy Museum, Arlington National Cemetery, World War II Memorial and Ulysses S. Grant Memorial. Unfortunately, due to COVID, there were no visits to the Pentagon, White House or other enclosed locations.

Daisha, India, and Taylor most definitely learned how to adapt and communicate in new situations and to new challenges when a storm hit the area and caused the power to go out on the campus of the University of Maryland. It forced the school to relocate all activities and everyone to a hotel and continue with the program. Taylor said "it was a little stressful having to relocate, but the hotel was nice."

All the students agreed that this experience gave them an opportunity to meet new people, network, make lifelong friends and definitely an eyeopener to what awaits them in their future. It made them think seriously about their plans for the future. Daisha said "I really don't want to leave home, but I believe I can make it if I do." Daisha's roommate was someone she had never met before and they formed a bond. They are still in communication with each other. When asked if they would recommend

this program to other students, the response was unanimous and loud “YES, DEFINITELY!!!” In addition to the program, the other two biggest highlights of the trip were the plane ride and the food. This was the first flight for these students and they did not eat at any restaurant that was in Franklin Parish or Northeast Louisiana. After receiving their certificates of completion, they were treated to a meal at McCormick and Schmick’s Harborside at National Harbor.

They all are active youth members of the Franklin Parish NAACP. The knowledge and experience gained from attending this program has better equip them with the skills and abilities needed to help put an end to bullying especially in our school system and greatly enhance the NAACP Youth Council. Rev. Roosevelt Grant, President, Franklin Parish NAACP says “These are the kind of opportunities our children need to improve our communities. They go, learn and grow, then come back to make our towns stronger. Our motto for this year is Stronger, Together, We Win. This year, we sent three, next year, we want to send five and grow and grow. These kids are our future. We need to continue investing in them.”

THANK YOU So Much to the numerous supporters who made this dream come to fruition for these students. Your investment will never be forgotten.

Bullying Report It Please (Bullying RIP) is a nonprofit organization founded by MSG (R) Emma Jones Blackshire, a JROTC Instructor and secretary for the local NAACP, with a vision to eradicate bullying at all levels. It is the mission of Bullying RIP (Report It Please) to inspire, encourage and engage victims of bullying and violence and help them succeed in their academic, personal, and professional lives.

Applications for next summer programs will be available January 2023. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer or make a donation, please contact MSG (R) Emma Jones Blackshire at 318-435-9381, call or text 318-535-5858, email: bullyingrip@gmail.com or Rev Roosevelt Grant at 318-535-3031.

Bullying RIP is recognized as a charity and tax-exempt organization under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions may be deductible. All contributions are greatly appreciated. Please make checks payable to Bullying RIP and mail to P.O. Box 1114, Winnsboro, LA 71295.