

Using Racial Literacy to Combat Racial Stress and Trauma

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Penn Undergraduate Research Mentoring Program

Makuu Summer Impact- Success in College

A 6 week program through Penn's Black Cultural Center, Makuu, for 15 rising high school sophomores, juniors and seniors in Philly created to prepare them for the college admissions process and college experience. Concurrently, the program incorporates leadership and activist training, engages with content and conversation about race and social injustices, and is facilitated by undergraduate students.

CLCBE

Based on the racial socialization research of Dr. Howard Stevenson, CLCBE - Calculate Locate Communicate Breathe Exhale - was a core intervention used throughout Summer Impact. By helping students unpack difficult conversations and experiences around race, CLCBE aims to be a catalyst for racial healing and self care, short and long term. Along with CLCBE, games and individual check-ins were utilized to inspire comfort and joy amidst the tough conversations.

Program Framework

The program was made up of 3 themes that changed every 2 weeks. Digital Justice Academy was the first theme, in which students delved into present day social injustice, storytelling, and racial stress. Higher Learning was the second theme, in which students learned about the college process, including applications, financial aid, and college life. Peer Ambassador training was our last theme. This included leadership and activist training along with students creating their own initiatives to bring back to their high schools.

How to be an activist in their own community/ school

Students were given a personality test followed by descriptions of the roles of activism. This allowed them to determine how they could best combat issues like colorism, racism, sexism and more, keeping in mind their characteristics and which activism role best complements them individually.