Local Soroptimist Club Completes Its First Dream Program

Sheryl Longsworth, Soroptimist International of Rancho Cordova & Gold River

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - The Soroptimist International of Rancho Cordova and Gold River club completed its very first Dream It, Be It program! This Soroptimist "Dream" program is primarily geared towards secondary school girls who face obstacles to their future success. Through small group workshops or in a conference setting, students are mentored on setting and achieving their goals, moving forward after setbacks or failures, and discovering career opportunities.

The club originally planned to host its Dream It Be It (DIBI) workshops face-to-face. In light of rising COVID-19 cases and the Governor's Stay at Home orders in December 2020, they quickly adjusted their DIBI program to a virtual setting. Their first virtual workshop was held on December 5 with 10 girls. The beauty of the virtual platform was that participation was no longer limited to local area students. They had students that joined from Seattle, Michigan, Southern California, Vacaville and even Switzerland!

Their 12/5 workshop focused on identifying personal values and learning how personal values translate to work values. Their 12/19 workshop focused on an "adulting" exercise in money management, budgeting and the potential dangers of credit as well as exercises on identifying personal obstacles and how to develop a plan to overcome them. The 12/21 workshop focused on resume-building when you have little to no work experience as well as different interview types and how to prepare. During the last session, on 12/28, the girls practiced interviewing through mock interviews.

Their DIBI program turned some dreams into reality! As a result of this inaugural program, a mentorship was arranged for one of the girls, and an internship offered to another. In addition, the Rancho Cordova/Gold River club established a new relationship with a club in another state and a partnership with another local nonprofit! They had quite the learning curve for this virtual program. Not only was this the first time they offered this program, they had to learn how to offer it virtually. Yet, everything went off without a hitch. The success of their DIBI program is partly due to their community partner, National Teen Leadership Program (NTLP). Ashleigh Cook, their Program Manager, had the tech savvy, and the proper applications that allowed them to make our program interactive and fun. They received good feedback from the girls about that. They also spent a great deal of time planning out the sessions, which served them very well.

The club's next effort includes a "Success Stories" session, where professional women will present in a panel format on April 10th. Girls will hear what it is like to be a dentist, or HR representative, or a woman in the fields of medicine and technology. This program idea came from the feedback received from the girls in their DIBI program. The club will work with NTLP again for this, and continue working with them for the next DIBI workshop series in October. They are crossing their fingers to do an in-person session for that, but are also prepared to hold sessions virtually again, if need be, and will be open to not only our first DIBI workshop participants, but to all students. Watch for the Success Stories program announcement via the Cordova Council E-Blast, school flyers and on social media. If you are interested in participating as a panelist, please contact Janice at janice@kaleidoschool.org.

Soroptimist is global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment. The name, Soroptimist, means "best for women," and that's what the organization strives to achieve. Soroptimists are people at their best, working to help other women to be their best. Please send an email to sirancho-cordova@soroptimist.net to receive more information about Soroptimist International of Rancho Cordova & Gold River, how to become a member, or just learn how you can volunteer with our club members or visit http://www.soroptimistranchocordova.org/. ★