Leadership Institute Final Action Plan Report

My action plan took a very different road than I ever thought it would. Originally, I wanted to spread awareness about the attack on women in the Democratic Republic of Congo. I wanted to raise money and awareness by holding educational fundraisers at my house for my friends and family. When I came home, I started to spread awareness right away. I talked to my friends and family and posted on my blog. I sent out emails. Once school started, I became more involved in a Girls group at my school called the Girl Effect. I found out that we were going to be holding a Women’s Conference at my school in February. A senior girl wanted to create a conference similar to the First Lady of California’s Women’s Conference, previously headed by Maria Shriver in the last couple of years. Since Maria Shriver is not the first lady of California anymore, there is not a Women’s Conference that is like this one anymore. So, I was informed when I got to school that we would be having a Young Women’s Conference. I started working with a group of eleven other girls from grades 10-12 and administrators to plan this conference. We started in October and met at lunch every week. When the planning started, I didn’t really realize that this would become my action plan. I never realized just how big this conference would actually get to be because of the hard work of so many people in my school’s community. We planned for months and recruited tons of speakers. The theme of the day would be *It’s Our Turn: Young Women’s Conference At Brentwood School*. When the week of the conference came, we poured all of our energy into planning. Each of the girls on the Executive Planning committee had a specific role in the day. I ended
up moderating one of the break out sessions called *It’s Our Turn to… Be Visionaries.* I interviewed Angella Nazarian, Author of the book *Life as a Visitor* and psychologist, and Catherin Paura, CEO of Advanced Marketing Perspectives. On the day of the event, our school was transformed. I couldn’t believe this was actually happening. Lady Gaga, Mary J. Blige, Nancy Aossey, Azure Antoinette, Raven Symoné and Maria Shriver are just six of the 40 plus presenters that we had. I got to meet all of these amazing women and speak to them. I learned about their jobs, their lives and how they got to where they were. Break out sessions focused on topics such as giving back, body image, healthy relationships, self-defense and finding your own passion. During my break out session, I got to ask my presenters questions about how they got their visions, how they found there passion, and other questions along that line. I learned so much about being a moderator. I also got to introduce them to the audience. My break out session had probably 60 people in it.

Before lunch, I go to go to the main stage in our gym to introduce the film *Miss Representation* that we showed. In the afternoon, I attended break out sessions and heard many amazing speakers. The day was truly magical.

Overall, This was a perfect way to use the skills that I learned at Brown. During the summer, I learned how to facilitate discussions and public speak, which is exactly what I did. I realized just how much an event can impact the life of girls. I am so lucky to have been apart of this Conference. Even if my role in the whole scheme of things was not that important, I sincerely felt that I had made a difference. The energy that day was so tangible. Something like this had never happened at my school or in the LA school system in general. 800 Women attended our conference, including mothers and high school students. We got a lot of press for our conference, including posts on the
Huffington Post. A few weeks after the event, I met with the group of executive committee girls and some of the main administrators involved. We discussed the day and how everything went. At the end, a faculty member informed us that another girls group at another local high school wanted to now plan their own conference now. I heard so much feedback from my friends and family. People were inspired and still buzzing after the event. There was something truly amazing about the day. I can honestly say that we made a large impact in our community and the lives of other people. Even though I had just a small part in it, I feel like I did something wonderful and had an experience I will never, ever forget. My action plan turned out way different than I thought it would. And after that conference, I know that I am going to be involved in a lot more causes that support women. My two weeks at Brown have helped me more than I ever thought they would. Thank you, Leadership program!!

Links:
Photos: http://molophoto.com/ItsOurTurn/

NOTE**: I did not in any way initiate this conference. Jade Iovine, senior at Brentwood, did. I was part of the planning, but not the initiation. Thanks!