

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Report for Academic Year: 2008-2009

Residential Dormitory Jeeh Deez'a Academy Inc

Piñon, AZ Tribal Affiliation: Navajo

Project Coaches: Barbara Tacheene & Evelyn Begay

Regional Coordinator: Herbert Manheimer

Jeeh Deez'a Academy strives to provide a diverse and substantial education to students while preserving their culture and traditions. The Youth Leadership Program is utilized in the residential dormitory setting at the academy.

LEADERSHIP PROJECT:

- ◆ There were no projects done this year with this Youth Leadership group. The curricula was simply utilized to engage the students in something more than watching movies and playing outside on the playground.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ◆ The group utilized many of the activities from the Youth Leadership curriculum. Barbara and Evelyn facilitated some activities to make the evening free time fun and engaging. They facilitated activities such as: *Pass Right Pass Left*, *Human Knot*, *Trust Walk*, and a modified version of *Community Draw*.

Both Project Coaches indicated that their students had fun doing the Youth Leadership activities. Barbara went on to say that the students got more excited to do activities than to just watch a movie or do arts and crafts. She said that the curriculum was easy to use and she enjoyed seeing the students have fun doing the activities.

CHALLENGES:

- ◆ They struggled to evaluate how the YL activities positively affected the students. Barbara and Evelyn indicated that when they asked questions about the activities, there were long pauses and the students were very apprehensive about sharing their thoughts.
- ◆ Another challenge was the changes in the staff work shifts. Since the students staying in the dormitory needed to be supervised overnight, the residential staff shared shifts and they changed on a weekly basis. One week a Project Coach would be assigned to work the night shift and next week work a split shift where she worked four hours in the morning and the other four in the afternoon. Some shifts included an afternoon where staff was there when the students got out of school and stayed until bedtime. The variations in shifts created a challenge for the Project Coaches at Jeeh Deez'a Academy. They had difficulty in creating lesson plans to have their students experience Youth Leadership activities.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Youth Leadership Program assists children in developing leadership skills while generating projects that contribute to their communities. Each Youth Leadership group executes a project that benefits their community. The curriculum provides a framework in which students, guided by Project Coach volunteers, engage in activities focusing on improving leadership and confidence, both individually and as a group. Students learn to challenge their personal limits and achieve personal and group goals.



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