

# WE ARE WILLOWBROOK *SUMMIT 2019*

## We Are Willowbrook Summit Highlights

Youth took center stage on a rainy Saturday morning in March as part of ongoing community engagement efforts for the **Trauma Prevention Initiative (TPI)**. DPH staff are working with community residents and stakeholders in **Willowbrook** and Westmont Athens to support resident leaders and develop community-led strategic plans to reduce trauma and violence. **Community Action for Peace (CAP)** groups in each community have planned annual summits to engage and convene local residents and stakeholders to discuss priorities, strategies and resources for reducing trauma and violence, while taking action to increase capacity of local leaders to increase resilience, healing and engagement in the communities they live, work, play and worship.



The **We Are Willowbrook Summit** took place on **Saturday March 2, 2019 from 8am to 3:30pm at the Charles R. Drew University Dymally School of Nursing (CDU)**. It was the second TPI convening in this community and was free and open to the public. The focus of the Summit was to bring youth into leadership role after targeted engagement with youth serving groups in TPI communities for past year. The summit brought stakeholders together around four key areas prioritized by the community in 2018: Resident-Led Workforce Development; Youth Leadership; Safe Public Spaces and Law Enforcement-Community Relations.

**"We Are Rebuilding Willowbrook! Watch us."**  
Community Action for Peace Member

## Local Youth Lead 2019 Summit

The Summit is important both as a milestone and because it is the result of a targeted community-engaged, youth-driven process for the past year. TPI staff began meeting with youth-led focused groups in Willowbrook, initially meeting at the Community Healing Center in the MLK Center for Public Health in early 2019.

Over the course of eight weeks at bi-weekly meetings held at Carver and Mona Parks, youth and parents developed the summit programming and outreach plan to invite friends, neighbors, and community and faith-based stakeholders to attend. To date, dozens of youth and young adult residents and stakeholders (representing over 30 community-based and faith-based organizations) have participated in CAP and youth-focused summit planning meetings. During these meetings a common theme arose about the need to invest in the next generation and the need for youth & residents together to design the group themes, title of the workshops, identify workshop participants and develop scripts, timelines, art and music featured in the summit. The TPI & Parks staff assisted youth after school for three weeks before the Summit to build a healing-centered "thought closet." The thought closet represented a safe place to write down how you feel, express yourself and your feelings of self-confidence, fear and resiliency.



**"Parents listen to youth more often."**  
Dimea Polk, Youth Leader

**"The County is looking for ways to support youth and families. This summit is a sound investment."**  
-Dr. Muntu Davis, County Health Officer, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

# WE ARE WILLOWBROOK *SUMMIT 2019*

**“Real talk is what we need to have with our youth. I love the workshop title!”**  
-Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan, 44<sup>th</sup> District, U.S. Congress

**Sponsors and Partners:** This year, the planning committee guided the youth towards art and technology to shape the summit workshops. With the support of parents, youth, **LA Commons, Al Wooten Jr. Heritage Center, Heidi Duckler Dance and youth performers from El Segundo and King Drew Medical Magnet High Schools, CAP** created a unique summit experience through artmaking spaces, video loop, and social media activities.

A special thank you to: **Charles R. Drew University Dymally School of Nursing** and Dean Dr. Diane Breckenridge, for the generous donation of the summit venue, the **Department of Parks and Recreation** for providing in kind support by hosting summit planning meetings at Mona and Carver Parks. **Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches (LAM)**, for event planning, logistics, and staffing support (**Timelist Program, Amity/Beacon House Program**), and **USC University Initiative to Eliminate Homelessness** students to make the Summit a success. Special thanks to **Kaiser Permanente** and **Southern California Crossroads** for their financial support. A total of 151 people attended the summit with 121 pre-registrations and 30 onsite registrations.



The **Open Doors** community arts activity developed by LA Commons, was an opportunity to provide more arts for healing activities in the community and for summit attendees to again contribute their unique art pieces for the development of another art installation to be housed in a second healing room at the MLK Community Healing Center.

The artmaking at the Summit encouraged attendees to consider how we are accepted within our communities and the role of social media in facilitating or compromising self-esteem, sense of connection, and resilience from trauma and violence. To promote the event and Willowbrook CAP, attendees were asked to use the hashtags **#opendoors #wearewillowbrook** and **#summit2019** throughout the day. Art expression is a creative and tangible symbol of community members crossing through a threshold of change. The summit provided an opportunity to continue community driven solutions to violence prevention and collective action planning in one of South LA's most vulnerable neighborhoods.



### *In Memoriam*

*We lost beloved Willowbrook CAP member and lifelong resident Steven Fisher February 9, 2019. You were and will be missed. Your legacy will live through us. RIP Mr. Fisher.*