

BrainWise, CEC Young Rotary, and Mental Health Experts Represent DMHR at the San Diego Rotary Zone Institute

CEC and BrainWise. Stacey Hervey has been DMHR's Interact/Young Rotary CEC club advisor for ten years. Covid led to club changes, and she and Pat Barry adapted by creating a hybrid model that better meets the school's atypical student body. CEC's career courses attract students throughout DPS who take one or two courses, like Stacey's criminal justice class, other students attend CEC as their home school but may also take courses at Metro University or Community College of Denver, and many of the students have after school jobs that make outside school meetings impossible.

To address these issues, Stacey designated Fridays for Community Service projects for all her students. They have honored fallen officers, held book fairs, and staffed DMHR health fairs and Villa Park Holiday parties. Every year, the students have also worked on BrainWise projects with DPS elementary school students at Cowell, Eagleton, Sabin, University Park, and Kaiser school classes and presenting lessons on critical thinking skills. During the 2022-23 school year, Xitlali, Bryanna, Adrianna, Gabby, and Noemi volunteered and met throughout the year with Pat and Debra as they prepared BrainWise reinforcement sessions. In the Spring, they presented the lessons to classes of students in grades 1-7 at DPS Kaiser Elementary and Boulder's SHJ school, involving more than eighty children in critical thinking games and activities.

Rotary Zone Institute and BrainWise. BrainWise was invited in May to present a keynote session at the 2023-24 Rotary Zone Institute and share tools that addressed two of RI President Gordon McNally's initiatives: prioritizing mental health and empowering girls. Who better demonstrates the successful use of successful methods Rotarians can use than CEC's Young Rotary members?



CEC Young Rotary members with Pat and Debra



Students take selfie with Zone Institute MC

The students were thrilled and worked with Pat and Debra on their program. They learned that the Rotary Institute would offer project tools and resources to more than four hundred past, current, and future District Governors to bring back to their 1700 clubs in the western U.S. and Canada. In keeping the initiative to empower girls, they presented Taylor Swift's 2017 sexual assault in Denver as an example of how she used thinking skills to file charges, testify, and encourage girls and women to let men know that unwanted sexual touching has consequences. They shared Taylor's story and Rotarians answered how her actions addressed the 10 Wise Ways BrainWise teaches.

Mental Health and BrainWise. Preceding the CEC students' presentation, Dr. Pat, Matt Sena, a family and youth counselor, and psychiatrist Jared Greenberg, M.D. presented on using BrainWise to address mental health. Pat presented an overview of BrainWise, Matt talked about his work with teaching BrainWise to Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and Dr. Greenberg shared his pilot research teaching BrainWise to inpatient homeless Veterans with serious mental illnesses at the Los Angeles Veterans Administration Medical Center. Dr. Greenberg told attendees about the positive reaction of the Veterans and urged Rotarians to integrate BrainWise into their projects with Veterans and others.



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CA District Governor, Debra, Bryanna, Adrians, Xitlali, Gabby, Matt, Dr. Greenberg, CA District Governor

Afterwards, Rotary leaders expressed their delight at a presentation and a Utah DG wants the CEC students to help them with their youth projects involving Latinas. California Rotarians also asked for more information and advice on introducing BrainWise to their clubs.

Goeff Noble has expressed an interest in adding BrainWise to Warriors on Cataract and will explore including BrainWise to a new all-female group of participants.