



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

PRESS RELEASE

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Ford hosts more than 100 Boys & Girls Club middle schoolers for leadership summit; James Worthy speaks to attendees

REDLANDS – The Ford Fund held its first leadership summit for more than 100 middle schoolers from Boys & Girls Clubs around Southern California on Friday, Aug. 2, in Redlands.

The summit, held at the historic Burrage Mansion, featured retired Los Angeles Lakers legend James Worthy as keynote speaker and sessions offered by professionals from Ford, ADP, iHerb and T-Mobile. Topics included leading in the workplace, social media, and interpersonal skills.

Worthy, who grew up participating in activities at what was then Boys' Club in North Carolina, told attendees the importance of doing well in school, saying no, and talking to someone who cares.

"You'll be graduating high school before you know it. So start pointing to your direction, where you want to go – you know what you like," he said. "And talk to your counselors at school, talk to your counselors at the Boys & Girls Club -- don't be afraid to ask for help. That was one of my biggest problems, I internalized everything and all I had to do was go ask somebody. Don't be ashamed to ask questions."

Worthy answered kids' questions and took a photo with them.

Worthy, who played for the Lakers from 1982 to 1994, won three championships with the team and was MVP of the 1988 NBA Finals. He entered the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2003 and is also in Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Hall of Fame.

Johnson King, general manager of Tuttle-Click Ford in Irvine, welcomed the group by encouraging them to focus on hard work, having a positive attitude, and being nice to others as

they consider college or trade school and a direction for their careers. Redlands Ford employees grilled burgers and hot dogs for lunch.

“Ford is proud to sponsor our first-ever tween summit for middle school students from Boys & Girls Clubs in Southern California,” said LaShawn Ware, regional manager for Ford in the Los Angeles Region. “Instilling strong academics, leadership skills and local philanthropy is the central focus of our effort to strengthen our communities. We are thrilled to support such vital programs for students who strive for success.”

“We appreciate Ford’s investment in great futures for our young people, and for our business partners teaching them career skills they can use down the road,” said P.T. McEwen, CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Redlands-Riverside, which hosted the summit.

T-Mobile presented on interpersonal skills by starting the kids with a game of telephone.

“My entire team really enjoys and looks forward to being able to being part of today’s children’s futures, being able to teach them life skills, business professional skills,” said Jill Hamilton of T-Mobile.

Monica Encinas, a talent acquisition recruiter with iHerb, said she appreciated that the kids had the courage to ask questions.

“It was nice seeing what they want to do when they grow up, or if you don’t know what you want to do right, now you have time,” said Encinas, who helped present on hireable skills. “It was nice being able to give them those skills to build upon and knowing what different avenues to take to get help ... I think it’s important to give kids the ... confidence to be able to do certain things.”

Malcolm Griffin with ADP made sure his remarks applied to situations across the board.

“Some of the things we talked about regarding leadership – commitment, decision making, accountability, confidence, honesty -- those things relate in the real world in a job, but also in life,” he said.

Besides professional skills, attendees had time to play games and socialize, and each of them got a swag bag from Redlands Ford. The Rochford Foundation donated use of the mansion, which was restored by Redlands native Tim Rochford to serve youth in need.

Attendees came from San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Organizations that sent kids were Boys & Girls Club of the Antelope Valley, Boys & Girls Clubs of Brea-Placentia-Yorba Linda, Boys & Girls Clubs of Coachella Valley, Boys & Girls Club of Fullerton, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Los Angeles Harbor, Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach, Boys & Girls Club of Palm Springs, Boys & Girls Club of Simi Valley, Boys & Girls Club of the South Coast Area, Boys & Girls Clubs of Capistrano Valley and Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Redlands-Riverside.

About Ford Fund: Ford Fund works with Ford dealers and nonprofit partners to provide access to opportunities and resources that help people reach their full potential. It invests in programs that support education, promote safe driving, enrich community life, and encourage employee volunteering. For more information, go to www.fordfund.org

About Boys & Girls Clubs: For more than 150 years, Boys & Girls Clubs has enabled young people most in need to achieve great futures as productive, caring, responsible citizens. Today, more than 4,200 Clubs serve some 4 million young people annually through Club membership and community outreach. They provide a safe place, caring adult mentors, fun, friendship, and high-impact youth development programs on a daily basis during critical non-school hours. Priority programs emphasize academic success, good character and citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. For more information, go to www.bgca.org