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**More than 100 8th-graders complete Power Ties program**

Posted: Monday, June 28, 2010 2:13 pm

The New Orleans Outreach Power Ties Program touched the lives of more than 100 students this semester. Students from Samuel J. Green Arthur Ashe Charter School, and McDonogh City Park Academy attended seminars on resumé-writing, interview skills, dress and office behavior. Students also participated in a Career Day and job-site visits.

Power Ties is a career awareness program developed by New Orleans Outreach that links professionals from various occupations with New Orleans 8th-graders through a series of career-oriented workshops.

Founded in 1993, the mission of New Orleans Outreach is to advance the quality of public education at its partner schools. Outreach achieves this by linking volunteers, community organizations and resources through programs that respond to the needs of each school.

Volunteers from the Young Leadership Council (YLC) and the Junior League of New Orleans were a fundamental element of the Power Ties program. Both organizations trained volunteers, recruited experts to teach workshops, and organized 14 or more participating job sites for each school that matched students' interest. Many members of YLC and Junior League also volunteered to host job-site visits or perform mock interviews on the Career Day portion of the Power Ties programs.

The volunteers taught students how to perform a job search while showing them the importance of a solid education.

"This is our fifth year participating in this program," said Adele Ralston, Power Ties Project Manager for the Junior League of New Orleans, "and many of us are repeat participants because the students

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never fail to inspire us with their talents, enthusiasm and energy. We are proud to help the students realize their dreams of building a bright future.”

Ralston said they are grateful for the opportunity New Orleans Outreach provides.

There were three career days where YLC and Junior League volunteers conducted mock interviews with the students as well as provided seminars on business etiquette, drafting thank you letters, and office skills. Students also attended a “Power Lunch” and heard a motivational presentation by motivational speakers.

A main component of the Power Ties program was the Job Site Visit. Power Ties volunteers gave up half of their day to give students a glimpse of the working world, while giving advice and stressing the importance of a solid education. Some of the key employers included Ochsner Hospital, Entergy, Shell, Ya/Ya and the Army Corps of Engineers.

“These students saw benefit from these career events,” said Claudia Baker, executive director of New Orleans Outreach, “There is no replacement for guidance and interaction with established professionals.”

“They have worked very hard this year,” said City Park Principal Christine Mitchell. “Job-site visits show our students that there is a reward for their years of dedication to their education. It is also fun to see their eyes light up when a professional adult takes time out of the day to become a role model for the children.”

Together New Orleans Outreach and volunteers from the Young Leadership Council and Junior League touched the lives of more than 100 New Orleans students and provided them with an unforgettable experience. Through Power Ties, New Orleans Outreach and volunteers gave students the tools necessary to overcome obstacles and follow their career dreams.

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*This article was originally published in the June 28, 2010 print edition of The Louisiana Weekly newspaper*

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