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Educational summit at RCC to focus on supplemental education

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A summit on supplemental education geared toward youth and adults will be held next week at Rockland Community College.

Created by the CEJJES Institute and the Spring Valley NAACP, the summit is backed by many institutions of higher learning in the county, as well as by the East Ramapo School District and the Rockland County Commission on Human Rights.

More about the education summit

- The event is free. Refreshment is provided. Registration is suggested.
- The summit is Oct. 20. It begins at 8:30 a.m. and runs until 3:30. It takes place at Rockland Community College, 145 College Road, Ramapo.
- For more information, or to register, call CEJJES at 845-362-8610.

The Oct. 20 event is free, and will feature two simultaneous schedules, one geared toward adults and the other toward youth in grades 6 through 12.

The event is designed to empower families, said Jamila Brathwaite, program director for CEJJES, a Pomona-based organization devoted to the academic and cultural development of the African diaspora.

"There's a lot of discussion about what the schools don't provide, but there are things that families can do and should be doing, regardless of the kind of school system that their kids are in," she said yesterday.

Supplementary education is formal and informal learning and development enrichment provided to students outside of school and beyond the regular school curriculum.

Dennis McGloster, a Hillcrest resident who has a 12-year-old daughter in private school, said he believed supplementary education was vital.

McGloster is president of the Xi Lambda Lambda chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, which runs the Rockland Omega Academy, or ROAD, an educational and social mentoring program for boys of color.

Every parent should consider supplementary education.

"A lot of kids, the parents are letting them make too many decisions," he said. "Too often I hear parents say 'Oh, they don't want to do this, they don't want to do that.'"

"I don't expect my daughter to like every decision I make, especially when it comes to education, but I have to think of the long run," he added.

Willie Trotman, president of the Spring Valley chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said he was excited about the event. He noted that the wider community got involved.

"I think it's going to be fantastic, and it's not just the summit," he said. "It's the different educational organizations, the colleges coming together to be a part of it."

Trotman said the idea for the summit grew out of discussions he had with Heather Carty-Ward, CEJJES' then-executive director, and, later, with Edmund Gordon, co-founder of CEJJES.

Gordon, who is a renowned psychology and education academic and researcher, professor emeritus at Teachers College of Columbia University and at Yale University, and a senior scholar in residence for the College Board, will speak during the event, as will Adelaide L. Sanford, vice chancellor of the state Board of Regents.

Among the featured sessions for students is one titled "Do You Really Think You Are Invisible When Surfing and Chatting on the Internet?"

Students also will have lunch with RCC student ambassadors. For adults, sessions include talks on what parents should know about social networking sites and how to prepare for college admissions.

The summit planning committee comprised representatives from Dominican College, Globe Institute of Technology, Nyack College, RCC and St. Thomas Aquinas College, in addition to people from CEJJES, the Spring Valley NAACP, East Ramapo School district and the district's PTA council, and the Human Rights commission.

The event will conclude with a boutique college fair featuring representatives from the summit planning committee institutions, in addition to Barnes and Noble book store, the Spring Valley Youth Bureau, Finkelstein Memorial Library and SAT preparation organizations Excelsior Admissions and Nth Power Education Consultants.

Gordon believes supplementary education is critical to closing the academic achievement gap.

"I think it's so important I wrote a book on the subject," Gordon said, referring to his "Supplementary Education: The Hidden Curriculum of High Academic Achievement."

Schools are important, he said, "but I think that we may have reached a point of no return in trying to get more out of schools in terms of improving educational achievement. I think the next breakthrough is going to come from the kinds of things that happen outside of the school, to support what schools do."
