

Emerging Leaders Retreat By : Niko Salas February 2016



YouthBuild Charter staff, students and alumni from Compton YouthBuild, Field of Dreams Learning, and ACE's RUTH YouthBuild attended the Emerging Leaders Retreat in Big Pine, CA this past weekend. They had an amazing weekend full of useful workshops, fun outings and community building activities. Before arriving at the retreat, they visited the Japanese internment camp in Manzanar on the anniversary of when President Roosevelt signed the executive order to have more than 110,000 men, women, and children to leave their homes and detained them in remote, military-style camps. Manzanar War Relocation Center was one of ten camps where Japanese American citizens and resident Japanese aliens were interned during World War II. Students were able to explore the visitation center, which includes 8000 square feet of exhibits, a bookstore, and theaters which show the site's award winning 22-minute film, Remembering Manzanar every half hour. Most of the students invited out were part of their sites' Youth Policy Committees and were there to show the leaders they are and to ensure that the next up and coming leaders are prepared to step up to the plate. Workshops and activities were facilitated by the California State Alumni Council Vice-President Niko Salas (Century Center for Economic Opportunity YouthBuild Alumnus), Armando Luna (Field of Dreams Learning Alumnus), and Onix Moreno (Compton YouthBuild Alumna); as well as YouthBuild Charter School of California staff. Workshops and activities included ways to prepare for California YouthBuild Day (formerly Government Education Days), how to find and engage your state and local officials, and an overview of who CSTAC is and what they do. The youth had an amazing time and were even surprised with a visit to the snow! It was a first time for many of the youth present and they really loved it.