Walt Disney World News

Disney Dreamers Academy hosts 100 high school students for annual program

Dreamers will engage in career and mentoring workshops at sixth-annual event

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (March 7, 2013) – This weekend, the Walt Disney World Resort will host 100 teens participating in ***Disney Dreamers Academy with Steve Harvey and Essence Magazine***. The teens, along with a parent or guardian, received an all-expense-paid trip to the Walt Disney World Resort March 7-10, but they won't be vacationing. Instead, they are participating in a once-in-lifetime innovative outside-the-classroom educational and mentoring program.

Entering its sixth year, Disney Dreamers Academy continues to hold true to its mission to inspire and fuel the dreams of teens; help them discover a world of possibilities and help them prepare for the future. Each year, 100 students participate in hands-on, full-immersion workshops related to a bevy of career paths ranging from animation to zoology. Each participant learns important skills such as communication techniques and networking strategies.

It all takes place in a magical setting: The Walt Disney World theme parks. Both on stage and behind the scenes, the parks become vibrant 'classrooms' leading to career discoveries, the pursuit of dreams and fun memories to cherish for a lifetime.

Motivational speakers and celebrities share their stories and provide insight on how to achieve success and "DREAM BIG." Dreamers have the opportunity to cultivate relationships with other students from across the nation while they gain first-hand knowledge from Disney experts and world-renowned entrepreneurs and executives.

"Over the past five years, we have helped 500 Dreamers unlock their potential and get started on their journeys in life," said Disney Dreamers Academy Executive Champion Tracey D. Powell. "The sixth Disney Dreamers Academy marks another year of continued motivation, education and success. Steve Harvey and Essence Communications share in our vision of enriching lives. Everyone leaves this program inspired to live their best life."

Walt Disney World Resort, along with Steve Harvey – syndicated radio and television personality – and Essence Magazine will host the selected Dreamers during their four-day power-packed career and educational exploration. Harvey, speaking on the program, says, "Disney Dreamers Academy gives hope and inspiration and exposes youth to a world of possibilities. We are excited about another opportunity to transform lives and give students an inside look at what their future can hold."

Essence Communications President Michelle Ebanks added, "We are excited about the sixth Disney Dreamers Academy. This program transcends the normal classroom setting, taking learning to the next level. This year we plan to go above and beyond to encourage Dreamers. Our valued partnership with Disney Parks and Steve Harvey represents our commitment to the leaders of tomorrow."

This year's 100 students were selected from among more than 5,000 applicants by a panel of judges representing the best in their fields which included Powell, Harvey and Ebanks. Applicants answered a series of essay questions

about their personal stories and life dreams.

The remaining 2013 Disney Dreamers Academy judging panel was comprised of: Mikki Taylor (Editor-at-Large, ESSENCE Magazine); Yolanda Adams (gospel music legend); Terrence J (actor and host of E! News); Stephen A. Smith (broadcaster and sports analyst); Dr. Steve Perry (education advocate and CNN commentator); Sonia Jackson Myles (founder and author, *The Sister Accord*); Jonathan Sprinkles (award-winning motivational speaker); Chef Jeff Henderson (celebrity chef and motivational speaker); Alex O. Ellis (CEO, Simply Ellis Custom Clothier) Brandi Harvey (Corporate and Community Relations Director, the Steve Harvey World Group) and Karli Harvey (Hair Artesian, U Salon, Atlanta).

This accomplished group remains involved in Disney Dreamers Academy throughout the year, serving as the program's ambassadors and advisory panel as part of the Disney Dreamers Academy's Speaker Resource Group.

For more information visit www.disneysdreamersacademy.com, www.facebook.com/disneysdreamersacademy or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/dreamersacademy.

The following students have been selected to participate in the 2013 Disney Dreamers Academy with Steve Harvey and Essence Magazine:

First	Last	City
Trechaun	Gonzalez	El Mirage
Kailah	Brookfield	Los Angeles
Edriece	Gills	Corona
Sathya	Peri	Cerritos
Brandon	Tanyi	Inglewood
Mahogany	Foster	Hartford
Thomas-Anthony	Lytle	Bloomfield
Marcus	Burns	Jacksonville
Cesar	Castillo	Hialeah
Thomas	Darby	Apopka
Kalin	Houston	Davie
Dwight	James	Jacksonville
Aisha	Louis	Hollywood
Alyah	Sheppard	Orlando
Caroline	Simmons	Tampa
Erica	Thomas	Land O' Lakes
Demetre	Williams	Pace
Reaghan	Wooster	Yalaha
Daniel	Blues	Atlanta
Lawrence	Boyd	Clarkston
Kylah	Cox	Conley
Dwymesha	McConn	Marietta
Gabriel	Roberts	Fairburn
Jawaun	Samuels	Stone Mountain
Ebony	Winters	Ringgold
Ian	Boyd	Chicago
Tiszara	Green	Chicago
Jada	Jenkins	Chicago
Danye	Lackland	Berkeley
Tarena	Lofton	Fishers
Izabella	Borowiak-Miller	Stilwell
DeAndre	Farris	Shelbyville
Brendan	Canty	Baltimore
Raven	Coit	Cheltenham

Jasmine	George	Upper Marlboro
Jai	Horsey	Owings
Michael	Shannon	Bowie
Faith	Boone	Novi
Tiara	Clark	Detroit
Kayla	Noel	Pontiac
DeShone	Valley	Saginaw
Alanna	Humphrey	Plymouth
Aziza	Harrell	Kansas City
Daniel	Johnson	Kansas City
Kionna	Townsel	Kansas City
Camille	Amos	Jackson
Che’	Smith	Horn Lake
Shamiraca	Williams	Hattiesburg
Mathama	Bility	Cary
Kenneth	Bridges	Fayetteville
Darryl	Crockett	Rocky Mount
Chauncey	Davidson	Charlotte
Nile	Hooker	High Point
Stephen	Hope	Jacksonville
Clarke	Mingo	Charlotte
Marcus	Mobley	Cary
Austin	Morrel	Cary
Ashlee	Ernst	Lincoln
Ryan	Shepard	North Plainfield
Isaiah	Devereaux	Piscataway
Dashonnah	Gittens	Newark
Kayla	Jackson	Somerset
Melaine	King	Brick
Izaiha	Linton	Carteret
Husain	Abd ‘Allah	Jamaica
Garrett	Collins	Brooklyn
Yaime	Espinoza	Texhoma
Kiela	Brewer	Philadelphia
Aliya	Bright	Philadelphia
Dominique	Foster	West Chester
Anthony	Waller	Lavittown
Monikah	Dozier	Columbia
Sydney	Johnson	Simpsonville
Sydney	Knox	Rock Hill
Kendra	Nesmith	Fort Mill
Thomas	Pope	Aiken
Quintavias	Watts	Simpsonville
Nyles	Harris	Nashville
Jordan	Simpson	Smyrna
Asia	Clarkson	Fort Worth
Chrystine	Gallegos	Cypress
Jaida	George	Dallas
Brandon	Hammons	DeSoto
Elizabeth	Monroe	Baytown
Cody	Neal	Houston
Nytesia	Ross	Tyler

Ja Tavia	Stoot	La Porte
Howard	Watson	McKinney
Cameron	Wicks	Cedar Hill
Shena	Bynum	Suffolk
Deysha	Cochran	Norfolk
Lorea	Cooper	Newport News
Kayla	Jernigan	Norfolk
Micah	Murray	Richmond
Nicholas	Payne	Glen Allen
Devin	Simpson	Woodbridge
Cristen	Braun	Barre
Marquese	Sykes	Seattle
Amani	Lawrence	Milwaukee
Kelsey	Orr	Inwood

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About Walt Disney World Resort / The Walt Disney Co.:

Walt Disney World Resort is a contiguous 40-square-mile, world-class entertainment and recreation center located at Lake Buena Vista, Fla., 20 miles southwest of Orlando. The Walt Disney Co. has a rich legacy of creativity and exceptional storytelling that brings families together in unique and memorable ways. Creative excellence is coupled with a strong commitment to community service and diversity. The Walt Disney Co. is dedicated to making a positive impact in communities around the world, with a primary focus on brightening the lives of children.

About Steve Harvey:

Steve Harvey began doing stand-up comedy in the mid-1980s, which eventually led to a long stint as host of “It’s Showtime at the Apollo.” His success as a stand-up comedian led to multiple TV sitcoms, including “Me and The Boys”, “The Steve Harvey Show” and “Steve Harvey’s Big Time Challenge. “His first book, “Act Like A Lady, Think Like A Man,” quickly became a bestseller in 2009. Harvey has appeared on “The Oprah Show,” “Nightline,” “Good Morning America” and “The Ellen DeGeneres Show.” Currently, Harvey hosts the nationally syndicated “Steve Harvey Morning Show” which airs in over 60 markets and has over 7 million listeners. He is host of “Steve Harvey” a new nationally syndicated daytime talk show.

About Essence Communications Inc.:

Essence Communications Inc. (ECI) is the number one media company dedicated to African-American women, with a multi-platform presence in publishing, live events, and online. The company’s flagship publication, ESSENCE

magazine, is the preeminent lifestyle magazine for African-American women; generating brand extensions such as the *Essence Festival*, *ESSENCE Black Women in Hollywood* and *Black Women in Music*, *Window on Our Women* and *Smart Beauty* consumer insights series, the *Essence Book Club*, *Essence.com*, and ventures in digital media (mobile, television and VOD). For 42 years, ESSENCE, which has a brand reach of over 8 million, has been the leading source of cutting-edge information and specific solutions relating to every area of African-American women's lives. Additional information about ECI and ESSENCE is available at www.essence.com.

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