

Christine Rominiecki [christiner@acoe.org]

Doctor Flores,

I am writing on behalf of myself and my students to thank you for allowing the "Story Teller Project " to come to juvenile hall and enrich our students' lives.

Last Thursday, Peter brought the Story Teller Project to Unit 4. Its difficult to put into words what a profound experience it was to be in the unit that day.

Peter and the members of his group connected with our students and built such a strong rapport with our students, that the students felt comfortable enough to express their thoughts and feelings in front of their peers. They did this in such a thoughtful and positive manner.

There was just an overwhelming sense of community and support that emanated from the students, staff and the storyteller team.

All of the JIO's in the Unit commented about what an excellent program it was and inquired about how we can continue the collaboration.

When Peter asked the students for feedback at the end of the day, the only feedback he received was questions like, "when are you coming back, when can we do this again...."

The students were eager to write thank you letters to Peter and perhaps they expressed the the x=experience better than I could have. Here is some of what they wrote:

- "...you did a great thing by coming to unit 4 and sharing with us... even though we are in a tough situation right now you made us take that off of our shoulders for a little bit"
- "I liked how you got us to work together as a team and it sounded like we were just one drum playing"
- "A lot of us had a lot on our mind and needed to express our feelings"
"I really appreciate you guys giving us kids at juvenile hall an opportunity to experience something other than being locked up even for one day...I really enjoyed you being here and it made me feel like I should get involved with music when I get out"
- "it would be good if you guys could come some more"
- "come back and share your wisdom"
- "I'm pursuing a career in being a rapper so going up in front of the unit was a real boost to my ego"
- "it was a good learning program, probably the best I had"
- "I appreciate you guys encouraging everyone t try and get up even if they weren't sure about it, and getting me to go up too. I hope you guys can come again even if I'm not here when you do.'
- "...showing us how we can open our minds and make positive words come out of our mouths..."

These letters were some of the best writings that I ever received from students. It would be of great benefit to the students here at juvenile hall if there was any way we could continue the collaboration with Peter and the 'Storyteller Project.'

I would be happy to help make that process happen, if possible.

Thank you again,

Christine

Butler Academic Center, Juvenile Justice Center, Alameda County Office of Education