

Your Voice: SAVE lets Laney students make a difference



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The Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) chapter at Laney High School gives students a chance to become involved in efforts to make a difference in their communities such as this Out of the Darkness Walk for Suicide Prevention. [CONTRIBUTED]

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The SAVE chapter at Laney High School plans a number of anti-violence initiatives.

By Beth Scheirer Your Voice Correspondent

As a graduation coach, I often encourage students to think about the future. For the past decade I have advised the Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) chapter at Laney High School, which works to empower and encourage students to end issues like bullying, violence and reckless driving in schools. This gives students an opportunity to impact not only their future, but also that of their peers and community.

Our goal is to make sure students feel safe at school each and every day so they can learn, grow and develop skills to make a difference in their communities.

Our chapter is part of the National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere, a nonprofit committed to promoting anti-violence initiatives in schools. This school year, SAVE is receiving a \$75,000 grant from The Allstate Foundation. As part of the grant, 20 elementary, middle and high schools across the Carolinas will receive aid for their SAVE chapters to further its mission to encourage and empower students to keep their schools safe from bullying, crime, violence and reckless driving.

We're honored our Laney High chapter was selected to be one of these 20 schools.

Through the help of the foundation, thousands of students across the Carolinas will be educated and directly engaged in SAVE activities. Our chapter is able to receive free affiliation and mini-grant funds, educational materials, training for school and community activities, ongoing support and technical assistance for SAVE's youth safety efforts.

I have seen first-hand how instrumental this program is in changing the lives of students and their peers. SAVE chapters at participating schools are led by students for students, which gives members the opportunity to lead the planning and execution of youth safety campaigns for their peers. This year, our students who participate in SAVE will lead a number of events that will impact their peers and our community. We plan to host a Stop the Text Rally, as well as an Out of the Darkness Walk for Suicide Prevention.

We're also planning to attend the National SAVE Youth Summit on April 1 in Raleigh, where SAVE participants, students, teachers, law enforcement, counselors and parents from across the country will join together in the fight to stop shootings, bullying and other violence in our schools. The annual summit showcases successful practices in preventing violence and train participants in effective ways to make their schools and communities safer through motivating workshops, peer-to-peer presentations and nationally acclaimed speakers. Youth-led sessions will include topics such as The Anonymous Bully: New Trends in Cyberbullying; Collaboration for a Cause; Bullying and LGBTQ Awareness; and more.

Last year, our Laney High School chapter led the session on Stigma and Mental Illness.

These events bring students together for a common cause, which teaches them confidence skills they cannot learn from a textbook. I am thankful for the chance to be a part of this pr experience the way it is impacting our students and our community.

Beth Scheirer is chapter adviser at Laney High School for Students Against Violence Everywhere.