Bringing First Generation and Low-Income Students Together to Pave the Way

On April 20th, students and administrators representing 7 northeast colleges attended Class Action’s first Summit to explore challenges that face low-income, working class and first generation students.

Dr. Jane Van Galen, whose research is focused on social mobility for students whose parents did not attend college, delivered the keynote. She emphasized the value of using storytelling as a change agent; then students participated in a storytelling workshop to help everyone describe their own journeys to becoming first generation (1st Gen) college students.

Attendees learned from one another informally during the speed-networking sessions, and formally during one of the workshops where students talked about innovative programs on their campus. Rie Ohta, President of Social Classmates, presented about the 6-week cross-class dialogue at Brown, and student Daniel Lobo and mentor Lita Orefice presented on the innovative mentoring program at Harvard between 1st Gen alums and first-year 1st Gen students.

In April, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Anita Garcia Morales, and Alan Preston presented a full-day Institute on Exploring Class, Classism and Race Intersections at the WHITE PRIVILEGE CONFERENCE in Seattle. Betsy also delivered one of the keynotes, bringing the attendees to their feet in a standing ovation.

(Pictured above, L-R: Class Action’s Tanya Williams and Betsy Leondar-Wright, Class Action bloggers Julie Garza-Withers and Jeanne Burns.)

Please like us!

Have you noticed increased Facebook activity this spring? Class Action’s talented team of interns from Simmons College has breathed new life into our social media. If you haven’t liked us yet, please do to get the most updated content daily from Class Action. Visit us at facebook.com/ClassActionNow.
Our Family Grows

In January and February, we hosted two 3-day Trainings of Trainers for current and prospective trainers in Amherst, MA and Oakland, CA.

Amherst, January 2013

Both gatherings included groups of cross-class, multiracial and multigenerational facilitators and trainers from all corners of the country (and 2 from Canada) who want to add class to their toolboxes. The combined talent and experience in the room was inspiring.

Oakland, February 2013

We are honored to have added more than 25 new Class Actionistas to our family. We have new future trainers, advisory board members, bloggers, Created Equal users and friends. We also have a new or increased presence in the San Francisco Bay area, New York City, Seattle, the Twin Cities, Austin, New Orleans and Boston, to name a few.

Where Else We’ve Been Lately

Media Coverage

• Phyllis Labanowski talks about Created equal on WMBR: bit.ly/CEWMBR

• Betsy Leondar-Wright is interviewed about Class Action in Boston’s Spare Change street newspaper: bit.ly/16kEDOu

• Barb Jensen discusses Reading Classes on WBAI: bit.ly/10sztbc

Recent Workshops

• BCLA Public Charter High School
• Boston College
• Colby College
• Harvard Graduate School of Education
• Jobs with Justice
• Rainier Scholars
• Simmons College
• University of Maine
• Upper Valley Haven