

LIST OF ELLA FELLOWSHIPS 2010-2011

The ELLA Fellowship Program is based on SNLP's central philosophy that opportunities for community leadership are integral to addressing issues affecting young women as both leaders and catalysts for effective social change. ELLA is named for social activist, Ella Baker, and stands for Engage, Learn, Lead and Act. It also means *she* in Spanish.

This Fellowship – the only one for young women that we know of – offers a 9-month, in-depth leadership training. Fellows are supported in designing and implementing a project to address a need within a community they identify with. Program goals are to expand young women's understanding of leadership, to deepen their program management skills, and to enhance young women's confidence, resourcefulness, and creativity, and their potential for effective community leadership.

The 2010-2011 class of ELLA Fellows and projects are summarized below:

RANA ABDELHAMID – Senior at Townsend Harris High School. Developed “Unbreakable Strength,” a space where young Muslim women aged 13 to 15 explored issues around identity and self-esteem. Participants explored the strengths of their cultural and religious identity while also learning basic Karate and self-defense techniques.

SABRA BHAT – Graduate of Bryn Mawr College. Worked to reduce peer-related conflict at a middle school in Philadelphia by empowering students with leadership skills, character development, and peer mediation training. Through her project, “PATH Ambassadors” she developed a core group of student leaders, from 5th to 7th grade, who now serve as peer mediators in their school.

LAUREN COLEMAN – Graduate of Duke University. Developed “Untitled: A workshop on Praise, Poetry & Perspectives” in Roxbury, Massachusetts. This workshop series for young women of color aged 14-19 utilized poetry to explore social justice issues and focus on identity, self-esteem and self-love.

XUE YUN GAO – Senior at Baruch College Campus High School. Through “S.O.A.R – Students Advocating, Organizing, and Resisting” Xue worked to ensure that all students regardless of background or level of access have the ability to defend themselves. She led a co-ed group of high schools students in a campaign to include self-defense classes in the NYC Physical Education curriculum.

NATALIA LANTIGUA – Junior at Hostos Community College. Created an empowerment group for teen mothers in the South Bronx. Through her project, “Rooted in the Heart,” she worked with young mothers to develop their parenting skills, build a supportive sisterhood, and provide education workshops on future options and self-care.

JENNIFER LIU – Junior at Hunter College. Used writing as a tool to address educational inequities. Through her ongoing project, entitled, “Write On!” Jennifer will support high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors as they address educational inequities through writing. Students will leave with improved writing skills and will see themselves as a part of a larger social justice movement.

SHANICE SANCHEZ & ASTOU THIANE – Seniors at Brooklyn Technical High School. Developed a safe space at Brooklyn Technical High School for female survivors of abuse. Through “In Circular Motion” they used educational workshops and artistic expression to guide young women in developing their voices as young leaders.