



Labor panel preaches equality

Added by **Taylor Rouch** on November 21, 2011.

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Sexism, Racism and other negative yet realistic occurrences that people will most likely encounter in the workforce today were the topics of the Labor Panel in the Great Hall Wednesday.

Professor James McKeever hosted the event and invited a small group of his friends that do research in labor to be on the panel. McKeever was inspired by Shigueru Tsuha, PH.D. the Executive Director of the Dolores Huerta Labor Institute (HLI).

"HLI is trying to cause a district wide educational rippling effect in which it's not just the faculty or the institute educating but it's really the students getting involved in being educated and paying it forward," said Shigueru Tsuha, Ph.D.

The meeting tonight was a Labor StEP (Students Educating Peers) event. The point of Labor StEP is to educate students about labor in some way and to inform students of the inequalities of labor in today's workforce.

"We talk a lot about education but I don't think we talk enough about what work really means, what unions mean, what the issues are in labor and the different aspects of work," said McKeever.

Dr. Rebecca Romo spoke about the stereotypes of single mothers on welfare and her personal experience of being a hard working yet struggling single teenage mother.

"I received my Bachelor's in 2004, my Masters in 2007 and my Ph.D. on Monday," said Dr. Romo. "I did all of that with federally funded programs like Upward Bound, CalWORKS, Women Infants and Children (WIC), Medi-Cal exc. and if we continue to cut programs like these then my story will become even more rare."

Jake Alimahomed-Wilson, Ph.D., spoke about the lack of worker unity due to racism and sexism. He also said he believes that racism and sexism are pivotal organizers and shapers of our economic system.

Mr. Wilson's studies gender tensions in the labor force caused by men threatened by the presence of female coworkers and women faced with inequality, hostility and sexism.

The Great Hall was filled with Pierce Students, all silently watching the Labor Panel speak.

"After watching the Labor Panel I'm scared of my future. I'm very inspired to change things, but I just don't know how and I don't know where to start, everything seems so bad right now," said Stone.

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