

Jessica Duran interviews Taytiana Brown and Mi Hua, Mandela High and Oakland's First Student PAC Members

The Project Area Committee determines use of Economic Development Agency funds for city projects within its area

JD: How did you find out about this program and what do you do?

TB: A spokesperson from the city redevelopment office held a presentation at our school. I wrote an essay, did an application and interview and now I am the first student voting member. We sit together with the other members and discuss projects that will be added to the community.

MH: I went through the same process. I am a student PAC alternative; if Taytiana is absent, I get to vote.

JD: Why did this program interest you and what do you hope to get out of it?

TB: It interested me because it opens my eyes to see what kind of things are brought to our community and if they are positive. I hope to receive more opportunities in life and find out about more jobs.

MH: This program gives me the opportunity to interact with business people and city members and be part of the decision making process. I want to get more experience in working in the city and learn from PAC members how they communicate with each other.

JD: What have you learned while being part of this program?

MH: It has given me a better perspective about how the city works.

TB: It has opened my eyes to see what is being added to the community and how the community is starting to redevelop. I feel like I have matured and I am more responsible and reliable. There are a lot more businesses and apartments being built. We are also helping fire departments with more equipment.

MH: All the money from property taxes goes to the city and PAC uses them for projects.

JD: Can you name a few examples of these projects that PAC is funding?

TB: Fire department equipment, Fruitvale Plaza by BART, and more stores for teenagers at Eastmont Mall.

MH: They built the Fremont pool, help fix the windows of businesses, and repair Lake Merritt

JD: What do you enjoy about this program?

MH: They have interesting discussions.

TB: The fact that they are trying to help improve the community.



Taytiana Brown and Mi Hua

Photo: Markala Kaze-Davis

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