

Matadors Celebrate Women in Leadership Day

On Tuesday, May 23, Miramonte's Orinda Junioresettes Club hosted their annual Women in Leadership Day. Led and organized by presidents Leila Minowada and Lara Sanli, the Junioresettes celebrated with a lunchtime activity and a panel of women in leadership positions after school.

After weeks of preparation, the Orinda Junioresettes Club, or OJC, treated Miramonte with a day to celebrate and recognize women in society as well as their achievements. Prior to Women in Leadership Day, posters were hung around school with quotes from well-known women in the world that touched on feminist issues.

During lunch, students were encouraged to write on a slip of paper the name of a woman in their life who is their role model or inspiration. With over 150 participants, the entire poster hung on the side of the gym was covered with shout-outs slips from students who wanted to commemorate someone special in their life. "I shouted out Hillary Clinton because she is strong and inspirational," sophomore Dara Kazmierowski said. The Junioresettes were pleased with the turnout and success of the activity: "It was a huge success," said Minowada. "It was so fun to read the shout outs to women in leadership that Miramonte students appreciate."

Later that day, students were invited to a discussion with a panel of leaders in our community, ranging from the mayor of Orinda to a local Rabbi to a research scientist. Speakers on the panel included mayor of Orinda Eve Phillips, Orinda Union School District board member Julie Rossiter, Rabbi Nicki Greninger from Temple Isaiah, pharmaceutical research manager Min Li, and attorney Latika Malkani. With about 80 students present, the panelists had an interactive discussion with the

audience about their jobs and how they got there, as well as their successes and any obstacles they experienced, regarding gender in particular. "It was really interesting to hear about the biases, successes, and general life stories of all the women who participated in the Women in Leadership panel," Minowada said. Audience members heard about what it is like to be a working woman in addition to having a leadership role, and received advice as to how they should live their lives and continue the feminist movement combating sexism in the workplace. "Speak up and take it on," Malkani said. "You have to challenge people's beliefs. That's how society changes, when people call other people out." When talking about her experiences as a young, female Rabbi, Rabbi Greninger described encounters where she felt underestimated or intimidated: "When I tell people I'm a Rabbi, some people can't believe it. We can't assume that women aren't capable of doing things, especially the same things as men. We just have to keep trucking along and opening these opportunities to everyone." Students were encouraged by the panelists to speak up, advocate for themselves, be proactive, and follow their passions when moving into the future. "I think the panel was successful in showcasing a wide variety of inspiring women who gave some great advice regarding the challenges they face in their field of work," junior Sienna Marley said.

"There was a great turnout to both the lunchtime activity and the panel," Minowada said. The Juniores finished off their year and said goodbye to their presidents and other senior members with a win for feminism, and hope for the same, if not better, outcome next spring.