

Dr. Bell reveals grant findings

By Sherry Jacobs
Staff Writer

The Lumbee Rite of Passage (LROP) Community Advisory Board (CAB) held a meeting on Oct. 25 that featured guest speaker Dr. Ronny Bell, co-director of the Wake Forest Maya Angelou Center.

The meeting was held at the UNCP Regional Center to hear the results and findings from a study conducted with the suicide prevention grant.

Dr. Bell gave new insights regarding perceptions of suicide, bullying and self harm.

Some of the findings from the study were unexpected and quite surprising, like the prevalence of prescription drug abuse as exemplified by what the youth referred to as "skittle parties."

Other discoveries were even more alarming, such as the high incidence of self inflicted harm or "cutting."

"It is better to bleed on the outside than on the inside," said one participant.

Another study finding is that there is a low incidence of bullying among obese participants, possibly due to the fact that obesity is becoming a norm and there is an increasing number of obese populations in economically disadvantaged areas like Robeson County.

The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression revealed moderate to severe scores resulted from a development of a 30 percent incidence of depression.

The Rosenberg Sleep Scale Survey compared the times students were considered to be "in bed" and their actual sleep time, which depicted the average sleep hours between six and seven hours each night. The scale recognized three to four hours of sleep deprivation from the recommended nine hours per night.

This sleep deprivation might be re-



Photo by Sherry Jacobs

Dr. Ronny Bell discusses his insights with the LROP Community Advisory Board and guests after his speech on Oct. 25 at the UNCP Regional Center.

lated to the increasing sleep disorders that are related to various physical health and psychosocial problems.

Chair of UNCP's American Indian Studies Department Dr. Mary Ann Jacobs suggested there may be a strong connection between sleep disorders and the high incidence of physical and sexual abuse in the children and adults in Robeson County.

An addictive nature of social media and texting among young people is being overlooked. Pediatrician Dr. Joey Bell inferred a correlation between the increasing high rates of technology use and addiction and suggested that time limitations to technology use should be no more than one hour prior to lying down for sleep.

The LROP Study also planned a Community Forum on Aug. 21. It was

held at the Robeson County Department of Social Services and reported on the success and developments of that initiative as well.

The study convened a panel of 11 Lumbee Tribe youth ages 12 to 17 to participate in the discussion.

Ideas about what actions the community could take to provide resources and safe zones for youth ranged from starting clubs at schools and churches to forming youth rallies that embrace differences and promote cultural awareness. The recently held "Peace in the Park" concert series was also referenced.

For more information on the LROP CAB, contact Field Coordinator Rhonda Faircloth at 910-785-3382 or LROP Chair Kay Freeman at 910-521-6181.