



Summary: Circles partners highly successful professional women with groups of girls in a program that demonstrates real world skill sets used by women in the workplace.

## **CIRCLES: NCR's Girl Empowerment and Career Pathway Project**

CIRCLES targets a vulnerable and underserved population, adolescent girls in poverty. Society teaches girls that career aspirations should not include leadership or policy making. Poverty teaches them that their future will be much as their present is. Youth in poverty drop out, go to jail, engage in high-risk behavior, and fail more than their more affluent peers.

CIRCLES connects middle school girls with highly successful women in their own community. The program can be organized in 8-9 week sessions or it can span a school year. NCR has implemented CIRCLES in after school programs. The course is organized as follows:

- A coach is selected and her message is communicated to the provider (teacher)
  - e.g. the coach is media specialist and her message is on facing your fears
- The provider spends 2-3 periods with the girls on the topic of "fear."
  - e.g. what might women face in the workplace or real world that could cause them to be afraid? How should fear impact your career choices?
- The coach visits the girls and presents her message. The coach determines the degree of formality, the method of presentation, and the content.
  - e.g. the coach has a PowerPoint and gives personal examples of when she was starting her business and had a fear of failure.
- The group goes on a field trip to a venue where they can see real-world application by women and the skills that their coach talked about.
  - e.g. the group visits a web design company founded and run by a woman. They talk about what it takes to be successful in that workplace.

During the session, the girls may see 2-4 different coaches. As the session progresses the girls are working on a long-term project to raise awareness on an issue relevant to girls.

e.g. a public service announcement on how some dress codes negatively impact girls