Ms. Ahlishia Shipley spoke about the many positive outcomes that healthy relationships provide for adolescents. She discussed the factors that contribute to identifying, forming and sustaining a healthy relationship. While young people hold high aspirations, they have low expectations for marriage.

Portraying a young couple (Terrence and Ashley) and using their experiences as an illustration, Ms. Shipley reviewed the core components of the National Extension Relationship and Marriage Education Model (NERMRM) identified through research by NERMEN (National Extension Relationship and Marriage Education Network; www.nerman.org). The model presents key patterns of thinking and behaviors associated with healthy, stable couple relationships.

Ms. Nisa Muhammad and Dr. Rozario Slack delivered a joint presentation about the impact of love on life, relationships, and goals. They discussed definitions of love, myths about love, reasons for marrying, the role of communication and the importance of commitment. Dr. Slack stressed the development of core values or “unshakable unbreakables.” Ms. Muhammad said we often give those who are closest to us the “leftovers,” rather than the very best we have to offer.

The workshop concluded with a highly interactive Q&A session. The young people in attendance eagerly participated. Attendees and presenters lingered for additional discussion after the formal program ended.