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"My sisters ran away when they were 11 and 12 and started having kids soon after. My sisters are in prison, so I have all these nieces and nephews in foster care that I've never met."

At Women Rule! Comenote can't believe it when she learns that the facilitator of her breakout group, Elisabeth Garrett, is also Native American. Another high point of the session for Comenote is sharing what she's learned about designing her Web site (using an experienced tech consultant) with fellow winner Roslind Blasingame-Buford, who has started a college prep program for at-risk inner-city kids (see "Leading Ladies").

In a workshop about public speaking with Ora Shtull, president of MAXIMA Coaching, Comenote learns that body language, delivery, and wardrobe choices have more impact than the actual words. "In fact, when you communicate, you transmit as much as 93 percent of your information nonverbally—gestures, tone of voice, volume—and as little as 7 percent verbally," Shtull says, "and you have seconds to establish credibility." When addressing a group, she coaches: Keep your feet in line with your shoulders and hands above your waist, make eye contact with multiple members of the audience, and occasionally connect to the back of the room. Shtull strongly advises every woman to have an "elevator pitch" handy for meeting

a potential donor or anyone who might support her cause. "Summarize your venture, mention one or two accomplishments, and tell me why I should care," Shtull says. "Too often people stop at features and don't move on to benefits."

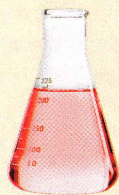
In a lecture about time management, Comenote has a moment of clarity about her compulsive e-mail checking. "It puts you in a reactive mode rather than addressing your own agenda," says presenter Julie Morgenstern, author of *When Organizing Isn't Enough: SHED Your Stuff, Change Your Life*. "Wait an hour in the morning before opening your in-box." But Comenote realizes her problem is larger than e-mail: With a full-time job, hectic travel schedule, and an inability to say no when others ask for her time, she's allowing an overstuffed life to keep her from focusing on her project.

Morgenstern offers a number of concrete strategies: "Every time you feel out of control, fill in the blanks: I spend way too much time on _____. I procrastinate whenever I have to _____. If there were a 25th hour in the day, I'd use it for _____." Energized, Comenote starts practicing: *No. I'd love to do it, but I'm simply too busy at this time*—words that are "a huge evolution" for her. "And I know I've got to learn the fine art of delegation—the idea that yes, someone else really might be able to do this as well, if not better," she says. Vowing never to get a BlackBerry—"it would be fatal"—she declares herself ready to "do nothing less than change the face of Indian country."

Go to oprah.com/omagextras to meet each of the 80 winners and learn about their projects. You'll also find resources to help you turn your own dreams into action.

► THE SCIENCE ROCK-STARS

Three winners are putting a new face on math, physics, and chemistry—and they want girls to notice



When **DÉBORAH BEREBICHEZ** told her family and friends she wanted to study mathematics, they said, "But you'll never get married. No man wants a wife who's smarter than he is." Their reaction was typical in the Mexico City community where Berebichez grew up, but she paid no heed, earning a PhD in physics at Stanford in 2004. Now 34 and living in New York City, where she's a consultant for MSCl Barra, a financial risk analysis firm, she is determined to make science more appealing to the next generation of girls. Her videos, with titles like *The Physics of High Heels*, demonstrate ways in which science applies to daily life and how fun it can be to learn. If her dream comes true (likely, considering her record), the series will become a TV show.

TANYA MOORE remembers being told by a high school teacher that she didn't belong in the advanced math class. Moore, 35, now has a PhD in bio-



Chemistry is hot! Jennifer Stimpson (second from left), back home in Dallas, gets her students fired up about science. Here she shows (from left) Phantasia Preston, Richia Campbell, and Chelsea Grant how to determine the number of calories in a peanut.

statistics from UC Berkeley and wants to challenge the idea that "only some people can do math—usually white males." Her project, an Infinite Possibilities Conference, will support and encourage minority women and girls in mathematics by offering role models and mentors. "Math provides a framework to organize information and interpret data," says Moore, who is program manager for the City of Berkeley's Division of Public Health. "Even if you're not going to use geometry in your life's work, it gives you tools that are good for decision making and critical thinking."

JENNIFER STIMPSON, a 36-year-old chemistry teacher from Dallas, calls herself a "new-millennium science nerd." Stimpson is developing a K-12 program

called Get a KIC Out of Science (KIC stands for Knowledge in Chemistry). "It shows that everyday people use chemistry," she says. "Your pharmacist is a chemist, your neighborhood baker is a chemist, and your air conditioner guy has to have some knowledge of chemistry. KIC makes science relatable and tangible."

The trio bonded during the conference, and after a discussion on how celebrities always generate buzz for their causes, they joked about forming a mock girl group: Déborah as Shakira, Tanya as Alicia Keys, and Jennifer as Beyoncé. They're more than half serious (anyone in Hollywood reading? are we talking TV pilot?). "We're women, we're minorities, we're scientists, and we don't have that geeky look," says Stimpson, "so here's our message: You can be black, Hispanic, or Asian, you can wear Manolos, you can be fly, hip, and dynamic and be a scientist. When a 12-year-old thinks you're cool, that's like getting a million-dollar check."