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Big Brothers Big Sisters



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GROOMING MEN OF THE FUTURE HOPES TO RECRUIT MENTORS FOR WAITING AFRICAN-AMERICAN BOYS

DALLAS/FORT WORTH, TX-October 14, 2009 – African-American barbershops can serve as equal parts debate club, school, man cave, sports bar and therapists' couch for men who enjoy the lively multi-topic conversations each weekend. On Saturday, October 31, members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and Big Brothers Big Sisters hope to interject the need for African-American male mentors into the morning conversations at barbershops throughout North Texas. Both Alpha Phi Alpha members and Big Brothers Big Sisters representatives will spend their mornings at participating shops sharing the tremendous need for mentors with customers.

“While many of our members are mentors in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, the need for African-American mentors greatly exceeds what our local chapters can provide,” said Alpha Phi Alpha Xi Tau Lambda President Lewis Brewer. “Through the **Grooming Men of the Future** barbershop event, we hope to recruit mentors that day and also encourage folks to get involved and ensure that these boys are matched with positive role models.”

Participating barber and former Little Brother Michael Johnson got involved in the event last year. His former Big Brother is an Alpha Phi Alpha member who recruited Johnson to participate.

“I’m not sure that I would be standing here today if I did not have a Big Brother when I was a kid. Dale made a huge difference in my life,” said Johnson. “Boys in our community need positive influences in their lives. I am happy to be involved in an event that can provide that through mentoring.”

Recognizing that traditional mentor recruitment efforts were attracting a very small number of African-American males, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. worked with Big Brothers Big Sisters to develop a barbershop mentor recruitment event five years ago. The 2009 event hopes to recruit at least 40 mentors. Currently, more than 1,500 African-American boys are waiting for a mentor in North Texas.

The following barbershops are participating:

Chop Shop Barbershop
6700 Brentwood Stair Road
Fort Worth, TX 76112

Ray's Barber & Beauty Salon
1565 W Main Street – Suite 215
Lewisville, TX 75067

Natural Edges