

July 11, 2020

Summary of 2020 Purple Boot Mentoring Program Highlights

The John Lancaster & W. Cecil Short Foundation Purple Boot Mentoring Program (PBMP) is a



mentorship program to inspire young African American and Hispanic boys in Southern Maryland to learn about Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) in a fun and interesting way.

Translation: we battle robots.

Since 2009, our program has been successfully building interest in STEM with underrepresented students in the Southern Maryland region. PBMP mentees are also typically young boys in need of a male role model, ranging in ages from 7 to 17.

The goal of Purple Boot Mentoring Program centers around four key goals:

- Improve academic performance
- Improve behavior at home and school
- Improve social skills
- Expand awareness of positive African American men



Partnering with Tau Lambda Lambda Chapter of Omega Psi Phi and Charles County Public Schools Office of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education, we expose students to STEM by establishing robotics teams. For elementary school students, the robotics team utilizes the Lego EV3 robotics kit to teach students basic programming and engineering principles. For the middle school students, we use Ten80 Radio Controlled (RC) car kits. There are two

RC teams, and, throughout the program, they learn driver certification, mechanical engineering, and teamwork skills.

For the high school students, we focus heavily on building a mentoring relationship to prepare them for college and to prepare them for life by aligning to the four Omega cardinal principles: Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift.

“Friendship is Essential to the Soul”

This was an exciting year and despite the onset of COVID-19 we had a remarkably successful year. The 2019 – 2020 program provided mentoring support to 24 young African American males ranging from elementary to high school. Primarily conducted at Waldorf Center for Higher



Education, the program was supported by 17 mentors and Mrs. Shandel Johnson who provided tutorial support. To enhance peer-to-peer mentoring, students Olivea Varlas (2020 Salutatorian, Westlake Highschool) and Kyla Sutton provided programming support to the robotics team. Additionally, Kyle Carter and Jeremiah Vaughn provided math tutorial support.

The program kicked off this year with the students supporting the annual Akida Jordan 5K run in September. The run was a great environment to expose the students to team building, the importance of physical fitness, and social awareness skills.

Guided by Brothers Winston Lewis, Wayne Horton, and Vic McCollum, the students handed out water and motivation to runners in the 5K.



Later in September, the official opening ceremony for the robotics program was held. The robotics team was led by Bro Darryl Jackson and the RC car team was led by Bro Wilson Ennis and Bro Kenneth Pittman.

On November 23, PBMP students supported Project Give Back by assisting members of the Divine Nine deliver meals to 141 needy families in the Southern MD area. The students learned a valuable lesson in community service and had a great time interacting with the members of the Foundation and Brothers of Tau Lambda Lambda.



thrilled to spread the Christmas spirit.

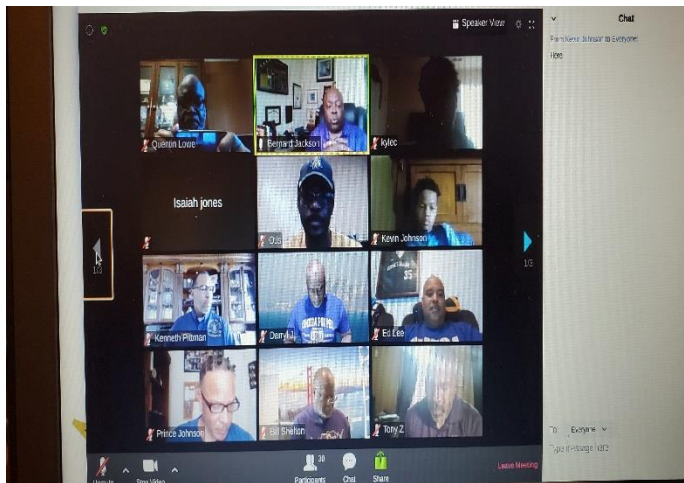
In December 2019, the chapter also provided Christmas gifts to two PBMP families. The families were appreciative of the support and Brothers were



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February 2020 was a highly active month for the program. The February PBMP sessions included financial literacy topics of “Needs vs Wants” and an extensive Black History review. On February 8, 2020 7 PBMP students attended the Opening Game of the XFL DC Defenders accompanied by ten mentors/Brothers from the chapter. On February 14th PBMP High school students, Joshua Rankings, Isaiah Jones, and Kyle Carter attended the 34th Annual Black Engineer of the Year Award Program, which features a mentoring session for young students. PBMP students were mentored by senior level officers in the military. Finally, Isaiah Jones and Kyle Carter were honored to attend the Stars and Stripes Dinner where Kyle was a featured speaker and shared the stage with the various Service Chiefs of the Armed Services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corp and Coast Guard).

To enhance public awareness of the program starting in February 2020, Bro Prince Johnson and Bro Bernard Jackson served as the host for the Ques on the Move pod cast. The pod cast conducted monthly served as an excellent forum to educate the community regarding PBMP mentoring opportunities, student talent hunt opportunities as well as scholarships available to Southern Maryland high school students from the John Lancaster & W. Cecil Short Foundation and Tau Lambda Lambda Chapter of Omega Psi Phi.



March 2020 the program was impacted by COVID-19 and like many in the nation we had to reorganize to operate in a virtual environment. The program was restructured to incorporate interactive virtual lectures and virtual chess lessons conducted each Saturday. We also offered tutorial services for selected students on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

Our virtual lecture topics included:

- A discussion regarding healthy habits to avoid COVID-19 & Impact of COVID-19 in African American Communities.
- Being Strong in Difficult Situations.
- Challenges Facing Young African American Men in the 21st Century – Part I. Hosted by Attorney Bill Shelton.
- Challenges Facing Young African American Men in the 21st Century – Part II. Hosted by Attorney W. Thomas Stovall.
- The Importance of Positive Thinking.

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- How to Compete for College Scholarships

The objectives of the 2020 program were met utilizing a team of mentors, supplemented by tutors,



projects, speakers, STEM engagement and team building events. Students were encouraged to preform academically by rewarding each student who demonstrated academic excellence with monetary and public recognition of their accomplishments. Improvement in social skills and behavior was evaluated by engagement with parents and guardians to supplement the social skill building events associated with the PBMP.

The 2020 program culminated on 27 June 2020 with the presentation of the following awards:

Certificate of Participation - All students who attended at least 3 meetings/events awarded a participation certificate including two students who participated in the virtual sessions from Pennsylvania.

Academic Excellence awards -The following students were recognized for achieving an A on 50% or greater on their final report card. In addition to a certificate each student received a monetary gift from the chapter in the amount of \$60.00.

Elementary:

Isaiah Crockett (5th grade)

Middle:

Demitri Hicks

Quincy Quattlebaum

High School:

Kyle Carter – Graduating senior, Northpoint Highschool, Summa Cum Laude*

Isaiah Jones – Graduating senior, Westlake Highschool, Magnum Cum Laude*

Braxton Wheeler



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*Note: Bro W. Thomas Stovall also awarded the graduating seniors the book “Open Season” by Bro Ben Crump. Both graduating seniors were awarded a John Lancaster & W. Cecil Short Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.00.

Special Awards:

- **Scholarship Award** – Top scholar based on GPA. Each of these students awarded \$100.00 by Tau Lambda Lambda Chapter and Bro Thomas Stovall added an additional \$100.00 and a motivational letter to each of the students.
 - Track I elementary student- Isaiah Crockett
 - Track I middle school – Demitri Hicks
 - Track II high school – Braxton Wheeler
- **Perseverance Award** - Most Improved Track I and Track student based on a review of three grading periods.
 - Track I – Quincy Quattlebaum
 - Track II – Isaiah Jones
- **Manhood Award** – PBMP student demonstrating good attendance and great attitude
 - Stephen Jones
- **Uplift Award** – PBMP student with a positive impact on other students and positive spirit.
 - Chase Hall

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The members of the John Lancaster & W. Cecil Short Foundation and Brothers of Tau Lambda Lambda Chapter of Omega Psi Phi, Inc are proud of the results of our 2020 Purple Boot Mentoring Program.

Bernard Jackson, PhD
Vice President John Lancaster & W. Cecil Short Foundation
Chair, Purple Boot Mentoring Program