

## MALE INTERNS & PARENT BOOSTERS

Several years ago I was at my wit's end. I was having trouble balancing my Chicago Public Schools responsibilities and the day-to-day operations of the Kenwood Academy Brotherhood and its alumni. Upon sharing my frustrations at an educational presentation, an audience member suggested that I secure a graduate counseling intern to assist me. Over the course of ten years some great scholars have provided superb supplemental resources to the Brotherhood.

This section will share the experience of the diverse group of men that went beyond their graduate school expectations. This group exercised their communal responsibility to develop young men out of boys, one at a time.

The section will also give homage to the parents. Over the past fourteen years several parents have also gone the extra yard to support the Brotherhood. In a way, *all* parents are boosters because they allow their children to participate in this school-based male mentoring organization. Some parents encouraged their sons to join while others *demand*ed it.

The parents rallied together to ensure we raised enough funds for college tours, buy dress shirts and ties with money out of their pockets, and even worked the door for the step show and basketball game while often getting heckled by the audience. This section will serve to recognize the parents that sat with us in the middle of the night while we waited on a late coach bus to take us to our various destinations.

There are so many stories of parent involvement with the Kenwood Brotherhood. One time was ahead of a three-day college tour, and all of the chaperones backed out. I didn't know what to do! 48 hours before the trip I was talking to a parent, expressing that I would unfortunately have to cancel the trip and lose the deposits.

"Why?" He asked. I explained the situation.

"Well, you know, I'm a certified volunteer for CPS," He replied, "I've been cleared for years!"

I was so overcome with gratitude that I fell to my knees and began thanking God for sending this rescue angel. I didn't want to lose the thousands of dollars, but more importantly I did not want to disappoint the guys.

Male interns and parents have been such an integral part in the development of the Kenwood Academy Brotherhood. This section looks to highlight their invaluable service.