

Hancock County Head Start Million Men School Day



The Million Men School Day is an opportunity for men to show their commitment to the educational lives of their children throughout the school year. This is a national initiative that was created by the Black Star Project that begun in 2004, fathers and other significant male caregivers across the country and around the world has been asked to participate in their child's education. This day is the beginning of a year-long commitment of men to their children's educational success.

Hancock County Early Head Start/ Head Start & Pre-K celebrated this national initiative on November 14, 2017 which was spearheaded by the Fatherhood Initiative Coordinator, Gary Hill and the Family Service Advocates. Approximately 70 fathers and male caregivers brought their children to school and attended the program that discussed the value of male involvement, the importance of the father in the family structure, and role of the father in education. To demonstrate Hancock County EHS/ HS & Pre-K commitment to the father's initiative, two fathers within



the program demonstrated parental/ male involvement, parent engagement, and strong leadership during the 2016-17 school year: Ezekiel Bundrage, 2016-17 Early Head Start Grandfather of the Year and Kenneth Taylor, 2016-17 Head Start/ Pre-K Father of the Year. These two gentlemen lives are dedicated to family, citizenship, charity, civility, responsibility and admiration.

Gary Hill, Family Service Advocate/ Fatherhood Initiative Coordinator opened the program with a welcome and

explained the purpose of the Hancock County Fatherhood Initiative. Mr. Hill gave a motivational speech to the males which included tips on how to be involved in their child's education, how to be helpful with their child's learning and growth, and the importance of being involved in their child's life. Mr. Hill incorporated male bonding by the fathers playing competition games and engaged in a networking activities. Terrell Reid of Community in Schools discussed the imperative need for parental involvement particularly males in the school district and the overall effect of how the father's involvement has on the improvement the academic performance of children. To demonstrate our Hancock County Early Head Start/ Head Start & Pre-K commitment to the community, Mr. Boderick Foster of the Hancock County Government Manager was presented the Community Partner Award for his dedication in supporting and assisting the program with all the resources available in the county. His work and dedication reveals his servanthood, his passion to the community, leadership, and collaboration efforts.



Guest speaker for the event, Raymond Reynolds and Zachary Reynolds, brothers and Sparta natives gave a motivated presentation that discussed the importance of a father in a child's life, value of a male in the home, church, and the community, and being a support to their family. Later, the fathers had a chat and chew session facilitated by Gary Hill and lunch was provided by Subway of Sparta. The program ended with Dr. Terry Nelson, Hancock County School District Director of Curriculum and Testing gave closing remarks that emphasized the importance of men in taking a stand in their home and community and taking the leadership role in the home. Mr. Boderick Foster, Hancock County Manager discussed the county government willingness to support and assist fathers and their families in the community and the positive aspects of the growth of Hancock County. Other special guest included, Olivette Long, Hancock County Department of Family and Children Service Director, Brandi Boswell, Ocmulgee Court Child Support, and Mrs. Marilyn Hood of Hancock State Prison. Special thanks to Raymond Reynolds, Zachary Reynolds, Terrell Reid, Communities in Schools, Dr. Terry Nelson, Hancock County School District Director of Curriculum and Testing, Mrs. Marilyn Hood, Hancock State Prison, Ollivette Long, Director of Hancock County Department of Family and Children Services, Brandi Boswell, Ocmulgee Court Child Support, Boderick Foster, Hancock County Manager, and most of all the fathers/grandfathers/ male figures of the children of the Hancock County Early Head Start/ Head Start & Pre-K program. "I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection."- Sigmund Freud.