

DIRECTING ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

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PHOTO/IMAGE PROVIDED

The Directing Adolescent Development Initiative, or D.A.D. Initiative, is an innovative Cincinnati-based non-profit designed to help all children and teens – but especially economically or socially disadvantaged African American males – to succeed in school and in life.

Founded and led by Tyran Stallings, the D.A.D. Initiative's mission is "to ready children for higher education, productive social engagement and job placement by providing support, resources, and positive experiences to families through collaborative mentoring, and innovative programming."

"We need the community's help to make the D.A.D. vision fully come to fruition," Mr. Stallings said.

The cornerstone of the organization is collaborative mentoring, where professional African American men provide a caring, encouraging role model in a group setting at its monthly

"Brothers' Brunch," focusing on career exposure and exploration sessions, character building, and goal setting. DAD also operates school-based programs and the new "Operation Passport."

"Brothers Brunch" brings together young men ages 11 and up with mentors for a hot meal, conversation, and activities focused on helping them excel academically, socially, emotionally.

The new "Operation Passport" is a program being launched in 2017. Designed for high school juniors and seniors, Operation Passport will buy pass-



ports for the young men accepted into the program, and pay for them to travel with a team of mentors to other nations during school breaks. Students accepted into the program must maintain a 2.7 GPA, complete an internationally focused project, and maintain high character during the current school year.

"It's a globalized economy, and a lot of opportunities for employment are outside of the country. We want our kids to take advantage of travel, like many majority kids do," Mr. Stallings explained. "We wanted to take a bold step to help them see what the world has to offer. The first year we plan to visit Canada, and build up from there."

The D.A.D. Initiative's school-based program is based at Western Hills High School. The focus is on "social and emotional learning," and helps the teens de-

velop coping skills, conflict resolution skills and character development.

You can help the D.A.D. Initiative by making a tax-deductible gift, becoming a volunteer or mentor, or by signing up your children to take part. Contact the organization at 513-760-6275 or www.dadinitiative.com.

This article was featured in the Apro Accounting online newsletter as a Partner Spotlight. Apro Accounting supports and wholeheartedly endorses the great work D.A.D. is doing in the Greater Cincinnati community.

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