

Zena's House, Inc.

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Spring 2018

ZENA'S HOUSE WOULD LIKE TO THANK



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Welcome our new monthly donor for 2018!

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Spring Break Experience 2018 University of West GA and West GA Tech

Zena's House (ZH) was toooo excited to go West this spring and visit the University of West Georgia (UWG) and West Georgia Technical College (WGTC)! This year, an energized and eclectic group of 24 students attended our tour along with 9 dedicated volunteers. The day dutifully began with registration, ground rules review, breakfast sponsored by McDonalds and of course PRAYER! In less than an hour we

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arrived and were warmly welcomed by Group Tours coordinator Elizabeth Spenlau. Evan Jaynes, Associate Director of Admissions, provided an awesome overview of the University highlighting many interesting elements, for example he explained UWG doesn't use GPAs to determine admission but rather a point system, additionally UWG is recognized for their state of the art nursing program facilities. The students were fully engaged and asked great questions that kept our hosts on their toes! We learned about Greek and student life from Ms. Gigi, a student and member of the Sigma Gamma Rho sorority. We felt Ms. Gigi's genuine enthusiasm, she is clearly enjoying her time and highly endorses UWG. After the presentations, student ambassador, Lillian, met our group and gave us a tour of the campus. We were all impressed; it was a beautiful and expansive campus with friendly faces at every turn. We visited the dorm rooms and concluded our tour



in proper fashion with lunch in one of their many dining halls.

Next stop—West Georgia Technical College! Just a 15-minute drive away. The students were out for spring break but that didn't stop our tour. The capable staff gave us a great overview of the technical college system that was equally impressive. Students loved the simple application process: application, high school diploma or GED and \$25—that's it, no fuss, no drama. There are 120 programs



students can choose from and 5 campuses across the state of Georgia. Some of their programs include nursing, cosmetology, and welding. Courses cost \$89 per hour with full-time students generally taking 12 hours, in addition to \$350 in student fees. So, for about \$1400 per semester a student can earn an Associate degree and start to earn a living as they chart their way forward! Now that's a deal! An impressive rate of 99.7% of students find jobs right after graduation.



Special thanks to my sorority sister, **Mrs. Shelbia King** for suggesting we add a technical college to our visit; **Mr. Ben Alston (McDonalds)** for sponsoring our breakfast; **Fulton County College and Career Academy** for their partnership and student participation; **Kitty Brightman of Odyssey Tours** for coordinating our bus transportation with **SouthEastern Stages** and bus driver **Randall**; Spelman college student volunteer, **Jasmine Porter**, and former ZH parent, **Linda Boles**, for helping us coordinate and prepare for this tour. Last, but not least, thanks to all our donors for sponsoring students to attend. All 24 students enjoyed the tour, had a great time and look forward to attending another tour! We consider it an honor and a privilege to EXPOSE our students to higher education— and know that with each trip, college is an option for students.



Zena's House is a non-profit youth development organization that provides tutoring, life-skills workshops and exposure trips for middle and high school students in metro Atlanta.
Our vision is to instill hope in youth through education, life-skills workshops, exposure, encouragement and love—ultimately to see youth so full of hope whereby they know and believe nothing shall be impossible to them!

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The Law and YOU!

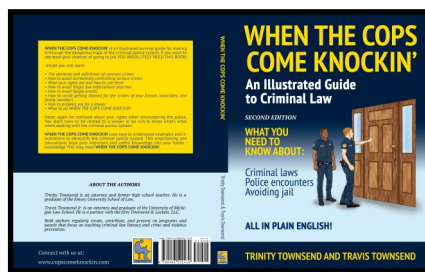
Zena's House, the city of Union City, and JB and Company Barber Studio hosted one of our most popular and well-received workshops titled the Law and YOU at Banneker High school on February 3. The purpose of the event was to provide our parents, students and community with important information about the Georgia and federal legal system and how to constructively engage with law enforcement to keep our kids safe! There were over 70 attendees and the panel consisted of current Zena's House Board member and former prosecutor, Attorney Riah Greathouse of Greathouse Trial Law, Attorneys Travis Townsend (Townsend and Lockett), Trinity Townsend (Fulton County), Judge Kelli Stevens Hill (Cobb County Magistrate), Judge Kelly Lee Ellerbe (Fulton County Superior Court), Fulton County Deputy District Attorney Fani Willis, and Morehouse student and White House Historically Black College and University (HBCU) advisor, Jarrell Jordan. The event kicked off with a welcome from Union City Mayor Vince Williams, followed by Mr. Greathouse's presentation that included how to understand Georgia laws, legal terms and criminal punishments for gangs, drugs, statutory rape, and other criminal activity. He also discussed how to safely interact with the police and knowing your Constitutional rights. The audience also watched a brief but compelling video from Lt. Joe Kenda: Homicide Hunter that recounts the case of two 17-year-old boys involved in an attempted robbery. The video clip demonstrated just how quickly one could lose their freedom based on a simple and thoughtless decision.



The esteemed panel discussed their experiences in the criminal justice system, and the staggering and growing number of young African Americans in the system. Judge Ellerbe strongly encouraged anyone who is arrested to exercise their Miranda rights and **REMAIN SILENT**, don't speak until their parents or attorney arrives. The panel also discussed that criminal records can prevent a person from getting a school loan or job. Jarrell spoke on how his clean record afforded him many job and internship opportunities that someone with a 'record' would not have available.



Zena's House raffled off two free hair cut coupons from JB and Company Barber Studio, and 10 copies of When the Cops Come Knockin: An Illustrated Guide to Criminal Law, created by the Townsend attorneys. Each attendee received a Law and YOU interactive exercise to complete during the session which outlined the key elements of Mr. Greathouse's presentation.



Zena's House would like to thank all who attended, and a special thanks to **Mayor Vince Williams**, Assistant to the mayor, **Cindy Givens**, Zena's House volunteers, the ladies of Alpha Kappa Alpha (Tau Epsilon Omega chapter) and Zeta Phi Beta (Kappa Iota Zeta chapter) sorority for volunteering, Banneker High School, and Fulton County College and Career Academy for their photography and video services. It truly takes a village!



Sponsor Highlight: Dr. Maisha Standifer

It is with great pleasure that I highlight my friend Dr. Maisha Standifer. Maisha and I met over a decade ago by way of our shared public health work. Maisha holds BA from Spelman College, an MPH from Emory University, and PhD from University of South Florida. Dr. Standifer is currently a Health Science Specialist at the Department of Veterans Affairs in Tampa, FL. Her training as a medical anthropologist has allowed her to provide unique insight into health research focusing on disparate populations, including Veterans, women and medically underserved populations. She is a community-based researcher that is committed to empowering disenfranchised populations to make healthy informed decision-making and life choices. She lives in St. Petersburg, FL with her husband and son and enjoys weekly visits to the beach, and church-related activities.



Maisha began supporting Zena's House in 2006. She volunteered to lead workshops, donated financially, encouraged others to support and provided her expertise. We asked Maisha a few questions about her support. **Why do you support Zena's House?** Maisha: I support ZH because I believed in my friend's vision and purpose for the organization. I was born into a family that has been committed to community empowerment, youth advocacy, political engagement and spiritual motivation. The program embodies these elements and I wanted to be in on the ground as the foundation was being built. **What advice would you give to young people?** Maisha: Be persistent, be resilient, be authentic, be you. Don't let anyone dim your light...you are a child of God and let your light shine unapologetically. **How would you encourage others to donate?** Maisha: Donate your ideas, time, expertise, funds, etc.

I am so grateful for Maisha's support. If there is anyone I can count on to 'like' and comment on our social media posts...it's Maisha! She is engaged with Zena's House and provides great feedback and support! We appreciate and salute Maisha!

News and Announcements

Principal for a Day November 17, 2017- Zena's House Executive Director was selected to participate in Principal for a day at Evoline C. West Elementary school in Fairburn. Mrs. Bronson shadowed Principal Burton throughout the day which included attending meetings, registering parents for the Thanksgiving lunch, classroom monitoring, etc. Kids were excited to learn and really love their principal. Just recently, EC West became the first STEM certified school in South Fulton!!! Congrats to Principal Burton, teachers, staff, students and parents! Go EC West!

Welcome new Board member! We are excited to have Rodney Jackson join our Board! Rodney received his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Ottawa University in 2002 and a Master of Arts degree in Organizational Security Management from Webster University in 2005. His 20+ years of military and law enforcement experiences had led him to want to work with youth to help them realize their dreams and goals. He believes youth should seek and take advantage of productive opportunities and possibilities. Rodney is driven to mentor, teach, and guide our youth. Rodney is currently a manager with Walmart eCommerce Fulfillment Center in south Atlanta. We look forward to working with Rodney as we continue to instill hope in our youth!



Upcoming events. Zena's House is planning some essential workshops for our youth to include Social media: Its' benefits and harms (8.25.18), College and Career Preparation and Financial literacy (Dates: TBD). Check our social media pages and website for updated information.