

ZENA'S HOUSE, INC

WHERE YOUTH HAVE HOPE!

Fall 2025

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THE LAW & YOU



Our Law and You workshop was rich with valuable insights about the legal system and the role each of us plays within it. The panel featured an outstanding group of local and state officials, community leaders, and dedicated community members. The goal of the workshop was to educate and empower our students, parents, and community on the criminal justice system—covering crimes, consequences, and the importance of exercising civic responsibility.



The event opened with a warm welcome from Union City Mayor Vince Williams. Participants viewed several impactful videos highlighting the real-life consequences of poor decision-making among young adults, along with information about local mentoring programs designed to offer support and guidance.



Key takeaways included:

- Be mindful of the company you keep—your peers can influence your path, positively or negatively.
- Your vote matters in every election.
- One wrong decision can take a lifetime to overcome. Always think through your choices and actions.
- Exercise your right to remain silent during encounters with law enforcement.
- Participation in extracurricular activities (sports, debate, karate, computer technology, etc.) builds skills, discipline, and positive connections.
- Diversion Pre-Trial programs can offer a meaningful second chance. (See Fulton County Solicitors Office website for more information)



The workshop concluded with raffle drawings and a thoughtful pledge led by Judge Freeman-Dease:



"I will think through my choices and make smart decisions to stay on the right path and out of the system."



Learn more about boys mentoring programs in South Fulton: IMO Question, Dr. Travis Barber and Next Level Boys Academy, Gary Davis.

Speakers: Judge Freeman-Dease (Union City); Dr. Travis Barber; IMO Question; Gary. DuBose and Chris Latson (Fulton County Solicitor's Office Diversion Pre-Trial Program); Christina Clark, Esq.; Jadey Brock; Sgt. Roderick Pittman-Delaney (Union City Police)
Moderators: Trinity Townsend, Esq.; Chandra Davis, Esq.

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Let's Get College-Ready!



College preparation and planning can be stressful for both students and parents. The goal of our workshop is to make the process more manageable by sharing practical tips, strategies, and resources through our College-Ready DREAM TEAM: Marnessa Vital of the Generating Resources, Aid, and Scholarship Program (GRASP); Tyshiba Maxie, The 360 Counselor; and Zena's House.



Students and parents rotated through three interactive stations focused on:
Financial aid * The college application and scholarship process * College and scholarship application tips

Participants expressed overwhelming appreciation for the workshop, with many sharing that it was one of the best college-readiness events they have ever attended.



Key takeaways from the workshop included:

- Create a Brag Sheet or Scholar Profile (also known as a résumé).
- Attach your brag sheet when requesting letters of recommendation.
- Give teachers and counselors at least 2-3 weeks' notice when requesting recommendation letters.
- Develop relationship with your counselor and see their
- Complete your financial aid application early, on a laptop and review carefully before submitting
- Send thank-you notes to organizations that award you scholarships.
- And most importantly – DON'T GIVE UP!



Resources shared during the workshop can be accessed here:
[Let's Get College-Ready Resources](#) and www.zenashouse.org

Money Moves!!

It's always a good time to talk about money—how to save it, protect it, and make it grow. Financial literacy is a key life skill that helps build confidence and long-term stability, from managing credit to preparing for unexpected expenses.



Our Money Moves workshop featured an engaging team of speakers who covered Banking, Credit, and Wealth Building. Key takeaways included:

- Save something from every paycheck or cash gift, no matter the amount.
- Maintaining a strong credit score opens doors to affordable housing, cars, and other major purchases.
- Credit unions often offer lower fees and better interest rates.
- Wealth building can include homeownership and life insurance.
-



Each participant received a Money Move resource sheet with helpful financial terms and tools. Students and parents had fun testing their knowledge—and many walked away with cash prizes for correct answers.



Special thanks to Georgia's Own Credit Union for supporting this workshop and to Zach Weidman, Community Sales Manager, for leading the Banking session.

Speakers: Taleesha Bates, Tamesha Walker, Danielle Wallace, Zach Weidman



SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: DR. LESLIE DAUPHIN

Zena's House is proud to highlight one of our long-standing supporters, Dr. Leslie Dauphin, whose dedication to education and youth development continues to make a meaningful impact on our mission.



Dr. Dauphin recently retired as founding Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Public Health Infrastructure Center and is now a part-time professor at Meharry Medical College. She is also author of *The Germ Handbook*. With a lifelong passion for educating and developing others, she has consistently championed opportunities that empower young people to reach their full potential.

Dr. Dauphin's connection to Zena's House began more than 20 years ago through a shared commitment to service. In 2004, Bernice and Leslie met while volunteering at a youth conference at their church and soon discovered a meaningful connection—both were working at the CDC. That shared passion for service laid the foundation for a lasting partnership. Dr. Dauphin further supported the mission by serving as one of Zena's House's first parent workshop speakers.



Dr. Leslie and parents

Dr. Dauphin has supported Zena's House because she believes deeply in our mission to develop and uplift youth. Her unwavering support reflects her belief that education, mentorship, and community investment can change lives. When asked how others can support Zena's House, Dr. Dauphin encourages the community to donate financially to help sustain this important mission and to share Zena's House on social media to raise awareness and broaden our impact.

We are incredibly grateful for Dr. Dauphin's continued commitment and generosity. Supporters like her help ensure that Zena's House remains a place where young people are inspired, equipped, and empowered for the future.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: JACOREE NICHOLS



In this issue, we're proud to highlight JaCoree Nichols, a dedicated member of the Operation Graduate (OG) Mentoring Program for the Class of 2024. The OG program focused on life skills and personal development where JaCoree gained valuable tools to prepare for life beyond high school.



JaCoree shared that Zena's House played a major role in helping him create a plan for his future. "Before I was in this program, I had no clue what my route was after high school," he said. "This program pushed me to apply myself more in multiple aspects of life. My mentor, Mr. Trinity, taught me important lessons about how to be successful, including how to invest."



When asked what advice he would give to his peers, JaCoree shared wise words beyond his years: "Stay focused and have a solid plan. You shouldn't let time pass by after you graduate." Now a proud graduate, JaCoree is putting that advice into action—working, investing his money, and pursuing an apprenticeship in the electrical trade. With focus and determination, he plans to one day launch his own electrical business. Adding to the joy of his story was a small-world moment during the program: we discovered that JaCoree's barber is my husband, JB—proof that community connections run deep!



Congratulations, JaCoree! Your hard work and vision for the future inspire us all.

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Every donation—big or small, one-time or monthly—makes a lasting impact.

Thank you for being part of our village!

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NOW**



Zena's House is a nonprofit youth organization named after The Executive Director, Bernice Bronson's sister, Zena. Zena loved school, her family and Friends. Zena died at the age of 17 (2002) due to lupus and its complications. Zena's house empowers metro Atlanta youth through skills workshops, mentoring, scholarships and exposure trips

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!

