

White House recognizes “Fatherhood Heroes” in Washington, D.C.



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Recently, I had the pleasure of attending a White House sponsored “Fatherhood Heroes” event which focused on lifting up the importance of responsible fatherhood and recognized 12 individuals from Washington, D.C. who exemplify the goals of President’s Responsible Fatherhood & Mentoring Initiative. I was honored to join as Michael Strautmanis and Joshua DuBois, former Super Bowl Champion Cato June who facilitated a roundtable discussion and then recognized these Fatherhood Heroes:

- **Joshua Rogers** shared his story of pain and reconciliation, where an honest but challenging conversation restarted a relationship between him and his father.
- **Jennifer Hernandez** and **Jeremy Smith II**, two high school student shared how they are working to balance school, apply for college and working hard to be the best parents they can be.
- **Wayne Salter** shared about the great work that Concerned Black Men is doing to address a myriad of challenges facing fathers in the Washington DC Area.
- **Thomas Young**, a social worker for the city, was adamant about the importance of communication between fathers and children and shared how he facilitates that interaction with families.
- **Carl Dunn** the oldest dad in the room described how he needed to rethink the approach he taken as a father in order to improve his relationships with his family.
- **Herman Odom** helped us understand how to help fathers returning from incarceration and a little of his own personal story as a father.
- **Isaac King**, who grew up without his father, shared how that absence drives him as mentor and the nonprofit he founded to support mentoring in the DC Area.
- **Ephraim Scott** described how despite overcoming many challenges he makes spending time with his children a priority every day.
- **Louis Limes** shared how he is working through his local Head Start program, Bright Beginnings. He shared how grateful he was for this recognition as an engaged and involved father.
- **Rob Keeling** highlighted that with all the differences among the fathers around the table and in the Washington DC Area in race, religion and/or sexual orientation, they all shared a passion to be the best fathers and mentors possible to children.
- **Major Freddie Robinson** participated by recorded video direct from Afghanistan where he is serving our country through the D.C. National Guard. He shared how important it was to have family support while he has been deployed.



Click here to watch his statement <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1ZwS7he2y8>

Eugene Schneeberg is the Director of the Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Justice.