

A few good men, and women, step up as mentors

The program was created in part to stop youth from being criminal offenders.

NICHOLE OSINSKI
STAFF WRITER

On a gloomy day on Saturday, April 21, a group of men and women gathered in the Daytona Beach Police Department with the goal to be role models and mentors to the next generation.

This was the Calling a Few Good Men event, part of a growing initiative to match up men and women with local youth in hopes of fostering brighter futures and instilling positive character traits.

A similar event was held in October in Deland, but Saturday's program was a first for the Daytona area.

"Calling a Few Good Men is a call to action for men who are held responsible and accountable not only for your own children," Primrose Cameron, the event's coordinator, said. "It's being responsible and accountable for those that are within our community so that they can grow and live a better life."

Cameron came up with the idea for the initiative when she was an English teacher and guidance counselor at Mainland High School and began seeing a growing need for mentors among the students. She saw how important it was for her own son to have role models and wanted that for other young people. However, Cameron said she began to realize it was a



Photo by Nichole Osinski
Primrose Cameron, event coordinator, and Bob Davis, president of the Halifax Lodging and Hospitality.

more than one person.

Last year, when Cameron went to visit her parents, she also found inspiration in her father, whom she said portrays the characteristics of a good father and husband. Cameron began wondering where the other men like her father were.

When she returned to Florida, she contacted Port Orange resident Bob Davis, president of the Halifax Lodging and Hospitality, to put out a call for men, and women, in the community who wanted to help local youth. By the end of October last year, 17 people had signed up as mentors. Davis said that a mentor means

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BOB DAVIS, president of Halifax Lodging and Hospitality

person. It may mean taking a mentee to a baseball game, or it may be helping with homework. It could simply be offering advice.

"We've got to break that cycle of no male in the family," Davis said. "We don't want them in ankle bracelets, we want them in honor societies. We want to teach them."

Tony Servance, a member of the Daytona Beach Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, is one of those people who made the decision to become a mentor. Servance said the fraternity has a focus on working with young people, so when Cameron asked members if they would be "a few good men" the answer was yes.

"I think it's important to be able to talk to young people today because a lot of them need guidance," Servance said. "The best thing to do is support them so we don't have to support them in court or support them in a juvenile program."

And while the majority of the attendees were men, there were also women ready to volunteer their time to help young girls. Cameron herself has been a mentor to Natacha Jerome since Jerome was in ninth grade.

Port Orange resident Alicia Dove was one of the women in attendance who was offering her time as a mentor.

"A Few Good Men is a great program for the young kids to help them grow," Dove said. "If you don't have someone to look up to, basically it's hard to get ahead in life."