



PROJECT VISIBLE MAN

Bringing young men together through strength, empowerment and education

“Project Visible Man is a very effective program...Our young adults need to see and hear from positive role models.”

—Vince Price, Manager of MIS at United Stationers

Project Visible Man (PVM) is a youth empowerment program for young men of color, ages 13-26. It is designed to encourage self-respect and transform dysfunctional behaviors through the exercise of willpower, positive reinforcement, and real-life role models.

The goal of PVM is to motivate, inspire, encourage, and challenge youth to look critically at their life situations, to find value in their lives, and to maximize their potential.

PVM provides a platform for open, honest expression and an exchange of dialogue through candid conversations with adult males from various walks of life.

PVM is named for renowned author Ralph Ellison's book *Invisible Man*. This book examines the invisibility of black men because some people refuse to see them as positive influences on society.

WHY IS PVM NEEDED?

For every black male who graduates from college, one hundred others are in prison. In addition, young men of color significantly exceed the number of whites in the foster care system.

The lack of fathers in the household has particularly dire consequences for young men of color. Some 71% of high school dropouts and 85% of all the youth in prison grew up in fatherless homes.

“.. a much-needed program for young Black men – enlightening and empowering”

—Clarence Waldron, *Jet Magazine*

WHAT DOES PVM DO?

PVM consists of three key components:

- Candid Conversations are open and honest dialogues addressing the developmental needs of youth through such topics as managing anger and conflict, leadership, self-esteem, sexual issues, economics, spirituality, education, fatherhood, violence prevention, and healthy lifestyles.
- Forums are larger gatherings in which youth from PVM and other agencies, including women, discuss issues of concern. Raising awareness and bridging communication gaps between diverse members, forums bring about new insights into how others live, shatter false perceptions, and eliminate stigmas associated with others.
- Community Service builds character and encourages young men to honor commitments and take responsibility for their environments.

“You are doing great and important work.”

—Quraysh Ali Lansana, Director of Gwendolyn Brooks Institute at Chicago State University



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Become an advocate for PVM.

- Assist in obtaining corporate sponsorship to improve the lives of men of color.
- Participate in Candid Conversations and dialogues with our young men.
- Recruit experienced speakers to provide meaningful insight into various topics.
- Recommend positive male-enriched organizations for the group mentoring program.
- Host an exposure outing at your company.
- Provide internships and/or entry-level career opportunities.

TO BECOME A MENTOR

We are looking for caring, responsible people to be role models. Volunteers must:

- Be 21 years of age.
- Be a high school graduate or have a GED.
- Demonstrate problem-solving and mediation skills.
- Have strong assessment and communication skills.

Our screening process includes:

- Completion of the volunteer application.
- Background check and fingerprinting.
- A volunteer interview.
- A physical examination, TB test, and drug screening.
- Volunteer Orientation.

And submission of:

- Three reference letters from family, friends and business associates.
- A copy of your current driver's license and proof of insurance.

TO CONTACT US

To become involved or to find out about other opportunities, contact:

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