

Families Matter Celebrates Community Impact at Annual Collaborate & Celebrate Dinner Gala

Faith-based nonprofit highlights the life-changing impact of fatherhood, mentoring and family-strengthening programs across Memphis

MEMPHIS, TN, UNITED STATES, July 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Families Matter](#) recently welcomed 200 community leaders, supporters, program participants and partners to its annual Collaborate & Celebrate Dinner Gala at Second Presbyterian Church. The evening celebrated the organization's mission of strengthening families, changing lives and transforming Memphis through [programs](#) that equip youth, fathers and families with the tools they need to thrive.



At Families Matter's annual Collaborate & Celebrate event, Quinton Brittenum and Damion Norfleet shared with moderator Michael Arnold and attendees how the AFIRM program has strengthened them and their families.

The evening began with a welcome and prayer by Brad Morrow, Pastor to Young Adults at Second Presbyterian Church, followed by a lovely musical selection from Barbara Jackson Sago.

“

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Carol Jackson, executive director of Families Matter

Then, Kenneth Glass, chair of the Families Matter Board of Directors, greeted guests and welcomed them to the dinner gala before Mrs. Dee Henley performed a musical selection for the crowd's enjoyment.

Following dinner, attendees heard inspiring highlights from the Connections relationship education program and the 12 Principles of Manhood initiative. Educator Michael Hoots and students Asia Cox, Calos Watkins and Orin

Butterick shared how the programs have helped them develop healthy relationships, strong character and positive life skills. Program participants also shared how the encouragement and support they received from program manager Patrick Batson and other program leaders have

helped inspire their respective journeys.

Carol Jackson, executive director of Families Matter, gave special recognition to those program leaders and mentors who help administer Families Matter programming throughout the Mid-South. Following this, attendees enjoyed an inspiring musical performance by Barbara Jackson-Sago and Ivory Jackson, Master Trainer for [AFIRM](#) (A Father's Involvement Really Matters).

A highlight of the evening were the remarks of Dr. Altha Stewart, Senior Associate Dean for Community Engagement at UT Health Science Center. Dr. Stewart is a valued community partner who shared about her commitment to improving the well-being of families throughout the Memphis community.

Guests then participated in an engaging fireside chat moderated by Michael Arnold, Faith Community Relationship Manager. AFIRM (A Father's Involvement Really Matters) participants Quinton Brittenum and Damion Norfleet shared personal stories about how the program has strengthened their relationships with their children, improved co-parenting skills and inspired lasting personal growth.

The evening concluded with closing remarks from Glass and a closing prayer by Gordon Fykes, manager of the 12 Principles of Manhood program.

"Every program we offer is rooted in the belief that stronger families create stronger communities," said Carol Jackson, executive director of Families Matter. "When we invest in fathers, parents, young people and healthy relationships, we are investing in the future of Memphis. Collaborate & Celebrate gives us an opportunity to recognize the incredible people,



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Families Matter executive director Carol Jackson and board chair Kenneth Glass welcomed guests to the nonprofit's dinner gala.

partners and program participants who make that work possible."

Families Matter partners with schools, churches and community organizations to provide free educational and family-strengthening programs that encourage healthy relationships, responsible parenting and positive youth development. Programs include the 12 Principles of Manhood, Connections, Dynamic Dads, Raising Highly Capable Kids, The Nurturing Parenting Program, and AFIRM (A Father's Involvement Really Matters).

Through these evidence-based programs, Families Matter equips youth and adults with practical skills that strengthen families, promote healthy decision-making and help prevent families from reaching crisis situations.

For more information about Families Matter or to support its mission, call (901) 260-8520 or visit www.familiesmattermemphis.org.

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