

July 27, 2020

Black Males Explorer Program

501 Orr Drive GEC -C Suite 305 Tallahassee, FL 32307

Dear Reader,

As a FAMU alumnus, former Rattler football player and current FAMU football record holder, I can honestly say that one of the most influential and life altering experiences while in college and in life has been my participation in the Black Males Explorer Program. I was made aware of the program by one of my best friends and former teammates. My teammate always spoke of the program with high regard because not only did he work for the program, but he had also been a participant in the program as a high schooler. He attributed the program to redirecting his path and his belief of being able to become a college student.



I worked for the program as a program counselor and mentor and gained a tremendous respect for the Black Male Explorer Program and the students who participated in the program. The participants were high school aged at-risk Black males who were being afforded the opportunity to experience a summer high school program in an authentic college setting, exposing them to first-hand college-life experiences and the possibility of what they could experience in the future. The students did everything from live in the dorms, eat in the cafeteria, attend classes and the biggest part, which was the interactions with current college students who served as their camp counselors and mentors.

As a counselor and mentor, without knowing the program exposed me to my life-long passion of mentoring and educating youth. I have been blessed to make a career of my passion. This year, I am entering my 21st year of a career in education. I have been a teacher, coach, ESE Behavior/Educational Specialist, and I am currently a high school administrator. I can honestly say that my participation in the Black Males Explorers Program is what sparked my enthusiasm to work with the youth and become an inspiration for the youth, the same way the program inspired me.

The Black Male Explorer Program is one of Florida A&M University most successful, honorable, and inspiring programs to our Black at-risk youth and has been the catalyst for many like me to move forward with purpose after experiencing it. I am thankful for my opportunity and hope many others continue to reap the rewards of such a worthy cause.

Sincerely,

Tariq D. Qaiyim

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