

To Whom it May Concern:

100 Black Men of South Metro, Inc. is a chapter that is respected in the community for its actions. Its members demonstrate “What They See, Is What They’ll Be” in the community and through their Rites of Passage Academy. Over the year, the chapter sponsored several community forums and informative workshops. They create an environment where local leaders have an opportunity to share information with the community. The forums and workshops address issues important to the community such as, racial profiling and financial planning. These community activities are truly informative and engaging.

The 100 Black Men of South Metro, Inc.’s Rites of Passage Academy offers the mentees opportunities that far exceed any similar program. This program is much more in-depth than appearance and how the mentees articulate their thoughts, it also teaches them self-respect, brotherhood, and leadership skills. Unfortunately, in general, the media and society stigmatize, dehumanize, and criminalize black men. The members of 100 Black Men of South Metro, Inc. demonstrate to the mentees that the images projected are not true and that they have hope. They advocate for the mentees and teach them how to advocate for themselves.

The members invest a tremendous amount of time sharing educational and life skills with the mentees. One would think that the generational differences would cause a communication disconnect. Fortunately, this has not been observed. Additionally, with the wealth of their experiences, they create many educational, professional, and social opportunities to expose the mentees. Finally, to observe mentees that have graduated from the academy maintaining their relationship with the chapter validates the impact and effectiveness of the chapter’s program and commitment of its members.

Our son is a recent graduate of the academy and he maintains a relationship with many of the mentors. They continue to accept him and provide enough guidance to allow him to make appropriate decisions. As his parents, we are thankful that he has wise and trustworthy adults that take the time to provide him advice and guidance. Additionally, as a result of the exposure provided, many opportunities continue to open for him. He will be studying abroad in Spain during the summer break and he studied at the Google Institute last summer. Additionally, since graduating from the program, he has opened and manages his investment account. He also continues to maintain “Express Lawn Care,” a business he started while a mentee in the academy. Finally, he gives back to the community by volunteering with the First Tee of Atlanta and being available to advise current members of academy.

As a parent of a 2017 graduate of the Rites of Passage Academy, I highly recommend 100 Black Men of South Metro, Inc. as the “Chapter of the Year.” The members have consistently demonstrated their leadership and unselfish contributions to the community and the Rites of Passage Academy.

Sincerely,

Victoria Ali  
Parent, Rites of Passage Academy  
South Metro, Inc.