



FORERUNNER**MENTORING**

PROGRAM



2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



THE
Manhood
DECLARATION

I am a man of God.

I am strong, fearless, and courageous.

I am a man after God's own heart.

I walk in wisdom and power.

I have favor with God and man.

I live life to the fullest.

I was created on purpose, for a purpose.

I act with responsibility, humility, integrity, leadership, and respect.

I am loved and will love others with the love of Jesus.

I will forgive because I am forgiven.

I surround myself with godly friends.

I honor women with my words and actions.

I will be a godly husband, father, and leader.

I am loved by my heavenly Father.

I am saved by grace through faith in Jesus.

I am empowered by the Holy Spirit.

I AM A MAN OF GOD.

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Leaders desire to build things that will outlast them. To leave a legacy in their wake. They are the few who plant trees while others look for shade.

The greatest of leaders extend the opportunity to lead to others. They make time to mentor, encourage, and build other leaders. They look forward to the day when they will pass the baton to the next generation.

2011

Zach Garza saw a need in the boys on his football team. A need to be led, believed in, and empowered to fulfill their God-given potential. A need for father-figures.

2016

Zach matched me with a boy to mentor. A boy who changed my life as much as I did his. A boy who has gone off to college (in the car I taught him how to drive). A boy who has become a man of God.

2019

Zach invited me to join his staff to champion our mentoring program, extending his vision beyond his own influence.

2021

Zach passed me the baton to lead Forerunner Mentoring.

By God's grace Zach's leadership has envisioned hundreds in the Lake Highlands community to make Forerunner Mentoring what it is today: a **community endeavor led by the next generation of leaders.**

I hope all of the stories you are about to read are an encouragement to you and to our community. I hope they reveal what's possible when we show up, build up, and share Jesus. But make no mistake: these stories are the fruit of trees planted by mentors, tutors, coaches, friends, and donors like you.

Thank you for being a forerunner for others. For giving generously of your time, talent, and treasure to support our vision to see boys in our community fulfill their God-given potential.

We're asking for you to consider a financial gift to Forerunner Mentoring this Christmas season. Whether it is a monthly recurring donation or a one-time gift, every little bit helps us to accomplish our vision for Lake Highlands. An investment in future husbands, fathers, and leaders who will produce fruit that outlasts us.

We could not do what the Lord is calling us to do in our community without you. So thank you. May the Lord bless you and yours this holiday season.

Relationships change lives,



Stephen Murray
Executive Director



YOU CAN GIVE FINANCIALLY ONLINE AT

www.forerunnermentoring.com/donation

OR MAIL A CHECK TO

10228 E Northwest Hwy #24
Dallas, TX 75238

"I'M STILL LEARNING", said Samuel as we drove home from another afternoon at the park. Samuel had just met some new friends at the park. We were in the car on the way home reviewing our fun time. In particular, we were discussing how Samuel was interacting with the other kids. As I began to correct him, Samuel stopped me by reminding me what all this is about...he is still learning....so is his mentor.

Samuel is like the other 7 year olds. He likes to be silly, laugh, sing, and have fun. He also needs guidance to maneuver through elementary school, bullying, making friends, and to communicate with those around him. Like the rest of us, he needs a safe place to process his happy and sad emotions in a healthy way. He also needs to learn the environment around him and learn to be comfortable in it.

Together, Samuel and I have learned how to hang out, learn new things, and meet new people. We've used the neighborhood streets, playground, scooters, bikes, karate, singing, and chicken (yes chicken) to connect, be adventurous, and to learn respect for the people and resources around us. The reports from his principal, teachers, and the staff at Forerunner have been remarkable. He is a different young guy than he was last year.

"FORERUNNER GIVES SAMUEL AND I THE FOUNDATION TO CONTINUE TO LEARN AND GROW TOGETHER."



Sarah (Samuel's mom) and I are very close. As Samuel and I have built our relationship, Sarah and I have had to communicate and work together to love Samuel as best we can. It's been important that we develop a relationship that is healthy and honest. Though not anticipated, getting to be part of their family has been part of the process. It's healthy for Samuel to see his mom working and communicating with his mentor. Forerunner gives Samuel and I the foundation to continue to learn and grow together. Relationships matter and Forerunner allows for us to develop ours in a healthy and life-giving way. Learning is a life-long process (it took a 7 year old to remind me of that). Samuel and I are looking forward to all the lessons that the many tomorrows will bring.

TIM SIMS
SAMUEL'S MENTOR

SONS ARE A HERITAGE FROM THE LORD, CHILDREN A REWARD FROM HIM. LIKE ARROWS IN THE HANDS OF A WARRIOR ARE SONS BORN IN ONE'S YOUTH. BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE QUIVER IS FULL OF THEM. THEY WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME WHEN THEY CONTEND WITH THEIR ENEMIES IN THE GATE.
PSALM 127:3-5





“When I grow up, I’m going to be a mentor. Actually, can I start now?”
- SEMAJ D, 8th GRADE

“At Forerunner I have learned new things about myself...like I know how to use my brain and worship.”
- RILEY, 5TH GRADE



K-6 AFTER SCHOOL MENTORING PROGRAM METRICS
41 Forerunners Enrolled
80% of students said they made new friends at Forerunner
95% say Forerunner helps them be a Man of God



“We spend time with Jesus because who we hang around is who we become like.”
- KING, 5TH GRADE



“This year I learned that God is the judge. That means that nobody’s opinion matters but God’s.”
- JAXON, 3RD GRADE



“Y’all have helped me see my future, and what I need to do to be successful in life.”
- TJ, 6TH GRADE

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

If a boy grows up with no male presence in the home, who is the most important person in his life?

We serve and support the moms of our boys through friendship and community to help them flourish as the leaders of their family.



Forerunner moms feel they have developed life-long relationships through our Women's Ministry



Forerunner Moms who have served in a leadership capacity through recruitment, bible study leadership, volunteer training, and advocacy.



Forerunner moms say the Women's Ministry has helped deepen their relationship with Jesus



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MOMS/GUARDIANS BEING SERVED THROUGH FORERUNNER

I discovered Forerunner **BY THE SIGN** that was in the grass just outside of my sons' elementary school, Skyview. I was needing to find an after school program for my boys because their current one was no longer available. I called and got them enrolled in Forerunner. My sons have been in Forerunner for 14 weeks now, and the difference it has made is so evident! Prior to Forerunner I would receive calls from the principal about my son's misbehavior. I was used to those calls. Last week I got a call from the principal and my thought was "of course here we go again."



This time I cried in relief and joy because the principal was calling to tell me of all the good things he sees in my son. His grades have improved and he has even received awards! I was so happy and it is all because of Forerunner! I am so thankful for this program and the way the coaches encourage and help my son. Forerunner has also been a place for me as a mom. The women's ministry events are fun and they provide a place for me to go and have social time. I do not get an opportunity to go out of the house to do something fun for myself because of childcare needs and no safe places to go. The events not only provide that for me, but it also is so encouraging to be with other moms who understand the burden of caring for our children by ourselves as single moms. **FORERUNNER HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE A SOURCE OF LIFE AND JOY FOR ME AND MY SONS.**

**MULUSHEWA GIRMA
NATTU & ALAZZAR'S MOM**





**“CAN WE STOP BY MY MENTOR SCOTT’S HOUSE?”
“CAN I USE YOUR PHONE TO CALL MY MENTOR SCOTT?”**

This summer we took a few of our junior high students to go see the movie Space Jam. This was a way to redeem their disappointment of not being able to go to a camp due to covid. As we departed from the parking lot of North Park AMC Theater, one of our Forerunners named Tyre kept asking to stop by his mentor Scott’s house. Tyre asked again for the third time. “Can we stop by my mentor Scott’s house?” We were a bit hesitant because it was a Friday evening and we figured Scott was with his family. We also didn’t want to show up unannounced. As we dropped a student off, Tyre asked again, “Scott lives right down the street, can we please stop by?” Ok Tyre let’s see if he’s home. As we parked our 15 passenger van in front of Scott’s home, we allowed Tyre to go give a few knocks at the door. Scott was home and was so excited to see Tyre along with the Forerunner Van parked right in front of his residence.

Scott was surprised but happy to see us because he was working on a eulogy for his friend’s funeral the next day and couldn’t form up the words. He stated that us showing up meant a lot because he needed prayer. Before we departed from Scott’s home, Tyre got to pray for his mentor Scott that evening. We were proud of Tyre for choosing to show up. He supported his mentor in time of need. As the school year got rolling, Tyre was going through a hard time. He just lost his uncle to cancer and was having a hard time getting in contact with his mom. He was in a low place. But guess who showed up to the junior high program to check on Tyre? His mentor Scott.

Our mentors show up. And showing up gives our Forerunners hope. Showing up reminds them that they matter and are thought of. A few weeks later Tyre asked one of our coaches, “Can I use your phone to call my mentor Scott?” For a student to put forth effort to use someone else’s phone to call his mentor shows you how much a mentor relationship has impacted them. Relationships change lives.

**DARIUS PERSON
HIGH SCHOOL COORDINATOR**



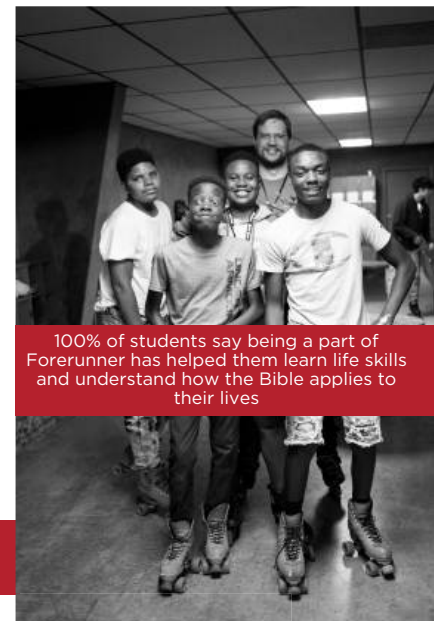
7-8 AFTER SCHOOL MENTORING PROGRAM

Our 7-8 program places special emphasis on the development of life skills, future stories through career path exposure, and how to live as a Man of God.



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**JUNIOR HIGH
STUDENTS ENROLLED**



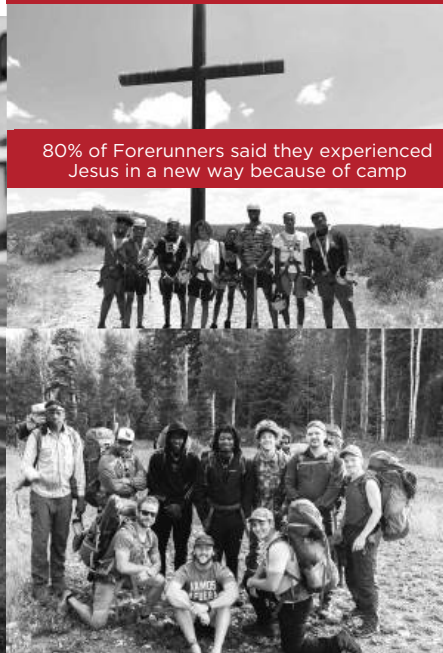
100% of students say being a part of Forerunner has helped them learn life skills and understand how the Bible applies to their lives

Relationships *Change Lives.*

SUMMER CAMPS

We partner with summer camps to provide more opportunities for our boys to meet new friends, godly mentors, and experience the love of Jesus.

80% of Forerunners said they experienced Jesus in a new way because of camp



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**FORERUNNERS WENT
TO SUMMER CAMPS**



GRANT & MICAH

When I joined Forerunner in April of 2019, I was only vaguely familiar with mentoring in general. I knew I would be spending time with a child from the area who did not have a father figure in his life. I knew that mentoring would give me the opportunity to help change a child's life for the better.

I met Micah while he was in Kindergarten. I tried to make small talk, but he shied away from conversations. Perfectly understandable, as I was a giant 6-foot-3, total stranger trying to talk to him in his school classroom. As I tried to think of other ways to connect with him, I remembered that I loved playing tic-tac-toe when I was his age. So I gave it a try. Sure enough, his face lit up like the sun and we were instant friends. Over the months, he grew warmer to me with every visit, greeting me with his (no longer front-tooth-less) grin and growing more engaging every time we met.

Over the summer, I would pick Micah up from his home and we would go to lunch. His choice, every time: pepperoni pizza. Who can't bond over pizza?? We decided to make it our mission to visit a different pizza establishment every time we met and try to choose the best one. After visiting many restaurants, it is now evident the best pizza in Dallas is the pizza currently in his hand!

Our new traditions grew from pizza to following that up with a visit to the elementary school in my neighborhood. It has a working garden/farm, with



chickens, herbs, veggies - the works! As a local, I know there are always children and families playing on the playground and lots of varied equipment and opportunity for physical activity. Micah loves to swing and play tag around the playground.

One of my favorite moments, definitely an "a-ha" moment, was when he first discovered the chickens. He gave me that look that I know means he's confused - then asked me what they were... He had never seen a live chicken. In that moment, I could see why mentoring children is so important. Opening up his world to things he may not have experienced otherwise. These kind of new experiences are crucial for a child's brain development.

When my daughter was little, not quite crawling yet, we spent some time in Colorado over the winter. She had been sitting up and rocking on all fours for a while, and her mother and I were excited for the next step - but she just didn't seem ready to take that on. We could only encourage her, provide her with support, and cheer on her successes. We had a fabulous time playing and skiing with family and eventually headed home.

We arrived home weary and happy to be back, and spent the first few minutes to relax and stretch our legs. When we took Lauren out of her car seat, she was anxious to stretch her legs too. I placed her on the floor in the living room while we decompressed from the long car ride. Without the least bit of hesitation, she then proceeded to crawl all around the room, like she had been doing it for weeks already. The only thing I could think of that would have caused such a quick development was the trip. She had seen, felt, smelled, and tasted things she had never conceived of before. This became my mission for Micah. To give him as many "Colorado moments" as I could.

One day, after playing at the playground, it was especially hot and Micah was thirsty. My house was close by, so we stopped by to get some water and cool off a little. My son was in the backyard practicing his baseball swings into a net that would trap the balls. My son invited Micah to try swinging the bat to hit the ball off of the tee. Micah had never seen a bat, let alone played baseball.

He showed Micah how to hold the bat, hit the ball, then they tried catching and fielding balls. In that



moment, I saw how these experiences could change my children's view of the world as much as they've changed Micah and myself. I prayed that these types of experiences would plant seeds in my children that will lead to them seeing that servitude is a blessing for all those involved.

Recently, we took advantage of an opportunity to go camping with Forerunner at Camp Firewalker's ranch. Micah was a bit hesitant at first, but once we got out there we had a great time. We fished, shot BB guns, archery, went canoeing, and learned some knot tying skills. It was great to watch Micah and the other boys experience these activities for the first time. We finished the night with smores around a campfire, which resulted in a first for many of the adults as well. One of the Camp Firewalker volunteers, a former military member, stood up, asking for silence. Everyone was quiet as he let us know there was a tattered flag at the ranch when he arrived, and it was his duty to retire the flag. As he cut the tattered flag into customary pieces he spoke about the history of the flag, its importance and how we honor it for all the sacrifices made and that will be made. He then asked each child to walk up and grab a piece and drop it in the fire. I had never retired a flag and this was something I'll never forget. I am so grateful Micah and the other boys got that experience as it was very meaningful.

The experiences and adventures that Micah and I have had will forever leave an impression on my heart. I hope they will on Micah's heart as well. When I started this journey into mentoring, I knew that I could be affecting a child's life. I had no idea how much he would change mine.

GRANT PHILLIPS
MICAH'S MENTOR



*a generation
of world changers.*



A WEEKLY HANGOUT FOR THE YOUNG MEN OF LAKE HIGHLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

THRIVE

MANHOOD · FAITH · LEADERSHIP

HIGH SCHOOL METRICS

- 11** Average number of high school guys who show up consistently to THRIVE every week
- 90%** of students said that the support they get a THRIVE helps them feel hopeful about their future
- 100%** of moms said they have seen a positive change in their child because of the high school ministry



THE PERFECT MATCH

We got a call from one of our board members that there was a young man that attended their church that had interest in going to our high school summer camp. His name was Terrel. When Terrel's mom whose name is Mary dropped him off for camp, she had a desperate look in her eyes. She said, **"My son needs a mentor bad."** He doesn't have any male role models in his life. I had an older sister who poured into me. I want that for my son. Could y'all give him a mentor?" I told her absolutely. We will be praying for a mentor for Terrel. We will be thinking about the perfect match for him.

This summer Terrel **gave his life to Jesus and was baptized.** Terrel came to our high school program for the first time. One of our mentors, whose name is Kevin, was there that night. I noticed Kevin and Terrel had a natural connection.

"HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY MALE ROLE MODELS IN HIS LIFE."

Our speaker that night was former NBA champion Terrel Harris. He encouraged our young men to embrace their resources and have a vision for their life. He went around the room and asked some of them about life after school. He asked Terrel and he had an answer already ready. Terrel stated boldly, "I want to be an underwater welder."

A few days later, I called Kevin and asked him if he would be interested in mentoring Terrel. Kevin notified me right away that he'd felt led to pray for Terrel ever since he met him.

He also told me on the phone that his brother is a welder. I knew they were the perfect match. Kevin was delighted to mentor Terrel. I called Mary right away to give her the good news. I asked her if we could all come over to their house so they could meet Kevin. As I arrived at their house, Kevin was already inside. They were looking at some of Terrel's welding projects.

God is in the welding business. Welding together relationships for the good of his glory.

DARIUS PERSON
HIGH SCHOOL COORDINATOR



MENTORING

If a boy grows up with no male presence in the home, who will show him how to be a man?

We connect the boys in our program with godly men in our community who commit to show up, build up, and share Christ.



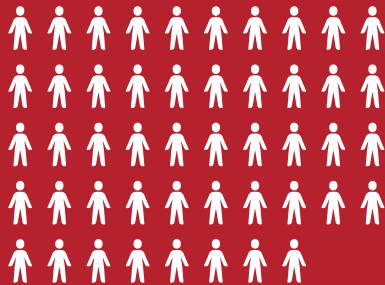
100% of moms said they have seen mentoring make a positive impact on their children



"THE STAFF AND MENTORS ARE AMAZING IN AND OUT. I AM GRATEFUL THAT GOD HAS LED ME TO THIS PROGRAM FOR MY SON." - MOM



100% of Forerunners said they would trust their mentor for support if they were going through something hard



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Active mentors



You Can Mentor.

The Mentoring Resource for Christian Mentors and Mentoring Organizations

You Can Mentor is a network of mentoring ministries collaborating to advance the Kingdom of God through mentoring kids from hard places.



Resources

Practical, shareable content for mentoring organizations of all sizes



Relationships

A place for mentors and leaders to share their knowledge and experience

NEW PODCAST EPISODES EVERY WEEK



STAFF STORIES

Working at Forerunner is an honor. Not because it's a great mission, which it is, but rather because it's an honor to be trusted by the moms who are a part of our program. It's an honor to get to speak into the lives of the leaders of the next generation; our Forerunners. It's an honor to witness these boys grow, to hear about their dreams, to be a presence for them in their pain. It's an honor to see our coaches' hearts become transformed through the experience of working here. An honor to champion and be championed by volunteers and supporters who cause us to far exceed what we could do in our own strength.

“TO BE AN ENCOURAGEMENT, TO BE A FRIEND, TO BE A MENTOR - THESE ARE EXPERIENCES THAT YOU CANNOT BUY.”

To be an encouragement, to be a friend, to be a mentor - these are experiences that you cannot buy, but they are things everyone is looking for. So to play a role in being these for the people I've met through this organization, it's priceless. The saying is true; relationships change lives - and for me, I consider it an honor to build a relationship with you.

BETH WINTER
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS



“When God first began calling me to be a teacher, I was doubtful to say the least. Although I was often the one to be found playing hide and seek with the children at parties rather than making small talk with the adults, I certainly never thought of myself as someone who could lead a classroom. But, as I was working with Youth with a Mission missionaries to teach English to Yemeni immigrants on a mission trip in Hamtramck, Michigan, the small flicker of curiosity within me about teaching began to ignite, fueling my drive to begin my pursuit of becoming a teacher upon my return to Texas. This journey eventually led me to apply to a part-time grade coach position at Forerunner Mentoring.

To be honest, this was a season of disappointment. I had just passed my required content exams and completed the minimum coursework necessary to be hired as a full-time teacher, but those doors didn't open, which is Christian-speak for, “This girl did not get a call back.” Thankfully, God was writing my story and He, of course, knew that my training for the classroom was far from over.

When Forerunner said “Yes” to bringing me on, I had no way of knowing that that was exactly where I needed to be. The men and women of Forerunner don't just say that relationships change lives - they live that reality every single day. They were there for me when I needed them and taught me how to cultivate those same relationships with the boys I got to serve. I learned to trust the process, an invaluable tool of a successful teacher, and how a culture of honor

changes the atmosphere from one of accusation to one of faith.

I now teach at Faith Family Academy in Oak Cliff, where the majority of my students come from what we would call at Forerunner “hard places.” I hear stories of the realities that some of these kids come from nearly every day, and most weeks it brings me to tears. If it were not for what I learned at Forerunner, I might find it easy to blame, accuse, and grow weary of the hurdles I often face with my students. But thanks to Forerunner, I can see the bigger picture.

I can trust the seeds I'm planting to make a difference even if the process looks messy. I can believe the best about my students, knowing they have a creator God that loves them and created them on purpose, for a purpose. And most importantly, I can choose to be thankful, reminded of how God has had his hand in every step of my journey, and how He, as always, has me right where He wants me.”

DALISE DEVOS
FORMER K-6 COACH





"They draw pictures of me, poke the veins in my hands and ask, "Does that hurt?"; lay their heads on my arm as I read to them and call me "Miss," a far cry from accurate.

I am a 66 year old grandmother who started tutoring for Forerunner in 2015. I first met Zach when my twins took Health from him in 7th grade (2013). Later, a friend of mine told me about Zach starting Forerunner, and I knew immediately that this is where I wanted to be. The first year, we were squished amongst the supplies and old teaching materials at Northlake Elementary School with the Forerunner boys, helping them with their homework. Math is not my strong suit so I have to ask for help, but I know that it is less about math and more about the relationship. They ask me lots of questions and want to know how many grandkids I have (1) and all about my children (3) and my husband. Ethan and Elissa, my now 21 year old twins, used to come and help out when they were able.

I am also increasingly involved with the Women's Ministry at Forerunner, going to Bible study and Ladies Nights every month. It is wonderful to hear one of the moms lead our Bible study and see them get so excited about the prizes at Ladies Nights! It provides an opportunity to strengthen those relationships. We eat and chat together, and I have started to be in

contact with a few of them outside of a Forerunner! Sometimes I think my husband might get tired of hearing all my funny and precious stories I come home with from Forerunner. It fills me up and I smile when I think of them. I missed out on 2020, which created such an empty space for me, that I started asking in May to make sure I would be added back in for 2021. I'm so honored to be a part of this ministry and am excited to see it continue to grow and continue to positively impact both the lives of the Forerunners as well as the adults involved."

**DANA MASSEY
TUTOR SINCE 2017**

"INSTILLING CONFIDENCE IN THE CLASSROOM IS VITAL"



FORERUNNER TRAITS OF A MAN OF GOD



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Scott Frost | Board Chairman

President and Chief Operating Officer and Co-Owner, RIM Manufacturing, LLC

The ministry of Forerunner matters to me because I grew up in a single parent home with an absent father. A young man mentored me. He taught me what it meant to be Christ follower and a man. He hung out with me, encouraged me, and loved me. My life was forever changed and he is still in my life today.



Zachary Garza Sr. | Founder & Executive Committee

Founder, Forerunner Mentoring Program

Vice President of Expansion, The Mentoring Alliance

I'm passionate about Forerunner because the Lord used mentoring relationships with Godly men to introduce me to a relationship with Jesus Christ and to give me vision, direction, and purpose in my life.



Jeremy Sain | Development Committee

Managing Director at JLL

We have a Heavenly Father who loves us. Forerunner Mentoring teaches boys to walk in the joy of the Lord, and to carry the love of Jesus into their families, schools, and futures. It's a privilege to watch what God does through mentoring.



Chad Lancaster | Financial Committee / Treasurer

Director - HR/Finance, Chacon Autos

I am passionate about Forerunner because the organization is providing a deep investment, centered in Christ, that can be transformative and life altering. Our mentors, volunteers, and staff give selflessly to ensure these boys and their mothers feel loved, respected, and cared for in ways they might not have ever experienced before. God called us to be leaders in our communities and to provide a voice and to defend those in need. I'm not sure how you could hear the story of Forerunner and not want to be a part of this mission.



Kim Sayles | Development Committee

As a believer in Christ, the mission behind the ministry of Forerunner directly aligns with my beliefs and passion. The life of Jesus gives us context for how to love the world—by caring for the fatherless and serving those he called “the least of these.” Forerunner seeks to pursue young boys and men who are physically and spiritually needy, just like you and me. Through the structure of mentorship with men who know and walk with the Lord, Forerunner aims to raise up the next generation of men on mission for Christ and His Kingdom. What a powerful goal—to make known the love of Christ through the community of other believers. Forerunner’s heartbeat is simple and it is transforming our community.



Ricky Zorn | Governance Committee / Secretary

Senior Management Consultant, Credera

I care about Forerunner because it powerfully displays the love of Jesus in our community. When Zach told me he was starting Forerunner, I was playing catch at Lake Highlands with my dad, the first of many influential mentors in my life. I'm grateful for the mentors who invested in me and challenged me to be a man of God, and I'm thankful that Forerunner is providing the same opportunity for others.

FORERUNNER *BAPTISMS*



Baptism is the public announcement of a personal decision to follow Jesus. We see baptism as a thing worthy of great celebration because it is a symbolic representation of the new life in Jesus that we receive when we put our faith in Him and leave our old ways behind.

This year we celebrated the baptisms of **22 of our Forerunners.**

Elijah Agbugui
Elijah Green
Eric Green
Garrison Cassell
Isika Ugbaja
Jai'Caree Johnson
Jaiden Green
Jemell Carter
Jemere Hartsfield
Jermarcus Hartsfield
Jesse Olamiju

Josef Fassio
Julian Fernandez
Onyi Ugbaja
Riley McNally
Samuel Adetola
Semaj Dunn
Shalom Olamiju
Te'Vincent Hartsfield
Terrel Foreman
Tyre Deberry
Zh mari Edwards



Relationships *Change Lives.*

