



YEAR IN REVIEW



WE EXIST TO FULFILL THE POTENTIAL
OF EVERY YOUNG MAN IN LAKE HIGHLANDS
GROWING UP WITHOUT A FATHER-FIGURE AT HOME
BY PROVIDING **MENTORING, PROGRAMS, AND FAMILY**SUPPORT IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

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A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We all have a shared need as humans: the need of a father's blessing. To not be left in the dark, but to be brought into the light. To be mentored along the journey. Belonging always comes before becoming.

The heart of a father is to give sons and daughters all of these things freely. When we don't receive a father's blessing, we find ourselves resigned to forsake it or replace it. And it never works.

Many feel they received something of the sort by reading books about historical figures, seeking to apply wisdom from the experiences of others. Many will convince themselves they found a father's blessing on a TV screen, watching athletes and movie stars while they were growing up.

But at some point, we realize many of the father-figures we've looked up to for a blessing have never set eyes on us to tell us we have what it takes. We know their stories but they will never know ours. Their wisdom, though inspiring, can prove to be difficult to apply without being hands-on.

I have found that the blessing of a father cannot be summarized in wise words on a page, or hidden withint models of success. The blessing of a father can only be found in a trusting and secure relationship. It is experienced in the form of attention when you think no one else sees you. It's in the affirmation of a hand on your shoulder that acknowledges your past wounds and arms your potential. It assures you with the acceptance you always longed for, giving you the freedom to try and fail and try again.

For the last decade at Forerunner Mentoring, we have seen the blessing of a father enable young men to fulfill their God-given potential. Because it's easier to believe you are someone, when you are someone's. The stories of relationships you are about to read became possible when individuals like yourself became the blessing for others. Thank you for supporting Forerunner Mentoring. There are mentors and mentees who are on the journey together because of your choice to give.

Have you received a father's blessing? I hope this Christmas you will receive the Father's blessing in this...

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

The Father's blessing became a person and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. Behold Him. He is for you.





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

BRAD + NATTU

As I look back at 2022, a pivotal point in my life was in early January during the 'New Year's resolution' season when I challenged myself to find new ways to give back to the community. It was soon after, that I felt a tug at my heart to dive deeper into supporting the youth in the neighborhood. I believe this seed had been planted over many years working with kids at PCBC, on mission trips, and coaching youth sports.

My journey with Forerunner Mentoring started on Friday, Jan 21, 2022, at lunch with a good friend named Chad where I quizzed him on Forerunner, asking about the organization's purpose, programs, leadership, and mentorship opportunities. Within days of leaving that lunch meeting, he had worked out visits for me with Stephen Murray, the Executive Director, and Andrew Williamson, the Community Coordinator at Forerunner. A lesson I learned early on – simply visit Taco Joint and you're bound to see one of these men investing in relationships. Investing in other men and the boys at Forerunner. I recall like no other time in my life (other than meeting my 'soonto-be bride' at the time) the sense of urgency to onboard quickly and not let time or distraction squelch this desire to jump in as a mentor.



MATCHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2022



My prayer was answered in a matter of days as Andrew had an opportunity awaiting as Nattu, a 3rd-grade forerunner, was seeking a match. Andrew felt it was not just a match, but the right match for Nattu and me to build a relationship together. Within days I went from exploring a new adventure to suddenly being on that adventure - with no looking back.

My very first encounter with Nattu will forever be etched in my memory. It was a casual meet-up at the Forerunner's after-school program. I recall the energy and beaming smile as he approached me with a firm fist bump. It was a moment of instant joy and I couldn't help but match his energy and excitement. Nattu happens to be well known for 'lighting' up every room with his smile - he enters with a sense of happiness that you'll never forget. From day one it has been a mentoring relationship focused on trust, encouragement, accountability, and loads of basketball! We've both been tested on and off the court as we discuss important character traits while also bonding through rounds of trick shots - "working on our skills" as Nattu often says. I look to bring into discussion a personal mantra to live by "J.O.Y", an acronym that my favorite basketball coach instills in his team culture, "Jesus, Others, Yourself."

A huge blessing of this mentoring program has been the relationships built between my family and Nattu's family. Within months of building the foundation of our relationship, we were able to get to know each other's families. Now we can look at each of our families as one – a simple extension of the family and bond that will last forever. We gather in our home for meals, we celebrate big events as a family, we try new things together, we visit each other at work and we take time to pray. I will never forget the intentional words from Nattu's mother when she pulled me aside to say "We pray for your family each night (tears coming down), we pray for you, for Baylie,

at the after-school program. The coaches are consistent day in and day out as they pour into the kids and families of Forerunner. I also benefit from the discipleship that comes from Andrew and the broader group of mentors that meet often - whether via mentor trainings or the many social activities.

One thing is for certain, God is the one and only perfect mentor for us all. From the words of Chris Tomlin, "You're a good, good Father; It's who you are, and I'm loved by

"A HUGE BLESSING OF THIS MENTORING PROGRAM HAS BEEN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MY FAMILY AND NATTU'S FAMILY."

for Bridge, and for Brynley - every single night." I stood speechless as they lifted me up in that very moment to feel the purpose that God has in my life - to continue to live on 'mission' and love others as I had witnessed them love me.

Let's get real - who is mentoring who here? All too often the role of a mentor is seen as a burdensome and unrewarding endeavor marked with hardships, disappointments, and change. But my personal experience is the complete opposite as I walk away from any encounter at Forerunner with a renewed spirit, overflow of joy, and the motivation to also be present for my own family. The support network within Forerunner is second to none as well. I leave in awe every time I witness the work of the Forerunner coaches

you". I'm proud of Forerunner for instilling that first and foremost in all it does.

I can't describe how rewarding the Forerunner program has been for me in the first year alone. It is a pure gift from God for me and my family. For those reading this that may feel that same tug that I felt - say "YES" to that next step. There are numerous Forerunner boys that have also said "YES" to that next step and they patiently wait if God has a 'match' for them. It could be you. Let's go!

BRAD DEJEAN NATTU'S MENTOR



OUR END GOALS

Relationships: Personal relationship with Jesus, impactful relationships with mentors, positive relationships with peers

Education: Academic Achievement, Life Readiness, Biblical Wisdom Identity: Character of a Man of God, Internal Resilience, Vision for His Future Story

We've intentionally designed our programs so that whether a boy joins our program in Kindergarten or 10th grade, he will be equipped to know and live into his potential as a Man of God.

Our design is that our mentoring relationships and our group mentoring programs would be a joint effort in equipping our boys with the knowledge, skills, and support needed for each stage of their childhood.

We've designed our programs for three stages: Foundations (K-6), Development, (7-8), and Leadership (9-12). Each stage has a list of primary activities that our coaches and mentors engage our Forerunners in during those years of his life, and each stage has Core Milestones that we have said are the most important takeaways we could hope for our Forerunners to learn during that time of his life.

K-6TH GRADE | FOUNDATIONS

Laying the foundation of what it means to be a Man of God

CORE MILESTONES

- Learning the foundations of the 5 Traits of a Man of God
- Memorizing the Manhood Declaration
- Developing a vision for healthy relationships
- Developing a vision for a relationship with Jesus

7-8: MAN OF GOD | DEVELOPMENT

Developing the character and perspective of a Man of God

CORE MILESTONES

- Developing the habits of the 5 Traits of a Man of God
- Memorizing the Manhood Declaration and thinking critically about its' meaning
- Developing a vision for healthy relationships
- Developing a vision for what it looks like to have a relationship with Jesus

- PRIMARY ACTIVITIES Manhood Talks
 - Life Skills Training
 - Scripture Memorization
 - · Personal Roadmaps for Their Future Story
 - Homework Support
 - Rec Time
 - · Social-Emotional-Learning
 - Career Exploration
 - Behavior Redirection
 - Mentor 1-on-1s
 - Forerunner Church
 - Summer Program Opportunities
 - Mentoring Activities and Field Trips

9-12: MAN OF GOD | LEADERSHIP

Commissioning young leaders as Men of God

CORE MILESTONES

- Showing leadership in living out the 5 Traits of a Man of God
- Confidence to embody the manhood declaration
- Developing a vision for healthy relationships
- Developing a vision for what it looks like to have a relationship with Jesus

PRIMARY ACTIVITIES

- Manhood Talks
- Worship Nights
- Life Skills Training
- Small Groups
- Career Exploration
- Mentor 1-on-1s
- Summer Program Opportunities
- Manhood Rite of Passage
- Mentoring Activities and Field Trips
- Leadership Opportunities

PRIMARY ACTIVITIES

- · Bible Time
- Grow work
- · Literacy Development
- Rec Time
- Social-Emotional-Learning
- Personal Roadmaps for Their Future Story
- Behavior Redirection
- Mentor 1-on-1s
- Forerunner Church
- Summer Program Opportunities
- Mentoring Activities and Field Trips

MENTORING STATS FROM 2022

2847 TOTAL HOURS OF ONE-TO-ONE MENTORING

NEW MENTOR MATCHES

100% OF K-8TH STUDENTS BELIEVE THEIR MENTOR MADE THEM FEEL SAFE AND HELPED THEM GROW



K-6 PROGRAM INTERVIEWS



WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE EXPERIENCES WHILE BEING AT FORERUNNER?

"Some of my favorite experiences is being with my mentor."

"When I very first came here"

"The hike and the camping trip for sure"

"Bible time"



HOW HAS BEING A PART OF FORERUNNER CHANGED YOUR LIFE?

"It has made me think more about what to do productively and what to just not do."

"It has made me learn about God more. It made me a man of God."

"It kind of changed my relationship with Jesus."
"It has changed my manners, helping me be respectful to others"

"It makes me feel happy and good to be here"

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT FORERUNNER?

"All of the fun we have on Funday Friday and the fact that we can make good friends"

"I like bible time and I like the camping trips and Sky Ranch"

"Free time, recess, snack time, and bible time"

"Funday Friday and recess. Early release when we have those free time days"

"Recess, bible, and free time"





HOW HAVE YOUR COACHES HELPED YOU BECOME A MAN OF GOD?

"They have helped me in other situations to now think about what I can do for myself. They have helped me make life decisions"

"They helped me, they taught me stuff.. Different things about Jesus."

"Coach Taj has taught me discipline, Coach Bailey taught me to be respectful, and coach Caitlyn taught me to be patient."

"Helping me with my homework and listening to me"

WHAT WOULD YOU TELL YOUR FRIENDS WHO ARE CONSIDERING JOINING FORERUNNER AND THE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM?

"That it is a pretty fun place to make friends."

"I would tell them it is really fun and you learn about God and Forerunner shows you how to be a man of God." "That it is a fun after-school program"

"That if they go to Forerunner you can read the bible, learn more about God, and be a Man of God"



JEREMY + JACARI

My family and I were fortunate enough to meet Jacari when he was in the third grade. As with any new relationship, you have the normal fears and hesitation if this is really going to work. Now, looking back over the past four and a half years, being in a relationship with Jacari has been incredibly impactful to our entire family. I can't think of another ministry or activity that we have bonded together more than our relationship with Jacari and his family. From countless trips to Chick-fil-A, joining us for sports on the weekends, Halloween, and dinner with our extended family, Jacari and his sister really have become part of my family. I would have never imagined the impact this relationship was going to have.

While our backgrounds are incredibly different, words really can't express how grateful we are to be in relationship with them and to watch our kids play together. They don't see the differences or the skin color, they see another person. We have celebrated birthdays together, spent hours watching the kids jump on the trampoline, played basketball, swam, and eaten ice cream; our life is better because of this relationship.

Watching Jacari grow into a young man has also been incredibly rewarding. I have seen the Lord use Forerunner to impact his life in countless ways. At the beginning of our relationship, I sometimes felt pressure to say exactly the right thing or

memorize the perfect bible verse. In reality, what I have realized is he just wants me to show up. What Jacari needs, what we all need, is unconditional love, encouragement, and stability. While Jacari and his family have moved numerous times, including one year outside of RISD and therefore not being able to be in the program, he knows that he always has Forerunner and our family to come back to. He knows he has relationships to come back to.

"...WHAT I HAVE REALIZED IS HE JUST WANTS
ME TO SHOW UP. WHAT JACARI NEEDS, WHAT
WE ALL NEED, IS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE,
ENCOURAGEMENT, AND STABILITY."

My biggest surprise though has been how this young man has positively impacted our family. Jacari has learned incredible character traits at Forerunner and has positively impacted my kids. This has been a shared relationship with my wife and four daughters, a relationship that has brought all of us closer together and helped us realize two primary things: first, how similar we all are and secondly, that relationships really do change lives.

I would encourage anyone considering mentoring to jump in and watch the Lord work. It's not only a blessing to you, but to your entire family. All you need to do is show up.

JEREMY SAIN JACARI'S MENTOR



PROGRAMMING STATS FROM 2022

K-6TH STUDENTS SERVED

27 7-8TH STUDENTS SERVED

OF K-8TH STUDENTS BELIEVE FORERUNNER HELPED THEM BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

OF K-8TH STUDENTS MADE NEW FRIENDS THIS YEAR AT FORERUNNER

OF K-8TH STUDENTS BELIEVE FORERUNNER HAS HELPED THEM EXCEL ACADEMICALLY





I'm a terrible mentor.

When I first signed up for Forerunner, I had big dreams. I wasn't looking to win any medals, but I definitely had grandiose ideas of what good mentorship looked like. I imagined Friday night Mavs games and weekends at the lake. I saw us gocart riding, camping, and giving the kind of fireside chats that leave a young man forever changed. I wanted to be a killer combo of Ron Swanson and Gandalf, with a healthy dash of Yoda. I know. It's a slight stretch.

I met Marquis early in the spring. He's a freshman at Lake Highlands High School. He plays football, enjoys sleeping in, scrolling on his phone, and a solid playlist. Fun fact? Wind, rain, or shine, Marquis is usually sporting flip-flops. I give him a hard time about it, but I'm really just jealous. I'm too old to pull them off.

I've made it a habit to make most of Marquis' football games. Toward the end of this season, Marquis had a game scheduled for Thursday night at Berkner. I had it on the calendar and planned to head there straight from work. I got a text in the middle of traffic. "The game was moved, we're playing in Grapevine now. Can you still make it?" I rattled off a series of texts explaining all the reasons I might not be there. Rush hour traffic, a long work day at work, I'd miss half the game, and so on and so on.

I eventually turned the car around. I cared about Marquis, and I wanted to see JV kick some tail, so I made my way to Grapevine. I got there halfway into the second quarter, plenty of time to snag popcorn and see some action. The Cats killed the Mustangs, and Marquis played fantastic. I texted him a few

videos of some of his best plays on my way home, congratulating him on the win. All he texted back was, "I knew you'd make it. Thank you"

That's all there is to it. People willing to come. Men and women ready to show up. I've learned that's the most important thing a mentor can do. The football games, the pep rallies, the school lunches, and the Saturday scrimmages. Showing up for the everyday, and living life alongside these young men - that's what matters the most. The majority of the time, Marguis doesn't care where we are or what we're doing. He just cares if I'm there. All that matters is that I showed up. And if you think about it, isn't that what Jesus did best? Of course, he preached truth and saving grace everywhere he went. He also turned water into wine and raised people from the dead. Minor stuff. But the scriptures tell us quite clearly that Jesus' ministry on earth was not only marked by miracles and sermons, but by ordinary living. He ate dinner with friends, he sat in people's living rooms, and he went fishing with his disciples. Jesus lived life with people from all walks of life. He was there. Time and time again, he showed up.

"PEOPLE WILLING TO COME. MEN AND WOMEN READY TO SHOW UP. I'VE LEARNED THAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING A MENTOR CAN DO."

I'm grateful for a Savior that loves us in extraordinary ways, but perhaps the coolest thing about our God, is the way He loves us in the everyday, ordinary. How cool is it that Forerunner gives us the opportunity to show our love for one another by doing just that. Showing up.

JOHN HERRINGTON MARQUIS'S MENTOR

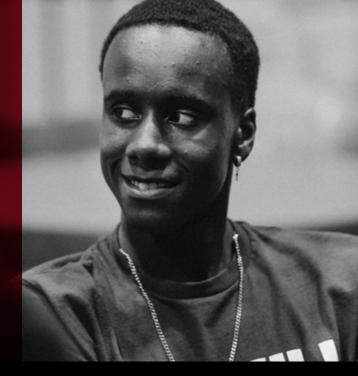
THRIFE

A LAKE HIGHLANDS HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

2022 STATS

62 YOUNG MEN SERVED SALVATIONS 6 BAPTISMS

100% OF THRIVE PARTICIPANTS BELIEVE FORERUNNER HAS EQUIPPED THEM WITH LIFE-SKILLS THAT INCREASE THEIR **CONFIDENCE IN BECOMING MEN**



"THRIVE HELPED ME GET OUT OF MY DEPRESSION."
- 10TH GRADE STUDENT

"GOING TO THRIVE IS THE HIGHLIGHT OF MY WEEK."
- 9TH GRADE STUDENT

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT Y'ALL DID BUT MY SON CAME HOME A DIFFERENT PERSON." - MOM OF 9TH GRADE STUDENT



THE INCEPTION OF FORERUNNER: THREE COURAGEOUS YESES

ZACH'S PERSPECTIVE:

Founder of Forerunner Mentoring

I felt this call from God to become what I didn't ever have for myself - to be a father and to help kids who were growing up without a father. I was an eighth grade teacher and a coach, and I started asking myself the question, "how did God change my life through other people?"

I had this idea... how can I do what other men did for me? How can I mentor? It was the thought of "freely, I've received" leading to me wanting to freely give back. So I decided that I was going to try to do that for these kids who I was teaching. I vividly remember sitting in my classroom praying, "God, you've got to show me how to do this.", and then I walked into the eighth grade cafeteria at Lake Highlands Junior High, and I said, "Okay, Lord, show me - who do you want me to serve?"

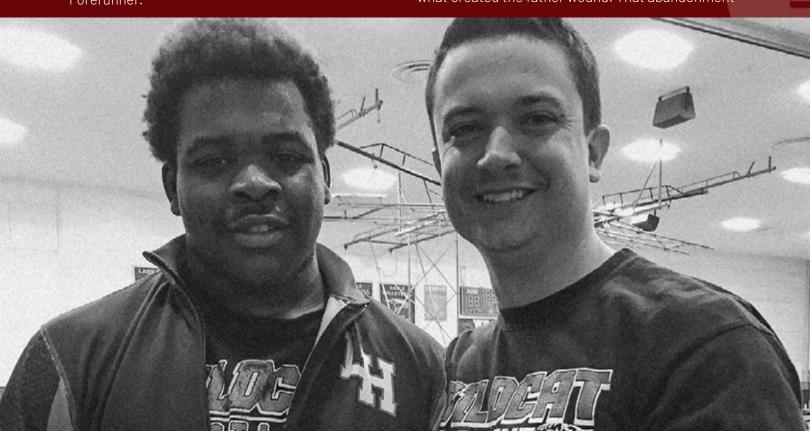
At that moment, TwQwan came up to me. I was on lunch duty, so I was just standing in the corner and he came and stood next to me. We talked about his home life. He told me he didn't have a dad at home, so I just asked him if I were able to put a mentor in his life who would be there for him no matter what - would he want that? I just asked him that question, he said yes, and that's how he became the first Forerunner.

Around this same time, I was meeting up with a friend of mine, Steve, who was a pastor living in Lake Highlands. I told Steve that I had this idea to mentor kids in Lake Highlands and asked him if I could talk to him more about it. Steve got another message that week, from a man in his church named Jonathan. Jonathan reached out to Steve saying "I have a heart for kids who don't have dads. Can I talk to you about it?"

Steve had us both meet with him together, and that's how Jonathan became the first Forerunner Mentor.

JONATHAN'S PERSPECTIVE:

The First Forerunner Mentor
I connected with Zach before Forerunner was really even formalized. Zach and I were introduced through his friend Steve, and that's a whole story in and of itself of just how the Lord brought Zach and I together. I had a calling in my heart to work with or to be a part of helping heal the fatherless journey and fatherless story. This calling really came from my dad. His dad left when he was four years old, and he says that's one of the top three defining moments of his life outside of accepting Christ and the birth of his kids. When his dad left, that was what created the father wound. That abandonment



shaped a lot of his story. For me growing up, I grew up with my dad and I grew up well with my parents staying together. But what I experienced in my teenage years and earlier on was a lot of gaps in a lot of things that I needed from my dad with respect to my masculine journey that he couldn't give me. And that really was the effect of my dad's fatherlessness.

I found myself really drawn to books like "Wild at Heart" and a number of other kinds of tools talking about the father wound and understanding the impact of fatherlessness in the father wound as a result of exploring and needing to understand how my dad's fatherlessness affected his ability to father me and the gaps that were created in my story. It was one of the ways that God wanted to repair that and I spent most of my twenties in pursuit of that journey to healing.

After God had brought healing and restoration, and I went through that journey, I really felt a calling to help others journey through the father wound. I reached out to Steve and just shared my heart with him. And that's when a God moment happened. Zach reached out to Steve on the same day, and Steve connected us together. From that point, Zach and I met and ran with what God had placed on our hearts. We spent the first year casting the vision, creating a website, setting up the nonprofit, raising money, and laying the initial framework of what became Forerunner Mentoring. Towards the end of that first year is when we made the first mentor match. That's where Twquan came along.

Zach introduced me to Taquan and when I met Taquan, he was living with his mom, his older brother, and his older sister. They were living at a transitional women's and family shelter with Buckner International. Zach and I went over to their house where I got to sit down and met Twquan's mother, and we all just kind of got to know each other. It was kind of a, I would say awkward sort of introduction on some level, but I could see the look on Twquan's face that sort of carried both some skepticism and also that my presence was a need. But looking back at that first meeting, it was really rich, and we laugh now at the awkwardness that first came with our relationship.

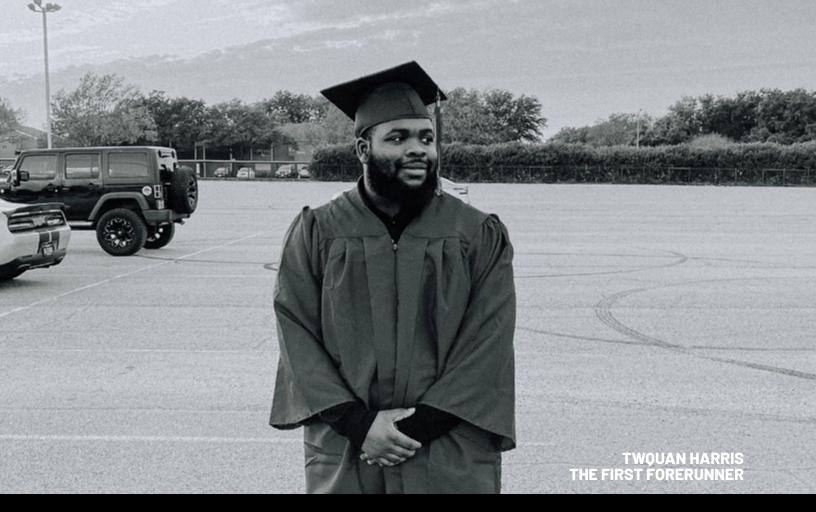
There are a lot of favorite memories I have with Twquan. A lot of them are really tender and great moments we shared. We took countless trips to LSU football games, and we did some intentional work around understanding: what does it mean to be a man? What are the different aspects and dimensions of manhood?



One of my favorite memories was when Twquan came to my wedding. At the rehearsal dinner, we had an open mic time and Twquan stood up in front of a crowd of about 70 to 80 people, looked at me, and told me in front of everyone that I saved his life. That if it weren't for me intervening that he would probably either be in jail or dead because of the anger he had carried in his life from just feeling abandoned. That was a really powerful moment in our relationship alongside so many other funny moments filled with joking and laughter.

Twquan and I still stay connected today over the phone. We'll talk every few months and catch up on life. I think there's still an element of mentoring that happens today now that he's gone through college and into adulthood, but now he is really walking in his strength as a man.

If you're thinking about jumping into mentoring, I would encourage you: you don't need much to be a good mentor and to make a positive impact in the life of a young man who is fatherless. All you really need to have is two things, and that's time and a willing heart. Invest your time and present the image of Christ to a young man's heart, and you'll be the greatest mentor he needs.



"Jonathan and I were just in the background asking God to move, and He did. He's moved in ways that we never would have dreamed. We never thought that it would turn into what it is today." -ZACH GARZA

TWOUAN'S PERSPECTIVE: The First Forerunner

Zach came up to me and said "TwQuan, I want you to meet Jonathan, your mentor." I remember him asking me about basketball and I loved basketball. We ended up going to the basketball court and playing a game of "Horse", and it was funny because at the very beginning I'm thinking to myself, "he's doing his own thing but he's gonna lose, this is horse. This is my game."

I found in the midst of the game, he was asking me some questions. He asked me, "Who are you?"

It was simple questions that he was asking me that I didn't have an answer for. "Who are you?"

Such a simple question, but could be so hard to answer if you don't know who you are. If you don't know your purpose; if you don't know your identity. I didn't. I didn't know my purpose or who I was at that time, so I couldn't answer it. So it was those questions that really got me. It was hard trying to open up my heart to him. It was like I had a mask on that I couldn't take off.

After that, Jonathan and I kept meeting and every time it was like I still had that mask on, but day by day, week by week, I found my mentor cracking my mask. I found myself opening up a little bit more to the point where I fully told him how I felt, how I fully felt about my dad.

It came on a drive to Houston together and I told him my full story. It was also the first time I thought to myself, "you know what? If he leaves, he leaves." It wasn't comfortable telling him my story, but in my head, I'm thinking to myself, "You wanna know my situation? You wanna know how I feel about everything?"

His response to me allowed me to fully take off my mask. He said, "Can I pray for you?" And the first thing he said was, I'll never forget. "Oh, gracious Father." And he just dives into his prayer. I was hocked because I was a church boy. I grew up in church. But in that moment, it was the first time I genuinely heard someone pray out of true concern for me. He prayed for my heart to be healed. He prayed that I find peace. He prayed that I find understanding.

Jonathan came to all my games. Whether it was football, whether it was track and field, whether it was wrestling. I remember telling Jonathan that I wanted to wrestle, and he was so excited for me. He was excited about the transition. He encouraged me through the transition. He confirmed what were right choices to make for myself, and he encouraged me to continue wrestling. He came to every single one of my wrestling matches. My wrestling matches were early in the morning, sixthirty sometimes seven o'clock in the morning, and he was there right on time. I began to appreciate those conversations that we had to the point where I started to miss him. When I do have such heavy thoughts or I feel like I have heavy burdens, he was my outlet when I maybe felt uncomfortable talking to my mom about it because I needed a man's perspective. He was the greatest outlet for me, and he listened. And one thing that I love the most about Jonathan is, in every piece of advice he's given me about life, he has always mentioned the Word of God. I remember times when Jonathan wouldn't realize it, but I'm just watching him and thinking to myself "I thank God for you." He would probably be ordering some food or something, and I'm just looking at him, "I thank God for you." Jonathan was

like a big brother. Like a father figure. And my best friend. He's still there for me. He still calls, and he still texts. When I got older, he made my college experience easier knowing that no matter what, if anything happened, I still have someone I could call home and talk to. After that season I realized the type of program that Forerunner is. The mentors don't leave no matter how old you get. The mentors at Forerunner, like Jonathan, come to be the best friends you could ever ask for.

Twquan graduated with a Bachelor's in Mathematics with a concentration in Education from UNT Dallas. He works as an elementary school teacher and is enrolled in a Master's program. He wants to teach because he wants to give back and work with younger kids to make an impact in their lives. It's pretty much the exact vision Zach had when we started this and more evidence of God's abundant grace over it all. Twquan was our very first mentee, **a true Forerunner**. He was an ambassador for the program and wasn't afraid to take a journey along with Zach and myself to see what God may have in store for him. He's been a good steward of the opportunities he's been given, and I'm very proud of him. **-JONATHAN HAFEMANN**





A RUN THROUGH FORERUNNER HISTORY

Since 2011, Forerunner Mentoring has been pairing boys who are growing up without a father figure at home with men of God who are willing to stand in the gap and show up, build up, and share Christ with their mentee. That first match was the spark that lit the fire behind our vision of seeing every boy growing up without a father figure in Lake Highlands fulfill their potential in the name of Jesus.

2011

The One-to-One Mentoring Program for Junior High boys started





2013

The Women's Ministry started

TIMELINE CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

TYLER + GREGORY

MATCHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2020



I joined Forerunner Mentoring in the summer of 2020. The team at Forerunner did such a great job interviewing me and pairing me with Gregory. Gregory and I were able to bond through our mutual love of sports. It is important to have some type of common interest to participate in and talk about at first. After all, at the beginning as a mentor, you are just a random person and it can take a little while for a boy to open up to you.

Gregory and I met every Wednesday and played football, basketball, air hockey, ping pong, and just about every other game that can be played. I soon learned more about his personal life, his schoolwork, and that he can eat 23 pieces of Cici's Pizza. I try to help him through any difficulties he is encountering and encourage him in the areas he thinks he is lacking. One thing Gregory wants to get better at is reading. The only way to get better at reading is by reading. We bought several books that Gregory was interested in to help in this area. I try to think of myself at that age and teach him the things that I learned (or didn't learn soon enough). Though, I have learned a lot from Gregory too!

In the summer of 2021, I was asked to move to Salt Lake City for work. Gregory and I were both pretty sad about it. A couple of months after I had left, Gregory called and asked if I could be his "virtual mentor." I was honored to do so. We picked back up with facetime calls Wednesday evenings. At this point, I had a good relationship with Gregory

so it was easy to hop on the phone and talk about whatever was going on. This included going over the fastest, slowest, strongest, and weakest football player on just about every NFL team.



This fall I had the opportunity to move back to Dallas for work. When I told Gregory on facetime he was screaming "Yesssss!!!" with excitement and preceded to sprint around the pool. It made me feel good knowing I was important to him. I am glad we held those "virtual mentor" calls because after getting back, we continued as if I had never left. It has been great being able to see Gregory in person on a weekly basis again and to get back involved with the Forerunner Program.

TYLER ZOZ GREGORY'S MENTOR



The Families Ministry at Forerunner Mentoring has made a huge impact on me and my boys' lives. Having such an amazing group of individuals loving on and pouring into my boys has been so comforting and just beautiful to witness. Something I have seen change and grow throughout their time at Forerunner is their confidence. They have grown in that area a lot since being a part of the program. They feel like they can truly become the man they talk about in their chants. They understand how their actions can affect others, and how to grow from their mistakes. They really look up to their mentors, and I love that so much. One of my sons struggled to talk to grown-ups as freely as he does with his peers prior to coming to Forerunner. Now, he has grown so much and has gotten so much more comfortable with that. He speaks to adults so much more confidently now and has even opened up to the coaches about his personal life. He has sought growth, asked for advice, shared his opinion, asked clarifying questions, and talked about his relationship with God. It's been a big deal to have relationships with other Godly adults who aren't his family members. Since being a part of Forerunner and the Women's ministry I have gained a great deal of support and feel a lot less pressure in what

comes with raising boys. It has made my job as a parent much easier. My kids get to see examples of who they could be and are exposed to a whole different world of Godly people that they don't necessarily experience at school.

"SOMETHING I HAVE SEEN CHANGE AND GROW THROUGHOUT THEIR TIME AT FORERUNNER IS THEIR CONFIDENCE. THEY HAVE GROWN A LOT IN THAT AREA SINCE BEING A PART OF THE PROGRAM."

I have also enjoyed being a part of the Ladies' nights and Women's Encounter nights. I typically don't like hanging out with large groups of women, but each time I go I connect with at least one woman and gain a new friendship that I don't expect. It makes me glad I went. I would encourage moms to consider going. You don't have anything to lose, only great things to gain. You get to have time for yourself while knowing your kids are safe, having fun, and being poured into. It's a good place to enjoy fellowship, grow and learn different personalities, and step away from your day-to-day routine to have fun.

WHITNI JOHNSON FORERUNNER MOM

FAMILIES MINISTRY STATS FROM 2022

57 MOMS IN OUR FAMILIES MINISTRY

FAMILIES SERVED

100%

OF MOMS AND CAREGIVERS SURVEYED HAVE SEEN POSITIVE GROWTH IN THEIR CHILD/S LIFE IN RELATIONSHIPS, EDUCATION, AND IDENTITY

The Family Ministry Program has made my life much more beautiful. They have helped me to love the Lord so much more. Ladies' Night and Encounter nights are so great; a place where women from everywhere can come together and know each other, learn more about the Bible, and hear other parts of each other's lives. I love when we meet. It has been so great in my life because I have never been to a gathering where women meet, pray, and fellowship together in the evening. It has empowered me greatly in motherhood. I have learned to be a positive mom who always speaks good things over my kids' lives and become



a good example to them. I've become a mom that loves God, does the will of God, and teaches my kids to live for and love Him. My favorite thing is when the word of God is taught and we get to answer how we feel about certain things. When we pray for each other it is so powerful; you can feel the presence of God in the room. Bailey, the Family Ministry Coordinator, has been the most impactful person in my time here at Forerunner. She always has a big smile on her face every time I see her. She is always willing to help and explain things that we don't understand. Forerunner has helped me find myself. It has helped me realize that I am a great person and that Jesus loves and cares about me no matter what. That I am a child of God. My son also loves Forerunner. He is a child who will play most of the time by himself or his brothers. Since being in the program, he has loved playing and spending time with different kids. Normally, he struggles with his homework at home, but being in this program he does all his homework and is doing great in his lessons now. It's evident that his coach has made a big impact on his life.

This place has been a guide. It has helped me grow from strength to strength, and has made me depend on God the Father. Forerunner is a place where I can go and feel loved, and it has brought me so much joy in my life. I am looking forward to spending more time studying the Bible together and being a part of the Family Ministry Program here at Forerunner Mentoring.

EMMA WARD FORERUNNER MOM

OUR HISTORY CONTINUED

2015

Founder, Zachary Garza, went full-time. The 4th-8th grade After School Mentoring Programs started, serving **2 schools**, and the One-to-One Mentoring Program expanded to serve all of these grades.





2018

The After School Mentoring Programs and the One-to-One Mentoring Program expanded to serve K-8th graders at **3 schools**.

2019

The K-8th After School Mentoring Program expanded to serve **6 schools**.





2020

Thrive High School Ministry started and the One-to-One Mentoring Program expanded to serve **K-12th grade**.

2021

The very first baptism ceremony was held, where **22 Forerunners** made a public decalaration of their faith and the first Manhood Rite of Passage was initiated





2022

We had **20,127 hours** of program service impacting the Lake Highlands community

Forerunner began with the courageous yes of **one mediator** willing to be a bridge, **one mentor** willing to stand in the gap for a stranger, **one mentee** willing to open up, and **one mother** willing to trust.

11 years later, Forerunner has served over **250 boys** in Lake Highlands. We are just getting started.

WHERE WE'RE HEADED: 2023 GOALS

We desire every young man in Lake Highlands growing up without a father-figure at home to fulfill their potential. To that end, in 2023 we will expand access to Forerunner's programs by committing to:

LAUNCH NEW MENTORING INITIATIVES WITHIN SCHOOLS

Elementary: weekly before-school mentoring activities for boys Junior High & High School: Weekly mentoring talks and guest speakers

2 NEW AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM SITES TO SERVE 75 MORE BOYS

Begin to serve Forest Meadow Junior High feeder schools

SUPPORT 100 MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Recruit and train mentors who will show up, build up, and share Christ with young men in Lake Highlands

COACHING STORY

Forerunner is a unique place that God uses every day to change the lives of boys, moms, volunteers, and staff. As a coach, I get the privilege of seeing that on a daily basis. I get to watch God move in small, tiny details just as much as He does in the big, miraculous breakthroughs. I think people often think that as staff, we're the ones changing lives, and while I hope and pray that's true, these boys are the ones changing lives. I get to come into the presence of Jesus through these boys every day. They worship in the purest form. They pray with compassionate hearts. They love others boldly. They have a righteous, childlike faith. They know God and walk with Him.

When I think of impact, I think of when I asked the boys to write down a list of everything they wanted to pray for. Together they listed things like: stop the war in Ukraine, stop race-based hate, make the world a better place, help people in need, for God to protect us from sin, be more kind, read the Bible more, to love people more. This list showed me that they are truly men after God's own heart. They see injustice and pain in this world, most of them even go through it themselves, and yet they still desire what God desires. They will be the ones who make global changes. They will be the ones to bring peace and comfort to their communities. They will be the ones who show others who Jesus is. They're already doing it.



"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad".

MATTHEW 5:3-11

These boys are the blessed world changers, the salt of the earth, the light of the world. Their impact will last for generations and generations to come.

I'm in my second year as a coach at Forerunner and it truly doesn't get better than this. There has never once been a doubt in my mind that God is living and active in this organization. To fight for the Kingdom of God with a family that's got your back no matter what is unlike anything this world could bring. There is nothing better than walking into the room and having the boys run up to give you a hug or tell you hello. Their love will never fail to melt me. It's the love of God in them that changes my heart and lets me see Him as a good Father, a faithful friend, and a merciful Savior. They make me better. I have given these boys everything that I have but I have gained more than I have ever given. I have taught them to look for the God who is always with them and have seen them meet Him. I have told them stories from the Bible and have seen them wide-eyed at what God has done. I have prayed with them and seen what comes after "amen". We have prayed together, worshiped together, cried together, played together, and been absolute goofs together. We've gone through it all. In my lack, the Holy Spirit has always moved in ways that I couldn't. To see them grow into who they are and who they are becoming is a gift. We've got a million little miracles running around at Forerunner in the form of young men. They have my whole heart and I'm blessed beyond measure to be a part of their lives. They are all going to change the world for the glory of God.

CAITLYN MOUDY COACH SINCE AUGUST 2021



I am very thankful for what each person does at Forerunner. Everyone here truly embodies the Father's heart for His children, and the staff and volunteers are unselfish in the way they minister to these young men of God. I am encouraged that these young men can learn about Jesus in a safe and fun environment, and this place has made a great impact on my life. I have been blessed to see how this ministry functions.

I chose to volunteer with Forerunner because my close friend, Joel McMillan, has worked with the ministry as a coach for years now, and he has only had great things to say about Forerunner. I have seen it positively affect his life and make him a stronger man. It seemed that God opened the door for me to serve here at Forerunner during this season.

I have learned so much while volunteering at Forerunner. I would say God has been revealing His heart for children to me, especially young men of God. He has been cultivating the Father's heart within me. I am realizing how valuable it is for young men to have positive male role models and how it shapes their character. Having mentors helps these boys discover their true potential, and sets them on the path to achieve their destiny.

My time at Forerunner has also highlighted the importance of patience and showing patience to these young men.

"Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 15:5-6 NKJV)

"HAVING MENTORS HELPS THESE BOYS DISCOVER THEIR TRUE POTENTIAL, AND SETS THEM ON THE PATH TO ACHIEVE THEIR DESTINY."

Forerunner has stretched me by broadening my perspective and understanding in areas I had never known or experienced. I am thankful for God allowing me to have this time at such a great place. I am grateful for everyone at Forerunner and for these boys who are becoming men of God through this program. Forerunner is truly increasing the Kingdom of God through their work.

DANIEL BRUFF

VOLUNTEER TUTOR SINCE AUGUST 2022



Have you ever lost yourself in the wilderness? Ventured away from all the noise of a city, the demanding attention of phones and screens, the ruthless hurry of day-to-day life?

Getting away from that and getting lost became a reality for a week for five of our high school men this year as they trudged through the trails on our Manhood Rite of Passage.

A way we initiate our high school men into manhood after they graduate is through getting in the outdoors and embracing an environment they've maybe never navigated before. This a reflection that as they step into manhood and a new chapter of their lives, they are trudging through new territory and being forerunners for their future families.

We drove 15+ hours to Pagosa Springs, CO where we partnered with an incredible organization named Outdoor Adventures that allowed our Forerunners to lose themselves in the wilderness to find their heart as men of God. On the trip, they endured uncontrollable circumstances brought forth by the mountains like heavy rain, altitude, and more, but it only produced perseverance. It built character. It filled them with the hope that they are surrounded

by, "a great cloud of witnesses" as mentioned in scripture - mentors and brothers who will walk with them through any circumstance life throws at them. To know they can overcome difficulty and hardship. To know they are not alone. To know when it feels like they are in the dark of life, they have men in their corner to illuminate the love of Jesus and their identity as forerunners: to prepare and make a

"THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE SURROUNDED BY SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES, LET US ALSO LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT, AND SIN WHICH CLINGS SO CLOSELY, AND LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US," HEBREWS 12:1 ESV

way in the midst of the unknown, in the wilderness, in the areas that may bring them uncertainty or fear. You really had to be there and experience it. Carrying 40lb. packs to set up basecamp, helping one another navigate the rain and the thick mud, opening up about struggles, and praying for each other around the fire.

After spending days camping in a valley, we had the opportunity to spend time at some hot springs to wind down from the week. With this opportunity came a moment for these men to make a public declaration of their faith in response to what God

did in their hearts all week through getting baptized, and four of our Forerunners got baptized on the trip! They each went forward from this trip walking greater into Jesus' light and love, making a statement with each and every single step they take forward, understanding that they matter and that what they do has an impact on something greater than just themselves.

Take heart. Be encouraged. You who are reading this may feel like you have had little impact on these men, but you are a champion. Our prayers are being answered in this ministry. Men are submitting themselves to the hands of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. No matter how you've sown into this ministry, know that these are the lives seeing a potential fulfilled. Thank you for championing our Forerunners and this generation.

OSCAR ORTIZ
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR





Outdoor Adventures played a tremendous role in creating a space for "iron to sharpen iron" and for unity to be formed amongst our guys. We got to see our older and more mature Forerunners be tested and be called higher into their identity as men of God. We saw vulnerability displayed in the sharing of testimony and struggle. We saw our young men open up and express themselves emotionally as they let themselves be seen and fully known - no walls up. We saw burdens be laid down at the feet of Jesus in trusting that His grace was sufficient. We saw a band of brothers rally around one another, encouraging one another amidst adversity and trial. We saw personal error be owned and not be used to be condemn or shame but rather fuel for encouragement and humility. We saw our young men be poured into and affirmed in their identity and sonship - that they are loved by a Heavenly Father and carry potential as his children.

ANDREW WILLIAMSON
COMMUNITY COORDINATOR



On April 27, Forerunner started a new event that we plan to make part of our ministry moving forward. We gathered a group of 20 men in the community for a dinner to celebrate our graduating Forerunners as they ventured off into the next chapter of their lives.

We bought them all suits, broke bread together at RM 12:20 Bistro, presented them with personal bibles, and shared the fears and hopes we all experienced in becoming men ourselves.

One of our longest-standing forerunners stood up and shared what excites him most about becoming a man.

"I know that I don't have to figure this out on my own. God has supported me in the journey with mentors, and will continue to do so. And some day soon I will have the privilege of being that support for others as well."

In a few sentences, he summed up what we want every young man in Lake Highlands to know. "It is not good for man to be alone."

God reveals Himself in relationship. Relationships are not only a reflection of His care and support for us, they are where we find our purpose. To live and make sacrifices for others. To leave a legacy. One day these young men will be the husbands, fathers, and leaders on the other side of the table, there to celebrate and welcome others into the company of men.

STEPHEN MURRAY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





THE FIRST FIVE INDUCTED INTO

The Company of Men



Sir Jason Mosley



Bryson Randle



Jeuann Payton



Chitivias Anthony



Jamari Maloy

MEET ADAM + CHITIVIAS



This is Adam and his mentee Chitivius. They got matched back in 2015. They have been walking together for 7 years now. This year, Chitivius graduated high school and stepped into a new chapter of his life. Into a new chapter of manhood. What would have happened if Adam didn't step in as his mentor? What would his life look like today? We don't know the answers to that, but what we do know is this: a man chose to step into his life and show up every day. That man said yes to showing up the next day, and the next day, and the next day. What became days turned into months and has now been years of walking together. Overcoming obstacles together. Learning what it looks like to be a man of God together. Walking out in responsibility, humility, integrity, leadership, and respect together.

We believe mentors have the unique opportunity to shift the narratives that fatherless boys in our community may believe. To combat and kick out

INDUCTED INTO THE COMPANY OF MEN



the lies that men don't stick around, that they aren't worthy of love and attention, that they will always be alone and live up to nothing. The boys we serve in our programs and those yet to be served in Lake Highlands are world changers and historymakers, and we long to see them all matched with mentors. To see them in relationships that produce confidence in them that carries on to their generation. That their future children and families will know they don't have to ever do life alone. Thanks to men like Adam, young men and boys in our community like Chitivius have gotten to discover their potential. To discover that they are not alone and have someone who is committed to them for the long haul. To discover that this is just the beginning of God fulfilling plans for their lives and discovering what they were made for. May this be the fruit and more for every mentor and his relationship with his mentee. May this be the first five of many grafted into the Company of Men.

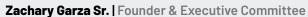
OSCAR ORTIZ

OUR 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.



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.



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.

John Herrington | Marketing Committee

VP Client Services, Tegan Digital

I believe in Forerunner because relationships change lives. It's listening, encouraging, guiding, loving, but most of all, being present. We're called to show up — and that's enough. Life can be overwhelming and having someone in your corner can lead to real transformation. I know that relationships change lives because Jesus changed mine.

Janal Reid | Government Committee

Owner, Serveway Heating and Air Conditioning, LLC

I love Forerunner because its passion is to raise up the next generation of leaders by setting them on a firm foundation with God at the center. There are a lot of options rallying for the youth's attention and I love that Forerunner is providing a space that is safe for them to stumble, uplifting in spirit, passionate about education, and filling a gap of fatherlessness.





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 **20 people** within our programs: **18 Forerunners, one Forerunner Mom, and one of our K-6 coaches.**

Jordan Giron Hector Patino Zmaryion Harrel Caitlyn Moudy Lincoln Davis LaTiffany Dunn Marquis Grant Demarius Stiles Humphrey Ochieng David Azzez **Demerin Hawkins** Derrick Golette Jr. Micah Sallie **Eric Green** Greg Henderson Silent Hmung Daniel Azeez Javion Ransom Sir Jason Mosley **King Barron**

