

ITED officers mentor Fort Bliss youth

MEME STYLES, ITED

The distinctive needs of military youth have changed over the last decade. Most Fort Bliss youth face the daily reality of a high-tempo Army lifestyle accompanied with the communication hardships that come with a deployed parent.

Understanding this need for more face-to-face honest communication, test officers with the Integrated Test and Evaluation Directorate - along with their fraternity - have launched a mentorship program to help develop young males ages 12 and older.

Called "Project Alpha" and "Go to High School/Go to College," the curricula are sponsored by the El Paso Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and have begun at the Fort Bliss Milam Youth Center.

Maj. Johnnie Walker, local chapter president, has seen positive results of teens involved in the curriculum. He believes the program will go a long way toward improved focus and increasing confidence.

"It is our charge as men of Alpha to develop leaders," Walker said. "We appreciate the opportunity to leverage our skills and experiences in partnership with Fort Bliss and the Milam Youth Center to coach young men to make informed life decisions pertaining to education and social responsibilities."

"Project Alpha" is a collaboration between the Alpha Phi Alpha and the March of Dimes. With special parental consent for the participating youth, the curriculum seeks to educate participants on issues of responsibility, relationships, teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. The "Go to High School/Go to College" program educates participants about strategies to finish high school successfully and ultimately to graduate from college.

"We look forward to building a long-term partnership with Fort Bliss and the various youth centers," Walker said. "We look even further to building partnerships with other organizations to continue to help develop young adults into productive and responsible citizens and leaders."

Those participating in the mentorship program are all Alpha Men of the El Paso's Theta Delta Lambda Alumni Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., to include Integrated Test and Evaluation Directorate test officers Maj. Johnnie Walker, Chief Eric Brown and Glacier Technologies contractor lead Myron Rone.

For more information about Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Theta Delta Lambda chapter's programs, projects and initiatives, visit the website at www.TDLI906.org or their page on Facebook or email the program committee chairman at eric.brown3579@gmail.com.

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