

**Recommendation to Consider Support for Two Minority Organizations
submitted by Bruce Peterson, Janie Plank and Don Pierson
First Parish Church in Weston
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Brief Background

With encouragement by the Standing Committee in November 2020, we assembled a group of 11 people to brainstorm about ways for First Parish to help minority owned businesses and organizations. The brainstorming group included representatives of the minority community in Boston and investment experts. The group identified seven organizations as resources: Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA), Black Mass Coalition, The Boston Foundation, Boston Ujima Project, Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corp. (JPNDC), King Center for Economic Justice, and the UU Urban Ministry. In the course of gaining familiarity with these resources, we identified many organizations that are worthy of support. We also learned that several new organizations, including: Ariel Investments, Black Market Nubian Square Incubator, the Commonwealth Racial Equity and Social Justice Fund, GK Fund, and Stories in Place Vimeo, are raising significant funds to support small businesses owned by people of color, especially those harmed by the pandemic.

At this point, we are nominating two organizations for consideration by First Parish. Both focus on youth development and rely entirely on unpaid, volunteer staff. Three independent references have vouched for the authenticity of these organizations accomplishing transformational work with youth. Additional organizations worthy of support are listed on a separate page.

Boston Teen Police Academy

The Boston Teen Police Academy was founded in July 2010 by Boston police officers William Baxter and Darryl Owens. Owens' personal history figures prominently in the understanding of the need for the BTPA. When he was a youth and living in an urban neighborhood, Owens witnessed a violent murder of a family member. Owens chose the path of law enforcement but in retrospect realizes how easily he could have taken a very different and negative route to adulthood. The Boston Teen Police Academy was developed to be "here to serve" as a viable and living role model that embodies leadership, trust and community as an alternative path out of the cycle of challenges urban youths face.

Darryl Owens spoke at First Parish during the February 28 10:30 AM service.

No Books No Ball

Tony Richards Sr, lifelong Dorchester resident, is the founder and the Program Director of the non-profit *No Books No Ball* (NBNB) which provides support to at-risk city kids by connecting them with mentors while also playing basketball. These mentors teach their mentees the importance of academics by holding them accountable academically so that they are eligible to continue to play basketball. While Richards places a strong emphasis on keeping up in the classroom, he also strives to help children and adolescents develop social skills and self-confidence. Cooperate, be creative, keep an open mind, accept responsibility and have concern for others are fundamental maxims of NBNB. Tony provides mentorship opportunities as well, the chance to participate in community service projects, and above all, gives them a safe place to play. Richards credits the mentors in his life for inspiring him to create this impactful program.

Tony Richards spoke at First Parish during the March 7 10:30 AM service.

Go to the First Parish website to view these and other recorded services, and also discover the many programs at the First Parish Church in Weston. <https://firstparishweston.org>