

No Books No Ball

Overview

Tony Richards Sr., a lifelong Dorchester resident, is the Executive Director and founder of No Books No Ball (NBNB), since its inception in 1991. Tony wanted a place for his son to play, learn and grow in a safe environment. NBNB is a non-profit that is run and staffed entirely by volunteers and free to participants. Today NBNB 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. Progress reports need to be submitted quarterly and if their academics are faltering, they are not allowed to participate in clinics, teams etc. NBNB serves boys and girls ages 6- 16, and in an average school year there are approximately 350 participants. The program encourages all students to graduate from high school and, long-term, to attend college. Some students have ultimately used their athletic prowess to get college scholarships. While Richards places a strong emphasis on keeping up in the classroom, he also strives to help children and adolescents develop self-confidence and social skills. Cooperate, be creative, keep an open mind, accept responsibility and have concern for others are fundamental maxims of NBNB. In recent years, they have instituted a reading/literacy program for the younger children with assigned homework etc. to again stress academics and responsibility. Tony runs some programs in the summer months including taking promising student-athletes to a college or university to participate in a week-long basketball camp (ex. Georgetown). Tony tries to organize outings and gatherings to mentor the older teenagers and open their eyes to opportunities that could be in their future if they work hard and apply themselves academically. Tony also organizes community service projects and food drives to “give back” and ultimately better the surrounding community. Richards credits the mentors in his life for inspiring him to create this impactful program.

Financial

NBNB runs on a “shoestring budget” according to Tony. Their annual revenues are \$30,000. Their expenses go towards office costs, rental space at a local school for gyms and the literacy program, program costs, supplies, travel (summer basketball camp) and uniforms.

Existing Funding

NBNB is supported by individuals, families and local businesses. There are no large financial institutions or foundations helping them out. The largest funding they receive is approximately \$5000/yr. from the “Mass Convention Center” to help fund the summer basketball camp/program.

Suggested Donation

We recommend a \$5000 donation to NBNB which would primarily be used to fund books/reading supplies etc. for their literacy program which continues to grow and they find it hard to support this growth.