

Community Building Award

Award criteria: The recipient selected in this category has made significant contributions toward building a sense of unity among Ohio citizens. The recipient has demonstrated the ability to build safer communities through various activities and programs that help to revitalize areas and make our communities a more wholesome and desirable place for living, learning and loving. The recipient has used Dr. King's vision of nonviolent social change in his efforts to successfully bring people from diverse backgrounds together in order to build a better community.



Master Sgt. Antonia Anderson
Columbus

Master Sgt. Antonia “Tony” Anderson served as director of educational activities for Alpha Rho Lambda, the Columbus alumni chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., for two years. He oversaw the fraternity’s nationally mandated community outreach mentoring programs which included voter education, youth leadership initiatives, and the promotion of high school and college education.

Anderson’s projects included leading “Project Alpha,” a youth development seminar targeting male teens. He spearheaded instruction regarding male responsibility in relationships, the impact of sexual messages through social media and the importance of making appropriate choices. Other topics included teen pregnancy and STD prevention as well as drug and alcohol

abuse prevention. He reached out to local organizations to obtain materials and speakers.

According to his nominator, “Parents in the community were so impressed with ‘Project Alpha’ ... they inundated him with phone calls to get their sons into the program.”

Anderson twice led special programming at the Central Ohio Historically Black College University Fair, resulting in huge participation and attendance, according to his nominator. To promote Alpha Phi Alpha’s youth development programs at the fair, Anderson donated two of his Ohio State football tickets to be given away at the fair. In addition, he led a seminar for teens and parents about the importance of choosing a college major.

Further displaying his passion for youth development, Anderson collaborated with leaders of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and twice served as a mentor and group leader during the sorority’s six-month youth male development program named EMBODI, which stands for Empowering Males to Build Opportunities for Developing Independence. He instructed more than 30 group members on various leadership topics ranging from self-esteem, self-confidence, dress and appearance, and the importance of education and also led the mentees during a community service program by serving food and providing clothing to the needy. In addition, local school officials asked Anderson to read to 25 elementary school students, and he discussed the importance of healthy choices and nutrition to more than 30 teens at a community outreach event.

In his professional life, Anderson is an Air Force military serviceman, currently serving in Columbus at the Defense Supply Center, which is part of the U.S. Department of Defense’s Defense Logistics Agency. Anderson will transition from the Air Force on Feb. 1, 2015, after 23 years of honorable and dedicated service. According to his nominator, “He is a shining example of the Air Force’s core values of integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do.”