

# BEYOND THE BALL

## MEMPHIS ATHLETIC MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

### From gangs to grads

In May, four unlikely students walked across the stage to receive their high school diplomas. Each has been in trouble at home, at school and in the community. All have been kicked out of their neighborhood schools and had confrontations with Memphis police.

Enter into their lives the A-Team, a new MAM ministry initiative, headed by Detric Golden. The mission is to take students assigned to Northwest Prep Academy, a year-round alternative school, from gangs to grads.

"Northwest Prep is full of kids that most people would say are hopeless. With guidance, A-team members are now setting positive life goals and working towards those goals," said Detric. "You wouldn't believe that these kids have been kicked out of school. They are focused. They even love to talk about God."

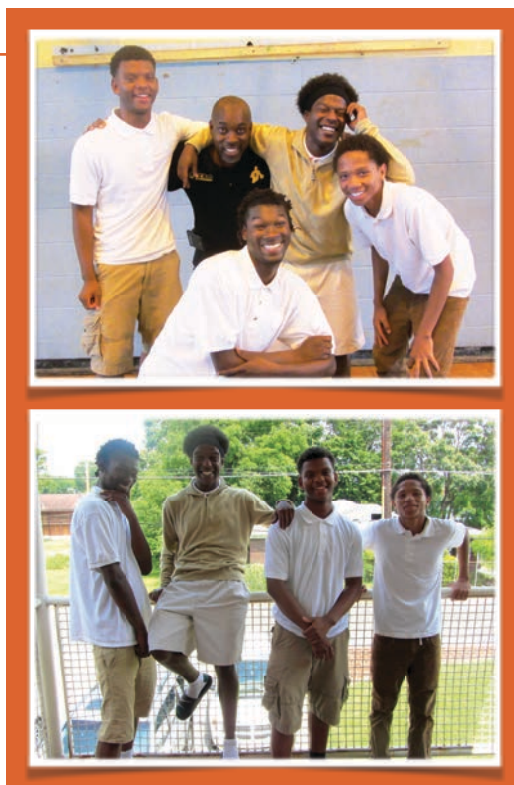
Detric is at Northwest Prep every day using sports to connect with students. As a former Memphis Tiger basketball player who had the option to go to the NBA, Detric is cool to hang out with and uses his "coolness" to get students involved in academics, Bible studies and life skills training as members of the A-team.

Detric only allows 20 teens to be on the A-team at one time, so that he can better engage in disciple-making with each child. There are three A-team graduations per year; the traditional time in May, and in July and December. As students finish high school, they graduate from the A-Team, leaving openings for others to join.

Detric uses a ranking system similar to gang hierarchy to assign each team member a role. Ranks such as recruits, foot soldiers, enforcers, officers and lieutenants have different responsibilities. To join the A-team, a student has to be recommended by a current member. Officers and/or lieutenants talk with prospects and if approved, they are on probation, proving themselves by having respect for teachers, no truancy, not getting into trouble, etc.

"Probation can be a struggle for students, especially if they already are having trouble with authority figures," said Detric. "But, for many, this is the point where they begin to turn their lives around."

For more info about the A-team program and how you can get involved, go to [www.ateammemphis.org](http://www.ateammemphis.org).



# MAM Insights from the President: Everyone needs help

As I spend time with my 11-year-old son Enoch, I reflect on words I have told him over and over again, "Everyone needs help." Words that I need to remember, too. As imperfect humans, we all need each other's support. When Enoch sees his need for me to help him, he models helping and learns to serve others. Helping each other is what I have observed with Detric Golden and his A-team members.



The A-team program at Northwest Prep, our city's alternative school, is a new ministry initiative of MAM. I've known and worked with Detric for over six years. I have seen his heart for our city's youth, especially the kids who no one wants to help, the kids who are rough and scarred by life, the kids who have made life-changing mistakes.

Every time I have been around Detric's A-team students, I am encouraged. I am encouraged by Terry, LaCavis, and by De'Xavior and Raheem. In spite of being hurt, angry, fearful and lonely, these four young men and 16 other teens are becoming positive influencers and leaders at Northwest Prep. And they are helping each other.

I believe that MAM's A-team program will empower these troubled teens to change the course of their lives. But the reality is that these kids are changing me. I am broken over the hurts and struggles these kids endure, but the joy they bring into my life outdoes the sadness. I have a richer Christ-centered life when I let these kids into my life; I help them, they help me and God helps all of us.

I am asking you the question: What will you do to help one child in our city? Will you give time, talent or treasure? I promise you will be forever changed if you ask God to help you serve these amazing kids. You can contact Detric Golden at [golden@ateammemphis.org](mailto:golden@ateammemphis.org), if you want to help these kids and begin changing your own life.

Randy



*"And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward." Matthew 10:42*

## Volunteers build a better MAM

We want to thank all the volunteer groups that have served MAM since the beginning of this year. Whether working on the golf course or working with our kids, our volunteers are vital in helping us positively influence our youth, their families and our city.

### Golf Course Maintenance

TruGreen

Medtronic, Inc.

Bellevue Baptist Church

Christ in Youth Ministry, Joplin, Missouri

24:7 Ministry with Parkview Church, Iowa

United Way Day of Caring

### Spring Break Groups

Fellowship Northwest Arkansas

### Homework Help

Germantown Presbyterian Church

Howard University, Washington, D.C.

The Collegiate School of Memphis

### Special Events

Junior League of Memphis

Island Community Church

New Memphis Institute



## Meet a #MAMkid: Darryl Faciane



- I am 14 years old and will be a freshman at Soulsville Charter School.
- I go to Olivet Fellowship Baptist Church.
- I started playing basketball at MAM when I was six; I switched to the golf program at eight, but I still play basketball on my school team.
- Coach Vince teaches me golf with life lessons. He says to “keep my eyes on the ball, stay focused on the task, and then look up to see the outcome.”
- My most fun golf story is playing with my mom. She picked the wrong golf club and hit a ball in the water four times. I told her to use a four iron, but she used her driver instead. But she is a very good putter!
- My personal heroes are Stephen Curry because he is humble and Drew Brees because he is family-oriented.
- My favorite place to visit is to see my dad in New Orleans. We like to eat crab cakes, beignets, and shrimp po'boys. We have also been to see the Saints play.
- People might be surprised to know that I used to play the trombone, trumpet, drums and piano.
- My goal for the future is to learn how to fly helicopters in the military.

## Did you know?

We serve an average of 750 youth daily at eight centers. Of these 750 youth, 250 are involved in mentoring relationships through a Youth Leadership Team (small discipleship group).

Pray that the power of the Gospel will continue to be life-changing to MAM youth.

Pray that our youth know that they are loved unconditionally, that they are not alone in dealing with day-to-day challenges, and that they matter.



## Off the court

### Germantown Presbyterian Church book fair

In April, Germantown Presbyterian Church hosted a Scholastic Book Fair to raise money for MAM's literacy program. Purchases from church members raised \$2,900 for MAM's reading program. The book fair also provided 90 MAM youth with a book to take home. These boys and girls of all ages visited the book fair at the church, were treated to pizza and shopped the fair to pick out their own books to keep.



GPC's relationship with MAM began three years ago when church members started regularly volunteering with our academic program at MAM Olivet. Now their involvement with MAM has become a church-wide affair.

“Becoming involved with MAM has given our church a larger sense of community,” said Carolee Carlin, GPC member and book fair organizer. “Our members have fallen in love with MAM's mission, its staff and these precious children. The book fair was simply another way to help these children with their reading.”



**THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN OUR MISSION!** Each contribution makes a difference.

To donate by credit/debit card, go to [www.mamsports.org/give](http://www.mamsports.org/give).

You can make a one-time donation or set up a recurring monthly gift.

To donate by cash or check, complete the form below and mail your gift to 2107 Ball Road, Memphis, TN. 38114.

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