**YOUTH SERVES ON THE 17th ANNUAL ARISE DETROIT! NEIGHBORHOODS DAY**

By Mariam Kebe

ARISE Detroit’s annual Neighborhoods Day was filled with excitement with scores of community improvement events, hosted by more than 150 churches, block clubs and community groups on Saturday, Aug. 5. The events brought the community together to build better and safer neighborhoods for all Detroiters.

Young Detroiters were a big part of the day, participating in beautification projects and sport activities.

Here’s a look at a few of them:

**HOLLYWOOD GOLF TOURNAMENT AT ROUGE PARK**

For the past 40 years, Detroit **native Selina Johnson,** director of Hollywood Golf Institute, has been blessing the city with her value-added youth golf program. She began her program to give the youth of metro Detroit an opportunity to expand and develop life skills and, to help shape them to be independent, well-rounded individuals. Not only does she coach these children about the art and skills of golf, but she also educates them and instills in them problem solving skills, abstract thinking and more.

During Neighborhoods Day , the team was at Rouge Park in northwest Detroit, competing in a friendly golf match to enhance their skills and earn medals for the winners.

“Golf is a business in America, and these children offer a diversity in this sport,” Johnson said. “Many have pigeonholed a lot of players like us (African Americans) into sports like basketball and football, but we can do more.”

Hollywood Golf has guided than 4,000 youngsters, from seven to 17 years of age, throughout metro Detroit and Johnson is working to see that the program continues to thrive in the years ahead.

“This program has not only been rewarding for my children years ago, but it also has had a significant effect on my grandchildren now,” said Detroiter JoEster Bursie. “They travel by themselves and have learned how to become independent, how to problem-solve, and [program directors] have taught them etiquette skills. All these children need is at least one person to support them.”

**YOUNG MEN-N-MOTION; BEAUTIFICATION FAIR-**

**Minnie Davis**, the director of Young Men-N-Motion, has done it all for Detroit. For years, she has participated in community service activities like Neighborhoods Day, hosting city clean ups, offering resources for mental health, providing housing to those that need it, and spreading the importance of nutrition and oral health.

She said growing up in Detroit taught her how essential it is to give back to her community. While raising herchildren, she also became an adoptive and foster mother. She helped raise many young men, which then gave her the inspiration in 1999 to start the non-profit organization, Young Men-N-Motion.

The organization’s purpose is build success-driven young men.

“I especially wanted an opportunity to give these young men a place to keep them out of trouble and out the streets, " Davis said.

During Neighborhoods Day at the Greg Mathis Center on Greenfield in northwest Detroit, her organization helped put together a beautification fair offering free resources. Michigan State University's Extension Program distributed information pamphlets highlighting the educational and mental health services they provide. Delta Dental Foundation handed out oral care products and made sure to highlight the importance of youth taking care of their bodies. Leaders from around the city also came out and helped give out free clothing.. This event was all about “Knowing your Neighbors” and being of service to others.

“I’ve learned how to be more social, and this program is helping me transition into adulthood," said Quinton Allen, 16, an Oak Park student.

Supporters said the program has offered many young men opportunities to elevate themselves to the next level, helping them figure out life after high school, providing job opportunities and other life enhancing experiences.

“My mom connected me to Ms. Davis, and I couldn’t be more grateful,” said Craig Ellis, 24. “I encourage all young men, ages 11-26, to come join. We can help you in more ways than you can imagine." .

**MARTIAL ARTS AND CLEANP AT ALKEBU-LAN VILLAGE**

 **“It takes a Village to Raise a Child”**

Located on Harper near Van Dyke on Detroit’s east side, Alkebu-lan Village was established by Detroit native **Marvis Cofield** in 1978. As founder and CEO of the martial arts organization, Cofield has been teaching, coaching, and educating youth and adults from all ages and social classes on the artistry of martial arts. Alkebu-Lan-Village is a place where people come, to not only get physically strong but also mentally, and spiritually fortified. Members participate in community based, recreation based, academic based, and faith-based practices.

During Neighborhoods Day, the organization held a cleanup and an open martial arts demonstration class. Organizers said the event aimed to highlight the arduous work that needs to be done within the four walls of the facility - as well as outside of it. The youth and adults work together on the cleanup, leaving the area better than they found it. Whether they are doing a city clean-up, learning how to create and run a business, helping build a house, participating in community service events, participants said Alkebu-lan organization exemplifies the true spirit of being of service to others.

“This program and programs like this help heal ourselves from the pain and trauma from the ways of the world- it teaches self-respect, self- discipline, self-control, and lastly self-defense, ” said, *Quinton Harven, 24. “*Many people grow up in unstable living conditions and unfortunate situations. It is up to those that have something to give to get up and offer their services.

When asked to give one piece of advice Director, Marvis Cofield simply stated, “Don’t look to be served, look to serve.”

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