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Highfields Invites Local Celebrity Speakers to Campus to Celebrate Black History Month

Onondaga, Michigan – February 16, 2016 – Highfields proudly celebrates Black History Month every year by inviting key speakers to the Onondaga Campus to motivate residential youth. This year, two of the speakers are former Highfields’ employees who have become very successful individuals: World Champion Powerlifter, Eric Jones, and Varsity Basketball Coach at J.W. Sexton High School, Carlton Valentine.

Jones is now the number one powerlifter in the world and is also a Lieutenant at Michigan Department of Corrections. He worked at Highfields as a Residential Counselor for 6 years, and his passion is motivating underprivileged youth.

“I take being a role model very, very seriously,” said Jones. “That’s part of the reason I do what I do as far as powerlifting. It’s not so much for me... It’s to inspire young people to achieve and for them to realize that they can do things that I can do.”

Valentine currently coaches Varsity Basketball at J.W. Sexton High School. He worked at Highfields for 13 years as a Residential Counselor. He has two sons, one of whom is Denzel Valentine, a player on the Michigan State Basketball team. Valentine spoke passionately to the students about his upbringing and how important it is to make the right choices in life.

Highfields’ CEO and President, Brian Philson, is honored to have such amazing speakers on campus.

“It’s important to celebrate Black History Month with our students. We invite these speakers to show them that no matter what your circumstance is in life, you still have the opportunity to turn your life around and do great things.”

Highfields celebrates Black History Month every year with inspirational speakers, off campus events, and a Black History Month dinner at the end of the month.

Highfields is a nonprofit human services organization serving 10 Michigan counties through its residential treatment facility, community services and counseling programs, and educational services. For more information, please visit www.highfields.org.

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