



RICHMOND CITY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
RICHMOND CITY JUSTICE CENTER
1701 FAIRFIELD WAY
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23223
C.T. WOODY, JR., SHERIFF

PRESS RELEASE

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RCJC TO HOST THE FIFTH 'DANCE OF THEIR OWN' CELEBRATION WITH MALE INMATES AND THEIR DAUGHTERS

This year marks the fifth "Dance of Their Own" hosted by Richmond Sheriff, C.T. Woody, Jr. A Dance of Their Own, sponsored by the local non-profit Girls For A Change*, will provide the opportunity for a half-dozen male inmates to share the afternoon with their daughters.

When: Sunday, March 13, 2016

Time: 12:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Location: Richmond City Justice Center, 1701 Fairfield Way, Richmond

During this event, the fathers, dressed in semi-formal attire, and the daughters, are able to enjoy a meal and live comedy, dance, play games, and participate in other activities aimed at father-daughter bonding and creating special memories, all without the physical barriers that exist between them during visits. Actor, and Richmond native, Chad L. Coleman of AMC's "The Walking Dead" and actor Malik Yoba of Fox's "Empire" will serve as special guests at the dance and hope to provide some encouragement to the men as they work to maintain relationships with their children while incarcerated, and beyond.

A Dance of Their Own aims to mark the beginning of a new, restored, or continued relationship for dads and their daughters. Eligible residents had to be either an active participant in the RCJC's REAL Program or a part of the internal work detail program and then were selected through a voluntary application process.

Men selected to participate in the dance are required to go through over 30 hours of parenting classes sponsored by the Richmond Family and Fatherhood Initiative (RFFI) and facilitated by Clarence Harris. Classes included topics of trauma, co-parenting, resilience, manhood, value systems, understanding child support, community awareness. Speaking on the classes, Harris commented, "I am passionate about the work because if we build better fathers, then we build better neighborhoods, and therefore we have a better community."

The Richmond City Sheriff's Office is responsible for maintaining a secure jail and a safe court system, along with seamless inmate transport and civil process to preserve public safety. We remain committed to performing these duties with unsurpassed integrity and professionalism, with progressive training that incorporates best practices and technology. While partnering with the community, we strive to lower recidivism by bridging the gap from incarceration to reentry into the community by addressing criminogenic needs and barriers most closely related to reoffending.

In addition, they participated in an etiquette class hosted by the Virginia Governor’s Mansion butlers, where they learned everything from table manners, setting a table, escorting someone down the aisle, and tying a tie.

Sheriff Woody shared that “As a parent, I know the importance of the relationship, and it is for that reason that I opened the doors for the dance. Through the fatherhood classes and then the dance, we have been able to see relationships between these fathers and their daughters blossom and strengthen.”

History of ‘A Dance of Their Own’

A Dance of Their Own began when a girls taking part in a Girls For A Change program wrote to Richmond Sheriff C.T. Woody, Jr., asking him if a father-daughter dance could be held inside the jail for girls and their incarcerated fathers so they could have a ‘dance of their own,’ like the one the organization had held publicly for a few years. The girls were inspired by a girl in the program who did not want to attend the public dance without her father, who was incarcerated at the time. Girls For A Change CEO, Angela Patton, said that “when one girl first suggested the idea, some of the girls thought it was crazy, asking ‘who is going to allow a bunch of little girls, dressed up to come inside a jail and dance with their daddies...?’” Sheriff Woody said “yes” to the girls’ request, and the first “Dance of Their Own” was held in the Richmond City Jail in 2012.

About Girls for a Change

*Girls for a Change sponsors ‘A Dance of Their Own,’ as an extension of its Date With Dad weekend in Richmond, Virginia. Their 2016 weekend is comprised of various activities including a dance in the community, a 5K run, and screening of the movie “Daddy Don’t Go.”

For more information on the weekend, visit <http://www.girlsforachange.org/datewithdadweekend>.

~~ Media is invited to come. However, in order to attend, confirmation of attendance must be received by 4 p.m. Thursday, March 10. No exceptions. Additionally, press credentials are required for entry. ~~

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