

Savannah State Representative Speaks on Bullying

Contributed by Qwantel Turner – Black College Wire
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Bullying, a national epidemic, was the center of White House meeting Sonya Howard, the news director at Savannah State University, was chosen by the White House Press Media to attend a meeting in Washington, D.C., addressing the national epidemic of bullying.

The meeting, which was held by President Barack Obama, included parents of children who have been bullied and other candidates selected from the White House Press Media list. Stories of children dying as a result of bullying and parents with adult children who were bullied and have become bullies themselves were highlighted during the meeting.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there are 4,500 suicides caused by bullying yearly.

Researchers believe the lack of adult supervision is to blame. They say bullying can be the result of several factors: abuse at home, lack of discipline, child neglect and low self-esteem.

After hearing several stories of children who had committed suicide because of bullying, Howard decided that "we can't stop bullying, but we can help it."

The "Each One, Reach One, Teach One" network and the website Survey Monkey were established to help stop bullying, she said.

The "Each One, Reach One, Teach One" network establishes foundations for students who lack parental supervision. Learners have a mentor who provides them with constructive advice on where bullying leads, and what they can do to prevent it.

Survey Monkey is a network tool that helps students learn if they are the bully or if they are being bullied. It introduces them to signs of bullying such as aggressiveness, impulsiveness and dominating behaviors.

Howard said that Savannah Chatham County Board of Education recently established a no tolerance policy on bullying. Students who bully another student will be expelled from school and charged by the court for harassment.

"It is truly an eye opening experience where we are headed in today's society. When I was younger, you were picked on for what you wore or where you lived," Howard said. "However, today you are picked on for who you are. This puts students in a corner where they have no choice but to back into pressure."

Qwantel Turner writes for the Tiger's Roar, the student newspaper at Savannah State University, which originally published a version of this article. {moshaloscan}