



# GROWING KINGS

For Immediate Release:  
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## Growing Kings Receives \$10,000 Grant

### Birmingham-based Mentoring Program Receives Grant from Verizon

Birmingham, AL – January 10, 2022 – Growing Kings, an organization that provides mentoring programs to at-risk males in public schools throughout the Birmingham region, is pleased to announce it has received a \$10,000 grant from Verizon. This grant was awarded as part of Verizon’s commitment to strengthening youth and the communities in which they live by advancing social good across Alabama.

Growing Kings, founded in 2009, targets many of the issues plaguing today’s underserved male youth through its school-based enrichment and mentoring program series, Journey of a King. The program has been able to engage over 1,500 boys and young men through its innovative, culturally relevant programming, and has also recorded long-term impact with 100% of the students who have been involved with the Journey of a King program for at least three years.

“Verizon’s contribution to Growing Kings is critical to ensuring that our students are provided with the tools and support needed to improve their academic and behavioral outcomes,” said Executive Director, Marcus D. Carson. “We are grateful for this investment from Verizon; their support directly impacts some of our city’s most vulnerable youth by increasing the protective factors in their life.”

Journey of a King mentoring program engages five hundred, 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade boys and young men every week of the school year, who participate in 1,000 hours of comprehensive mentoring and enrichment sessions. This grant directly supports programming that has been proven to increase academic performance, decrease negative behavioral occurrences, and increase school attendance. Growing Kings’ approach to eradicating disparity gaps in academic achievement and social development skills provide participants with constant encouragement, positive mentoring, and high-quality enrichment.

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#### **About Growing Kings:**

*Growing Kings is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that operates with a mission to encourage and facilitate the critical thinking and positive attitudes of underserved male youth through systemic and targeted enrichment, research, and advocacy. Journey of a King is a school-based mentoring program that engages students as early as the fourth grade and follows them through graduation from high school. The program is provided free of cost to 500 boys and young men in nine different Birmingham City Schools. The program utilizes structured curricula to engage students in hands-on activities and discussion-based sessions that focus on various issues and topics specific to male youth.*