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THE DIGITAL NEWSPAPER



Fraternity Organization of Alpha Phi Alpha

Representation in the School System

The latest local news

----- RUDI NICOLE MCLAURIN

Breaking news "Battered Women Shelters Short- Staffed"

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MCLAURIN

Shelters all across the city are in jeopardy of closing their doors or cutting down on their intake. Vicky Thomas of *There's Hope* women's shelter describes the danger of having very little staff to cover daily operations. "Some days I only have one person to work an entire day and night shift. They may like the extra money, but it does me know good when they have to take a day or two to rest up in order to come back and just work another double."

What are local officials doing about this? Closing the doors to those in need shouldn't be an

I asked a group of men who consisted of recent graduates and those who are now alumni to their alma mater, and asked what field or industry they are entering or currently working in. Very few mentioned education, which is especially common in cities such as Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. There are several schools in the city and surrounding areas that are predominately Black, yet the faculty and staff are primarily White. According to a John Hopkins University study, Black students are 13% more likely to go on to college if they've had a black teacher by their third-grade year. In addition to that, experts say the very few Black male teachers have the best track record of improving academic outcomes and graduation rates.

Why do Black male educators do better in improving our schools? Children naturally are submissive to powerful authority. Men tend to possess a strong presence and an authoritative voice. As a result, there is less resistance and rebellion.

A high school History teacher within the Propel Schools system expresses, "Many of these children are products of broken homes and don't have a father or father figure in the home and they act out." Therefore, having men in the schools who look like these kids and can relate to them culturally bridges the gap.

Considering the disparity and having the facts on schools improving due to representation, there should be some strategizing within the school boards on how to attract more Black educators. There should be things implemented, such as sign-on bonuses or monthly disbursement of school supplies' stipend. Another teacher from the Pittsburgh city schools' district stated, "our salaries don't reflect our responsibilities and the expectations of the school board; if they started reforming that issue that could entice these Black educators to consider entering and staying in our field."

As we know there's budgets for everything, so to implement new ideas cost money and local government may argue that our city doesn't have the funds to budget for incentivized programs for teachers. Yet we claim the children are our future. So why not invest in them? Cost shouldn't be an issue when it comes to the younger generations who may someday be in the same shoes as that History teacher from Propel. What we invest in now could be an even greater return later.

option. This city prides itself on having programs in place such as these that help those in dangerous situations get out. Vicky declares, "Shelters like mine that house about 85% Black women and children seem to be forgotten. There should be routine food deliveries from food banks twice a week, but they only come once simply because I don't have the staff to help do inventory and properly store everything after the driver unloads our shipments." These resources are necessary. Places like these save lives and minimize trauma and casualties.

