

Workshops examine links to manhood

Continued from page 1A

2400 Carmine St., from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The workshop will be offered the second Saturday of each month, from March to November throughout Charlotte. All youth must be accompanied by an adult. The registration fee is \$40 for one adult and one youth ages 10-19. Registration for each additional youth accompanied by the adult is \$18, and adult registrants may register a maximum of five males. The registration fee for an adult not accompanied by a youth is \$25. No on-site registration will be available.

Graham has traveled across the country conducting workshops since 1997, but this is the first in Charlotte. During the sessions, youngsters between

the ages of 10-19 discuss what it means to be a man, the traits of a man and their development, relationships with others, and the importance of spirituality.

"If you ask 100 different men what manhood is, you'll get 100 different answers," Graham said. "How many women you have, how much hair you have on your face, how much bass is in your voice. 'We break down the stereotypes.'"

Once stereotypes are eliminated, workshop attendees then focus on various aspects of manhood, such as the importance of spirituality in defining a man's behavior and relationships with others; the traits a man should exhibit and the development of those traits; dealing with anger, fear, violence and other conflicts, as well as personal development. Graham, who describes manhood as an art, uses

visual displays to illustrate a man, his spirituality, his connection to others, and his behavior, in what is called the "Manhood Model." Graham explained this Manhood Model was created at the beginning of time for all men, but he designed the illustration for the workshops so that it can be easily understood.

"Manhood is unique to each male, but it is a shared experience," said Graham, explaining why one illustration of manhood applies to all men, regardless of race or background.

Graham, who divides his time between Charlotte and Jonesboro, Georgia, is a poet, author and motivational speaker. He says he was inspired to begin the workshops after speaking at a juvenile facility in San Diego, Calif., in 1996. That one experience led to him abandoning his job as a govern-

ment employee, to devote his life to helping others.

"This is my journey," Graham said of his life's mission, which he said was inspired by God. "I didn't choose this journey, but it's where I'm supposed to be." Graham, who is referred to as "Elder" by many young people as a term of respect, talked about the rewards of traveling along this journey.

"I might be in a mall or gas station," Graham said, "when somebody will come up and say, 'Elder Graham, I'm so glad to see you.' He's crying, not ashamed. That's what keeps me strong."

Graham also teaches a Walking the Talk workshop for young females, based on many of the same principles of the workshop for males, but a local workshop has not yet been scheduled.

The registration fee is non-refundable and is due by Feb. 18. Checks or money orders made payable to Walking the

Talk may be mailed to Walking the Talk, P.O. Box 16097, Charlotte, NC 28297-6097.

For more information, call (704) 535-3248, or visit the Walking the Talk website at www.walkingthetalk.net. The workbook "Manhood: A Light from Within," is available at the website, along with other books by Graham.

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Muslims want FBI out of Kenya

INTERNATIONAL PRESS SERVICE


NEW YORK — Muslim leaders have asked President Mwai Kibaki to kick the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation out of Kenya.

They say that Kenya can conduct its own investigations, and doesn't need the help of the FBI, which is monitoring the country as a potential site of terrorist activity.


The group of 58 leaders, writing in a memorandum to Kibaki, also want him to withdraw the Suppression of Terrorism Bill. That bill, they say, could turn Kenya into a police state.

"We see it as a direct insult to our religion and an instrument of harassment," says the memorandum. "Presently many Muslims are arrested then set free after they and their families have been harassed."


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