



We Are Columbia

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor's Basketball Classic to help bring community together

Columbia, SC. – Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin will host the inaugural Mayor's Basketball Classic, a first of its kind tournament for our city featuring teams of teenagers and young adults from across our community competing against and playing with officers from the Columbia Police Department on Friday, May 16 at Greenview Park (6700 David Street) from 6:00-8:00pm. These commingled teams will compete and help foster a new bond of mutual respect and trust that is much needed throughout our community.

The brainchild of former gang member and founder of the Stop the Violence Movement in Columbia, Shuron Malone, the Mayor's Basketball Classic provides an unique opportunity for young people to build a rapport with the officers of the Columbia Police Department.

"This game is a big step for us to unite, promote togetherness and demote violence. Sometimes people look at the police as an adversary. This game will be step in the right direction to open the eyes that the police are people just like any of us," said Shuron Malone.

The effort is part of Mayor Benjamin's vision to create a better path forward for the young, African American males in Columbia. It is presented in conjunction with the 2014 Columbia Black Expo, which will host the Black Male Summit on Saturday, May 17th.

"Our job is to create an environment where every child has the chance to live up to their God-given potential regardless of race, heritage, ethnicity, creed, what social status they belong to or what zip code they were born in," said Mayor Benjamin. "This is an important step in the direction of encouraging true mutual responsibility and we're very excited."

WHAT: The Mayor's Basketball Classic

**WHEN: Friday, May 16th
6-8 p.m.**

**WHERE: Greenview Park
6700 David Street**

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