

100 Black Men help connect students to colleges

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By Elizabeth Cady, Rome News-Tribune, staff writer



Richmond Booth, a football player from Rome High School, signs an interest form for Stillman College. (Contributed photo)

For many students, the only thing standing between high school and college is the know-how on where and how to apply.

In an effort to improve the graduation rate and college attendance of black students in Rome, [100 Black Men of Rome-Northwest Georgia](#) started a Historically Black College and University Tour program.

The program informs black students about the options available after graduation and the steps needed to get into a college or university.

"We take African-American juniors and seniors to HBCUs to let them see college life and help to get them motivated," said Greg Shropshire, president of 100 Black Men of Rome-Northwest Georgia.

The program began in response to the low graduation rate of black students who attend Rome City Schools.

"Last year we were looking at a large number of African-American athletes who for some reason didn't go for college, and instead of blaming anyone, we decided 'lets do something'... it (the HBCU College Tour) was a way we thought we could help," said Shropshire.

During the fall semester, on two separate Saturdays, 27 seniors visited Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Ala., and 31 students to Alabama A&M University in Huntsville, Ala.

"We learned about the difference between colleges and universities, and we learned about different sororities and what time scholarships and grants were due," said Jerjuana Haywood, a Rome High School senior. "I enjoyed it. I'm still looking around, but I have applied to some schools."

In addition to visiting colleges, 100 Black Men of Rome-Northwest Georgia works with parents and students to aid with filling in paperwork for college applications and scholarships.

They also offer PSAT and SAT tutoring to students.

In January, the College Tour has another trip planned to visit a few more schools.

"The goal is to go at the beginning of the year and to coordinate to go during the week to sit in classes and interact with students," said Shropshire. "I feel like it (HBCU College Tour) will be very beneficial to the community as a whole."

100 Black Men of Rome-Northwest Georgia is a non-profit organization and does not charge for any of the services it provides. For more information, visit the group's Web site at <http://100blackmenofrome.org>.