

A Church-based Health Risk Reduction Program

Project FAITH

Fellowship and Instruction Toward Health

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Lavonda Murphy may appear to be an ordinary woman, but she is doing some extraordinary things. Especially when it comes to raising her five girls and being the “Daughters of Mothers Advocate”.

Lavonda Murphy has been serving in the United States Army for the last 21 years and is working toward her retirement in 2021. She has served her country and gained many rewarding experiences along the way. But it is her anticipation of the next chapter of her life that brings her the most joy. She has always had the desire to serve in the community and she proclaimed her work with Daughters of Mothers as a vital part of her journey and next chapter.

When we talked about her next chapter her love and connection to her family and her Daughters of Mothers group permeated through the conversation. There is no doubt about the passion she has around her awakened purpose. She is ready to go out in the world and show daughters and mothers how they connect and what they mean to each other. She said, “I am truly an advocate of women and helping them to understand who they are so that they can put that knowledge into their girls”

Lavonda wants to reach uninformed women to teach them about self-love; what it is and how it should look and feel. As she counts down to the next chapter of her life, she has a vivid blueprint of the service she will provide as a coach to women, daughters, and mothers. Her Facebook group Daughters of Mothers- May We Raise Them is a safe place for support. Lavonda describes her group as a village that “will provide counsel and comfort necessary to raise our little world changers” The mission of her mothers and daughter is a loving helping community where women can come for non-judgmental support. Where they can continuously learn about themselves from others' mistakes and triumphs. She wants women to learn to share. She said, “sharing is so important, nobody wants to be alone, in this group you can ditch the pride, competition, and the jealousy and just share”.

Lavonda’s reason for her passion for her group is her five beautiful daughters, her mom, and her “bonus mom”. She is motivated by the lessons she learned from both mother-figures in her life. She used these gems and nuggets to continue to shape her girls. She remembers not being the best daughter and decided to do her best job as a mom. She wants her girls to know they have a

tribe! She has surrounded them with good people with great energy.

I asked Lavonda what she was looking forward to most about her retirement from the military, and she answered peace of mind to do what she loves which is spending more time with her family. With humility, she stated that her husband had been so supportive for all the years of her being in the military and she was looking forward to giving back that support to make his business Steady Growth Fitness thrive. Her face lit up as she spoke about continuing to help her five daughters with their bath bomb business Murphy’s Love. Her passion around this was a testament to her commitment to her family.

I could not end my interview without asking Lavonda how the recent events have affected her multi-racial family; she took a deep breath before she responded. She explained that living with a biracial family is the reality that she faced with her white husband before they had children. They talked about systemic racism, generational wealth, slavery, and all the intricacies of race. There was no hiding from these realities especially when they planned on having children. And now they talk to their children about who they are as people, not their color. Although she explained to her girls that they are viewed by society as black women, she still struggles with checking the boxes on the application. Her children are in the other category on a form, but at home, they are her daughters born to an Irish descendent white father and a Black mother. She recognizes the importance of raising her girls to be strong women. She plans to help them to create phenomenal lives by teaching them self-love and surround them

with a positive community.

Lavonda Murphy does not want her children to believe that being black is a “strike against them” this is a phrase that is said to many children. She knows that when you are shaping young minds, you must set them up for success. She wants her daughters to know they can have what they desire and not to limit themselves. It is her lessons learned as a daughter and a mother of five girls that she wants to share with other women. Why did God give me five girls?” then she answered by saying, “to show the world five different ways to love”.

Contact Lavonda Murphy:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=daughters%20of%20mothers-may%20we%20raise%20them>

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