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**Date:** April 19, 2005

**To:** **Mayor & City Council**

**From:** **Gerald R. Miller,  
City Manager**

**Subject:** Information Regarding  
Role of Men Academy

**Comments:** Supplemental  
Information for Agenda Item #15



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**Date:** April 19, 2005  
**To:** Gerald R. Miller, City Manager  
**From:** Ronald R. Arias, Director, Department of Health and Human Services /s/  
**For:** Laura Richardson, Councilwoman, 6<sup>th</sup> District  
Tonia Reves Uranaa, Councilwoman, 7th District  
**Subject:** Information Regarding Role of Men Academy

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At your request, here is an outline describing the Role of Men Academy and some general background information on how the program works.

### **Status of the Current Role of Men Academy Collaborative Program**

- The Purpose of the Knight Foundation funded Role of Men Academy (ROMA) Collaborative Program is to enhance the parenting and life skills of fathers of children 0-5 years of age residing in the 90806 (Knight Foundation target area) and parts of 90813 of Long Beach. The Black Infant Health (BIH) Program provides ROMA services throughout the rest of the city.
- Through the ROMA Collaborative, the three organizations: the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) Head Start Program and the Long Beach Community Services Development Corporation (LBCSDC) (known as the Long Beach Community Action Partnership) will work in partnership during the 5 year period to serve more than 600 fathers and their children in the 90806 area through the ROMA basic training and by enhancing the fathers' involvement with their children's educational and socio-emotional well being.
- The LBCSDC is the lead fiscal agent for the collaborative and will assist with social support services, family financial counseling and job development. The DHHS staff manage and coordinate the program and provide recruitment, assessment, basic training, case management, graduation services and follow-up. The LBUSD Head Start program will assist with recruitment, provide father/child(ren) activities, father involvement workshops and assist DHHS with evaluation of outcomes. All three organizations will participate in an oversight advisory committee to the program.
- These comprehensive services are provided by the collaborative partners to the fathers and the families: parenting skills, family economic stability activities, mental health, legal assistance, education, job development outreach, recruitment, assessment, case management, father/child workshops, field trips and reading workshops.

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- After one year in the program, the participating fathers are encouraged to become "alumni" volunteers and mentors to assist the new participants the following year.

**Background:**

- The DHHS ROMA was initiated in 1996 with State Department of Health Services grant through the DHHS Black Infant Health (BIH) Program to help decrease the high rate of infant mortality among African Americans in Long Beach by increasing the positive role of men/fathers in childbirth, childrearing and promoting a healthier family atmosphere.
- Funding for the program has consisted of a combination of various grants including: BIH funds from 1996 through current; California Wellness Foundation from 1999 – 2001; National Center for Strategic Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL) from 2000 – 2003. With the decrease in BIH funds and the termination of other grants, the Long Beach DHHS has utilized core health funds to supplement the program from 2002 through the present and will continue to use health funds until other funding can be identified. The Knight Foundation's five-year funding will assist the DHHS and its partner agencies in maintaining this important program and will be leveraged to seek additional stable funds.
- Since its inception more than 3,000 fathers of African American and other ethnic backgrounds from throughout the city have received services and of these more than 600 have graduated from the basic training and skills enhancement series offered by the program.
- The original curriculum was developed in 1996 by Dr. Alvin Nelson, a DHHS Public Health Physician in partnership with Dr. Michael Connor, a Psychologist from California State University Long Beach. Components for the 20 hours of basic skills training for program participants include: parenting skills, family economic stability activities, mental health and legal assistance, educational referrals, job development assistance. Additional life skills training and assistance are provided through workshops and case management services to the men and their families per assessment of needs.
- Role of Men Staff and professionals from Long Beach City College and other local educational and social services agencies provide the basic training instruction.
- The graduates are inducted into the Proud Fathers of the Hood where they receive case management services for one year and where many men continue to be involved with the program as volunteers by assisting new participants through mentoring and community projects.

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- The ROMA program is separate from Erroll Parker's Father's Program on the Westside that involves volunteer men who work with Olufami Filtz, Director of the LBUSD Truancy Center to provide conflict resolution services to students at Stephens Middle School. Role of Men staff volunteer with Erroll Parker and Olufami Filtz to provide services at Stephens. Also, Erroll Parker is a trainer in the Role of Men basic skills sessions.

**Location of Services:**

- The services that are funded by the Knight Foundation are provided at the DHHS Central Facility Center at MLK Park, at the LBUSD Head Start Centers in 90806, 90813 areas and at the LBCAP main office and alternative school sites located in the 90806 area. Currently, the LBUSD Head Start Program has held Father Involvement workshops at Cabrillo High School and at Stephens Middle School and has included the presentations of the Role of Men Program to recruit eligible Head Start fathers into the ROMA program. The program still recruits men from throughout Long Beach and conducts the basic training sessions at the Central Facility Center at MLK Park.

If you have additional questions, please contact me at extension 84016.

cc: Mayor and Members of the City Council