

Mission Statement

Mentoring A Touch from Above (MATFA) mentors incarcerated and at risk youth to help them become positive, productive young adults by emphasizing accountability and forgiveness and providing life skills.



The Founder

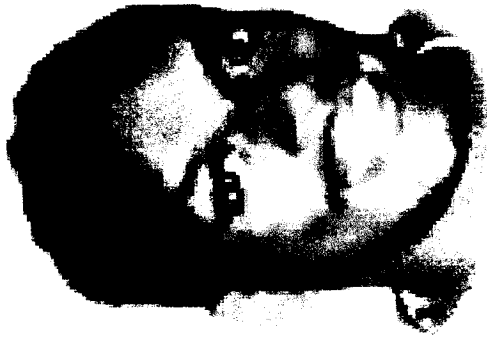


Melanie Washington
MATFA Founder and CEO
Winner of The Points of Light 2001
Presidential Community Service Award

Melanie Washington experienced more than her share of violence. Sexually molested and raped when she was still very young, she saw gang and domestic violence tear apart her family and community. Her mother and sister were murdered at the hands of her stepfather when she was 10 years old. Her husband was murdered three years after their marriage. Then on December 26, 1995, her son was killed by a young gang member he had befriended, taken into his home and tried to help.



The Inspiration



Damon Dowell

*Born on July 13, 1976, and
died on December 26, 1995.*

In examining the backgrounds of the offenders who had murdered her family members, Melanie learned that they had each spent time in the *California Juvenile Justice System*. She resolved to help save others from experiencing the tragedy and grief she had known, and founded ***Mentoring - A Touch From Above (MATFA)*** to work with jailed youth, helping them take responsibility for their actions and then re-enter the community as responsible young men.

After counseling and meeting Melanie, many who showed no remorse at first have faced their crimes, gained understanding of the people they have hurt, and asked their victims for forgiveness.



What we do.

Mentor young men and women who have been incarcerated in the California Juvenile Justice System.

Teach them to take responsibility for their actions and then re-enter the community as responsible young men and women.

Work with at-risk youth in local schools

Provide housing for young people who are re-entering society after being incarcerated.



Who we serve...

(277) Young people ages 13-25 who are incarcerated in the juvenile detention centers and California Youth Authority.

(35) "At-risk" young people in the school districts to help prevent them from going into our juvenile justice division.

Young people to adults who come to our offices in need of counseling during the prevalent times of hardship and loss of a loved one.

MATFA is here to serve those who are lost and hurting. To those who have wronged others, to understand that there is a way to say I'm sorry. They *can* move their lives forward.



Services provided

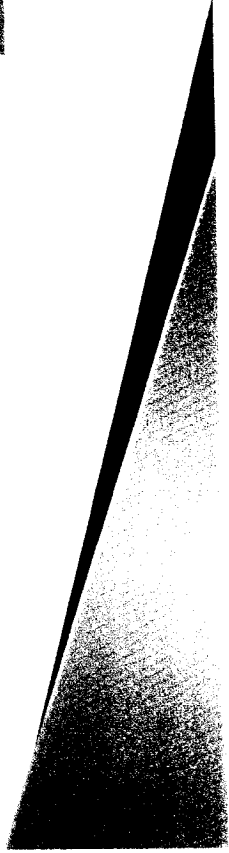
- Job training
- Seminars on topics of need
- Job placement
- Community services for youth
- Resume Writing
- Tutoring
- College application preparation
- Gang awareness
- Retreats for youth
- Family planning
- Youth mentoring within our school system
- Drug and alcohol rehabilitation
- Housing placement (24 hours supervision in all houses.)
- HOPE Study in the Youth Authority and at the United Way Harbor Area building
- Follow-up case work for youth and their families



Reclaimed for Purpose (RFP)

MATFA provides post release support programs for both the youth and their families. Training includes:

- Family Guidance
- Job Preparedness
- Life Skills Training
- Moral Guidance



Facilities served

SRCC in Norwalk, California – 100 young men weekly
Central Juvenile Hall in Los Angeles, California – 27 youth
once a week.
Ventura, California – quarterly mentoring 100 young
men/women.
Hudson Elementary School in Long Beach, California – 50
youth three times a week.

*The MATFA mentors assigned to the prison are able to visit up to 6
different dorms/cottages 2 hours per week OR 1 dorm/cottage 2
hours per month.*



Our House (OH)

Transitional housing for youth being released out of the California Youth Authority. Our House (OH) is located in North Long Beach, California. Our hope is that this structured learning environment will create and build upon the values taught in the RFP Program. The program includes:

Housing for 20 youth, 6 youth to a house only with 24 hour supervision.	Job placement
Moral study	Family counseling
Life skills training	College assistance
Sober living skills	Counseling to family members
Family style environment	Financial planning
Extensive case management for each client.	Regular visits from the parole officers.
	Recidivism is 5% verses the States 55%.



Save Our Children at Risk (SOCAR)

SOCAR is an intervention program now in its seventh year at Long Beach Unified School District. MATFA's aim is to educate children in grades sixth through eight on their choices in life and serious crime. The program began in April of 2002 and is designed for 100 students per year. The program includes:

- Mentoring on premises
- Drug and alcohol effects
- Student life skills
- Music and arts
- Guest speakers
- Field trips
- Gang awareness
- Graduation



Peace in the Storm (PITS)

MATFA founder, Melanie Washington, has had many storms in her life. How she made it through many wonder today. She is always willing and ready to share with those who are hurting and in the midst of life's storms. She shares the "how to's" of not only getting through the storm, but coming out of it strong and filled with peace and forgiveness.



Volunteer opportunities



- Youth Mentors
- Part-Time Office Assistant
- Part-Time Driver
- Resident Managers for Our House 1, 2 and 3

Future Opportunities: social workers, cooks, teachers, doctors, and legal advisors.



Generous Supporters

Rudolph J. and Daphne A. Munzer Foundation
Don Knabe, Los Angeles County Supervisor
Jerry Ski, Vice President, Quality Forming Inc.
The Boeing Company
Long Beach Education Foundation
The City of Long Beach
Several individuals who choose to be anonymous



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MATFA Staff



Melanie Washington
CEO / Founder

Steven B. Chesser
*Corporate Program Consultant
Development*

Judy Seal
*MATFA Program Consultant
Design/Development/Evaluation*

Dorianne Graham
Event Planner

Jessica Hendrix
Bookkeeper





Come, Share Our Vision

Guiding Our Youth

Touching Lives

Restoring Our Future

Forgiving The Past

*Please plan to join us for MATFA's Annual
Dinner Program on October 11, 2010 where
Reverend Cecil Murray will be the 2010
Honoree.*





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MATFA is a non-profit organization with 501(c)3 tax deductible status.