

CRJ/FRE's Fatherhood Engagement Specialist, Da'ee McKnight, shares highlights from the 23rd New England Fathering Conference held in Newport Rhode Island on March 15-17. This year's theme was Parents and Children Thriving Through Change.

The conference was attended by 450 New England DCF, DOC, Community Fatherhood Providers as well as dads who have been a part of fatherhood programs. Keynote speaker, Zoro, the drummer who played for New Edition, and Lenny Kravitz to name a few, spoke about his learning journey through fatherhood. Other keynote speakers included Tangler Gray, Commissioner, OCSE, ACF, HHS, and Ingrid Canady, Executive Director, State of Connecticut Education Resource Center, who wrapped up the conference with an inspiring speech on the need of fathers in the community.

On the second day during the Dad Stories presentation, Devon Kempson, a former client with Family Reentry's Fatherhood Engagement Services program, spoke about how the process works for incarcerated dads to be met and engaged with services while in prison. Devon spoke of his journey, and how Da'ee mentored and helped him navigate through reentry to become stable again as a dad. He also talked about the smooth handoff from Family Reentry to the Village in Hartford, CT. The Village is the community provider for the Greater Hartford Region where Devon returned. Devon is a dedicated father, homeowner, and volunteers to help other incarcerated dads. He remains thankful to Da'ee McKnight and Don Crocker, Father Engagement Supervisor at The Village for Families & Children Greater Hartford.



Captioned in the photos:

Eugene Schneeberg served as Director of the Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the U.S. Department of Justice under the Obama Administration and is the Author of the book, "I Never Met My Father." - <https://inevermetmyfather.com/>

Kenneth "Kenny" Jackson is a co-founder of the original Fresh Start program at Family Reentry.

Patterson "Don" Crocker is a Father Engagement Supervisor at The Village for Families & Children Greater Hartford, CT.

Devon Klempton is a former client with Family Reentry's Fatherhood Engagement Services program.

Da'ee McKnight is a Fatherhood Engagement Specialist for CRJ/FRE.