



#I AM Richmond 911 Tori Hymons

As a middle-school student, Ortoria Hymons had a mentor who understood and empathized with the pressures and obstacles she faced daily. As an adult, her gratefulness for that positive influence in her life has compelled her to give back.

She began working for the Richmond Department of Emergency Communications (DEC) in September 2005, as an emergency communications officer, answering and dispatching 911 calls. "Tori," as she is known at work, is now a training unit assistant supervisor, providing professional development and training for communications officers.

"We do empathize and sympathize with the callers," Tori said. "Some of what they're going through, we've gone through before or might even be going through now. We've experienced loss, and we know what it's like. But we don't always find out the end result of our helping. I felt like I wanted to do more."

She began working with youth by volunteering as a mentor in the Richmond Public School system, the Richmond Police Department's Mirror Me program and at the Peter Paul Development Center. After receiving training through the Virginia Mentoring Partnership Program, she started her own organization, Youth With A Destiny.

Through her organization, she works with Communities in Schools to mentor middle-school girls at Henderson Middle School bi-weekly, as well serving as a youth etiquette consultant and hosting her own events for youth.

"I just want to offer a listening ear, words of encouragement and let them know that I want to see them succeed," Tori said of the youth she works with. "I am able to see a change in their attitude, once they see that you are dedicated and committed to them on your own time and want to improve their situation."

In addition to her work with DEC and Youth With A Destiny, Tori is the mother of an active 7-year-old and working toward a degree in sociology/criminal justice and becoming a mediator for the Virginia Judicial System.



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