Polished Pebbles
Girl's Mentoring Program
THE COLLEGE EDITION
Through Mentoring, We’re Supporting Young Ladies Every Step of Their Journey of Learning!

Our model, Tiffany Mahogany just recently graduated from Chicago State University with a Doctor in Pharmacy degree. She currently works as a Pharmacist at CVS, and she’s also a Polished Pebbles volunteer and mentor!

The work of Polished Pebbles Girls Mentoring Group began in Chicago in 2009, as we realized that girls in the Chicagoland community were in a state of emergency. While so much attention and aid has been given to low-income, urban black boys, adolescent black girls who live in the same neighborhoods have been largely unaddressed. Girls are witnessing and experiencing the same violence in their schools, neighborhoods, and homes as boys are. As a means for survival, girls have adopted a “street code” to protect their reputation and retaliate when they believe their reputation is threatened. Sadly, we now witness that many young women feel that they are only equipped to use fighting and aggression as the primary means to protect their personal respect and as well as to gain status. The community has looked for solutions to assist our girls in overcoming these obstacles. Polished Pebbles Girls Mentoring Program is a vital solution to this crisis.

Polished Pebbles provides girls (7-17 years old) with the opportunity to learn the vital life skill of effective communication. Our program instills confidence in girls to face the challenges of daily life by substituting aggressive forms of communicating and problem solving with new strategies that allow them to gain a solid reputation and respect without retaliating. In partnership with local schools, businesses, and over 300 volunteer mentors, we have helped girls exhibit poise, react responsibly as opposed to retaliating, demonstrate assertiveness vs. aggressiveness, identify the difference between class vs. sassy, and become polished!

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Who is Kelly Fair, MA?
Program Developer and Lead Facilitator

Kelly is the founder of the highly successful Polished Pebbles Girls Mentoring Program (www.facebook.com/polishedpebbles) that has served over 600 girls 7-17 yrs. old to be effective communicators, and career & community conscious leaders! (www.polishedpebbles.com). This work has been supported by a network of 300+ volunteers from the Chicagoland community and area businesses such as Bloomingdale’s, Microsoft, ThoughtWorks, Blue Cross Blue Shield of IL, The Chicago Sky, Chicago State University, Illinois Welding School, and Nordstrom’s. Kelly is also a featured contributor for Jetmag.com’s “The Yard”, a weekly blog aimed to help undergrads excel in their studies and social lives. As a ComEd Neighborhood Hero, and Verizon Wireless Everyday Hero, she is a sought after speaker and contributor for mainstream media outlets, including print, internet, radio, and television. Check out her media work here:http://www.polishedpebbles.com/articles.php

Kelly also shares her unique experiences and lessons learned as a practitioner through her blog, www.kellyfairthementor.wordpress.com. The blog serves as a platform to inspire the entire “mentoring community” including those who are considering becoming a mentor, as well as current practitioners seeking to enhance their work.

Partnering Businesses for Polished Pebbles Career Mentoring Initiatives

Signature Career Mentoring Initiatives
Preparing girls to become effective communicators as well as equipping them with the necessary skills for success in the workplace is the primary objective of Polished Pebbles. Our signature mentoring initiatives and partnerships with local Chicagoland businesses create the ideal setting for girls to begin applying these skills in real life contexts and learn about a variety of diverse career opportunities.

Polished Pebbles’ TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS

• Over the last four years, Polished Pebbles has worked with over 600 7-17 year old African American girls throughout Chicago.
• After completing the Polished Pebbles program, 95% of our girls improve problem solving and goal setting skills.
• 100% of our girls report improved conflict resolution and anger management skills.
• 75% of our girls became more involved in school and community organizations & 87% of those girls became leaders of those organizations.
• Our girls reported broaden and more knowledgeable different career fields.

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But she was not always in the non-profit business. Prior to working in the non-profit sector, Kelly implemented literacy programs, performed research studies training and designed curriculum for various college prep programs. While working for McGraw-Hill, Kelly’s roles included management of national marketing for literacy products and oversight of research studies. That professional experience helped to inspire her transition to the non-profit world and to launch Polished Pebbles.

Kelly graduated from Howard University with a degree in Speech Pathology & Audiology and completed her master's degree in Speech Pathology and Audiology at the University of Iowa. She uses her educational background to instill effective communication skills via the Polished Pebbles S.H.I.N.E.: Smile, Hello, Introduce, Nod your head, End the conversation. For more press related content on Kelly and Polished Pebbles go here: http://www.polishedpebbles.com/articles.php
Over the last four years Polished Pebbles has worked with over 600 girls throughout the city of Chicago. Many of our girls have overcome the obstacles of life as a high school student in their communities, and have now begun their journey as college students at different institutions across the country. In order for them to successfully matriculate through college, it is critical that we increase support for African American students who specifically are:

- first generation students,
- underrepresented on many college campuses,
- face financial barriers,
- more likely to dropout

A combination of the above factors have left students feeling lost and in need of assistance as they navigate their respective college campuses. Through the power of mentoring, Polished Pebbles can support our young ladies in every step of their journey. To support our mentees, we’ve designed a series of workshops that:

- Ensure students are properly informed, motivated, and encouraged to connect with existing campus support and counseling services
- Introduce them to mentors, thought leaders, and potential employers who will provide guidance in the right direction.
- The workshops and activities will focus on career development, personal challenges, and campus life.

“Nine tenths of education is encouragement.”

- Anatole France

THE POLISHED PEBBLES COLLEGE TRANSITION PROGRAM INCLUDES:

- Group workshops focused on career development and management, coping with personal challenges, and how to tackle campus life.
- Exploration of the vital personnel and departments available on all college campuses
- Partnerships with local businesses that will provide job shadowing, internship and employment opportunities

SAMPLE WORKSHOPS INCLUDE:

- The Power of Compromise: Adjusting to Living with Roommates
- The Network: Hands-on Interaction with Future Employers!
- What’s Your Personal Brand? Appearance & Social Media
- Obtaining A Winning Internship
- Why Your Unique Diversity Makes You an Asset in the Career Marketplace
- Your New Besties! Forming Positive Relationships with your College Counselors & Professors

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