



Frontline Soldier's History

Frontline: The visible forefront in any action, activity, or field
Soldier; a person dedicated to a cause.

Gerald, a former gang member, began recruiting men and women, including some former gang members, who were willing to be trained in community street patrolling mainly in the neighborhood they were from.. They were chosen because they had already been volunteering in their communities and serving as positive role models.

The first M.A.D. D.A.D.S. breakfast was held on October 19, 1996, in the city of Inglewood, California. This first gathering, titled "A Gathering of Men," attracted over 160 men and youth, making the event a rousing success! Hats off to the women of our communities; in 1997, the M.A.D. MOMS was formed.

In 2000, after stepping down as director of Inglewood MAD DADS, Gerald co-founded Pathways To Your Future (PTYF) along with his wife, Linda. PTYF's mission is to provide comprehensive education, health, and human services to reduce homelessness among underserved youth while promoting their development and enriching the communities of Los Angeles County.

In 2000, Gerald also founded The Frontline Soldiers, which serves as the volunteer and mentoring arm of PTYF. The Frontline Soldiers' tagline is "Bringing the Neighbors Back to the Hood." It was noted that a little over 30 years ago, our communities were called neighborhoods, but today we refer to them as "HOODS." What's missing? Neighbor. The mission of The Frontline Soldiers is to "build an organized network of men, women, and youth strategically designed to foster unity, solidarity, and economic empowerment."

The Frontline Soldiers Wall of Fame Awards Breakfast has, for the past 25 years, become an annual fundraising event. The funds raised allow us to maintain supportive services and donate to other non-profit organization collaborative partners. The annual event is designed to recognize what you might call both "sung" and "unsung" heroes/sheros but we call them "Frontline Soldier's, individuals from the community who have dedicated their lives to combating the ills of our society, specifically in Los Angeles County.

Each year, former recipients and founder Gerald E. Thompson come together to select potential candidates for induction into the current year's "Frontline Soldier Wall of Fame" and to determine the agency to which portions of the proceeds will be donated. This year's sponsor is Community Empowerment & Resource Consultants, Inc. (CERC), with receipts going to HSS, Inc. for housing and supportive services, www.hss-inc.org.