

Making a Difference After School With Bro/Sis

Proskauer For Good Blog on **October 17, 2017**

The [Brotherhood/Sister Sol](#) (Bro/Sis) is a community-based, nonprofit organization located in Harlem that provides after-school and long-term support services to Black and Latino youth from ages eight to 22 in impoverished communities. Bro/Sis aims to cultivate leadership development and educational achievement, sexual responsibility, drug awareness, political education and social justice, Pan African and Latino history, and global awareness. Each year Bro/Sis provides direct guidance and support to more than 350 youth.

I learned about Bro/Sis through my Brown University alumni connections last November. A friend from college was having an informal get-together to introduce us to Khary Lazarre-White, another Brown graduate. During the evening Khary told us about Bro/Sis, which he founded with his childhood friend and Brown classmate, Jason Warwin, when they were seniors in college in 1994.

Khary's story was compelling. He explained Bro/Sis's holistic and long-term model of community engagement/support, and its very real results. He informed us that 94% of Bro/Sis alumni have graduated from high school or earned a GED; with 88% having received a high school degree. Comparatively, the high school graduation rate in New York City is 70%, in Harlem the graduation rate is 42%, and the graduation rate of Black and Latino boys generally in New York City is 34%. Further, the teenage pregnancy rate at Bro/Sis is less than 2%, whereas Harlem's teenage pregnancy rate is 15%. Notably, no alumni or member of Bro/Sis is incarcerated and less than 1% have felony convictions. Meanwhile, one out of three Black males in the U.S., ages 20 to 29, are under the supervision of the prison system, whether incarcerated, on probation, or on parole. Proudly, 95% of Bro/Sis alumni are either enrolled in college or working full-time. But in Harlem generally, only 30% of the youth, ages 18 to 25, are enrolled in college or employed full-time.

I liked the mission, but the proven results he shared especially resonated with me.

My first involvement with Bro/Sis was attending the Voices Gala, its annual fundraiser which took place in May. The young people being honored spoke about how Bro/Sis has helped them to become independent and resourceful, develop leadership skills and a sense of community responsibility, and strive to reach their highest potential. This inspirational evening led me to introduce the organization to the For Good team at Proskauer.

In July, Proskauer partnered with Bro/Sis and invited about 30 Bro/Sis high-schoolers to participate in a career day. We presented two panels, one on legal careers and one on business services careers. Following an informal lunch, we organized a tour of Bloomberg LP headquarters and a Q&A for the career day. Bloomberg LP supports academic achievement as a key component of their philanthropy and engagement, and is a Firm client. Throughout the day the students asked pertinent, thought-provoking questions and were clearly focused on long-term goals.

I believe in this organization because it takes a holistic, long-term approach and reaches participants at a critical, young age. The staff and board members of Bro/Sis are committed and inspired by these young people. The staff members work hard to make sure these young people have the very best opportunities available to them.

The Proskauer career day allowed us to expose the participants to career paths and opportunities they otherwise may not know about. It was personally rewarding for all who participated and we look forward to partnering with Bro/Sis again for this event next school year.

[view Original](#)