SON OF A SAINT

INSPIRING MENTORSHIP AND TRANSFORMING
THE LIVES OF FATHERLESS BOYS

SONOFASAINT.ORG
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Dear friends,

A bright future is never guaranteed, and even less so for boys growing up without access to a father figure. Son of a Saint exists for the fatherless boys of New Orleans, providing a necessary intervention at a critical time. We give them hope, vision, opportunity and, above all else, a good example in the form of a dedicated Son of a Saint mentor.

STOPPING A VICIOUS CYCLE

Many mentees have witnessed homicide, experienced abandonment or bear the burden of having a murdered or incarcerated father. These devastating issues put fatherless boys at a strikingly high risk of imprisonment, violence, chemical abuse, and poverty — trapping them in the same cycle to which their fathers fell victim.

Son of a Saint is stopping this cycle. Each boy enters our program with different circumstances and needs. To truly change the life of a boy who faces so many disadvantages, we employ a holistic, individualized approach and stick with him for a long time (ages 10-21).

OUR MENTEES ARE THRIVING

Our boys grow into men who are independent thinkers and leaders. The alternative is a stark contrast: loss of freedom, violence, and poverty. This year, our list of program graduates continues to increase, and these young men continue their higher education journey into college — often, the first in their families to do so.

WE ARE GROWING

We’ve set an ambitious goal — by 2021, Son of a Saint will scale to reach 200 boys, constituting a 50 percent increase in our program year over year. Additionally, we are excited to announce that we have officially launched distinct mental wellness, education, college access, and career development programs.

WE NEED YOU

If you aren’t familiar with our organization, I invite you to spend a few minutes to get to know and understand the critical need we strive to meet. We cannot do this work without you.

Sincerely,

BIVIAN “SONNY” LEE III
Founder + CEO, Son of a Saint

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Founder + CEO, Son of a Saint
WHAT WE DO

MORE THAN MENTORSHIP
Son of a Saint is founded on an enduring mentor-mentee relationship, but we go so much deeper than that. Our model is holistic and responsive, regularly intersecting every facet of boys’ lives with programming adjusted based on specific needs and circumstances. The result: a formula for success tailored to each boy.

WE TRANSFORM LIVES AND THEN WE BUILD THEM.
Each year, Son of a Saint selects a group of boys ages 10-12 to join the existing kids in our program. The boys must be fatherless due to their father’s incarceration, death, deportation or abandonment. Each boy remains an official Son of a Saint mentee until he is 18, but the connections remain, and we continue to advise and support him in the years that follow. Our goal is to graduate self-sufficient, independent thinkers who are leaders and give back to their community.

WHAT WE PROVIDE, ABOVE ALL ELSE, IS AN EXAMPLE.
Son of a Saint equips boys with the tools they need to become productive men. We give them hope, vision and opportunity. We provide a secure and consistent environment for them. But the Son of a Saint mentors’ most important role is simply to be a good example.

WE HAVE EXPECTATIONS.
The boys must maintain a minimum 2.8 GPA, complete four hours of community service each month and maintain good conduct at home, school and within the Son of a Saint organization.

WHY WE DO IT

Life for boys who lose their fathers in is an uphill battle involving challenges related to self-confidence, anger and feelings of abandonment. Left unaddressed, these challenges too often manifest in unhealthy behaviors during the early teenage years through young adulthood.

THERE IS A NEED THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED.
Son of a Saint is a necessary intervention at a delicate time — a wellspring of positive influence when it’s needed most by the boys who need it most. Young members forge relationships with volunteer mentors, counselors and tutors that develop over a long period, ensuring consistent support, guidance and encouragement.

DID YOU KNOW

85%
Youths in prison who grew up in fatherless homes1

75%
Male patients in chemical abuse centers come from fatherless homes2

71%
High school drop outs come from fatherless homes3

4 United States Census Bureau, 2017
Son of a Saint exists to transform the lives of fatherless boys through mentorship, emotional support, development of life skills, exposure to constructive experiences and formation of positive, lasting peer-to-peer relationships.

MENTAL WELLNESS
Son of a Saint’s Licensed Professional Counselor provides evaluations and ongoing counseling for our boys. This counselor works with mentees individually and in groups to address issues such as trauma, anger and grief.

ONE-ON-ONE + GROUP MENTORSHIP
Regular daylong mentorship sessions are designed to aid in our boys’ academic, personal and overall development. We host 20 group mentorship sessions per month, on average, covering topics such as etiquette, time management, decision-making, critical thinking, anger management, moral reasoning, life skills, work ethic, leadership, civic responsibility and teamwork. Kids and mentors enjoy frequent outings, such as sporting events, educational trips, movies, dining, parades and volunteer activities. 75% of our boys are also paired with a dedicated mentor to facilitate an ongoing, one-on-one mentoring relationship.

RECREATIONAL ACCESS
Son of a Saint mentees are exposed to horseback riding, fishing, yoga, music, chess, the arts and more. Every boy participates in at least one of these activities weekly. Mentors also support and encourage our boys in their extracurricular endeavors by attending various activities.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT
Son of a Saint provides ongoing tutoring for boys in need of additional academic support. Many of our volunteer educators are current New Orleans middle school or high school teachers, and are familiar with the boys’ coursework. We also serve as advocates for the boys at school, intervening in the case of behavioral or academic challenges, and providing support to guardians.

TUITION ASSISTANCE
Son of a Saint works to provide middle school and high school scholarships allowing mentees to attend tuition-based schools in the New Orleans area. If a mentee has the inclination and academic capability to attend a private or parochial school, we do our best to make sure financial means are not a barrier to a quality education.

COLLEGE PREPARATION
Son of a Saint works with boys to ensure they have the preparation and knowledge to make an informed decision about their higher education path. We review postsecondary education options, facilitate ACT preparation classes, guide them in the college essay writing process, teach them about college financing, and help connect them with financial aid and scholarship opportunities.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT
Son of a Saint’s Career Development Coordinator pairs boys with internships, job shadowing opportunities and academic camps. We also organize company tours and career panels for our mentees to learn about interview skills and different career options.

CULTURAL IMMERSION
Son of a Saint provides cultural immersion opportunities for mentees, allowing them to break down preconceived barriers about other cultures and people, while building confidence, developing newfound cultural sensitivity and making meaningful connections with the local ways of life in different destinations. Son of a Saint mentees have journeyed to places including Montreal, Costa Rica and Ghana, Africa.
As we near our tenth anniversary, Son of a Saint is witnessing the growing impact of its work. Our program graduates are attending postsecondary education institutions and are on trajectories to become well-rounded, positive contributors to society.

**WE ARE SEEING RESULTS**
- Grown to 100 boys and projected to reach 200 by 2021
- Nearly 100% mentee retention rate, year over year
- Improved academic and behavioral performance
- Graduated two classes of mentees, the majority of whom are first-generation college students

**RETURN ON INVESTMENT**
- Reduced poverty
- Increased equitability
- Reduced crime and incarceration
- Breaking cycle of fatherlessness
- Young mentees growing into self-sufficient men positioned to pay it forward in their communities

**A POSITIVE RIPPLE EFFECT**
Every boy has a path in front of him. The moment he’s accepted into Son of a Saint, the wrong path vanishes. He is no longer in danger of becoming a prison inmate, a victim or perpetrator of violence or an absent father.

Instead, we begin to witness the positive ripple effect of the boy on the right path, felt in his family, school, neighborhood, and even at the city level. This kid is a future leader, father, and mentor to the next generation of Son of a Saint enrollees.

**OUR BEGINNING**
Bivian Lee, Jr., was an NFL defensive back for the New Orleans Saints from 1971 to 1975. Tragically, in 1984 Bivian died at the young age of 36 after suffering a heart attack. He left behind a wife, a five-year-old daughter, Tamica, and a three-year-old son, Bivian “Sonny” Lee, III.

As an adult, Sonny came to understand the struggles and challenges his mother faced, and he gained a real appreciation for the opportunities he had as a child — opportunities the average boy would not be afforded. From access to psychiatrists who helped him navigate through anger issues associated with the loss of his father, to the ability to participate in sports leagues and enjoy relationships with teammates and coaches, Sonny was convinced that the array of opportunities made him who he is today.

**IN TURN, SONNY, THEN 29, FOUNDED SON OF A SAINT ON JANUARY 1, 2011, IN HONOR OF HIS LATE FATHER AND SINGLE MOTHER.**
He aims to “pay it forward” and replicate his own experience for a special group of fatherless young males in the community.

Sonny often speaks to companies and organizations on topics such as mentorship, community service and the importance of education. Send an inquiry to request information on booking Sonny for speaking engagements and other appearances.
FUND THE MISSION

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Son of a Saint depends largely on the generosity of individuals, foundations and corporations. We ask that you consider making a donation now. The examples below give an idea of the impact of your gift.

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WAYS TO GIVE

ONLINE
sonofasaint.org

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New Orleans, LA 70119

BY PHONE
(504) 561-7508

STOCKS + MAJOR GIFTS
(504) 655-8416 or lila@sonofasaint.org

VENMO
@SonOfASaintOrg

$40/MONTH GIVING CIRCLE
Help us sustain our programming with a small donation per month. Contact lila@sonofasaint.org for more information.

501(c)(3) Tax Id #46-5554558

Please make checks out to Son of a Saint. Visit sonofasaint.org/donate to learn more.

501(c)(3) Tax Id #46-5554558
OUR BOYS GROW INTO MEN WHO ARE INDEPENDENT THINKERS, LEADERS, AND COMMITTED TO GIVING BACK TO NEW ORLEANS.