

CORNELIUSFINLEY



We have all heard the grim statistical expectations for a young black male, reared in an economically disadvantaged neighborhood in a non-traditional family. Statistics tell us, with very high probability, that Cornelius Finley, reared in southeast Dallas (Pleasant Grove) by his grandmother, was on his way to dropping out of high school and landing himself in the penal system – unproductive, life wasted. This was almost the case. Beginning in middle school, Cornelius began walking this path as if it were his destiny – bad behavior, bad influences, alternative school, juvenile detention center, Dallas County Jail system. It was all so predictable.

In steps the Urban League of Greater Dallas, with programs designed to target youth just like Cornelius Finley. The 100 Fellows program, intercepted Cornelius' bad behavior and poor decision-making with life skills and opportunity that would show Cornelius a better way, a more positive existence. The 100 Fellows program did what it was designed to do – it transformed Cornelius Finley's life and set him on a new path. He was exposed to positive people and places that he sought to emulate. He traveled outside of Dallas to New York and competed in a business competition. He won a scholarship through the League, in partnership with PepsiCo, and was assisted with a successful transition into college.

Cornelius chose to attend Morehouse University where he is presently completing his final year. During his tenure at Morehouse, Cornelius has maintained a very impressive grade point average, as well as has had the opportunity to study at Oxford University and in North Africa. Following graduation, Cornelius plans to pursue law at an Ivy League school.

Our hat goes off to Cornelius for turning his life around. He actively refers other young people to Urban League programs and makes himself available for whatever he can do to give back. We are so proud of Cornelius Finley – a true Urban League success story.