

Our Community Impact Hero Teaches Kids to Respect Themselves and Their Education

By: *American Red Cross of Greater Chicago*

March 9, 2009

Paul J. Adams III will be honored as our **Community Impact Hero** at the [American Red Cross of Greater Chicago's Heroes Breakfast on April 23, 2009](#).

Each day in the Garfield Park neighborhood, Paul serves high school children beset by poverty, crime, violence, and sparse educational opportunities. In 1978, Paul rescued a closing school and became the founder and driving force at Providence St. Mel School.

For more than 30 years, students whose dreams might otherwise never have stretched beyond their own neighborhood have been given the opportunity to gain a college education and use their talents to give back to the community. Under Paul's leadership, the school has been an agent for revitalization, offering stability and hope.

Since the early years of the school, Paul has been the strong center of Providence St. Mel—taking on any task that would help, from mowing the lawn to welcoming the president of the United States for a visit. Paul currently serves as president of Providence St. Mel, and he is devoted to helping the students succeed by insisting they adhere to a strict code of discipline, respect themselves and value their education.

The impact Paul has had on individual lives and on the life of the community continues to be profound. Under his leadership, one hundred percent of the graduating seniors have been accepted to four-year colleges and universities.

As an advocate for education, Paul believes children who are left without an education are condemned to social failure and are caught in a cycle of diminished hopes, diminished means and diminished opportunities. He refuses to accept this pattern. He believes that a single child's failure is a failure for us all.

By transforming young lives and giving students the tools to respond to whatever life presents them, Paul is a hero to thousands of children and their families.

The Community Impact Award is presented to an individual(s) who displays leadership and commitment to his or her community by making a positive, noticeable and significant impact in society.



Paul Adams

This award sponsored by:

