

# Black History 4Ever Quiz Bowl organizer wants event to inspire students

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Chick Jacobs Staff writer

Joe McGee has nothing but respect for history. But the Fayetteville businessman says he'd rather see kids inspired to make history, than recite it.

That's one reason the 10th annual Black History 4Ever Quiz Bowl includes topics that, at first glance, don't seem connected to African-American history at all.

"You can continue to learn all these names from the past, and that's great," McGee said while preparing for the Saturday, Feb. 23 event at the John D. Fuller Recreation Center. "But you want kids to connect to what we're doing.

"That means you look at more than history. The future is built on business, military service, so many things that today's kids can appreciate."

Which is why when more than 100 students, 8 years old through high school, grasp the buzzers and start answering questions, a knowledge of Army rank may serve as well as knowing how many uses George Washington Carver invented for peanuts (300, if the question comes up).

It's all part of the vision of McGee's mentoring group GOTDAD. The organization, whose name is an acronym for Getting Opportunities Through Dedication and Devotion, shares the struggles of military and civilian fathers, both single and married. Its goal is to help balance jobs, military careers and family obligations.

It's a juggling act McGee became familiar with while raising his daughter.

"There was a lot of negativity in our situation," he said. "I knew things had to change, and we worked hard at it.

"I'm happy to say, 10 years later, she's a college graduate, now working on a master's degree. That's the kind of future we all want for our children. The question many have trouble answering is how - how do we get there?"

The annual black history quiz was originally seen as an opportunity for parents to work with their children to increase awareness of the accomplishments of blacks in history.

Recently, McGee said, the event has evolved into preparing for the future as much as studying the past. This year's event is adding military appreciation events, including a tour of the Airborne and Special Operations Museum - assisted by a convoy of cars and motorcycles, weather permitting.

"We're calling it the 'Ride to Freedom,'" McGee said. "It's an expression of appreciation for all the sacrifice these soldiers have made for us to enjoy our way of life at home."

Questions in the quiz bowl reflect the military heritage of Cumberland County.

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**Where:** John D. Fuller Recreation Center, 6627 Old Bunce Road

**Admission:** No charge to watch or compete. Competition is open to students in four age categories, with cash and gift certificates going to the winners.

**Note:** Weather permitting, after the quiz bowl at noon, participants may join a "Ride to Freedom" downtown to the Airborne & Special Operations Museum.

**Information:** [gotdad.org](http://gotdad.org)

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