



DWIGHT FITCH MD

The Impact of Mentors and Mentoring

Bradenton oncologist Dwight Fitch MD feels blessed to have been involved with the Brotherhood of Men Mentor Group (BOM) since its inception in 2007. The way he tells it, the connection between the group and the man was meant to be.

Born and raised in Detroit, Fitch moved here directly after his residency when he was hired by 21st Century Oncology in Bradenton. He soon started exploring the area and was taken aback at the lack of diversity.

It was only after he discovered Newtown in Sarasota that he found a community of black people. “These are families who have been here for decades, but it felt like they were quarantined to a just few blocks,” he said.

The very next day Fitch was told about a mentoring group starting in Newtown at 6 p.m. It was 5 p.m. “When I got there I thought ‘the only difference between these kids and

mine is that my three sons have a dad who is a physician and a mom who is an engineer.’”

“The founder was talking about things that should be basic: how to respect yourself, how to be positive and to stand by your word,” he explained. Remembering how his own experience being mentored helped him in life, Fitch committed his time and his heart to the group.

Since then he has helped guide generations of boys and young men as they learn how to become better grown men. And, when they come back to visit, these “graduates” – mentored by Fitch and other Brotherhood of Men volunteers – confirm BOM’s message of love, responsibility, integrity and manhood. “They say, ‘everything these guys told you is true. Because of them I stayed out of jail, I got a steady job, I went to college.’”

BY EMILY LEINFUSS | PHOTO BY BARBARA BANKS