

Pastor finds brotherhood in mentoring

By **MATT RAWLINGS**
Of the Keizertimes

Tim Davis has been the community pastor at Church on the Hill in Keizer for 12 years now. But back in 2015, Davis felt the need to expand his ministry.

After meeting weekly with two of his friends, Davis came to the conclusion that there was a need in the community that wasn't being filled.

"We were seeing nonprofits with wonderful causes, but the stories that were being portrayed almost always started with a person who came from a fatherless home or experienced absence and abuse from their father," Davis said.

This gave Davis the motivation to do what he could to help, which is why he started Brothers of Valor — also known as Valor Mentoring.

Valor Mentoring is a nonprofit organization that strives to contest the impact of fatherless by providing mentorship to young men through one-on-one relationships, community projects and music media.

While mentoring is open to boys and men of all ages, more than 80 percent of people that are being currently being mentored by Brothers of Valor are either junior high or high school students in the Salem-Keizer area.

"If we could get a young man to be a better future employee, a better college student, a better husband and father, then it will impact the community in a positive way," Davis said.

One aspect of Davis's passion for mentoring young men came from first-hand experience.

Davis's parents divorced when he was just two years old, and since his mother remarried several times, Davis moved all-around the country



Submitted
Tim Davis (left) and David Morse (right) from Brothers of Valor address the crowd during the Xperience Music Festival at McNary High School in October.

as a youngster.

With a lack of a consistent male presence in his life, Davis credits the mentors he had in high school for helping him become the man he is today.

"I had very inconsistent role-models in my life. But I was fortunate to have men invest in my life and see something redeemable in me and then coach me up," Davis said.

"I am where I am because of mentoring."

Over the last four years, Davis has been able to develop partnerships with Salem-Keizer schools and multiple foster care organizations as well as juvenile systems.

Davis's partnership with SK schools has been crucial to growing his program, due to the fact that the majority of the mentees that come through Valor Mentoring are referred by a teacher, counselor or coach.

"Schools are really for us," Davis said. "Because they don't have the funding or bandwidth to do the things

we're doing."

"Teachers and counselors know the kids that need the most help."

In order to match young men up with a proper mentor, Davis has them file paperwork that share their hobbies and interests.

All of the mentors at Valor Mentoring serve as volunteers, which allows them to connect more with the kids that they work with according to Davis.

"When kids know that their mentor isn't being paid to be here, I think that helps break down those walls a little quicker," Davis said.

"It can create a more trusting relationship between a mentee and a mentor."

Currently, Valor Mentoring has more than 80 mentoring relationships and Davis is hoping to double that total by the end of 2019 — mentors are recruited from churches and other nonprofit organizations.

One of those volunteer



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mentors is David Morse.

Morse has been with Valor Mentoring for two years where he serves the majority of the time with the music program as the Valor Studios Director.

"I believe in the cause so much," Morse said. "I love being able to walk alongside kids in this avenue."

Davis believes that one of

the things that separates Valor Mentoring from other organizations is how they support their volunteer mentors.

"There have been multiple mentoring organizations that have come and gone in this area and the main two reasons was due to lack of training and follow-up and encouragement," Davis said. "So that's where we spend a lot of time and energy. We follow up with every one of our mentors on a monthly basis."

Davis is also in the process of developing a phone app that has training and encouragement videos for mentors.

While Davis takes a lot of pride in what his organization offers in one-on-one mentoring and mentoring through service projects, he also acknowledged that the most popular aspect of Valor Mentoring is their music program.

With a recording studio at Salem First Presbyterian Church, Valor Mentoring opens the door into the world of music on multiple different platforms for interested kids.

The studio allows kids to write and record their own music, but also gives them the opportunity to enter into a music engineering program to learn from professionals in the industry — all free of charge.

"When you're hearing your voice recorded for the first time and go through that process, it brings up all kinds of creativity," Davis said.

Morse has an astonishing passion for helping kids discover that creativity.

Despite working at Best Buy and teaching Digital Media classes at Blanchet High School, Morse still puts in around 30 hours a week in the

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