



MEDIA RELEASE

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Community Connection Series Features Emerald Youth Foundation

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.— Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs interviewed Steve Diggs, president and CEO of the Emerald Youth Foundation, which serves young people living in the area’s urban neighborhoods. The organization started roughly three decades ago and now serves about 3,000 young people per year through the Emerald Youth Foundation and the Emerald Youth Charter School.

“We’re trying to develop them in their faith and their education and learning, as well as in their health,” said Diggs.

The interview is part of Community Connection—a spinoff from the Mayor’s small business series that provides owners the opportunity to talk about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their families and employees and helping them share any plans they hold for the future.

For the next couple of months, Mayor Jacobs will focus on local charities and non-profits. A new vignette will run each week on the county and Mayor’s various social media platforms.

“We can’t run out of the fire or away from the fire – we’ve got to run into the fire,” Diggs said. “So, we’ve looked at COVID like a fire that we responsibly go into and keep things going for young people. They need structure during this time so we can’t shut everything down.”

Mayor Jacobs also asked Diggs to share a success story. Diggs talked about a young man named Anthony who grew up poor in an inner-city home he shared with drug-addicted adults.

“He was a young man most would say was not going to make it,” Diggs said. “We were able early on to get the community people wrapped around him and now he is a special ed teacher, on the board of directors at his local church and he coaches youth football.”

The Mayor agreed.

“I think the way you change the community is that way.,” he said. “It’s like throwing a rock into a pond and it’s the ripples. It’s like you said. Someone like Anthony who goes out and has an impact and pays it forward and that just keeps on going and radiates throughout the entire community.”

To hear more of what was said, check out the [video](#).

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