

**Coaches Get Equipped to Mentor Boys and Young Men to Have a Healthy and Respectful Manhood**  
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**Verizon Foundation, A CALL TO MEN Team With Carolina Panthers Head Coach and GM, Former Players, CBS Sportscaster James Brown to Enable Coaches to Develop Young Men of Character**

CHARLOTTE, N.C., March 14, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Several hundred coaches from middle and high schools, colleges and universities, and community leagues across the Carolinas met on Thursday (March 14) to learn how to develop young men of character.

The [Verizon Foundation](#) and [A CALL TO MEN](#) – a leading national violence prevention organization – kicked off a series of training sessions entitled A Call To Coaches: Your Voice Counts. The half-day interactive seminar – which is designed to equip coaches with resources to prevent abusive behaviors by promoting respect, nonviolence and healthy relationships – debuted at the Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel. The seminar will also be held in Baltimore on April 16 and at one other location.

The Charlotte session brought together several members of the NFL community, including Carolina Panthers head coach Ron Rivera, Panthers general manager Dave Gettleman, Panthers operations manager Brandon Beane, former Panther Mark Carrier, former New York Giant Chris Canty and CBS Sportscaster James Brown.

"A healthy relationship begins with respect," said Ted Bunch, co-founder of A CALL TO MEN, an organization that works nationally and internationally to galvanize a movement of men committed to ending violence and discrimination against women and girls. "Breaking down traditional stereotypes is essential, and that begins in the locker room.

"For instance, it's not cool to demean a teammate by saying he throws like a girl. When a coach takes the lead and stops that kind of language, men and young men listen," said Bunch.

The training session enabled coaches and mentors to learn about how to foster healthy manhood; available free resources on how to talk with athletes; and ways to help participants encourage healthy relationships and positive locker room talk. Participants will leave the training with a list of action items and resources to continue the conversation with their teams and in their communities.

Brown, who has been an outspoken advocate for the importance of engaging men in domestic violence prevention, said, "Coaches often are one of the most critical role models young men have, so it's important that these influencers know how to use that influence to teach their players about what it means to be a man of character."

Resources from the training will also incorporate elements of the Verizon Foundation's recently launched [Your Voice Counts](#) awareness campaign ([www.verizonfoundation.org/yourvoicecounts](http://www.verizonfoundation.org/yourvoicecounts)), which features Brown and is designed to engage and empower men to speak up and be part of the solution to end domestic violence.

Verizon Foundation Program Director Susan Sullivan said, "Domestic violence is a pervasive and widespread problem that has devastating impacts on not only individuals, but also on families and entire communities. It's essential that men and women work together to break the silence around this issue and start a dialogue centered on solutions."

[Your Voice Counts](#) includes a series of public service announcements; a get-involved action guide; and a range of resources developed by [A CALL TO MEN](#) and the [Joyful Heart Foundation](#), a national organization focused on healing and empowering survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. [Your Voice Counts](#) and its resources were created specifically for men, and offer a variety of ways people can make a difference in their communities by speaking out against domestic violence.

Materials from the A Call to Coaches training seminar will be available soon for public download on the [Your Voice Counts](#) website.

For more than a decade, Verizon, through its various business units and its philanthropic foundation, has

been a champion of ending domestic violence. Verizon supports a broad range of programs that include:

- Training healthcare practitioners and first responders about screening for signs of abuse.
- Engaging men as role models and advocates for prevention.
- Educating teens about preventing dating violence.
- [Collecting no-longer-used wireless phones and accessories](#), with proceeds supporting and furthering domestic violence prevention programs.
- Allowing all Verizon Wireless customers to easily connect with a domestic violence counselor by dialing #4673 (#HOPE).

The Verizon Foundation is focused on accelerating social change by using the company's innovative technology to help solve pressing problems in education, healthcare and energy management. Since 2000, the Verizon Foundation has invested more than half a billion dollars to improve the communities where Verizon employees work and live. Verizon's employees are generous with their donations and their time, having logged more than 6.65 million hours of service to make a positive difference in their communities. For more information about Verizon's philanthropic work, visit [www.verizonfoundation.org](http://www.verizonfoundation.org); or for regular updates, visit the Foundation on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/verizonfoundation](http://www.facebook.com/verizonfoundation)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/verizongiving](http://www.twitter.com/verizongiving)).

### **About A CALL TO MEN**

A CALL TO MEN works to create a world where all men and boys are loving and respectful and all women and girls are valued and safe. A CALL TO MEN (ACTMen) works nationally and internationally to galvanize a movement of men committed to ending violence and discrimination against women and girls. Previously, ACTMen partnered with the Verizon Foundation and the NFL Players Association on the Training Camps for Life initiative, teaching teens about healthy and respectful relationships. ACTMen is a founding partner of the engaging men [Your Voice Counts](#) campaign and is contributing to the development and launch of the campaign, outreach efforts and educational resources. For more information about ACTMen visit [www.acalltomen.org](http://www.acalltomen.org).

### **About Verizon**

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE, Nasdaq: VZ), headquartered in New York, is a global leader in delivering broadband and other wireless and wireline communications services to consumer, business, government and wholesale customers. Verizon Wireless operates America's most reliable wireless network, with more than 98 million retail connections nationwide. Verizon also provides converged communications, information and entertainment services over America's most advanced fiber-optic network, and delivers integrated business solutions to customers in more than 150 countries, including all of the Fortune 500. A Dow 30 company with nearly \$116 billion in 2012 revenues, Verizon employs a diverse workforce of 183,400. For more information, visit [www.verizon.com](http://www.verizon.com).

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