

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



AN INTERVIEW WITH

RON JENKINS
FOUNDER

LAKE HAWKS IN FLIGHT FOUNDATION INC

HOW ARE YOU CONNECTED TO THE ISSUE OF YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION?

I'm connected by being a part of the community, a strong advocate for our youth, and helping to develop the youth in our community. I'm a part of the Lake Hawks in Flight Foundation and G.U.N.S (Gaining Unity through Non-violent Solutions). I'm also mayor pro tem of Muskegon Heights and involved in our schools systems. I try to make sure our youth can have a prosperous life.

WHAT IS THE MISSION OR PURPOSE OF LAKE HAWKS IN FLIGHT AND G.U.N.S?

Our mission is to provide a safe place of learning and comfort to youth, so they can feel free to speak out against violence, grow, and develop themselves. We also partner with a tech center training program to provide them with career opportunities, and we give them avenues for getting help with problems such as violence, food insecurity, and mental health. We have a hands-on approach, and teach them to share these resources with friends.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN LAKE HAWKS IN FLIGHT AND G.U.N.S?

I'm the founder and President of the Lake Hawks organization. We're a basketball organization, but we're also a nonprofit that mentors our athletes. We listen to them and encourage them, and help them speak out about their experiences and issues. I partner with G.U.N.S to bring our athletes together with violence prevention leaders to fix our community.

HOW DO LAKE HAWKS IN FLIGHT AND G.U.N.S SUPPORT YOUTH TO THRIVE?

Motivating them, encouraging them, and giving them a sense of respect and their own voice. We have a listening ear to their concerns to get an understanding of the youth and their needs.

HOW DO YOU THINK YOUTH CAN BE PART OF THE SOLUTION TO GUN VIOLENCE?

Youth are part of the solution by talking to one another and being a big brother or sister to someone. Youth learn from each other and share information with one another, so youth can make change by participating in our programs and sharing what they learned. We teach them to not give up, and to make opportunities out of their mistakes to become more resilient, and they share this mindset with one another.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE IN HONOR OF NATIONAL YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION WEEK?

We can't celebrate unless we're in the trenches with the youth, and until we're making an impact in their lives. Our kids need us now, and a lot of them have been let down. We need to share ourselves with youth and encourage them.

WHERE CAN WE FIND YOU ONLINE?

Website: <https://www.lakehawksbasketball.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/non-profit/Lake-Hawks-in-Flight-293819571037402/>

Instagram: [@lakehawksbasketball1](https://www.instagram.com/lakehawksbasketball1)

Twitter: [@LakeHawksBball](https://twitter.com/LakeHawksBball)

To Learn More, Visit
<https://yvpc.sph.umich.edu/>

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