

More about Ruben Moore, Jr.:

Many in the community, know Ruben as a no-nonsense man, who expects kids and adults to follow the rules, and to work hard to reach their goals. He also has been known to provide a helping hand to those in need.

Ruben grew up in the Projects on the Southside of Chicago, eleven blocks from the White Sox Baseball Park. Growing up, Ruben had to navigate his way around a violent neighborhood where rival gangs kept him on his toes. Ruben often praises his mother Dorothy for her toughness and strong guidance. He lost many friends to the streets but Ruben, along with his younger brother and sister managed to find their way out of the projects to live successful lives.

Ruben credits several people he encountered as a young man for helping him through challenging times. He's grateful to his baseball coach, Mr. Wilson, and to his grandfather, for teaching him essential life lessons such as the importance of honesty, hard work and respecting the value of people of all backgrounds. Ruben credits the Masons, a Fraternal Organization, for taking him under their wings and providing life-changing experiences that helped him imagine a life beyond the projects. These opportunities instilled in him a deep sense of obligation to lift others in need.

Ruben moved to the Quad Cities when he was a senior in high school and following graduation, he enlisted with the United States Marines. Following his stint in the Marines, Ruben returned to the Quad Cities and soon became the first Black pipefitter in the area. He traveled to different sites around the country, working in nuclear power plants and at other locations until an injury forced him to look for other work.

In 2093, Ruben started working for the Davenport Community School District, as head of security for North High School. He became a fixture in the building where he protected students and staff during the school day and at night, where he could be found at all sports events, music & drama programs and dances. Ruben was known to place high expectations on all those in his care. It was in this school setting where Ruben became inspired to help students with limited resources. He wanted them to have opportunities similar to those provided to him as a kid growing up in the projects.

Ruben co-founded QC United, a nonprofit, in 2009 and soon was sponsoring a variety of programs for low-income students. Some of the programs provided by Ruben and QC United over the years include:

- The Swing into Education Golf Tournament & Scholarship Program
- Unity Festival (a free community event celebrating the diversity of the Quad Cities)
- World on a Plate (Educational workshops for high school students)
- The Dreams Come True Program (trips to national sites for low-income students)
- The Pete the Purple Bull Program (a comprehensive program teaching positive social/emotional skills and promoting bully prevention in schools and communities)
- Community Education initiative (presenting/supporting community experiences that promote understanding among community members). This included the first performance by a Historical Black University marching band.