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06/27/2011

Name: Robert A. Cole

Age: 59

Family: Wife, Kathy; Sons Brian (deceased), Blake and Brett

Pets: Former Golden Retriever owners

Education: 1974, B.A., Florida State University, cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa; 1978, J.D., FSU College of Law

Admitted to the Bar: 1978

Employed by: Boyd & Jenerette, P.A.

Field of practice: Professional Liability, Legal Malpractice, Medical Malpractice, Architectural and Engineering Malpractice, Mediation

Professional Organizations: Current president of the Florida Chapters of the American Board of Trial Advocates (FLABOTA), International Association of Defense Counsel, Florida Defense Lawyers Association, Jacksonville Defense Lawyers Association.

Community Involvement: Current: Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Northeast Florida board member; Past: Jacksonville March of Dimes board member, Baptist Medical Center Health Foundation committee member, Jacksonville University council member, Arlington United Methodist Church trustee, Arlington Little League president and board member.

How did you get involved?

Most of my community activities have involved helping children or adolescents. Having been blessed with three sons and a loving and supportive wife, I have always recognized that some children come from single-parent homes and do not have the love, support and guidance to become well-adjusted, happy children and responsible adults. All of my activities have involved youth sports, babies' and children's health issues, and mentoring. Through school and sporting activities with my own sons, I saw there was a real need to help others. I have been involved in these types of activities for more than 30 years, and when I see a need, I get involved.

How can someone else get involved?

Right now, we have a need for adult volunteers to mentor children and adolescents who need an adult role model and mentor in their lives. Big Brothers and Big Sisters is in dire need of male and female adult volunteers. Currently, in Jacksonville, there are about 250 boys and girls who are on the waiting list for either Big Brothers or Big Sisters. If you are interested in being an adult volunteer/mentor, please contact either Warren Grymes or Steve Gilbert at 727-9797.

What have you learned/achieved through the experience?

I was lucky enough to have a little brother named Christian for about five years. Our relationship began when he was 10 years old and ended last year when he moved out of the area. Unfortunately, Christian was being raised by his maternal great-grandmother and he has never known his natural mother or father. We established a great friendship and relationship. Although Christian and I had a lot of fun together, I believe that I got much more out of the relationship than he did. My mentoring of Christian was and continues to be a very rewarding experience that resulted from my getting involved in Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

What was the last book you read or are reading?

"Same Kind of Different As Me" by Ron Hall, Denver Moore and Lynn Vincent.

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