
**Changing the Narrative: Monroe University Empowers Bronx Youth
Through Annual My Brother's Keeper Event**

BRONX, NY, May 6, 2026 -- Monroe University welcomed approximately 200 junior and senior students from high schools across the metro New York City area to its Bronx campus for its annual My Brother's Keeper (MBK) event, a day dedicated to inspiring young men of color through mentorship, motivation, and personal development.

Hosted in the Mintz Auditorium, the event brought together students from the Bronx (The Celia Cruz Bronx High School of Music, Earl Monroe New Renaissance Basketball School, and Harry S. Truman High School), Queens (High School for Law Enforcement and Public Safety, Hillside Arts & Letters Academy, and Urban Dove Team Charter School III Queens), Manhattan (The Business of Sports School, High School for Health Careers and Sciences, Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School, and YABC at the George Washington campus), as well as Yonkers (Charter School of Educational Excellence).

Centered on the theme "Changing the Narrative," this year's program challenged participants to redefine perceptions, overcome barriers, and take control of their future. Through engaging presentations and interactive discussions, students examined topics including leadership, resilience, self-confidence, and goal setting.

The event opened with remarks from Monroe University **President Marc Jerome** and **Celso Alvarez**, Assistant Vice President of High School Enrollment, who encouraged attendees to recognize their strengths, pursue their ambitions, and use their voices to create meaningful change.

Dr. Anael Alston, Assistant Commissioner at the New York State Education Department, delivered the keynote address, urging students to identify the deeper purpose that drives them and to remain focused on their long-term goals despite challenges.

Actor, entrepreneur, and educator **Cordaro Kendricks** followed with a powerful talk on the importance of finding your purpose, believing in your dreams, and finding your way around the temporary obstacles that life will eventually throw in their way.

Temajio Boodle and **Allen Jenkins**, Monroe University alumni who now serve on staff, spoke about navigating obstacles in college and building successful careers through determination and perseverance.

“My Brother’s Keeper represents far more than a single-day program,” said President Jerome. “It is an ongoing commitment to helping young men connect with mentors, discover their potential, and build pathways to success.”

Now celebrating its 17th year, Monroe University’s male empowerment initiative began in 2009 and later aligned with the national My Brother’s Keeper movement, launched by President Barack Obama in 2014 to expand opportunities for boys and young men of color.

The event was offered free of charge to participating schools and families, with lunch provided for all attendees. The University hosted its annual My Sister’s Keeper program, dedicated to empowering young women, earlier in the semester.

Monroe University extends its gratitude to the educators, guest speakers, community partners, and students whose participation helped make this year’s My Brother’s Keeper event a meaningful and impactful experience.

ABOUT MONROE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1933, Monroe University is a recognized leader in urban and international education. The University is proud of its innovative programs to increase college access, affordability, and completion outcomes, especially among first-generation students, and for the national recognition it receives for its strong impact on graduates’ social mobility.

Programs are offered through Schools of Allied Health Professions, Business and Accounting, Criminal and Social Justice, Education, Hospitality Management and the Culinary Institute of New York, Information Technology, and Nursing, as well as through its King Graduate School. Liberal arts and continuing education programs are also available. For more information and admissions criteria, please visit <http://www.monroeu.edu>.

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