

# UNUSUAL HEROES

## Mentors Shaping Nation One Teen At A Time

(NAPSA)—After calling on Americans to commit to community service, President Bush in his State of the Union Address said, “Our country...needs citizens working to rebuild our communities. We need mentors to love children.”

In fact, mentoring can be vital to the growth of our youth and nation. According to recent studies, teens partnered with strong mentors—adult role models other than family members—were less likely to start using drugs, drink alcohol or become violent. Having a mentor can make a difference in a young person’s life and enable them to help others.

One such example is Raymond Nunez of Lawrence, Mass. Unable to speak English at the age of 7, Nunez joined his local Boys & Girls Club at his uncle’s urging. There he met friends and role models who taught him the importance of education and community involvement. He joined the club’s TEEN-Supreme® Keystone Club, a program that focuses on developing life and leadership skills, character and values in our nation’s future leaders.

There, he organized community service initiatives with his peers and mentors. For 12 years, he never missed a single day of meetings and activities. Now 19, Nunez is a mentor and role model himself. He is the first in his family to attend college, studying education at Tufts University, while on weekends he tutors young people. Nunez also speaks to kids around the country about helping others.

“I have seen that the more people are willing to help each other everyday, the more they realize their responsibility to make this a better world,” he said. “That kind of effect could unite the globe.”

He and his peers truly are mak-



**Nunez with President Bush after receiving his National Youth of the Year award.**

ing waves around the country. His Club, as well as 70 other TEEN-Supreme groups, organized a national service project in 2001 seeking organ donor registrations and blood donation. More than 2,000 donor registrants and 1,400 pints of blood resulted, which could save more than 100,000 lives.

These efforts could not be possible without Americans who continue to heed the President’s call to action in our communities. Those who support charities like The Taco Bell Foundation, the organization that funds TEEN-Supreme, are making a difference in the lives of young people. Since 1995, The Taco Bell Foundation, with the help of customers, franchisees and employees, has raised more than \$10 million for TEEN-Supreme.

“During the last six years, these contributions have helped more than 500,000 at-risk teens become productive young adults and active members in their communities,” said Hillary Niblo, Executive Director, Taco Bell Foundation. “By donating money or time, every one of us can make a difference in the life of a teen and the future of this country.”

To become a mentor or get your children involved, visit [www.teen-supreme.org](http://www.teen-supreme.org).