

Faces Of New Bedford #63 – Robert Mendes

Meet Robert Mendes, Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater New Bedford.



Robert grew up in the cities south end, before moving into the house his parents bought just a few blocks from the program. Almost immediately his mother had him and his siblings signed up and they began attending everyday afterschool.

Soon after his time at the Club, he enjoyed helping the Gym Director, Chet Travers, gather equipment and form intramural leagues. Robert did this throughout his teenage years and started working as an aid in the Gym before he graduated High School. It was during his years there where saw kids from all walks of life coming together, some with no guidance besides the club, grow and see success they wouldn't normally have.

He stayed on at the Boys and Girls Club and it morphed into a career for him. He's worked as a basketball coach for the past 40 years. He took over the position as the Physical Director, transitioned to the Program Director, and eventually became the Executive Director, which he has been doing for the last 18 years.

He's enjoyed being able to impart to them all of the things

that his mentors had to him in his youth. When Robert became the Executive Director he knew he didn't want to stay pent up in his office all day, but become apart of these children's life and push them to be respectful and take advantage of every opportunity that is awarded to them.

"The kids are the most important aspect of this job and organization. You can never put yourself in a level where you aren't in touch with the kids."

Faces of New Bedford is a project by Colton Simmons. If you are interested in booking a shoot or getting prints from the series email all inquiries to colton@coltonsimmons.com

Follow Colton on Instagram:
<https://instagram.com/simmonscolton>