

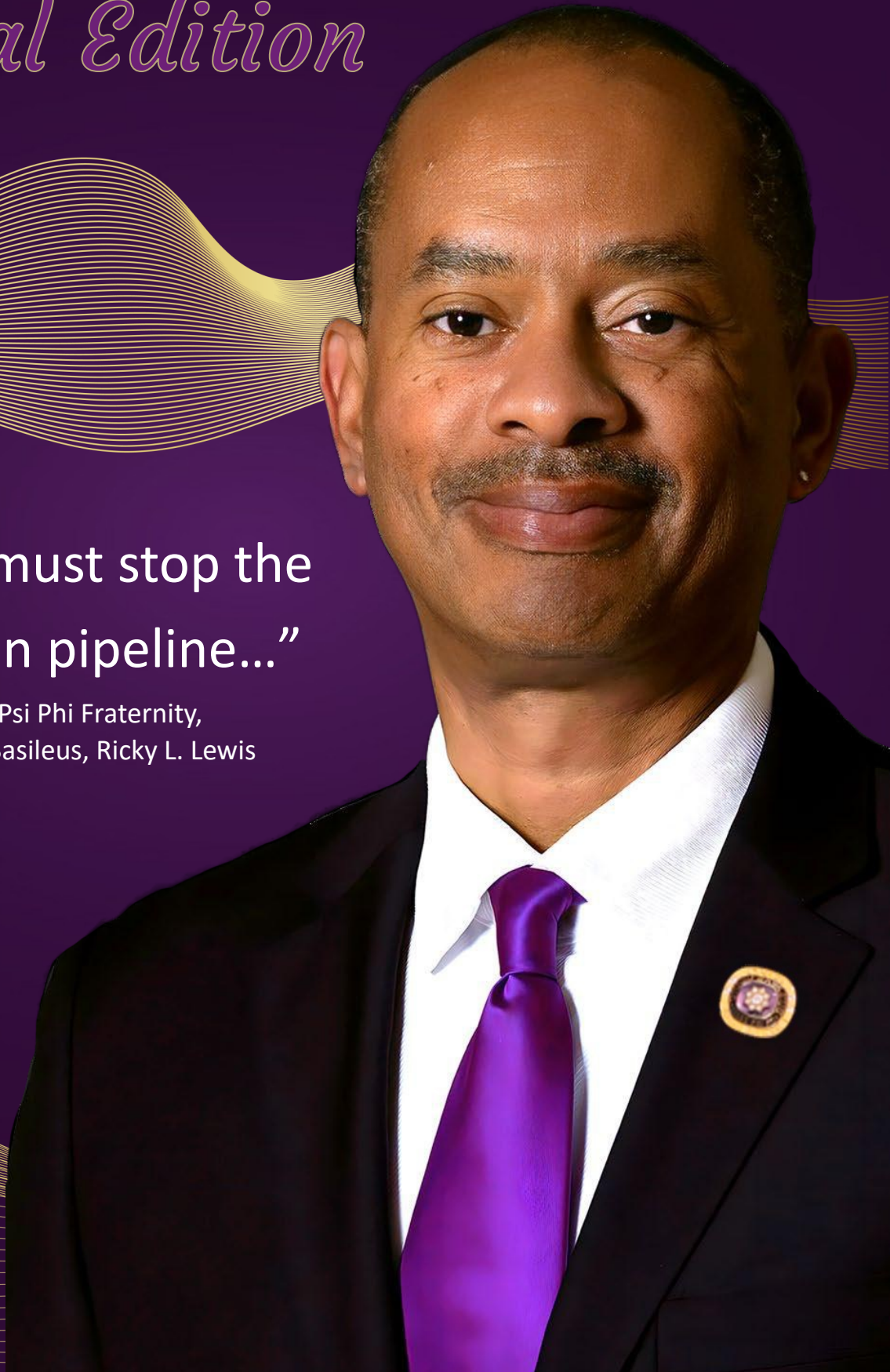
# *International Fatherhood and Mentoring* **NEWSLETTER**

Volume 12 | Issue No. 2

## *Special Edition*

“Brothers, we must stop the  
school-to-prison pipeline...”

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity,  
Grand Basileus, Ricky L. Lewis



**VOLUME 12 | 2025**

**Special Edition**

**April-May-June**

**Quarterly Publication of the  
International Committee on  
Fatherhood and Mentoring**

**OUR GOAL:**

Publish Information from Each District,  
Each Quarter

Next Newsletter Features:

Fatherhood, Youth Leadership Conferences,  
Mentoring, Brother You're On My Mind  
[geodtaylor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geodtaylor@sbcglobal.net)

~ In Memoriam ~

Verne L. Wilson

8th District, Omega Chapter



**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

September 15, 2025

3rd Quarter 2025, Submit information for  
July, August, and September 2025

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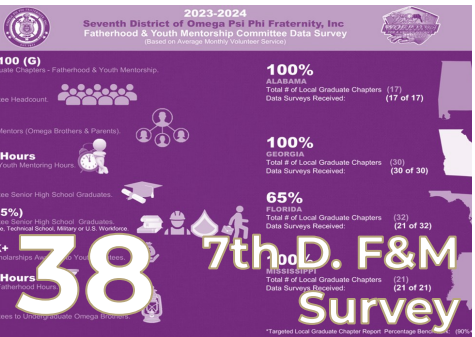
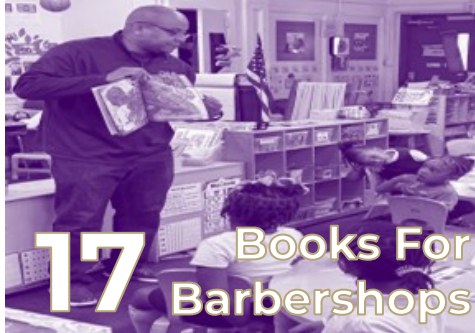
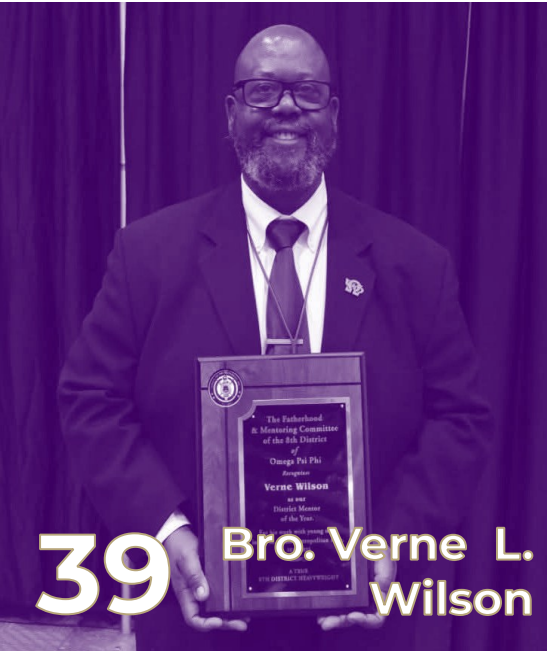
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# Message from the Grand Basileus

Greetings Brothers:

I am pleased to welcome you to this special edition of the *Omega International Fatherhood and Mentoring Newsletter* - the *Congressional Black Caucus* hard copy edition.

Our Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated is in good order. Let us keep it that way. I shall mention specific matters that continue to heavily resonate with me.

**First**, when I entered the office of 42<sup>nd</sup> Grand Basileus of the greatest fraternity in the world in 2022, I said then that we must do all we can do to stop the *school-to-prison pipeline*. There is much information on social media about the probable cause and effect of factors that result in a higher rate of students of color being placed in the juvenile justice system. We must continue to do our part to counter these facts.

**Second**, our fathers and brothers of Omega continue to reach out for our help. We must up our game and keep our brothers and fathers uppermost in our minds eye. Instances of brothers, and even young fathers having entered Omega Chapter, just in the last quarter have been astounding. Let us continue to reach out to a brother; lend a hand to a father when and where you can. Be a good brother, a good friend, and a good neighbor.

**Third**, the use of social media in today's world, is inevitable and encouraged. How, when, where, and under what circumstances we use it, however, can be a blessing or a curse! Please take care in the use of social media and, that the choice you make shall not be a curse to you, your family, your future, or our beloved fraternity!

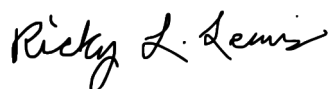
**Fourth**, as I mentioned to you in my May 19, 2025 Constant Contact letter, we have exceeded another Omega milestone, having achieved the highest number of financial members in the history of the fraternity – our financial membership is more than 35,000 members. What is amazing about this fact is – it keeps us in the business of doing Omega business – *bringing uplift to our communities*. And, why not!

Finally, Brothers, our fiscal year does not end until October 31, 2025. As I have said on many occasions, let us continue to do our part to make sure that every reclaimable and unfinancial brother understands that with them – we are all better for their being back home to Omega. With them back home, we can do more to continue to bring uplift to others and for our communities.

Let us continue to hold firm to our cardinal principles: manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift! Let us continue to lead our communities forward into a significant *next level* beginning.

Brothers, *you're on my mind* and I thank you and your family for your service.

Fraternally,



Ricky L. Lewis  
42<sup>nd</sup> Grand Basileus



“Brothers, we must stop the school-to-prison pipeline...”

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# Message from the IFM Chairman

Greetings Brothers of Omega

That — right there — is fatherhood.

Being a father is not just a title. It is a calling — one that reaches into every corner of our lives: social, political, economic, educational, and personal.

**Socially**, a father is often the first leader a child will ever know. He models how to speak with kindness, how to love with integrity, and how to live with purpose. Children watch us more than they hear us. And when we show up with love and consistency, we shape not only their futures — but the future of our communities.

**Politically**, a father must be present and engaged. Not just for today — but for tomorrow's generations. Voting, speaking up, paying attention — these aren't just civic duties; they are fatherly ones. Because what we allow today, our children inherit tomorrow.

**Economically**, a father teaches more than how to earn a dollar. He teaches how to value it. How to work for it, save it, give it, and use it wisely. He plants seeds of discipline, so that his children can one day harvest freedom — not just financial, but personal.

**Educationally**, fathers are far more than homework helpers. We are mentors. Tutors in the school of life. Whether we're helping with a tough algebra question, encouraging a dream that sounds impossible, our belief in them becomes their fuel.

And **personally** — health matters. Because if we're not here, we can't give. That yearly check-up? That gym session? That moment of reflection? It isn't just for us — it's an act of love for the people who count on us most.

Strength isn't just muscles and endurance. It's presence. Clarity. Wholeness.

So, I ask you: *What will your children remember?*

Will it be how you showed up even when it was hard? How you led with love? How you modeled what it meant to be a man worth following?

Being a father is foundational. And when we embrace that truth, with humility and courage, we don't just raise children — *we build legacies.*

Thank you.



Bro. Raymond J. Bell  
3<sup>rd</sup> Chairman, International Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated



“ A man gets home from a long shift, feet aching, mind drained. He walks through the door, and there is his daughter — crayon in hand, big smile on her face — asking him to read a book she's made. Not a report. Not a paycheck. Just her world, scribbled in purple and orange. And he sits down, tired as he is, and listens.”

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# On Mentors and Mentoring: Building Strong Men-TORS

By Brother Roi T. Johnson, Grand Chaplain, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

I came across a quotation in a recent reading that spoke to my spirit.

Said the anonymous author: “besides their fathers, every young male needs other men as mentors speaking regularly into his life. The relationship is better if it is over the course of years as they are walking side by side.”

Our Holy Writ, both old and new divisions detail accounts of the mantel of wisdom and subsequent leadership being transferred from a senior seasoned man walking beside a younger male mentee, tender in years and green in life’s experiences.

Abraham imparted wisdom, correction, and direction to his brother’s son, Lot. Rascal though he was, Jacob was sent to a far country to mature under the direction of an uncle more sinister in motive than Jacob himself was.

Elijah disrobed his mantel and placed it on the shoulders of Elisha so that his protégé could prophesy to and lead God’s people.

Moses, though found in a floating basket for his protection was “mentored” in the household of Pharaoh and came of age while mastering the state-of-the-art learnings in mathematics, philosophy, history, hieroglyphics, and leadership.

Jesus of Nazareth gave guidance and broadened the worldviews of those who were his disciples, particularly young John, while Paul, as he knew the mother and grandmother of young Timothy, gave vocational guidance to his loyalist.

TO WALK BESIDE AND GUIDE THE THOUGHT PROCESSES and shape the thinking and resulting actions of a young manchild is often the duty and responsibility of the father, but all Black men have an abiding duty to ensure that those who walk behind us learn to walk boldly, confidently, and shamelessly before the world.

If your father, teacher, pastor, coach, or mentor believes you can do something, accomplish some goal, achieve some victory, you are more likely to do it.

Forty years ago, the author Robert Bly penned a book entitled **Iron John** wherein he shared a line that went, ***A boy becomes a man when an older man sees him.***

With influence from one who sees the boy, the trajectory of the life of the boy can be redirected, while the course of your life can be altered. To see those young Black princes who walk behind us is the opportunity that male mentoring affords us.

Ω A truly great mentor is hard to find, difficult to part with and impossible to forget.



“A Friend to Every Omega Man”

Ω A truly great mentor sees more talent and ability within you than you see in yourself and stays with you to bring it out of you.

Ω A truly great mentor empowers one walking with him to see a possible future and believes it can be obtained.

Ω A truly great mentor shares his knowledge and experience to inspire another by walking behind him to reach his goals.

While it may be cliché to hear one say, be the mentor you wish you had, it cannot be overstated that the commitment to truly great mentorship places a huge and disproportionate investment of time with the desired resulting outcome does not yield blessings and benefits for years to come. But the investment of time must be made anyway so that the world in which we live and the culture in which those who come after us will reside is made better. The gift of your time in mentoring is an investment that will keep on giving generations beyond you.

There is an ancient Mandarin proverb that says: the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now.

MEN OF OMEGA CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE for that which has not been done in the lives of young Black boys in yesteryear, but we can take ownership of shaping the strong Black men of tomorrow, one life at a time.

MEN OF OMEGA MUST BE DETERMINED, must be disciplined, must be focused, and cannot be afraid to unleash the latent potential that lies beneath the outward energy displayed by our sons in need of direction. Where they go and how fast they get there is largely determined by our willingness to invest ourselves in them and invest we must.

Mandela said it far better than I ever could: **History will judge us by the difference we make in the everyday lives of our children.**

# Using Our Dollars to Invest in Our Future

By Bro. Zebby Miles, Sr.  
President Alumni of Lambda Epsilon Foundation (ALEF) Inc

Brothers, Sisters, Supporters, et. al.,

I am currently the President of ALEF, a mission-driven 501(c)3 organization dedicated to supporting our home chapter--Lambda Epsilon, alma mater – Tuskegee University, and its local community. I write this note to you with clarity, urgency, and conviction: it's time we build a sustainable culture of investing in our HBCUs—financially and beyond.

IN TODAY'S ECONOMIC CLIMATE—with inflation, job instability, and rising cost of living—it's understandable why charitable giving often takes a backseat. But now more than ever, we must double down on supporting our HBCUs. These institutions are the bedrock of Black excellence and generational uplift, yet they remain underfunded and too often overlooked.

This movement isn't just about philanthropy—it's about changing our habits and our mindset. For generations, we've been conditioned not to talk about money. Financial literacy has been absent from too many of our homes, schools, churches, and circles of influence. As a result, we've relied on fragmented information, predatory advice, and fractured hope. That cycle ends now.

OUR HBCUs HAVE STOOD STRONG despite historic underfunding, minimal state support, and systemic neglect. We must act—not just as alumni, but as a people—with deliberate and recurring investments that secure the future of these institutions.

Let's commit to more than degree opportunities—we must build for generational impact. Learn and teach others about financial health. Advocate for family/generational wealth-building. Start monthly sustained giving campaigns—\$25, \$50, \$100 adds up fast. Properly invest in insurance, real estate, mutual funds, and succession planning. Give intentionally. Educate consistently. Recycle our dollars within our community multiple times before they exit. If other cultures can do it 10 times, we must aim higher.

BLACK GREEK LETTER ORGANIZATIONS, (the Divine 9), have a vital role to play. We must consider adding HBCU support to our mandated programs. We must also increase our scholarship opportunities. Consider supporting minor infrastructure projects. Promote and build endowment accounts. Give at the chapter, regional, and national levels. If not us — who?

As a proud graduate of Tuskegee University, I know firsthand the power of an HBCU education. I've walked the yard, benefited from grants and scholarships, taken on loans, and now work within our foundation to give back—funding campus infrastructure, awarding scholarships, and growing



Brother Zebby Miles and ALEF "Raising the Bar"

our endowment.

Is it bold? **Yes!**  
Is it ambitious? **You bet!**  
Is it necessary? **Absolutely!**

OUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON US. Would we truly risk living in a world where our HBCUs no longer exist? Not on our watch! The culture, history, and brilliance lost would be immeasurable.

So I ask: Will you join the movement? Will you commit to a monthly gift (big or small)? Will you mentor, advocate, and invest in the very institutions that have offered access to higher education for multiple generations?

Let's make HBCUs sustainable. Let's increase our culture's financial empowerment. Let's invest in our future—today. Are you in? Let's make it happen!

With resolve and gratitude,

Bro. Zeb Miles Sr. 757-644-7923  
Thanks for the opportunity!

Visit <https://alef.foundation/donate>  
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# Black Males Face a Mental Depression Crisis

By Bro. Robert W. Fairchild, Fatherhood Advisor

Brothers, as we continue our work in Fatherhood and Mentoring and engaging in Brother, You're On My Mind efforts, it is becoming increasingly important to understand the impact that we can have on addressing the issue of depression in Black males. This proactive, preventative effort in reaching out to others goes a long way in helping to identify those individuals who are stressed and facing situations that leads to depression.

Black males across the United States face significant mental depression challenges, influenced by lack of employment, health issues, educational disparities, systemic racism, and social injustices. Add to this list the impact of life challenges that youth face, especially males because of the impact of fathers not being present in the home. These are all obstacles contributing to a growing mental depression crisis within the Black community leading to fatal results.

According to the **American Psychological Association**, suicide rates among Black males have risen in recent years. A 2024 research letter published in JAMA Psychiatry revealed a startling shift: in 2013, the midlife mortality rate from so-called “deaths of despair”— via suicide, alcohol use, and drug overdoses—was nearly twice as high among White males as Black males. By 2022, however, the death rate among Black individuals had nearly tripled, reaching 103.81 per 100,000, compared to 102.63 per 100,000 among

Whites. These challenges are a major concern and must be addressed.

Our efforts in working with fathers, young men and boys goes a long way in getting ahead of the game in discussing and dealing with potential life issues before they become serious problems. The engaging in training sessions and activities that teach individuals how to cope with everyday situations builds confidence. We do this well in Fatherhood and Mentoring.

Brothers, I ask that we take the next step. Engage in **Brother, You're On My Mind** efforts; we can identify and reach out to individuals that may need help. We can make a difference in many cases helping to prevent depression leading to fatal results and by helping to turn this trend around. Your reaching out to individuals shows them that you care and are concerned. It could make the difference between a life-or-death decision by the troubled person.



Bro. Robert W. Fairchild

## Sparks Offers Services As Pallbearers for Homeless Veterans

Montgomery, AL – Omega Sparks - Manhood Inc., of Sigma Phi Chapter is making a profound impact through their Youth Mentoring program, serving as pallbearers for homeless veterans who have no family. This dignified service honors the sacrifices of those who served their country. **The Need:** Many homeless veterans pass away without family to claim their bodies, often resulting in unmarked graves. **The Solution:** Omega Sparks partners with funeral homes and organizations to provide respectful funerals, with student volunteers carrying the caskets. **The Impact:** This program brings recognition and community to the deceased while teaching students empathy, service, and the value of honoring those who served.

Sincerely,

Bro. Dr. James E. Lovejoy '14 & Bro. Dr. Robert Thomas '08, Manhood Inc., Co-Chairmen,  
(813)-777-3274 & (334)-462-5657 Cells, Address: P.O. Box 5109, Montgomery, AL



PIC•COLLAGE

# Honoring a Legacy:

## The Brother Robert Fairchild Scholarship Award, Alpha Chapter

By Bro. Eric O. Johnson

Greetings Brothers,

I pray all is well with you and your loving families. Allow me to share a good news story with you, my brothers. Brother Robert Fairchild '64 Eta Sigma former Grand Keeper of Records and Seal for the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., stands as a living testament to the values that define our brotherhood.

For over 25 years, he served as the Alpha Chapter Advisor at Howard University, the Mother Pearl of our great fraternity. His unwavering dedication has left an indelible mark on generations of Omega men, shaping not only their academic journeys but also their character and commitment to service.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., was founded upon four cardinal principles: **Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift**. Brother Fairchild's life and service embody each of these ideals.

His guidance has inspired young men to pursue Manhood with integrity, to persevere through challenges, and to uplift their communities through service and leadership.

Yet, it is his **devotion to Scholarship** that stands out as a beacon for all who follow in his footsteps.

Recognizing this, the members of Alpha Chapter took the initiative to establish the **Brother Robert Fairchild Scholarship**. This honor not only acknowledges his

commitment to academic excellence but reinforces the importance of Scholarship as a guiding light for Omega men.

**Scholarship** is more than academic achievement—it is the pursuit of knowledge, the cultivation of wisdom, and the responsibility to share one's learning with others.

Brother Fairchild's legacy extends beyond the classroom.

Through his example, he has demonstrated the importance of Fatherhood and Mentoring. He has nurtured, guided, and supported countless brothers, helping them to realize their full potential both as students and as men.

The **Brother Robert Fairchild Scholarship** stands as a lasting tribute to his exemplary service, ensuring that future generations will continue to be inspired by his dedication to our cardinal principles.

In Friendship,  
Bro. Eric "EJ" Johnson  
Alpha Omega Chapter, KRS  
Chairman, International Father's Day Committee



Brother Eric O. Johnson

***"Presumption should never make us neglect that which appears easy to us, nor despair make us lose courage at the sight of difficulties." Benjamin Banneker***

### Vocabulary Update: An Old Word for New Ears!

**Drapetomania:** A term coined in the 19th century by Dr. Samuel A. Cartwright, a physician who supported slavery, to describe a supposed mental illness that caused enslaved people to run away. Cartwright believed that enslaved people who ran away were suffering from an irrational and uncontrollable desire to escape, which he called drapetomania. He claimed that this illness was caused by the "peculiar habits" of the African race and that it could be cured by harsh punishments, such as whippings and amputations.

**Its Scientific Validity:** Drapetomania is widely considered to be a pseudoscientific concept, as there is no scientific evidence to support its existence. It was used as a tool to justify slavery and suppress the resistance of enslaved people.

**Legacy:** The term "drapetomania" is now seen as a racist and offensive relic of the slavery era. It is important to remember that this term was used to dehumanize and oppress enslaved people, and it has no place in modern medical discourse.

# Just A Thought: A Clear and Present Danger

By Brother Dr. Carl A. Blunt  
32nd First Vice Grand Basileus  
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

**I**N today's environment, amongst the myriads of executive orders, administrative policies, restrictive measures, and legislative decisions placed in our path, there is a message that is crystal clear in its tone and tenor; i.e., a growing sentiment among some to put Black folks "back in their place" by resurrecting Jim Crow era verbiage and efforts as a grim reminder. Just like the measles, overt racism is back in full effect.

To put my opening statement into perspective, the Senegalese scholar **Dr. Cheikh Anta Diop** says: for an oppressor to oppress a people they must take away 3 things: their history, their language, and their psychological factors. Further research reveals that Dr. Leonard Jeffries describes psychological factors mentioned by Dr. Diop as being the values, interests, and principles of a people. Once those are taken away, the oppressor substitutes their own values, interests and principles via constant messaging and reinforcement.

The result of that substitution is that the oppressed, when faced with challenges, will most likely arrive at a conclusion that will be to the benefit of the oppressor. That psychological paradigm answers a question many of us have when wondering why so many choices our people make don't always serve our best interest; they tend to make us complicit in perpetuating our own oppression.

## **THE GRAVITATIONAL PULL OF RACISM**

The "Pull of Racism" is real and is posing a clear and present danger that could effectively impose negative consequences on Black people up and down the spectrum – regardless of economic status or reputation. Consequences that could set all people of color back 75 years, by restricting their ability to maintain their station, or

prevent the accumulation or transfer of wealth and position for several generations to come.

The oppressors begin their attacks by utilizing the age-old tactic of misinformation. Alternative facts are repeated over and over, logic is dismissed, the truth is concealed or distorted, and the oppressors portray themselves as the actual victims.

Another adage says: the bigger the lie - the longer it's told - the more people will believe it.

## **THE FALSE NARRATIVES**

False narratives are repeated today incessantly, not only in collective speech by officials, surrogates, and social media personalities, but also spewed via various outlets such as social media, television, and print. The oppressors create confusion by giving words and deeds new meanings which are negative, contradictory, and often incendiary.

For example, the privileged class, (be it privilege by wealth, station, position, generational or just the "Good Ole Boy" system), has traditionally benefitted from laws and opportunities to which the underprivileged did not have access.

With the passing of the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 and other legislation that leveled the playing field, the non-privileged gained access to opportunities, primarily employment, education, judicial, and healthcare, that had been denied them for generations. And most recently, the privileged class has successfully argued that being fair to those who are defined as under-privileged is unfair to those that are privileged. It appears, ironically, that fairness is now considered a discriminatory practice and cannot be used against the privileged class.

Another, and more stark example rests with the purpose of Diversity,



Brother Dr. Carl A. Blunt

Equity, and Inclusion, commonly referred to by the acronym DEI. Recognizing and allowing others to share different ideas, experiences, talents, and abilities would seem to be a benefit, unfortunately without a shred of proof, those that position themselves as oppressors have hijacked that concept and have equated DEI with substandard performance.

Moving forward with that premise that any female, person of color, or especially a Black employee is subject to be labeled a DEI hire and removed from their job or position based solely on the color of their skin, without any consideration given to their qualifications, job performance or merit. You may call that practice what you want, but to me it has the textbook definition of racism.

## **Definitions of Racism**

To clarify and punctuate my point, I searched for definitions of racism that did not just explain what it was but described how it is. Here are definitions that seemed to corroborate my thought process. "Historically, those who openly professed or practiced racism held that members of low-status races should be limited to low-status jobs and that

(Continued on page 11)



members of the dominant race should have exclusive access to political power, economic resources, high-status jobs, and unrestricted Civil Rights” (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/racism>).

Second, by the late 19th & Early 20th Century, the above ideology had evolved with the help of many ‘so-called’ academics, medical professionals, scientists, theologians and polygenists who crafted those thoughts into what became a more palatable and justifiable practice called Social Darwinism which espoused that “the poor were the unfit and should not be aided in the struggle for existence” (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/social-Darwinism>), and that wealth was a sign of success.

### **SOCIAL DARWINISM**

At the societal level, social Darwinism was used as a philosophical rationalization for imperialist, colonialist, and racist policies, sustaining belief in Anglo Saxon

or Aryan cultural and biological superiority.

By being aware or “Woke” to the strategies used against us and knowing what to expect from the oppressors, we can break those psychological bonds and successfully navigate the cultural, social, and economic obstacle course in our path. By educating ourselves, along with our students, our families, and our people, and by studying and understanding our history, our language, our values, our interests and our principles, the threat of the misinformation campaign can be assuaged and over time even negated.

THROUGHOUT MY COLUMNS I have stressed the importance of knowing our history by referencing historical instances and the results of previous misinformation campaigns, exposing distorted versions of history, and stressing the importance of knowing what history is being fed to our children, grandchildren, and students. Inaccurate interpretation and narratives often downplay and eliminates our ancestors’ contributions and their resiliency, all to

eliminate our hope for the future and leave us vulnerable and complicit.

In response to the “clear and present danger” of the misinformation strategy detailed above, additional assets and resources are being discussed to enhance the Fatherhood Initiative Newsletter and will be presented to the editor when fully designed.

The enhancements will include true and accurate history lessons, along with entrepreneurial, personal development, effective communication, decision-making and other modules that can be delivered via a dedicated Fatherhood Initiative YouTube channel and other social media platforms to Educate, Empower, and Enrich our future leaders with the truth.

This video enhancement is being developed with the objective of evolving into a certified course to include learning objectives and school credits.

*Stay Tuned!*

***Brother Dr. Carl A. Blunt is an author, lecturer, and immediate past Board Chairman of the Omega Youth Leadership Academy***

## **Mother to Son**

**By Brother Langston Hughes**

Well, son, I'll tell you:  
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.  
It's had tacks in it,  
And splinters,  
And boards torn up,  
And places with no carpet on the floor—  
Bare.  
But all the time  
I've been a-climbin' on,  
And reachin' landin's,  
And turnin' corners,  
And sometimes goin' in the dark  
Where there ain't been no light.  
So, boy, don't you turn back.  
Don't you set down on the steps.  
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.  
Don't you fall now—  
For I've still goin', honey,  
I've still climbin',  
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.



Bro. Langston Hughes, Omega Chapter

# The Leadership Impact of the Exodus Midwives: Lessons for Today's Men

By Brother Charles "Chuck" Clemons, Jr., 12th District Chaplain

**T**he story of Shiphrah and Puah, the Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1, stands as one of the earliest and most powerful examples of moral leadership in the face of tyranny.

When Pharaoh, the most powerful ruler of the ancient world, commanded them to kill every newborn Hebrew boy, these women quietly but resolutely refused, choosing to honor God rather than obey an immoral order.

Their leadership impact is profound for several reasons. First, their decision to resist was not dramatic or self-promoting. The text simply says, "The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the King of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live" (Exodus 1:17). Their courage was rooted in a deep moral conviction—a fear of God that outweighed fear of earthly power. This is the first recorded act of civil disobedience in history, and it changed the course of a nation.

The midwives' names are preserved in Scripture, while Pharaoh's is forgotten. This contrast highlights a timeless truth: those who stand for righteousness, even in obscurity, leave a legacy that outlasts the powerful who serve only themselves. Because of their faithfulness, God honored them, giving them families and a place in the unfolding story of Israel's redemption.

## Principles for Leading in Difficult Times

The example of Shiphrah and Puah offers enduring leadership lessons, especially relevant for men navigating today's challenges:

### • Prioritize Moral Conviction Over Popularity

True leaders make the right decision, not the easy or popular one. The midwives risked everything to do what was right, teaching us that integrity is the foundation of lasting influence.

### • Lead by Example, Not by Command

They did not ask others to take risks they were unwilling to take themselves. Modern leaders must be willing to "get their hands dirty" and model the courage and compassion they expect from others.

### • Resilience in the Face of Pressure

Leadership during crisis requires grit and resilience. The midwives acted under threat of death, showing that steadfastness in adversity often defines great leadership.

### • Compassion and Kindness

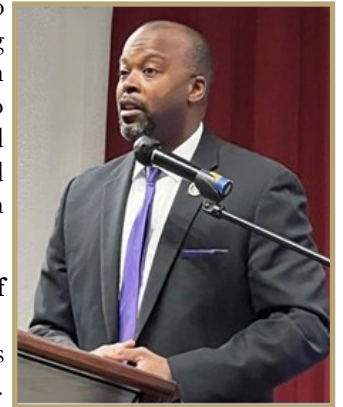
Their refusal to participate in genocide was an act of profound compassion. In a world often marked by division and cruelty, leading with kindness and empathy is more vital than ever.

### • Obedience to a Higher Calling

The midwives' loyalty was first to God and to life. Today's leaders must remember that there are values and principles higher than any earthly authority or policy.

## Conclusion

The story of the Exodus midwives is not just a tale of ancient heroism; it is a blueprint for leadership in dark times. Shiphrah and Puah remind us that true leaders may be unsung, their actions quiet but world-changing. For men today, their example calls for courage, integrity, compassion, and unwavering commitment to what is right—even when it is costly. In honoring God and protecting life, they shaped history. So can we.



Brother Charles "Chuck" Clemons

*Brother Charles Clemons, Jr., 12th District Chaplain, author of "UNDIVIDED: A Biblical Response to What Divides U.S.," 1st Edition, 2020*





## 1<sup>st</sup> District

Brother Eric Lindsey, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

### Eta Phi 2nd Annual Father's Day Fellowship Event: Brotherhood, Brunch & Legacy

**H**yd Park, MA – On Sunday, June 15, 2025, the Eta Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., hosted its 2nd Annual Father's Day Fellowship Event at Park 54 Restaurant and Lounge in Hyde Park. With an atmosphere filled with love, reflection, and fraternity, brothers and their families gathered to celebrate and uplift the vital role of Black fathers in our homes and communities.

The afternoon featured a beautifully prepared brunch, heartfelt conversations, and a livestream of the 2025 International Headquarters Father's Day Program, aired from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM. The program centered on the timely and meaningful theme: "What Are the Most Important Life Skills Fathers Should Teach Their Children?"

A highlight of the day was seeing Brother Eric E. Lindsey, Chairman of the First District Fatherhood and Mentoring Committee, featured in the national program alongside his children. His contribution, filled with authenticity and insight, powerfully illustrated the legacy-building impact of present, purposeful fatherhood. The broadcast also included several images of First District brothers with their children, offering a moving visual tribute to Black fatherhood in action.

We were deeply honored by the presence of several distinguished First District leaders who joined us in fellowship and support:

- Brother Anthony Lilley, 1st Vice District Representative
- Brother Durrell Harris, District Keeper of Records and Seal
- Brother Mark Arnold, District Chaplain



- Brother Linnett Bligen, Immediate Past District Representative

Their presence underscored the District's collective commitment to our mandated Fatherhood and Mentoring program and the ongoing work to strengthen men, families, and communities. Wives, sweethearts, and children were warmly welcomed, reinforcing the day's theme that fatherhood is a family-centered calling—one that thrives in love, unity, and support.

As Eta Phi Chapter continues its Centennial celebration, the success of this annual gathering serves as both tradition and testimony. We are reminded that through Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift, Omega men don't just talk about fatherhood—they live it, lead it, and leave a legacy through it.

## Coming Home

**W**aterbury, CT – On June 12, 2025 brothers of Lambda Rho chapter met with professionals at Mount Olive AME Zion, Brother Kelsey Hopson's church, to explore and envelop strategies to reconnect convicted felons with the Waterbury community. Retired State Representative, Family Court Judge, LMSW and concerned citizens all sat at the table and shared their strategies for getting gainful employment, housing, substance abuse and mental health counseling for felons reentering Waterbury. The main issues identified were getting jobs and apprenticeships, CDL license for felons. The process of getting criminal records expunged and workers indemnified will be pursued.



## Black Fatherhood: Strength, Struggles & Joy—Redefining Manhood and Fatherhood



**R**andolph, MA – On Saturday, June 7, 2025, the town of Randolph, served as a powerful backdrop for the latest installment of the Black Fatherhood: Manhood to Fatherhood Series. This impactful community event, themed “Strength, Struggles & Joy: Creating Legacy, Redefining Manhood and Fatherhood,” brought together fathers, mentors, educators, and local leaders for an afternoon of reflection, dialogue, and empowerment.

This initiative was a collaborative effort between the Eta Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., the Norfolk-Plymouth County Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and the Omicron Chi Sigma Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. Together these organizations created an intergenerational space to affirm and elevate the role of Black fathers in shaping thriving families and communities.

The event took place at the Randolph Intergenerational

Community Center, a vibrant hub for community engagement and empowerment, dedicated in loving memory of the beloved Paul K. Fernandes (1947–2017) — a longtime town official and the first Black person to serve on Randolph’s Board of Selectmen. His life’s work and legacy of leadership continue to resonate through the community he helped shape.

Moderated by Bro. Jeremi Taft, Eta Phi ’08 and Dean of Students at Boston Prep Charter School, the program featured a dynamic panel of community changemakers: Shawn Brown (Executive Director, Youth Guidance Boston), Conan Harris (Founder, Conan Harris & Associates), Winston Bodrick, Psi ’13 (Principal, Ambry Development Group), and Kurt Faustin (Founder, The Drop Out Academy). Together, they shared powerful reflections on fatherhood, manhood, and resilience in the face of generational challenges.

We are proud to announce that the second installment of this series will take place on November 15, 2025, during Achievement Week. As we continue this important work, we remain committed to creating spaces where Black fatherhood is not only affirmed but celebrated—honoring the past, elevating the present, and empowering the future.



## Brunch and Ball Wraps Up an Inspiring Season at New Mission High

**O**n May 31st the gym at New Mission High School was filled with energy and excitement as Iota Chi wrapped up its final “Brunch and Ball” session of the school year. The event, which has become a highly anticipated weekend tradition, welcomed over 30 students for a morning of basketball drills, skill-building, and community bonding.

More than just a basketball clinic, Brunch and Ball has served as a dynamic space where young athletes come not only to improve their game but also to grow in confidence and character. This final session of the year stayed true to that mission. Students ran through intensive drills, honed



(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

their fundamentals, and received hands-on coaching from mentors who care deeply about their development on and off the court.

The highlight of the day came when Brother Clayton (21\*) the head coach of New Mission and respected voice in the Iota Chi chapter, addressed the group. His words offered more than just tips on improving their jump shots or footwork — he spoke on the importance of discipline, self-belief, and resilience. “When you believe in yourself,” he shared, “you can go far not only in this game, but in life.”

Students left the gym inspired and upbeat, many sharing their eagerness for the return of Brunch and Ball in the fall. One student summed it up best: “I always learn something new here. It's not just fun — it makes me better. I can't wait for it to start again.”

With a strong finish to the season, Brunch and Ball continues to cement its place as a cornerstone youth initiative, combining mentorship, athletic training, and community — and it's only just getting started.



## STEAMS Expo at Benjamin Banneker Charter Public School

**O**n June 10, Brothers Edmund Stanford (16) and Frantz Paillant Jr. (21) of Iota Chi attended the annual STEAMS Expo at Benjamin Banneker Charter Public School. This year's theme, “Discovering the Wonders of Water,” celebrated the curiosity and creativity of students from Pre-K through 6th grade as they explored the many dimensions of water and its role in our world.

The Expo featured an incredible range of student projects that highlighted both scientific understanding and artistic expression. One 5th grade classroom transformed their entire space into a stunning underwater coral reef, creating an immersive experience that captured the beauty and complexity of marine life. Kindergarten students constructed a working model of a dam, inspired by the engineering skills of beavers. Meanwhile, the 3rd grade class built a submarine named “The Alvin,” modeled after the famous deep-sea submersible from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

Bro. Paillant was especially moved by a thoughtful and well-executed 2nd grade presentation. So inspired by the students' enthusiasm and depth of knowledge, he purchased STEM kits for every student in that classroom to continue nurturing their scientific exploration.

In the spirit of service, before departing the Expo, the brothers also donated three large bags of adult women's clothing to support the school's ongoing efforts to help parents in need.

Iota Chi remains committed to uplifting the community at Benjamin Banneker. From supporting educational initiatives like the STEAMS Expo to helping families facing food insecurity during the holidays, we are proud to stand beside the school in its mission to empower and uplift every student and family it serves.

## Steams: 10 Boys & Girls Initiative

By Brother Francois Fils-Aime



**B**oston, MA – Bro. Fils-Aime (96\*) of Iota Chi and students from around Boston Public Schools came together this week in Franklin Park for the BPS Office of Opportunity Gaps' 10 Boys & Girls Initiative Award Ceremony and Celebration!

Students received certificates that honor their participation and recognize their leadership and academic improvement. They also held an African libation and drumming ceremony and engaged in activities, ranging from board games to line dancing, volleyball, and soccer. A tasty lunch was shared, and everyone enjoyed the outdoor atmosphere on the beautiful day.

The 10 Boys Initiative and 10 Girls Initiative focus on the socio-emotional development of boys and girls of color in BPS. The Initiatives offer a character-based curriculum model that increases students' sense of belonging, decreases chronic absenteeism, and works to reshape their life trajectory. The Initiatives motivate students to improve their leadership, decision-making, and critical-thinking abilities. The Initiative also is rooted in rites of passage traditions modified to fit the school context. We are so proud of our 10 Boys & Girls Initiative.





## 2<sup>nd</sup> District

Brother Matthew Stevens, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania

### Tau Pi Chapter's Omega Academy Mentoring Program Wins Prestigious District Award

Submitted By Brother Anthony Hairston,  
Chairman, Omega Academy Mentoring Program, Tau Pi Chapter

**B**uffalo, NY, April 2025 —Tau Pi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., proudly celebrates a significant achievement as its **Omega Academy Mentoring Program** (OAMP) receives the Second District Fatherhood and Mentoring Program of the Year Award during the 77th Second District Meeting.

The award was presented by Grand Basileus Brother Ricky Lewis and Second District Representative Amir Shareef, along with a \$5,000 check, to Tau Pi Basileus Brother Nicholas Meade in recognition of the chapter's outstanding mentoring efforts.

Chaired by Brother Anthony Hairston, OAMP concludes the latter half of its 9-month cycle with this well-deserved honor. The competition was intense as there were numerous chapters with outstanding mentoring programs vying for the acclamation.

**Empowering Young Black Males:** Serving 40 mentees from grades 3 through 12, primarily Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) students, OAMP is divided into three cohorts: Elementary, Middle, and High School. Each cohort is tailored to meet specific developmental and academic needs of their age groups:

- Elementary & Middle School Cohorts: Emphasize academic achievement and behavioral development.
- High School Cohort: Maintains academic focus while also preparing mentees for adulthood, college, and leadership roles.

**MENTORING PROVIDED BY 23 DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS**, all of whom undergo annual background checks and commit to regular bi-Saturday sessions, and weekly check-ins with their mentees.

#### Valued Partnerships:

**OAMP** thrives through strong community partnerships and collaborative relationships:

**HCPSS:** Provides facilities and a liaison, Ms. Tanya Holland, (education professional) volunteers her time to



coordinate program activities with the school system, monitor the mentees grades, and interfaces with the mentees' families.

The Bridge Builders Foundation of Maryland: Serves as OAMP's funding partner, conducting annual fundraising events that sustain this vital initiative.

A Summary of 2024–2025 Program Highlights OAMP's impact was reflected in a host of activities:

- High School Seniors and Juniors Toured nine HBCUs
- Chess instruction and competitions
- Dress and Decorum etiquette training
- Money Management Fundamentals
- African American History
- HBCU Football Game - Morgan State vs Norfolk State
- Comprehensive STEM Project
- Curriculum integrated reading, analytical, writing, math, public speaking, and presentation skills to complete their STEM projects
- Movie Day featuring "The Forge" with guided discussions
- Christmas and New Year Holiday Celebration
- The Great Debate. Debate team training. Focuses on research, deliberation, team work, and public speaking. The event culminated in debate team competition.
- Career Day. Professional black men sharing career paths, educational requirements, and guidance.
- End-of-Year Awards Ceremony at Wonderfly Arena.

Mentees received awarded for academic achievement, and for participation and growth in OAMP. The ceremony was followed by food and the run of gaming at the Wonderfly.

#### Looking Ahead

The Second District Fatherhood and Mentoring Program of the Year award is more than recognition; it is a reaffirmation of Tau Pi's commitment to mentoring excellence. The chapter remains focused on uplifting young Black males, equipping them with the tools, confidence, and guidance to thrive in all aspects of life.



# Our Kids Read: 2<sup>nd</sup> District Donates 1000 Books To Barbershops

By Brother Matt Stevens



**E**ast Orange, New Jersey – On Friday June 13, 2025 the Second District Fatherhood and Mentoring Committee closed out the 2025 Fraternity Year by participating in the Our Kids Read Project in East Orange, New Jersey. Our Kids Read (OKR) is a national book distribution center., in the State of Maryland, whose mission is to promote family literacy.

The President, Jahmal Lake, and the Second District FMC Chairman, Matt Stevens, met in January 2025 through social media and immediately started working together. The collaboration included a three-phase process: 1. Donation of Books; 2. Distribution of Books: and 3. Culmination Ceremony.

On April 5 OKR donated one thousand books to Chapters in the State of NJ from the Saddlebrook NJ Warehouse. Brother Matt Stevens and the FMC Chairs from ten Chapters spanning the State of NJ collected the books and in turn distributed them to eighteen barbershops, laundromats, and schools. Stevens asserted "the FMC Committee decided to donate the books to institutions in the community where children and parents (particularly fathers), frequent. The goal is to increase access to books and to families where they are." The Cities included Teaneck, Paterson, Jersey City, Newark, East Orange, Elizabeth, New Brunswick, Trenton, Asbury Park, and Sicklerville.

The June 13, 2025 program concluded at a Pre Father's Day Resource Fair hosted by the East Orange Family Success Center. Fathers were encouraged to attend the Summer Kick Off Resource fair to receive additional books and to register children for a variety of summer camps including sports, theater, and literacy.

Two hundred fathers attended the resource fair and the City of East Orange provided a City Proclamation thanking the Our Kids Read Company and the Eta Pi Chapter for continued support of children and families around literacy promotion. Brother Barry Devone, Chairman for the Greater Essex County Uplift Foundation, said, "today is special to see so many fathers truly engaged in the lives of their children. The Eta Pi Chapter, working in collaboration with GECUF and the East Orange Family Success Center, plans to expand this program in the years to come."

Stevens reported the success of the collaboration at the District's Fall Meeting and stated "in 2025 the State of NJ secured one thousand books with plans to expand to seven thousand in 2026 for the Second District and possibly twenty-five thousand across the Fraternity in 2027 and beyond."

For more information on Our Kids Read Company visit <https://www.ourkidsread.org> or Matt Stevens, 2nd [OmegaMentors@icloud.com](mailto:OmegaMentors@icloud.com) or by calling 973.820.8999.

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## Pittsburgh Omega Sylvester Pace HBCU Tour

By Dr. Rahmon Hart, Sr.

**P**ittsburgh, PA- The Iota Phi Foundation with support of Iota Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., hosted the 5th Annual Pittsburgh Omega Sylvester Pace HBCU Tour. Brother Dr. Rahmon Hart, Chairman of Board of the Iota Phi Foundation, and the brothers of Iota Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., are planning for their next HBCU Tour. According to Brother Hart, plans are being made for the next big HBCU Tour that will take place in the spring of 2026. More information will be made available in the next issue of the newsletter.

This video features highlights and testimonials from students who have attended the previous tours.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=aUzS5g-r4hU>

Dr. Hart, the Foundation, and brothers of Iota Phi Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., are grateful to all who support these tours for our youth and families.

For additional information, contact: Dr. Rahmon Hart, Sr.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rahmonhart/>  
[iotaphifoundationchair@gmail.com](mailto:iotaphifoundationchair@gmail.com)



## 3<sup>rd</sup> District

Brother Michael Frazier, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Virginia, Washington, D.C.

### Chain Breakers II: “A Father’s Forum”

Bro. Lloyd Boxley, Jr., KII FMC Chairman



**O**n May 2025, the Kappa Iota Iota (KII) Chapter Fatherhood and Mentorship Committee, the Third District Foundation and Fatherhood and Mentoring Committee and An Achievable Dream, Inc., sponsored a forum focused on men and fathers. The forum provided a comfortable and safe environment to discuss issues and practices for the men in the audience to discover and to vent. The day started with the audience receiving a cater breakfast by Chef Adrianna Johnson. Brother Quentin Jackson served as the MC of the event and presented



Mayor Phillip Jones, Newport News Virginia



Congressman Bobby Scott



Chief Steve Drew, Newport News Police Chief

The outstanding program ended focused on topics that empowered men and fathers to have lasting impact in our communities. The event had several local distinguished dignitaries that participated in the Chain Breakers II. Congressman Robert Scott and Newport News Mayor Phillip Jones both addressed the importance of what we were doing for the community and how important this is for the future of our young people. Mayor Jones went on to say discussions like this help shape his thoughts as a future father.

Chief Steve Drew, Newport News Police Chief, has been a regular attendee for this staple event and he chimed in with a recent discussion he had with a fellow police chief and the value of having another man’s voice to help each other through difficult times. The event closed with Elmer Martinez presenting facts on the effects of stress. Robert Holmes gave a spoken word on what it means to be a father followed by words from Pastor Eric Vaughn.





YMOD | USAF Thunderbirds | Spring 2025

**Y**oung Men of Distinction (YMOD), KII Chapter Fatherhood & Mentoring program attended the Air Power Over Hampton Roads show on April 27, 2025 at Langley Air Force Base, Hampton, Virginia. The show was filled with exciting air acrobatics with multiple different types of aircraft and featuring the United States Air Force Thunderbirds. YMOD were able to meet General Kenneth Wilsbach, Commander of the Air Combat Command and Chief Master Sergeant David Wolfe, Command Master Sergeant Air Combat Command. General Wilsbach shared with students how it felt to fly a jet and Chief Master Sergeant Wolfe talked about what it takes to keep them flying.



YMOD | Fatherhood Luncheon | May 2025



KII Fatherhood Luncheon



Bro. Myron McDaniel, Third District 1VDR



# Introducing: 3<sup>rd</sup> District's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Youth Leadership Conference and STEM Expo

Spring 2025 Henderson Middle School – Richmond, VA



Third District Youth Leadership S. T. E. M.

The Third District's Spring 2025 Fatherhood & Mentoring Program hosted an exciting interactive Youth Leadership & STEM Expo at Thomas Henderson Middle School. The event inspired over 400 middle school students in Richmond Virginia. This event was the 3rd District's Second Annual conference that is designed to spark curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking for students throughout Washington D.C and Virginia.

The conference also focused on engaging students with pre-college initiatives (PCI) and career readiness through exposure while showcasing the wonders of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) coupled with emotional learning.



Bro. Craig Spraggins, Third District 1VDR



Bro. Raymond Bell, International Fatherhood & Mentoring Chairman

The Leadership & STEM Expo was a collaborative effort between educators, industry professionals, members of the Third District, and engaged community partners. The event featured 12 diverse exhibits, demonstrations, and hands-on labs crafted to engage and introduce different careers for STEM and STEM adjacent industries to inspire the next generation of future leaders in our communities.





The Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) chapter presented at the STEM Expo held in Richmond Virginia



Henderson Middle School students creating artificial storm clouds

Upon arrival, students were greeted by a sea of colorful displays and interactive stations, each offering a unique opportunity to explore the many facets of STEM. From robotics and coding to environmental science and medical technology, the Expo had something for everyone. Students were able to design and build their own bridges, create artificial storms, and even fly drones; all under the guidance of experienced mentors and industry experts.

One of the highlights of the Expo was the presence of several local university students talking with middle school students and sharing valuable insights into PCI, college majors, and STEM in the real world.

Bro. Isaiah Thomas (Pi Gamma 2025 – Norfolk State University), Bro. Kwame Mensah (Phi Delta 2024 – Virginia Commonwealth University), and Bro. Brady Andrea (Phi Delta 2024 – Virginia Commonwealth University) shared their personal experiences on selecting a college, choosing a major, and making consistent good decisions that will help you grow and accomplish your goals and dreams.

The STEM Expo also featured a series of competitions and challenges, designed to test students' problem-solving skills, creativity, and teamwork. These events included robotics, coding, and flying drones which were hugely popular among the students.



Bro. Isaiah Thomas (Pi Gamma 2025), Bro. Kwame Mensah (Phi Delta 2024), and Bro. Brady Andrea (Phi Delta 2024)





Bro. Brady Andrea and Bro. Kwame Mensah (left), and Bro. Isaiah Thomas performed for students at Henderson Middle School showcasing the rich traditional history of stepping within Omega Psi Phi history after speaking to the 430 student participants



Brothers of the Third District united in offering a wonderful Leadership and STEM Expo to students of HMS in Richmond Virginia



Students at the NASA station learning about space technologies through hands-on labs

As the event concluded, it was clear that the STEM Expo had been a resounding success. Students left with big smiles on their faces, eager to share their experiences with family and friends. Teachers and educators were equally impressed, praising the Brothers of the Third District for their ability to inspire and motivate young people.

The Third District Leadership and STEM Expo provided a unique platform for young people to engage with collegiate students, STEM professionals, and STEM subjects in a fun and interactive way, while highlighting the many career opportunities available in these fields.





## 4<sup>th</sup> District

Brother Quintin Sweat, PhD, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Ohio, West Virginia



### 37th Fourth District Representative Bro. James "JT" Thomas Jr.

**Leadership, Legacy & Lifelong Friendship**

## Wild and Wonderful: A Father's Tribute to Jared J. Thomas

By James "JT" Thomas Jr

I became a husband while still a young man, already blessed with a son from a previous relationship. That first son, James Thomas III, is my spitting image. He inherited my mannerisms, my name, and my alma mater. We are both James "JT" Thomas. I'm the Jr., and he is the III. Together, we've walked similar paths: both of us were student-athletes at West Virginia University, both of us proud brothers of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., through the Nu Zeta Chapter, he crossed as "Two TymeZ" in 2008, and I as "Timebomb" in Spring 1995.

We even made history as the first father-son duo to cross through Nu Zeta. My son went on to play seven years in the NFL, drafted by the Chicago Bears in 2011, later playing for the Jaguars, and retiring with the New York Giants.

While I'm proud of his success, this story isn't about my professional athlete son. This story is about my second son: Jared J. Thomas. And what a journey it's been.

Jared was born just two hours after my birthday, on October 22, 2003, a gift I'll never forget. From the start, Jared showed signs that he was extraordinary. As a toddler, he amazed us by solving puzzles and meticulously lining up his toys. He seemed like a little genius. But when Jared was around three years old, his daycare teacher suggested we have him evaluated for autism.

At the time, my wife and I were unfamiliar with the term. We were a

young Black couple raising a family in Wild and Wonderful West Virginia, far from our extended families, facing the unknown.

JARED WAS DIAGNOSED WITH AUTISM, and his early years were filled with unique challenges. He was nonverbal for a significant part of his childhood and wasn't potty-trained until age six. I won't sugarcoat it, it was a stressful and sometimes overwhelming time, especially for my wife. But we were never alone. We were fortunate to have an incredible network of educators, therapists, and a community that wrapped its arms around us. They helped us navigate the world of IEPs, interventions, and early support services.

And Jared? Jared rose to the occasion. He persevered through high school, never letting labels define him. Eventually, he was accepted into the Country Roads Program at West Virginia University, a post-secondary initiative that gives individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities a college experience.

Jared lived in the dorms, learned life skills, made friends, and grew in ways we couldn't have imagined years earlier. Watching him walk across campus, knowing the hurdles he overcame just to get there, filled my heart in ways that touchdowns and trophies never could.

Jared recently completed the program and is now preparing for the next chapter in life. One thing that really touched me was the bond he developed

with the brothers of Omega Psi Phi. He loves the Ques, and they've shown him love right back, helping him move in, mentoring him, and treating him like family. That's what Brotherhood looks like. That's what community feels like.

And so, to my Brothers, especially those raising children with special needs, I want you to hear this:

*I know your journey. I've walked it. And I want to remind you that you're not alone.*

*This road will test your patience, your spirit, and your faith. But it will also reveal the deepest kind of love. You'll learn to celebrate small wins that mean more than most people will ever understand. You'll become your child's biggest advocate, protector, and believer.*

*You were chosen for this. Your child is not a burden, they're a blessing with a different rhythm, a different light, and a different path. And when they succeed in their own way, it will move you like nothing else ever has.*

*Lean on your village. Lean on this Brotherhood. Let your story be a testimony that uplifts another family. And never forget, your love, your presence, and your perseverance matter.*

Jared may not have played under stadium lights or worn a college jersey, but he's the bravest soul I know.

He is, without a doubt, wild and wonderful, just like our home state.

***And I'm proud to be his father!***



## Jared, ***At home in***

Wild Wonderful West Virginia and West Virginia University!

*Goooo* Mountaineers!



# Zeta Omega and the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Conference

Submitted by Brother Dr. Jehoshaphat K. Jones

**C**leveland, OH – The 19th Annual Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Conference, titled “A Celebration of Fathers,” was held on Friday, June 13, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza in downtown Cleveland, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The free event welcomed fathers, stepfathers, grandfathers, and father figures to engage in a full-day program designed to strengthen family bonds and support community involvement.

Fatherhood Director and Brother Al Grimes (14-25- Zeta Omega), hosted the 19th Annual Conference and Resource Fair featuring over 70 local organizations, an Opening Plenary Session, a Town Hall moderated by Channel 19 anchor **Harry Boomer**, an Awards Luncheon with keynote remarks by retired Cleveland Municipal Court Brother Judge **Ronald B. Adrine** (9-67 Eta Psi), and several educational workshops.

The Great Zeta Omega Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity’s Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring Committee (FIMC) played a pivotal role in organizing and supporting the conference. As one of the chapter’s signature events, Zeta Omega’s FIMC played a key role in shaping the day by coordinating community partnerships with the Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative, facilitating logistics, volunteer recruitment, and promotion.



L-R: Brothers Al Grimes (14-25- Zeta Omega), Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative Director; Dr. Jehoshaphat K. Jones (5-96-Epsilon Upsilon), Zeta Omega FIMC Co-Chair; Participants at the 19th Annual Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Conference

Under the guidance of FIMC leaders, Zeta Omega Executive Committee members helped host the resource fair, engage attendees in workshops, and spotlight the importance of active fatherhood. Zeta Omega also contributed media coverage, offered mentorship through town hall interactions, and amplified awareness via its Fatherhood Crux newsletter and Omega Mentoring Network. Through these efforts, the 19th Annual Fatherhood Conference not only celebrated the vital role of fathers but also reinforced Zeta Omega’s ongoing dedication to community uplift and empowerment.

FIMC Website: [www.ZetaOmega-FIMC.org](http://www.ZetaOmega-FIMC.org)  
Committee Email: [information@ZetaOmega-FIMC.org](mailto:information@ZetaOmega-FIMC.org)

## Beta Iota at the KYS Teen Summit

Submitted by Brother Chris Macklin

**W**est Chester, OH – Brother Chris Macklin (5-21-Beta Iota) represented the Beta Iota Chapter and the Fatherhood & Mentoring Committee at the 8th Annual Kelly Youth Services (KYS) Teen Summit, held June 4–5, 2025, at the Holiday Inn in West Chester, Ohio. This year’s powerful theme, “More Than Mad: Turning Anger into Action,” created a transformative space for young people to channel difficult emotions into positive change. The 2025 Teen Summit marked a significant milestone as it expanded beyond the KYS network for the first time, welcoming youth from across the broader community. The summit reached more young people than ever before, amplifying its message of resilience and transformation.

Brother Macklin served as one of the featured speakers, delivering an impactful message that resonated deeply with the teens in attendance. His presence exemplified the mission of the Fatherhood & Mentoring Committee—modeling leadership, emotional intelligence, and purpose-driven engagement for the next generation. His voice added depth to a summit designed to foster healing, education, and empowerment for youth navigating complex life challenges.





## Beta Iota Co-Sponsors the St. Monica's "Kickoff to Summer" Celebration BBQ

Submitted by Brother Tim Thornton Jr.

**Cincinnati, OH** - On Friday, May 30, 2025, the Brothers of Beta Iota Chapter sponsored, showed up, and showed out at St. Monica's "Kickoff to Summer" Celebration BBQ! With sunny skies and a little bit of rain, sizzling grills, and a whole lot of community spirit, the event was the perfect recipe for connection, fun, and mentorship in action.

Our Brothers teamed up with the amazing staff at St. Monica's Recreation Center to help run the event, serving food hot off the grill, organizing games that had everyone laughing, and chaperoning the festivities to make sure fun and safety went hand-in-hand. But it wasn't just about logistics, it was about presence. About 150 kids and teens came out for an afternoon of fun, and the brothers were right there with them, tossing footballs, dancing to the DJ's beats, and sharing laughs that made memories.

More than just a one-day event, this BBQ was an extension of



L-R: Bros Tim Thornton Jr, Matt Cuff, Martinez Wilson, Jerry Leftwich, and Chris Macklin;  
PHOTO R: BROTHER THORNTON ENGAGING WITH THE YOUTH AT ST. MONICA'S



the ongoing mentorship our chapter provides every Wednesday. It gave us the chance to continue building real relationships with the youth, uplift the rec center staff, and remind the youth that we are their supporters. With burgers in hand, we left knowing the impact of showing we care and that we are a part of their extended village.

## Reflections from the 2025 Eta Nu Nu Fatherhood Luncheon

Submitted by Brother Maine Prince

**Columbus, OH** - On Saturday, June 14, 2025, the Eta Nu Nu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. hosted its annual Fatherhood Luncheon at First Church of God in Columbus, Ohio. Though the day began with a steady drizzle, the atmosphere inside was vibrant, filled with warmth, purpose, and brotherhood. The event brought together members of the Fraternity, their children, mentors, and elders in a heartfelt celebration of Black fatherhood and community leadership.

Brother Maine Prince, a Spring 2025 initiate and Chair of the Fatherhood & Mentoring Committee, led the program with a message centered on the power of presence in fatherhood. Drawing from his journey as a father to his sons, Justin and Maine II, Bro. Prince emphasized that fatherhood is more than milestone moments—it is about showing up daily with consistency, love, and accountability. His message resonated deeply, setting the tone for a gathering filled with reflection, connection, and affirmation.

The luncheon became a space where

brothers shared more than just a meal—they exchanged wisdom, encouragement, and honest stories of their fatherhood journeys. One brother spoke about teaching his daughter to ride a bike, while another shared his experiences with parenting a teenager. These conversations were reminders that while the paths may differ, the commitment to raising strong, loved children unites them all.

Brother Antonio Caffey, Vice Basileus, followed with a powerful address on the shared responsibility of raising the next generation, not as passive observers, but as active, engaged fathers and mentors. He reminded attendees that their roles extend beyond their immediate families; they are called to lift each other up and model excellence for all youth in the community.

A touching video montage of Eta Nu Nu brothers showcased everyday moments of fatherhood—teaching, celebrating, and simply being present. These authentic snapshots reinforced that fatherhood, while demanding, is deeply rewarding when approached with

intention.

The event's keynote speaker, Brother Bishop Timothy Clarke, delivered an unforgettable message on legacy and leadership. Using the poem *The Bridge Builder* as a metaphor, he challenged the men in the room to be builders, not only for their children but for generations to come. "To be a father," he declared, "is to place stones in the water where you once stumbled, so your sons and daughters may pass safely."

Brother Matthew Coleman, Basileus of Eta Nu Nu, closed the program by praising the spirit of unity and urging brothers to lead lives that reflect the values of Omega Psi Phi. Brother Bishop James Delaney concluded with a prayer, sealing the event in gratitude and with a sense of purpose.

Brothers took photos with families, shared final salutes and Brother Prince reflected on the moment. It was clear: the luncheon was more than a meal—it was a movement to uplift, affirm, and redefine what fatherhood means in Omega.



## 5<sup>th</sup> District

Brother Julius Hill, Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring  
Kentucky, Tennessee

### Theta Iota and Kappa Sigma Grand Opening of the Omega Outdoor Book Library

Submitted By Bro. Dwight Jones, Theta Iota, Vice Basileus

*"The Omega Outdoor Book Library aims to assist young people in developing important life skills through reading, which helps build an early foundation and teaches them how to express themselves."*



The Transformative Power of Literacy

**J**ackson, TN – Since October 1, 1944, the Theta Iota Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., has exemplified dedication to community advancement through initiatives that nurture the mind and spirit. Their efforts are deeply rooted in fostering education and empowerment as they strive to create opportunities that inspire growth and self-discovery, particularly among youth.

Recognizing the transformative power of literacy, the chapter continues to innovate and expand its outreach, addressing pressing needs within the community.

Our four Cardinal Principles: Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift are used as a road map to serve. Founder Dr. Oscar James Cooper stated: "Let It Be Said of Omega of the future that 'We Live to Serve Our Fellow Man.'"

Building literacy and language skills help children become pre-k and kindergarten ready. We felt it would be a great opportunity to partner/collaborate with the Jackson Madison County School System's **Leap Up to Literacy Program** and the Boys and Girls Club of Jackson to have a lasting positive impact on literacy for generations.



Reading offers numerous benefits, ranging from mental stimulation and enhanced cognitive function to emotional well-being and improved communication skills. Underserved families in this community will be able to get books that may not be available at the public library by coming to the **Brother Paul Thacker Omega House**. We will stock **our outdoor book library** with conventional books, as well as diverse books, allowing children to see themselves when reading.





## First Friday Fresh Flowers

By Brother Dr. Kenneth Sykes



Bro. Dr. Kenneth Sykes and his daughter "Chivalry Is Alive & Hand-Delivered!"

On June 6th, Bro. Dr. Kenneth Sykes presented beautiful flowers to his daughter, Zion Sykes. Fresh Flowers are presented on the First Friday of each month. With fresh flowers and an activity, Bro. Dr. Sykes displays his unconditional love to Zion. In return, Zion is confident in achieving her academic, athletic, and entrepreneur goals. Zion recently finished the 9th grade with a 3.85 GPA and captain of the girls' track team. In addition, she was lead presenter for the 2025 KIPP Collegiate High School Science Fair. Lastly, Zion is an aspiring nail salon owner as she is receiving first-hand experience during her summer internship.

## Gamma Phi at H.G. Hill Middle School

On May 19, 2025, the Brothers of Gamma Phi hosted for the third year, the H.G. Hill Middle School Field Day for the entire school year. The Brothers served hot dogs, chips, and beverages to 650 students. It was a great opportunity for the brothers to interact with not only the "Rites of Passage Program" mentees, but also other students who always have questions about the Ques and how well we work together.

For the adults in the building, they have come to know us as true servants, helping wherever we are needed. The Omega Brand is well respected in the school's community and other community organizations that serve H.G. Hill Middle school.



Brothers from Gamma Phi fellowshiping with students during HG Hill Middle School Field Day

## Breakfast at Bass Street Father-to-Father

Nashville, TN – On June 7, the Fatherhood and Mentoring Committee of Omega Lambda Lambda Chapter held a Father-to-Father Breakfast at Bass Street Church. The breakfast consisted of nearly 50 men from Omega Lambda Lambda with visiting brothers from Gamma Phi and other local chapters.

The pre-event socializing crystalized into a warm welcome and embrace by the 5th District PR Andre Anderson, who called the brothers to order.

Greetings were made by 5th District DR Bryan White, 5th District Fatherhood and Mentoring Chairman Brother Julius Hill and Basileus of Gamma Phi Chapter, Jermaine Scales. Omega Lambda Lambda Charter Line Member Brian Wilkins was the keynote speaker of the inaugural Omega Lambda Lambda Father-to-Father breakfast held in February of 2025.

Brother Wilkins introduced the Keynote



Speaker, Demetri Carter. During the introduction, he revealed Demetri Carter had become an amputee while serving as a police officer in Brentwood, TN.

Brother Demetri Carter mesmerized the brethren with his captivating life story filled with moments of persevering through adversity and enduring hardships. He encouraged the Fathers to do the same as they remembered that although Fatherhood can be tough, they were only facing what other men had faced.

Brother Wilkins spoke of losing his mother to gun violence at age 7;

transitioning from athlete to a new dad; joining Omega Psi Phi after a career ending accident in the weight room of MTS; to having his leg amputated because of a car accident while working as an entrepreneur. His speech concluded with a standing ovation from the audience as the Fatherhood Panel was called to the stage.

The panel included Brother Charles Wilson, Mu Zeta '73, Brother Lasalle Chapman, Rho Psi '92, Brother Jermaine Scales, Gamma Phi 2010, and Brother Kenric Jordan, Omega Lambda Lambda, '21.

The panel answered questions on a variety of subjects as they uplifted the brothers with stories of persevering through tough times. Reminding the fellowship that they are not alone as they endure one of the most challenging and rewarding blessings of manhood, the gift of Fatherhood!



## Psi Tau Chapter & BMWA Inc. Signing Day

Submitted by Bro. Charles Duke



**L**exington, KY, May 31, 2025 – The Black Male Working Academy, Inc. (BMWA), held its 2025 Academic Signing Day Program on May 31st at First Baptist Church Bracktown.

Twenty-one young men of color announced where they will be attending college in the fall. These outstanding young men received scholarships from a wide variety of sources, but the cream

of the crop was the scholarships given by the D9 - BGLOs.

Psi Tau Chapter had the honor of presenting a scholarship to Kaelan Richardson. This young man was a great student, he listened, asked questions, and displayed leadership during our mentoring sessions. He is a business owner (T-Shirts). Kaelan will attend the University of Louisville in the fall majoring in Business Administration. The brothers had an easy task selecting this outstanding young scholar.

The program's Welcome and Purpose was given by Mrs. Roszalyne Akins, Founder and Executive Director of BMWA, Inc. had a dream 20 years

ago where young men of color would be mentored by men of color (D9) and share experiences and those same young men would graduate High School, go to college, return to assist the BMWA program that molded them.

Psi Tau Chapter has been an active participant in this mentoring program for nearly the entire 20 years BMWA has been in existence.

Psi Tau Chapter was recognized by the BMWA director for our time, talent, and support. We are not finished, after the summer break we will recharge and create interesting and relevant content for those promising young men.

## Psi Tau Chapter & BMWA address Mental Health with Workshop



**L**exington, KY – April 26, 2025 – Psi Tau and Rho Lambda Chapter partnered with BMWA to present a mental health summit for students and families. The aim was to offer students the opportunity to choose which workshops they would like to attend based on surveys asking about topics that needed to be addressed. Parents were asked what topics on mental health they would want to attend.

Workshop 1 - Students watched "Seeing Ourselves" - A film-based dialogue on African American Male Identity." There was group dialogue about what was discussed during the film and how this affected them.

Workshop 2 – "Stay True: Navigating Peer Pressure & Making Healthy Choices." Building confidence, learning how to say NO without guilt and discover the power of staying true to themselves - no filters needed

Workshop 3 – "Positive Effects of Mental Health in the Black Community" Positive effects highlight the importance of prioritizing mental health within the Black community.

Workshop 4 – "Breaking the stigma of ignoring Mental Health amongst Black Men" Prioritize their mental health without fear of stigma or judgment.

Workshop 5 – "The Impact of Decision Making: You pay now or later." Aimed to equip participants with practical tools and techniques to navigate complex decisions, ultimately leading to more efficient and effective outcomes.

Workshop 6 – "Recognizing Mental Health concerns in our youth." Early intervention can make a significant difference in a young person's mental health and overall well-being: (Parents)

Workshop 7 - "Letting go of Your Baggage". Letting go of baggage is a journey, and it's okay to take one step at a time. Remember parents, you're not alone in this process.

Mental Health professionals in the chapters facilitated the workshops (Bros, Walter Malone, James Caret, & Kendal Belcher). Brothers that assisted - Charles Duke, Phillip Chenault, Leander Ridgeway, Claude Christian, Jarrod Gay, and Ches Gatewood.



## 6<sup>th</sup> District

Brother Warren T. Davis, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
North Carolina, South Carolina

### Mentorship in Motion: Phi Alpha Alpha Celebrates Young Scholars

By Brother Warren T. Davis, FMC



**N**orth Carolina – On May 29, 2025, the men of the Phi Alpha Alpha Chapter with Basileus Coery Lewis marked a proud milestone as they hosted their Annual Completion Ceremony at North Drive Elementary School. This event commemorated the culmination of a year-long mentoring program designed for 2nd grade male students, with proud parents, guardians, school board members, and district representatives in attendance.

Over the course of the year, mentors met every Thursday with 90 young participants, guiding them through lessons rooted in social-emotional learning, character development, and core values. Weekly sessions emphasized self-respect, mutual respect, and self-worth reinforced with affirmations like “I Matter,” “I am Unique,” and “I am Special”

empowering students to believe in their own potential and pursue their goals with confidence.

The chapter credits the program’s success to the steadfast support of North Drive Elementary’s principal and staff, whose partnership created the foundation for consistent engagement and growth. The sense of community and collaboration was on full display at the ceremony, where each student was celebrated not just for participation, but for progress and promise.

With eyes set on the future, Phi Alpha Alpha is already preparing to return in 2026, building on this year’s achievements to further invest in the lives of tomorrow’s leaders.





## Pi Phi Chapter Celebrates Youth, Mentorship, and Fatherhood at End-of-School Event



**C**harlotte, NC – The Pi Phi Chapter, recently hosted its Fatherhood and Mentorship End-of-School Celebration, on June 23rd 2025 honoring the young boys selected to attend the Mighty 6th District Boys Camp at Winston-Salem State University from July 13–18, 2025. The event recognized not only the youth but also the dedicated parents whose commitment ensured their sons’ active involvement in chapter programs throughout the year.

As part of the celebration, the chapter unveiled a new youth club initiative, complete with a custom-designed shirt logo. This club is designed to address the impact of absent fathers while introducing structured mentorship into the lives of young boys. Each participant received a branded shirt, a

travel bag, and a special gift to commemorate the occasion.

The mentorship program pairs each young man with a mentor who will provide guidance and support throughout the summer and into the new school year. The goal is to create a consistent support system during the months away from school ensuring that every boy has someone to talk to, lean on, and grow with. These efforts are led by Brother Melvin Boyd, Co-Chair of the Mighty 6th District Fatherhood and Mentorship Initiative, with the full support of the Pi Phi Chapter.

The young men proudly received their new shirts bearing the name of the youth club a symbol of unity, purpose, and the bright future ahead.

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## Purple and Gold Mentoring Program

**F**ayetteville, NC – On April 28, 2025, the Brothers of Tau Gamma Gamma Chapter in Fayetteville, NC hosted a meaningful mentorship session at E.E. Smith High School, deepening their ongoing commitment to empowering young men within the community. Nearly 30 students participated in a dynamic program centered on guidance, encouragement, and open dialogue.

To ensure a welcoming and focused atmosphere, the brothers thoughtfully provided meals for all attendees. The heart of the session was a powerful roundtable discussion featuring Brothers from diverse professional backgrounds including corporate leadership, civic service, and military careers. They shared personal journeys and valuable lessons learned, offering students real-world insights and practical advice. Importantly, the conversation wasn’t one-sided. The



event fostered a collaborative space where students were encouraged to voice their thoughts, ask questions, and share their own aspirations, creating an exchange that left a lasting impression on everyone involved.

On May 12, 2025, the brothers hosted a final session at the

*(Continued on page 32)*



(Continued from page 31)

high school for the academic year. This session served as an opportunity for the students to reflect on their experiences within the mentorship program. The young men shared their personal highlights from the past year, discussing what they

had learned and how the program had impacted them. They also provided constructive feedback and recommendations for improving the program in the future, demonstrating their engagement and investment in its continued success. Meals were provided at this event as well.

## Grilling, Growth, and Graduation: A Day of Skills and Celebration

**O**n May 17, 2025, Brother LeDarion Robinson fired up more than just the grill—he sparked curiosity and camaraderie among a group of young men during a grilling basics workshop. Designed to teach foundational food preparation skills, this hands-on session doubled as a powerful team-building experience.

As the students collaborated to prepare the meal for their End of Year Program, they not only learned to season and sear but also to support and trust one another.

Later that day, the atmosphere shifted from sizzle to celebration as graduating seniors were honored for their achievements.

Brother Marcus Washington created personalized plaques to commemorate each student's journey. The plaques were presented during the program with heartfelt congratulations from the Beta Kappa Kappa Brotherhood.

The moment was both inspiring and affirming, as the young men stood at the threshold of new beginnings—whether in college,



vocational training, or stepping directly into the workforce. By blending skill-building with meaningful recognition, this event perfectly captured the mission of mentorship: preparing young men not just for success in the kitchen, but in life.

Finally, on June 10, 2025, the brothers of **Tau Gamma Gamma** organized an outing for the returning students: a

(Continued on page 33)





baseball game featuring the local minor league team, the Fayetteville Woodpeckers. This event provided a relaxed and informal setting for continued mentorship.

Beyond enjoying the game itself, the brothers used the opportunity to engage in conversations with the students, offering advice and sharing their own experiences in a less structured environment. The event served as a reminder of the brothers' ongoing support and commitment to these young men, emphasizing the importance of community, leadership, and personal growth.

## Beta Kappa Kappa Fatherhood and Mentorship Program: "In School Support"



BKK Brothers Proctor EOG Tests and Celebrate Student Achievement

**O**n May 29, June 4, and June 5, Brothers Terry Bellamy, Myrick Gyant, Tim Rhoades, Donald Williams, George Odom, Norman Phelps, and David Chamblee of Beta Kappa Kappa of High Point NC demonstrated their commitment to education and community service by volunteering as test proctors at Triangle Lake Montessori Elementary School.

Responding to a call from school administrators, these dedicated members of the BKK Fatherhood and Mentoring Program contributed more than 40 hours of support during end-of-grade (EOG) testing for 3rd–5th grade students. The experience not only showed the brothers' adaptability and dedication but also provided valuable insights into the students' academic strengths and growth areas.

These observations will help shape future BKK mentoring efforts, particularly in early-grade academic support.

In recognition of the students' hard work throughout the year, the BKK Fatherhood and Mentoring Program went a step further by purchasing gift bags filled with treats and toys, which were distributed during the final week of school. This gesture added a celebratory close to the academic year and helped foster a spirit of encouragement and joy among students.

Through service and recognition, BKK brothers are actively building stronger connections with Triangle Lake Montessori and the wider community, embodying their mission to uplift and empower youth through education and engagement.



# South Carolina Celebrating Growth and Purpose:

## Epsilon Nu's Bridge Builders Awards Program

**T**he Epsilon Nu Chapter's Bridge Builders Mentoring Program concluded the 2024–2025 school year with its much-anticipated Annual Awards Program, bringing together proud parents, grandparents, and community members to recognize the remarkable progress of participating students.

The highlight of the event was a stirring keynote address by the chapter's very own Brother Dr. Brian Chad Starks—an accomplished speaker, author, social justice advocate, and CEO of BCS & Associates Consulting Firm. Drawing on themes from his book *Courageous Hearts*, Brother Starks delivered a powerful message about the importance of living out the four cardinal principles and using them as tools to advocate social justice and personal excellence.

Although the book was originally written for adults, the insights gained from engaging directly with the Bridge Builder mentees inspired Brother Starks to consider creating a youth-focused version. By the close of the event, he was already formulating ideas to bring that vision to life.

Beyond the inspiring words and heartfelt recognition, the program celebrated something even more tangible, significant, measurable growth. Empirical data presented at the ceremony showed marked improvement in both academic performance and behavior among the mentees throughout the year. These outcomes are a testament not only to the dedication of the students, but to the unwavering support and mentorship provided by the Brothers of Epsilon Nu.



With hearts full of pride and eyes on the future, the chapter looks forward to continuing its impactful work and building on this legacy of uplift and empowerment.

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## The Port Royal [South Carolina] Experiment

When [Harriett] Tubman arrived in Beaufort [South Carolina], the influence of the Port Royal Experiment could be felt, though its main areas of operation were not in the city, where Tubman was headquartered, but in the rural areas. Still, she and those in the experiment would overlap considerably in the coming months.

Free labor was the essence of the Port Royal Experiment. In late November 1861, weeks after the Battle of Port Royal, Adjutant General Lorenza Thomas seized the Sea Island cotton crop and the remainder of the Confederate planters' property for the benefit of the federal government. Some of the proceeds went into a "cotton fund" set aside for the Port Royal Experiment's expenses. William H. Reynolds, a rear admiral in the US Navy, was appointed supervisor of the cotton agents on the Sea Islands. These cotton agents, who were largely military men, were charged by the federal government with administering Black laborers' production of Sea Island cotton and selling it in New York. Most were decidedly abolitionist and did not stick around after the crop was harvested. Sea Island Blacks working on the cotton plantations were employed as wage laborers for the federal government. Employing former slaves to pick and gin the valuable Sea Island cotton crop abandoned by fleeing plantation owners and sell the cotton had been the US government's first order of business after the "Great Skedaddle." (Edward L. Pierce, *The Negro at Port Royal: Report of the E.L. Pierce, Government Agent, to the Hon. Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury* [Boston R. F. Wallcut, 1862], et.al.)

\*An excerpt from the book: **COMBEE: Harriet Tubman, the Combahee River Raid, and Black Freedom during the Civil War**, by 2025 Pulitzer Prize History winner Edda L. Fields-Black, Oxford University Press, 2024, p. 180





## 7th District

Brother Jonathan Gaines, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi

### 2024 - 2025 Fatherhood and Youth Mentorship Seventh District Service Awards

Bro. Jonathan L. Gaines – 7th District FMC Chairman

**I**t is an honor serving as 7th District Chairman working in collaboration with District Executive Leadership, State and Local Chapter FMC Chairmen throughout the Seventh District to uplift our youths, and fathers through community service programs.

In recognition of outstanding Fatherhood and Youth Mentorship, we seek to honor Omega Brothers, Youth Mentees, Local Chapters and State Organizations for their commitment & contributions during the 88th Seventh District Meeting - Orlando, Florida. Each Youth Mentee Scholar of the Year Recipients were awarded a \$500 College Scholarship.



Small Graduate Chapter  
**Bro. Natdrick Jones**  
Omega Mu Mu Chapter, Mississippi

#### Father of the Year



Large Graduate Chapter  
**Bro. Rodney Hankins Jr.**  
Eta Nu Chapter, Florida



Small Graduate Chapter  
**Psi Mu Nu Chapter - Florida**

#### Fatherhood Initiative



Large Graduate Chapter  
**Epsilon Kappa Kappa Chapter, Mississippi**



Small Graduate Chapter  
**Iota Upsilon Chapter - Mississippi**

#### Youth Mentorship



Large Graduate Chapter  
**Eta Nu Chapter - Florida**



#### Fatherhood & Youth Mentorship

Undergraduate Chapter of the Year  
**Beta Theta Chapter -Mississippi**  
Mississippi Valley State University

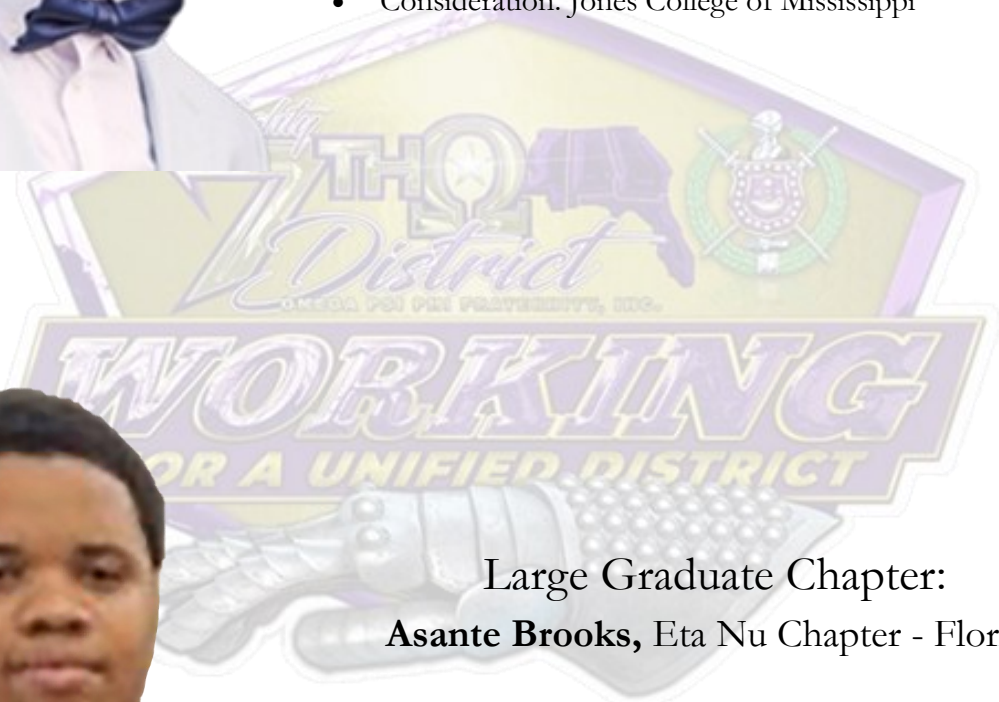
# Youth Mentee Scholar of the Year



## Small Graduate Chapter:

**Lathan Lewis**, Iota Upsilon Chapter - Mississippi

- 3.9 GPA - Florida Bright Future Scholar
- Class President of Pass Christian High School
- Math Honor Society
- Student Board Member Pass Christian School District
- Varsity Football, Track & Basketball
- Omega Lamplighters Youth Mentee
- Consideration: Jones College of Mississippi



## Large Graduate Chapter:

**Asante Brooks**, Eta Nu Chapter - Florida

- 3.2 GPA - Honor Roll Student
- Coral Glades High School Key Club
- President - GOI Mentoring Program
- 5000 Role Model of Excellence
- College of Consideration: FAMU & NCA&T
- Career Aspiration - Political Science & Robotics



## Youth Mentorship Day of Service 88th Seventh District Meeting.

Bro. Jonathan L. Gaines – 7th District FMC Chairman

The 7th District Fatherhood & Youth Mentorship Committee implemented a new Day of Service Community Initiative during the 88th Seventh District Meeting - Orlando, Florida. The Day of Service Community Initiative goal is to further support Fatherhood & Youth Mentoring Programs at the local chapter level during the 7th District Annual Meeting.

The Chi Tau, Eta Nu & Omega Beta Beta Graduate Chapters served as the inaugural host and co-hosts to facilitate programming at Carver Middle School with the Young Kings Youth Mentoring Group. Bro. Danny Vereem Sr. - Vice Basileus and Bro. Samuel Danner – Principal of Chi Tau Graduate Chapter were instrumental in coordinating efforts and requirements to carry out the initiative at Carver Middle School as part of Orange County Public Schools.

OMEGA BROTHERS AND JUNIOR YOUTH MENTEES of Young Kings Mentoring Group engaged in uplifting conversations of setting goals to achieve personal success in life and reinforcing the important to serving as contributing assets to their community. In addition, several Youth Mentees were selected to share with their peers their understanding of the important of academics and leadership.

Two Junior Youth Mentees with recommendation of Bro. Samuel Danner – Principal were recognized with a Certificate of Outstanding Leadership and Academic Scholar; each received a \$50 Gift Card. The Day of Service Fatherhood & Youth Mentorship Initiative will rotate each year moving forward with the scheduled 7th District Meeting to continue to support the efforts of our local chapters.



# 2023 - 2024 Seventh District Fatherhood & Youth Mentorship Survey Data Results

Bro. Jonathan L. Gaines – 7th District FMC Chairman

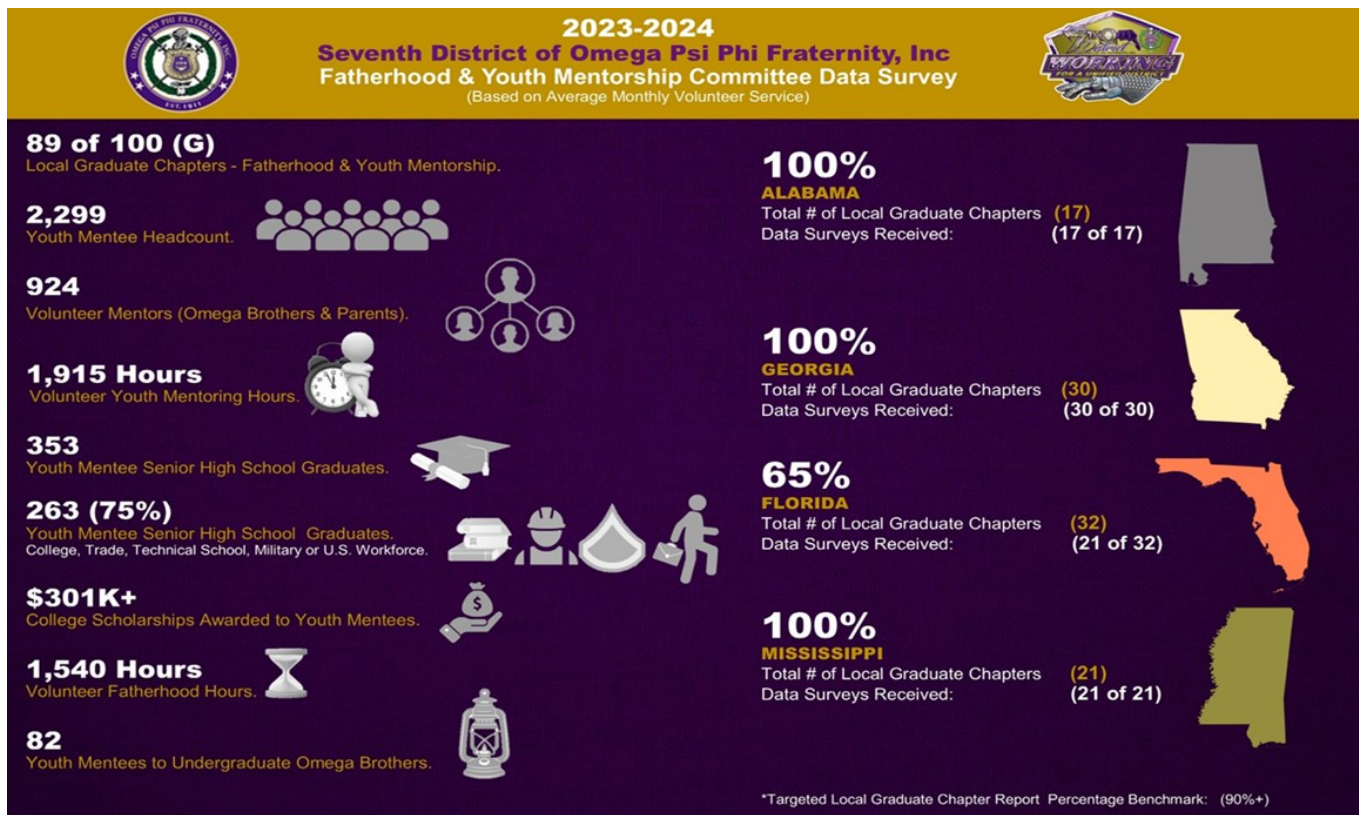
It is with a special thank you to all Local Graduate/Undergraduate Chapters, Omega Brothers, Parents, Community Partners & Volunteers for your great work in carrying out Fatherhood and Youth Mentorship Initiatives within your respective state and local communities.

Our combine collective efforts throughout the great states of Alabama, Georgia, Florida & Mississippi continue to show the positive impact of our time and commitment to invest in our youths to support their bright futures as contributors to their communities and society. It is with a special thank you to the State FMC Committee Chairmen of each State Organization and Local Graduate/Undergraduate Chapters in taking the lead to execute FMC Programming and Reporting.

Presented below is the 2023-2024 Seventh District Master FMC Survey Dashboard that illustrates various metrics and highlights key data points of our collective efforts, and to further support 7th District efforts to further access additional grant/foundation funding.

## Key Data Point Indicators:

- ◆ 3 of 4 States with 100% Reporting for overall 89% Rate of Reporting.
- ◆ 2,299 Monthly Average Youth Mentees Headcount.
- ◆ 924 Monthly Average Volunteer Mentors.
- ◆ 1,915 Monthly Average Volunteer Hours.
- ◆ 353 Youth Mentee High School Senior Graduate Class.
- ◆ \$301K awarded in College Scholarship.







## 8th District

Brother Michael Graham, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota



From the desk of the 36th Eighth District Representative

Brother Marvin L. DeJear, Jr.

Eighth District of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

P.O. Box 35853 • Des Moines, IA 50315

8th DistrictDR@oppf.org or 515-867-1525

“Friendship is Essential to the Soul”

June 2, 2025

### 8<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT OFFICERS

Bro. Marvin L. DeJear, Jr.  
36th Eighth District  
Representative

Bro. Ashley K. Kornegay  
1st Vice District  
Representative

Bro. Jahi Dickson  
2nd Vice District  
Representative

Bro. Skyler Johnson  
District KRS

Bro. Sharrell Topps  
District Keeper of  
Finance

Bro. Potso Byndon  
District Counselor

Bro. Jarret Smith  
District Publicist

Bro. John Pargo Jr.  
District Undergraduate  
Representative at Large

Bro. Ferrell Roddy  
District Chaplain

Bro. Kermit D. Ervin  
Immediate Past DR  
35<sup>th</sup> 8th District  
Representative

Bro. Osuman Issaka  
77th District Marshal

Bro. Alton Guidry  
District Chief of Staff

Greetings Brothers of the Eighth District,

I greet you in the name of the Supreme Basileus of the Universe during this time of collective grief we share. It is with a heavy heart that I write to inform you of the passing of our beloved Brother Verne Wilson, who entered Omega Chapter last week at his home in St. Louis, Missouri.

Brother Wilson dedicated his life to serving our fraternity at every level. His outstanding work as a mentor with the Omega Squires touched the lives of countless young men throughout the greater St. Louis Metropolitan area.

On the district level, Brother Wilson's light shone brightly as chair of the Omega Talent Hunt Committee, where he brought joy and inspiration to all our contestants. At the international level, Brother Wilson represented the Eighth District with distinction, as Fatherhood and Mentoring Chairman. His unwavering dedication made the Eighth District a shining example throughout the fraternity.

The news of Brother Wilson's passing has left us all heartbroken. Yet, Omega has prepared us for moments like this. Omega teaches us to work as a unit, and when the silent shadow removes one of us from the unit, we are instructed to grieve as a unit. To share in each other's sorrows is to embody true Omega Manhood.

Now, we must pick up the pieces left behind by our beloved Brother Wilson and continue his legacy of service to the Omega Squires, the Talent Hunt, and the Fatherhood and Mentoring programs. Let us, as true men of Omega, wrap our arms around his family and the brothers in St. Louis during this time of transition.

Fraternally,

Bro. Marvin L. DeJear, Jr.



Brother Verne L. Wilson  
Omega Chapter  
April 11, 1962 - May 31, 2025



## 9<sup>th</sup> District

Brother Sedric Myers, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

### Houston's Omega Lamplighters Host 2025 Leadership Conference



#### Prairie View A&M University

#### Illuminating the Future Together: A powerful Gathering of Tomorrow's Leaders

**H**ouston, TX June 19 – The Houston Omega Lamplighters served as the host chapter for the 2025 Leadership Conference, held in Houston, at the historic Prairie View A&M University.

With over 200 Lamplighters, advisors, and Omega men in attendance, the conference brought together representatives from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas for a transformational weekend of brotherhood, leadership development, and celebration.

The weekend began on Thursday, June 19, aligning with the spirit of Juneteenth.

The Houston Omega Lamplighters made their presence known at the Katy Juneteenth Festival, proudly participating in the parade and honoring our history with purpose and pride. From there, attendees checked into the residences at PVAMU, setting the stage for a weekend of learning and connection.

The evening's Welcome Reception and Brotherhood Mixer created an immediate

sense of unity and anticipation for the journey ahead. Friday was dedicated to building bonds, celebrating achievements, and casting vision for the future under the theme: **"Building Bridges, Creating Leaders."** The day began with an inspirational Opening Ceremony, followed by a Career Fair where Lamplighters engaged with professionals across multiple industries. The afternoon highlighted excellence with a formal Awards Ceremony, recognizing the outstanding work of Lamplighters from across the region.

The night concluded with "Friday Night Lights", a dynamic team-building experience featuring Lamplighter Games. Whether it was basketball 3-on-3, football 7-on-7, the Game Truck, the cup stacking game, 3-legged races, Black History Trivia, or the ever-competitive Stroll-Off, the energy was high and the brotherhood was stronger than ever.

Saturday's theme, "Illuminating the Future Together," embodied perseverance and forward thinking. The day's excursion to Texas Southern University was both educational and inspiring, providing a glimpse of collegiate excellence.

At the ONPEC Center Tailgate, Lamplighters experienced community, culture, and celebration before closing the day at Cidercade Houston, where they were greeted by the distinguished Men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. from the Houston Area Coalition of Omegas. These chapters included Nu Phi, Theta Chi, Rho Nu, Rho Xi, Rho Beta Beta, Alpha Mu Mu, Mu Mu Nu, Tau Epsilon, Rho Theta, Omega Theta, Eta Mu, and Nu Delta Delta—each contributing to the success and presence of the weekend.

As the sun set on a weekend of purpose and progress, the message was clear: the next generation of leaders has arrived—and they are Lamplighters. The Houston Omega Lamplighters extend heartfelt thanks to all who traveled, participated, and supported this unforgettable event. Together, we are illuminating the path ahead.





# Who Am I? – “Our Future!”

Submitted by Mr. Sean Myers

While attending the Emerge Leadership Academy at University of Houston

“Who am I?” is a question many people ask when trying to discover themselves. As for me, I am a persevering person. I can say that all day, but actions speak louder than words. Am I right?

The start of my freshman year in football was rough. I struggled. I got scored on in a game and later gave up a big play. The quarterback threw a deep pass, and the receiver was tall, I felt like I didn’t stand a chance. But I kept thinking, “Next play,” because that is what I was taught. Then he caught another big pass. I was devastated. I felt like my teammates gave up on me that day. Toward the end of the game, I broke up a pass, but I still felt like I let the team down and that the loss was on me.

Looking back, I think my faith was low. I was not letting God guide me. But through the rest of the year, I grew. I gained confidence. Spring ball came, and all the reps from 7-on-7 really helped. I got better. My teammates started trusting me again. I made plays in practice, had several pass breakups, and learned the system. I let God use me. I am a child of God and my faith is a big part of who I am and how I live.

Growing up in church, the words used to go in one ear and out the other. But over time, I started to really listen and reflect. I realized those words from the Bible actually connect to my life. I began doing my own research, reading verses, and trying to apply them. Anyone can read the Bible, but if you don’t live it, it does not mean much. One of

my favorite verses is Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” It reminds me of my past challenges and gives me strength every day.

Being an athlete is hard. Being a student-athlete is even harder. The word “student” comes first for a reason. It has taught me time management and helped me realize that even when life feels difficult, I have the power to make it

better. I have heard a lot of excuses and made a few myself, but I try to remember this quote from Vernon Brundage Jr.: “Excuses are tools of the incompetent. They build monuments of nothingness. Those who choose to use them seldom amount to anything but excuses.” That quote sticks with me, because it is true. Excuses don’t take you anywhere.

Sometimes school, sports, and other activities feel overwhelming. But my faith brings me peace. In Matthew 6:34, it says, “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” That verse keeps me grounded.

All these experiences have shaped who I am today: a persevering young man who faces challenges but keeps moving forward. I am grateful for every struggle. They have built my character. Spiritually and mentally, I have grown a lot. It has been a long road, and the journey is not over yet. It is still a marathon.

So now you know who I am. The real question is “who are you?”



Sean Myers, age 15, Lamar High School Scouting  
America, WABC Troop #242  
(Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church)  
Omega Lamplighter, Houston



## 10<sup>th</sup> District

Brother Cyrill Weems, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin

### Empowering the Future: the Saturday Academy at Tindley Accelerated School

By Bro Daniel Pierson

Indianapolis, IN – Mentorship has long been a cornerstone of personal and academic success, and its value was on full display at the Saturday Academy at Tindley Accelerated School, an initiative led by the Indiana Council on Educating Students of Color (The Council) and the member organizations of the Divine 9 Indianapolis. Chaired by Daniel Pierson of the Zeta Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., this pilot program provided tutoring and mentoring services to 28 high school seniors, setting the stage for a stronger academic foundation and brighter career futures.

A Program Rooted in Purpose; The primary goal of the Saturday Academy was to support and guide students as they navigated critical milestones in their education. Through dedicated mentorship, students received personalized assistance in refining their Capstone Projects, exploring majors suited to their interests and strengths, and charting meaningful career paths. Beyond individual guidance, this program also signaled the beginning of a larger movement—an effort to organize a coalition of Divine 9 members committed to improving student achievement through mentorship and advocacy.

Key Observations and Success Stories: The Saturday Academy provided three impactful mentoring

sessions on April 12th, 19th, and 26th, during which students and mentors worked collaboratively to make significant strides:

- Many Capstone Projects neared completion, showcasing strong writing, thorough analysis, and clear academic rigor.

- Students sought presentation coaching to boost confidence in their Capstone Defense, refining their delivery and public speaking skills.

- Several students had already secured college acceptances and defined career goals, while others benefited from additional guidance in shaping their future.

- Some participants required follow-up mentoring sessions to finalize their projects, ensuring they were fully prepared for their next steps.

Lasting Impact of Mentorship: The success of this pilot program reinforces the undeniable power of mentorship, the ability to bridge gaps, open doors, and elevate aspirations. When students have access to trusted advisors, they gain the confidence and knowledge needed to pursue higher education, navigate professional paths, and grow into future leaders.

#### Help Shape the Future: Become a Mentor or Tutor for High School Seniors!



Sign up Today for the SATURDAY ACADEMY: <https://tinyurl.com/5eaxza4e>

Are you passionate about helping young minds achieve their full potential? The Indiana Council on Educating Students of Color and Tindley Accelerated School is looking for dedicated volunteers to mentor and tutor our high school seniors as they embark on one of the most crucial journeys of their lives.

As a mentor or tutor, you'll play a vital role in guiding students to:

- Successfully write and refine their Capstone Project.
- Choose a major that aligns with their passions and strengths.
- Explore and plan for a meaningful career path for their life's work.



Your support can make a lasting impact on their academic success and future aspirations. Whether you're an experienced professional, an educator, or simply someone eager to give back, your time and expertise are invaluable. Join us in empowering the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and innovators. Together, we can create a brighter future! To learn more or sign up, please contact Daniel Pierson, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity at [dwp\\_indy@hotmail.com](mailto:dwp_indy@hotmail.com) or 317-626-3445. We meet with the Seniors every Saturday until their graduation on May 31, 2025.

By fostering meaningful relationships between Divine 9 mentors and students, the Saturday Academy not only addressed immediate academic needs but also cultivated a network of long-term support. This initiative stands as a model for expanding mentorship opportunities, with the potential to reach more students and deepen the impact across Indiana and beyond.

As we move forward, one thing remains clear: Mentorship is not just guidance, it is a transformational force that shapes lives, builds communities, and ensures a future of success.



## Another Year, Another Brunch, Another Bond

Submitted by Bro. Daryl Shackelford, Nu Omega



**C**ommerce Township, Michigan. Saturday, June 14, 2025 – Nu Omega Chapter held its 3rd Annual Father/Daughter Brunch at Uptown Grille in Commerce Township, Michigan. The event is the brainchild of Bro. Daryl Shackelford (NQ 1995) who saw a need for the daughters of the brothers to bond and simply get to know one another.

So many times, we bring our sons to our events because we want to expose them to the frat in hopes that it will positively influence them to consider joining our fair organization. Many times, that means that our daughters

get left behind. The Father/Daughter brunch gives our daughters an opportunity to be celebrated by the first men in their lives and it also gives them an opportunity to get to know each other in a comfortable setting.

The event kicked off with an ice breaker activity which offered an opportunity for all attendees to learn more about the people they were in the room with by moving around and asking each other questions.

Upon completion of the ice breaker, a hearty brunch was served and enjoyed by all. Once brunch was consumed, it was time for the games! A special version of Bingo was played in which the squares were facts about dad in one round and another round where the squares were facts about daughters.

The winners of each round were awarded prizes. The games provided plenty of laughs.

The final activity of the day was the traditional rose presentation. This is a time when our daughters come forward one by one and dads get to shower their daughter(s) with verbal praise and present them with a rose. A great time was had by all in attendance this year. Several attendees expressed that they cannot wait until next year's event which is sure to offer another great opportunity for more dad/daughter bonding, fun and new surprises.



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## In Chicago, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Champions Fatherhood and Mentorship: The Reclaim Weekend & 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Father's Day CookOWT

Bro. Sean Long, 38 Tenth District Representative

**C**hicago, IL – Washington Park came alive with purpose, Father's Day Weekend, as Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., in partnership with the African American Male Wellness Agency, hosted the transformative Reclaim Weekend and 2nd Annual Father's Day CookOWT.

Under the leadership of Bro. Sean Long, Immediate Past Tenth District Representative, with Vice Chairmen Bro. Michael Davis (Chi Lambda Lambda) and Bro. Christopher Glenn (Rho Mu Mu), under the theme "Living Nobly", emphasized the

critical role of fatherhood, mentorship, and holistic wellness in strengthening Black families and communities.

The weekend commenced Friday evening at the DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center with the "Real Men Real Talk: The Reclaim Summit."

Fraternity members and community attendees engaged in candid conversations, addressing the importance of mental health, emotional wellness, and stress management—pillars of Omega Psi Phi's commitment to nurturing resilient and responsible Black men.



(L-R) Bro. Michael Davis, Vice Chair, Bro. Sean T. Long, Chairman, Chicago Mayor, Brandon Johnson, and Bro. Christopher Glenn, Vice Chair kick off the day of Wellness and honoring Fatherhood.

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On Saturday morning, Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson energized the crowd at the Black Men's Wellness Day 5K Walk/Run. His motivating words highlighted Omega Psi Phi's commitment to promoting active and healthy lifestyles. Participants, driven by a sense of communal solidarity, enthusiastically completed the scenic route through Washington Park.

Throughout the day, over 40 health-focused vendors provided more than 200 comprehensive health screenings.



Bro. Kenneth Jackson, 2025 Father of The Year Awardee

Attendees accessed critical health services, including prostate exams, blood pressure checks, and diabetes screenings, reflecting Omega Psi Phi's proactive stance on preventive healthcare within the African American community.

The day's festivities seamlessly

transitioned into the vibrant Father's Day CookOWT, drawing thousands of fraternity brothers, families, and friends from across Chicagoland. Each Omega Psi Phi Chapter hosted lively tents, warmly welcoming attendees with food, games, and an atmosphere of fellowship and brotherhood. A dedicated kids' zone featured bouncy houses, fun activities, and generous plant giveaways from the Chicago Botanic Garden, fostering a nurturing environment reflective of the fraternity's mentoring spirit. Local favorite Shawn Michelle's Ice Cream added sweetness and a sense of community warmth to the occasion.

Renowned Purple Reign DJs, including Sean Legend, Phokiss, Shawn B, Speedy, Bonsu, Chip Davis, and others, energized the park with music, celebrating the spirit of fatherhood and Fraternity.

An emotional highlight was the Father of the Year Award, symbolized by a championship wrestling belt—representing the strength and dedication required of fathers. This year, the award honored the legacy of Brother Christopher A. Suggs, who tragically passed away last December from preventable health challenges. Proudly accepting this significant honor was Bro. Kenneth Jackson from the Nu Pi Chapter exemplifies the ideals of fatherhood and leadership that Omega Psi Phi seeks to cultivate



Bro. Sean Long presents the award to the Family of Bro. Christopher A. Suggs.

and celebrate.

The Reclaim Weekend concluded on a high note on Father's Day with a memorable brunch and the 36th Annual Real Men Cook event at The Quarry, celebrating fatherhood through community bonding and culinary fellowship.

Through these powerful events, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. via Chi Lambda Lambda, Sigma Omega, Iota, Rho Gamma Gamma, Nu Pi, Rho Mu Mu, Omicron Mu Mu, Epsilon Eta, and Iota Delta Chapters, and the Uplift Foundation, reaffirmed its dedication to mentorship, fatherhood, and the holistic well-being of Black men, leaving a profound impact on all who attended.

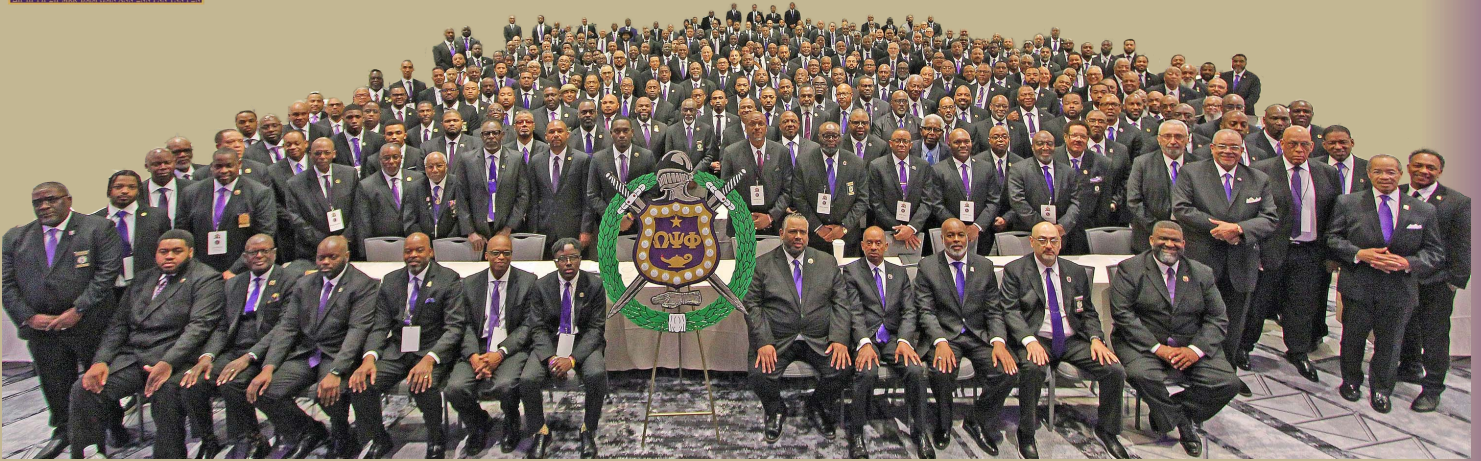






## 12<sup>th</sup> District

Brother George D. Taylor, EdD, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming



Brother Dr. Edward D. Young, 37th District Representative  
Brother Duane Thomas, 1st Vice District Representative  
Brother Carl-Ray Gillory, District Keeper of Records & Seal

Brother Rome Imari Mubarak, District KF  
Brother Damon Martin, Esq., District Counselor  
Brother Charles Clemons, District Chaplain

### Celebrating Transformational Leadership: 2024–2025 12<sup>th</sup> District Fatherhood and Mentoring Awards

Submitted By Brother Martin L. Boston, Ph.D.



*At its core, leadership is about showing up—with heart, with vision, and with a desire to serve others.*

That spirit was on full display on May 17, 2025, when Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.'s Twelfth District hosted its 80th District Meeting's Founders Banquet at the Hilton Portland Downtown in Oregon. The evening celebrated exceptional leaders who embody the fraternity's cherished Cardinal Principles: Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift.

This year's Fatherhood and Mentoring Awards honored individuals and organizations whose unwavering commitment to strengthening families and communities represents the very best of Omega's values. Recipients were recognized for their advocacy, innovation, and leadership in fatherhood and mentorship across the Western United States.



**Father of the Year:** Erik Woods Nominated by the Tau Tau Chapter, Erik Woods was honored with the Father of the Year Award—an accolade reserved for a non-member of Omega Psi Phi who exemplifies excellence in fatherhood and is accompanied by a \$500 prize.



Erik's journey has been nothing short of inspiring. As a single father raising two daughters, ages 14 and 10, he fought through legal complexities and systemic barriers to secure joint custody and provide them with a supportive, loving home.

After completing the 24/7 Dad program in February 2024,

*(Continued on page 46)*

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Erik didn't stop at personal growth—he became a source of strength for others. He now actively contributes to Project Fatherhood through weekly Men In Relationships Group (MIRG) meetings, offering encouragement and insight to fellow fathers. Erik's resilience and passion for fatherhood are not only admirable, they're transformative.

**Mentor of the Year:** Brother Mike K. Jules Representing Lambda Omicron Chapter, Brother Mike K. Jules received the 2024–2025 Mentor of the Year Award for his tireless



Brother Mike K. Jules, 12th District Mentor of the Year

efforts in guiding youth toward brighter futures.

As a Children's Social Worker III in Los Angeles County, Bro. Jules has spent more than 15 years championing vulnerable youth.

His brainchild, the **"A Greater Me"** initiative, is a five-week life-skills program for young men

with experiences in foster care aged 14–21, addressing everything from financial literacy and employment readiness to mental health and conflict resolution. More than a curriculum, the program offers hope, healing, and practical tools for a successful transition into adulthood. Backed by community partners, Bro. Jules fills critical gaps left by absent father figures, proving that mentorship, when sustained and sincere, changes lives.

**Fatherhood Program of the Year:** 2024 Fatherhood Conference Tau Tau Chapter was once again recognized, this time for organizing the 2024 Fatherhood Conference, named Fatherhood Program of the Year. Held at California State University, Dominguez Hills in August 2024, this milestone event marked the conference's first time operating independently, drawing in fathers from across Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties.

Attendees engaged in dynamic workshops and seminars focused on parenting, emotional wellness, legal literacy, and personal development. Co-hosted with Project Fatherhood and Assembly Member Mike Gipson, the conference

empowered fathers to become confident, engaged, and well-informed leaders in their children's lives. The event reaffirmed a simple truth: strong families begin with supported fathers.

**Corporate Partner of the Year:** The Uplift LA Institute The 2024 Corporate Partner of the Year Award went to The Uplift LA Institute, nominated by Tau Tau Chapter. Since the launch of its Fatherhood Initiative in 2020, the organization has redefined what support for fathers looks like—offering parenting workshops, financial education, job readiness training, and enriching father-child activities.

In collaboration with Tau Tau, Uplift LA has hosted vital mental health programs and outreach efforts that go beyond temporary fixes. Their holistic model nurtures long-term growth, making an indelible impact on countless families in the Los Angeles area.

**12th District International Fatherhood/Mentoring Chapter of the Year:**

A separate but equally esteemed recognition, the 12th District International Chapter of the Year award went to **Phi Beta Beta Chapter**.

A standout effort was the chapter's participation in a March 2024 Long Beach Unified School District event, which emphasized the crucial role of Black fathers in education.

Spearheaded in part by Bro. Lyonell Henson, the event sparked meaningful dialogue, community connection, and advocacy—setting a gold standard for grassroots fatherhood engagement. In recognition, the chapter was presented with a **\$5,000 award by Brother Ricky L. Lewis**, 42nd Grand Basileus, during the 12th District Meeting.

These honorees represent more than accolades—they embody purpose, perseverance, and the belief that love, when paired with leadership, can reshape families and communities for the better. Omega Psi Phi's Twelfth District salutes these trailblazers and looks ahead with pride and hope toward another year of impactful service.

Let their stories not only inspire, but move us all to action. Because when fathers rise, so do the next generation.

*Bro Dr. Martin L. Boston, PhD, Scholar – Writer – Entrepreneur, Editor-in-Chief, African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal, Taylor & Francis Group*



# Empowered to Lead, Inspired to Succeed: A Celebration of the Boys of Color Summit

By Brother John Ervin, III

**M**odesto, CA – Held under the commanding theme "Empowered to Lead, Inspired to Succeed," the recent Boys of Color Summit proved to be an overwhelming success, leaving attendees, mentors, and organizers alike filled with pride, hope, and renewed purpose.

The Summit brought together young men from diverse backgrounds, providing them with transformative experiences that will resonate for years to come.

From the moment the Summit began, the energy in the room was electric. Young men of color were welcomed into a space that celebrated their strengths, nurtured their dreams, and provided them with real-world tools to become tomorrow's leaders. Throughout the day, they engaged in a series of dynamic workshops, inspiring keynotes, and powerful mentoring sessions designed to affirm their identities and unlock their limitless potential.

One of the standout components of the Summit was the highly engaging Entrepreneurship Workshop. Facilitated by successful business leaders and innovators who looked like the young men themselves, this workshop taught critical skills such as business planning, financial literacy, marketing strategies, and the importance of resilience in the face of challenges.

Participants were encouraged to think big, to believe in their ideas, and to understand that entrepreneurship is not just about making money, but about building communities, creating opportunities, and changing the world.

Equally impactful was the mentoring that took place throughout the Summit. Dozens of caring mentors — community leaders, entrepreneurs, educators, and professionals — volunteered their time to build authentic relationships with the young men. Through one-on-one conversations and small group discussions, they shared their life journeys, offered practical advice, and reminded the participants that they are not alone on their path to success. The wisdom exchanged during these mentoring sessions was invaluable, planting seeds of confidence and ambition that will continue to grow.



Former NBA player and current Golden State Warriors Executive Chuck Hayes was speaker via video. He had to change from in person to video due to the Warriors making the playoffs and in Houston, TX during the conference.

The theme "Empowered to Lead, Inspired to Succeed" was not just words on a banner — it was a lived experience throughout the day. Every workshop, every conversation, and every handshake reinforced the message that these young men have the intelligence, strength, and capacity to lead their communities and achieve greatness. As the Summit concluded, the atmosphere was filled with hope, pride, and a sense of unstoppable momentum. The Boys of Color Summit not only equipped these young leaders with practical skills but affirmed their worth and unlimited potential. The future is indeed bright, and thanks to gatherings like this, a new generation of leaders is stepping forward — empowered, inspired, and ready to succeed. We are looking forward to next year!



# Omega Youth Leadership Academy on the Road

Submitted by Brother Dr. Carl A. Blunt



L-R: Brothers. Jerry Woods, Presenter; Dr. Carl A. Blunt, Executive Director; Marcus DelGado, Board Secretary; Marc Sutton, Board President; Jay Williams, Board Vice President; Dr. William Smith, Co- Founder. Right Photo: Brother Dr. Quebec Logan talking to YALA. Brother Dr. Quebec Logan, Keynote Speaker, and YALA Conference Award Recipients

**P**hoenix, AZ – On April 19, 2025, the 15th Annual Living Above the Influence Omega Youth Leadership Academy held The Larry C. Ross, Sr., Youth Conference at Gateway Community College, Phoenix, AZ. The Keynote Speaker was brother Dr. Quebec Logan, a psychologist, whose areas of expertise encompass psycho-educational testing, substance abuse, support for at-risk youth, and providing life coaching services. The conference is a statewide event. Participants from the three graduate chapters and two undergraduate chapters within the state are active. Students, parents, and teachers from as far away as Casa Grande and Tucson join every year. This year, OYLA received support from the Phoenix Suns and Mercury professional basketball teams.

**I**n West Hills, CA – San Fernando Valley Young Ambassadors Leadership Academy (YALA) Jeopardy-style Black History competition featured fierce competition between YALA Ambassadors, Kappa League, and Sigma Gamma Rho solo representative Daijah Rhoer. Every team showcased incredible knowledge, determination, and a deep appreciation for Black history.

## Tau Tau Chapter's Mentoring Program

Submitted by Brother Dr. Rodney Brooks

**C**ompton, CA – On May 23, 2025, Tau Tau Chapter concluded its 15th year of mentoring at Dr. Ronald E. McNair Elementary School in Compton, California. Since 2015, the Brothers of Mighty Tau Tau have touched the lives of approximately 200 young scholars. By working with small groups of selected 4th, 5th, and 6th graders the Tau Tau mentors successfully inculcate the values and Cardinal Principles of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. The program is named “Manhood 101”; it addresses a variety of subjects ranging from conflict resolution to financial literacy.

The Compton Unified School District's administration recognized and displayed their appreciation for this work by allowing Omega Psi Phi's Shield to be painted on the front of the school. Mighty Tau Tau through “Uplift L.A.” 501(c) 3 reciprocated by repainting the school's space mural which honors Brother Dr. Ronald E. McNair and the Space Shuttle Challenger.



The commitment and devotion of Tau Tau to the students of McNair is visible and widely recognized throughout the City of Compton. We look forward to continuing our work in the 2025-26 school year.

McNair Mentoring Chair

[tenthcav10@live.com](mailto:tenthcav10@live.com)

Phone: (818) 482-9258



## Delta Pi Passport to Manhood

Submitted by Bro. Wayne Greer



development, leadership skills, and positive behavior.

As we celebrate the achievements of these young men, we also recognize the importance of ongoing support and encouragement. The lessons learned in the Passport to Manhood Program will continue to resonate throughout their lives, serving as a foundation for success in both personal and professional endeavors.

With determination and perseverance, these graduates are poised to make a positive impact on the world around them, embodying the principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift instilled in them through this transformative program. Many parents and community members were in attendance. The keynote speaker for the event was Malik Gbenro who serves as the General Counsel for the Tacoma Public School District.

**T**acoma, WA – The Brothers of Delta Pi, the Tacoma Ques hosted a graduation ceremony on June 12, 2025 for the 2024-2025 Passport to Manhood Program which focuses on a curriculum which is directly aligned with our cardinal principals of Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift. Throughout the program, they engaged in discussions and activities designed to foster character

## Brother, You're On My Mind

Submitted by Bro. Dr. George D. Taylor

**P**asadena/Altadena, CA – Zeta Tau Chapter is working for Omega and its communities. It has grown in membership, in character, and – as an assemblage of educated, talented, men of integrity and grit – it has been tested; it has worked through significant adversity.

In a direct text message to Zeta Tau Brother Derek James, Zeta Tau Basileus Brother Larry Quishenberry briefed him and the Chapter from the 80th 12th District meeting in Portland, OR on District Representative Brother Dr. Edward Young's comment to the District's assemblage on the efforts of Zeta Tau brothers to immediately respond in a dramatic and life risking way to help him rescue his bedridden 80 year stepfather from a burning neighborhood during the January 7, 2025, Eaton California fires.

Brother Quishenberry's message to Zeta Tau Chapter and Brother James read, "...during Bro DR's [Dr. Edward D. Young,

36th District Representative] report to the collective, he spoke about how the Brothers of ZT rallied to aid & support DJ's family during the Altadena fire and the work that the chapter has done in fire relief. The chapter then received a standing ovation from the Brotherhood. A very nice moment for Zeta Tau...."



Sadly, DJ's stepfather, Frederick Louis Perdue, passed April 2, 2025. And, on a rainy Saturday morning, April 26, 2025 at 10:30, Zeta Tau Brothers were there with DJ to see it through and to say "Brother, You're On My Mind."

Following the 12th District meeting, Southern California Area Representative Brother Darryl Harris messaged the SoCal Basilei commending them on their leadership within the SoCal Area. He acknowledged the numerous chapter and individual awards handed out at the Founder's Banquet, "Tau Tau, Phi Beta Beta, Lambda Omicron, Zeta Tau, Zeta Rho, Rho Nu Nu, and Phi Lambda (UG). We also want to congratulate

the brothers who received individual awards from the SoCal Area," he wrote.

## Delta Pi Flag Football

Submitted by Bro. James Dubose

**T**acoma, WA – It all started with a request from the Eastside Boys and Girls Club (BGC) of Tacoma that turned into a mission after seeing ten eager faces staring up at me, full of energy and curiosity. Coaching the 12U Eastside Boys and Girls Club flag football team wasn't just going to be about wins and touchdowns; it was about purpose.

I've always believed in giving back, as a veteran, and as a community member. I saw coaching as more than just teaching plays; it was an opportunity to teach life. From the first practice I made it clear we would grow together. We would run drills not just to get faster, but to build discipline. We would huddle not just to plan the next play, but to learn communication, teamwork, and trust.

**Every dropped pass became a chance to talk about resilience. Every touchdown? A reminder of what happens when preparation meets opportunity. Watching these kids support one another, pick each other up after a missed flag, and celebrate each other's success reminded me why I do this.**



Bro. James Dubose Getting His Team Ready for Gameday!!!

My motivation comes from watching young players find their confidence, not just on the field, but in life. I want each child to walk away from this season knowing how to lead, how to be accountable, and how to believe in themselves no matter what life throws at them.

Flag football is the tool, but character, courage, and connection are the real trophies we chase. For me, there is no better reward than seeing these young athletes grow into better teammates, leaders, and people.

## Career Readiness Workshop

Submitted by Bro Vernon Hadley

**T**acoma, WA – On May 22, the brothers of the Delta Pi Chapter hosted the Career Readiness Workshop at Foss High School in Tacoma, Washington. This one-day event was designed to empower high school juniors and seniors with practical knowledge, inspiration, and access to career-building opportunities as they prepare for life after graduation. The workshop introduced students to four major post-secondary pathways: college, skilled trades, military service, and direct entry into the workforce. Throughout the event, each speaker delivered a direct, informative presentation focused on what their pathway offers—covering entry points, training requirements, growth opportunities, and long-term career potential. The goal was to present each pathway not as a backup plan, but as a valid and empowering choice.



Career Readiness Kick-Off with Pizza

A key strength of the workshop was the intentional diversity of its presenters. The Delta Pi Chapter prioritized selecting professionals who reflected the racial, cultural, and lived experiences of the students in attendance. This representation helped students connect more deeply with the messages shared and see a version of themselves in a successful future.

In addition to career exploration, the event concluded with a professional development offering: each student received a free professional headshot. This final experience gave students something immediate and tangible to take away—an asset they can use for job applications, college submissions, or LinkedIn profiles. For many students, it was their first professional photo and served as a symbolic moment of stepping into their future.

*(Continued on page 51)*





Brother James Dubose helping to tie a necktie



Students fitted with professional clothes for headshots

*(Continued from page 50)*

Organized entirely by the brothers of the Delta Pi Chapter, this workshop reflected their deep commitment to mentorship, education, and community leadership. Their thoughtful planning, strong presence, and ability to bring together local organizations and professionals made the event a success and set the tone for future youth-focused programming in the region.

## Zeta Tau Hosts 2025 Harold Reese Walk and Picnic in Honor of Beloved Fraternity Brother

Submitted by Bro Lindsey Bates



Sitting (L to R) Bro Said Kelly, Bro Pratt, Bro Banks. Standing (L to R) Bro Culpepper, Bro Thompkins, Bro Shannon, Bro Bates, Bro Phillips, Bro Bennet, Bro Taylor



First finisher Dorothy (Hope Now CEO), Bro Culpepper



Standing (L to R) Bro Bates, Bro Young (District Rep), unidentified, unidentified, Bro Harris (Southern Ca Area Rep). Sitting (L to R) Bro Wilson, Bro Culpepper, Bro Leufroy

**P**asadena, CA, June 14, 2025 — Zeta Tau Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. held its annual Harold Reese Walk and Picnic on a sunny Saturday morning, bringing together fraternity members, families, and community supporters for a day of health, unity, and remembrance. The event, named in honor of the late Brother Harold Reese, celebrated his enduring legacy of service, mentorship, and brotherhood.

Participants gathered early for a community walk around Pasadena's historic Rosebowl, emphasizing the importance of physical wellness and social connection. The walk was followed by a vibrant picnic featuring food, music, games,

and reflections on the life and impact of Brother Reese, a cornerstone of the Zeta Tau Chapter known for his tireless efforts to uplift youth and support underserved communities.

This event reminds us not only of Harold's legacy but also of our ongoing responsibility to carry the torch of service forward.

Now a staple in the chapter's calendar, the Harold Reese Walk and Picnic continues to unite generations and inspire positive action, reaffirming Omega Psi Phi's cardinal principles of Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift.

# He's Doing The Difficult, With Love and Respect

Bro. John W. Edwards, III



“**Do the difficult.**” In the only known recording of his voice, that was the charge of our Founder, Bishop Edgar Amos Love. He asked the Lord, “Give me this mountain,” not because it was easy, but because it was necessary. That same mindset applies to fatherhood, to scholarship, and to every Brother striving to lead his family and live up to the high standards of Omega.

In 2023, I flew to the Bahamas to represent the 12th District at the Dr. Moses C. Norman, Sr., International Leadership Conference as Scholar of the Year. The moment I checked into my hotel room, I received the call. My father had passed away.

Just weeks before, my wife and I had shared the news that we were expecting twin boys. A few weeks after laying my father to rest, I started graduate school at San Diego State University in the Master of Social Work Clinical Practice program. One month in, my sons were born.

There was no time to slow down. Life was full, and I was being stretched in every direction. With every course in person and my wife back to work, I had to figure out how to get to class. Many days, I brought my sons with me. While others sat in quiet classrooms, I was rocking car seats while taking notes.

This was not easy. There were moments I questioned whether I could keep going. But I stayed grounded. I leaned into the Word through monthly district Bible studies. I leaned on the strength of the Bruhz who poured into me when I needed it most.

While in school, I continued working as a licensed barber. My barber chair became more than a seat for a haircut. It became a space for Black men to talk about mental health, parenting, and manhood. I used my chair to spark honest conversations about being present fathers, loving husbands, and responsible men. I hope to continue using my care as a tool to help men grow, heal, and lead.

I used to search for signs of my father after he passed. Now, I see him in how I show up for my sons. His birthday is June 16, and most years it falls on Father's Day. To honor his life and legacy, I created a nonprofit called Love Always, Dad, named after how he signed every card he gave me. This work is rooted in presence, accountability, and love.



On May 18, 2025, I walked the graduation stage with my master's degree. Just days before, I had been named 12th District Scholar of the Year for the fourth time. My sons were there to witness it. That moment was not just about achievement. It was about legacy. It was about showing my children, and the men of Omega, what it means to keep going when the mountain is steep. Fatherhood is not an obstacle to leadership. It is where leadership begins.

To the Bruhz reading this: you can do both. You can raise your children and rise in your calling.

Do the difficult; you were made for this!





## 13<sup>th</sup> District

Brother Michael Robinson, Chairman, Fatherhood and Mentoring  
Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada, China, Dominican Republic, Germany, Ghana, Hawai'i, Italy, Japan, Mexico,  
Netherlands, Nigeria, Panama, South Korea, St. Croix, St. Maarten, St. Thomas, United Arab Emirates,  
United Kingdom

### A Bridge 2 Light

Dr. Lawrence Henry's Message to 13th International District Annual Meeting



(Col. Ret.) Bro Dr. Lawrence Henry presents on the protection of womanhood. Bro 13<sup>th</sup> International District Representative Freddie Thompson IV is pictured



Col Ret.) Brother Dr. Lawrence Henry with Nu Nu Nu Chapter Basileus, and host chapter of the 13<sup>th</sup> District Annual Conference (2025)



Col. Ret. Bro (Dr.) Lawrence Henry with Bro Ricky Lewis, 42<sup>nd</sup> Grand Basileus

**D**ominican Republic – (Col Ret) Dr. Lawrence Henry, a retired Green Beret, with 26 years of military service, founder and executive director of a non-profit called Bridge to Light, addressed the 13<sup>th</sup> International District at its 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting. The meeting was held under the leadership of the 13<sup>th</sup> International District Representative Bro Freddie Thompson, IV, in Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic from April 3 – April 7, 2025.

Dr. Lawrence Henry engaged the group twice during the conference, during the leadership luncheon and during a focused presentation on the protection of womanhood. During the leadership luncheon, Dr. Lawrence spoke about various forms of violence that affect the communities in which they live and its effects on Omega.

Given the current political, informational, and economic environments that are severely impacting underserved communities, Dr. Henry demanded that members of the 13<sup>th</sup> District transcend the borders of the individual, chapter, district, and fraternity and become ambassadors of brotherhood and friendship to the world. He challenged the brotherhood to become *agents of change* by serving as mentors to wayward youth. He amplified this point by stating, "*it is easier to mentor someone who has role models that attended Howard, Morgan or Penn State, but how about those youth whose role models were from the State Penn(itentiary)! We must possess the physical and moral courage to mentor these young men as well!*", he said.

During Dr. Henry's focused presentation, he asked conference attendees the question, "*What is Violence?*" Beyond the physical manifestation of violence, Dr. Henry spoke about the maldevelopment, and deprivation aspects of violence directed towards marginalized groups – in this case,

Black and Brown women.

He highlighted the physical and psychological aspects of *Intimate Partner Violence* and addressed the concept of "Gaslighting." He used several examples to illustrate what gaslighting is as it relates to intimate partner violence. Phrases such as "*Stop being so sensitive*" and "*Why are you so angry*" were cited during the presentation.

Dr. Henry concluded with a few suggestions that could create the proper environment to respect and protect womanhood. First, organizations such as Omega Psi Phi should *partner with organizations that have a shared mission, goal, and objectives* to reduce the effects of or instances of intimate partner violence, physical, direct, and indirect violence directed towards women. Second, host *protection of womanhood* panel discussions to assist in understanding how women define protection, examine different forms of violence directed at women, and identify obstacles that prevent men from respecting and protecting women and their communities.

Lastly, Dr. Henry spoke about his fight with combat – related to stage 3 colon cancer and his current fight with stage 4 colon cancer. He encouraged the brothers of the 13<sup>th</sup> District to educate, motivate, and agitate members in communities to receive the proper screenings and gain an education about chronic diseases – namely prostate, colon, and lung cancer.

International, District, and Chapter brothers received Brother Dr. Lawrence Henry's message very well, and he has taken action to operationalize his observations and recommendations.

# Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter Brings Science to Life at Ikego Elementary STEM Day

By Brother Michael Preaster



**Z**ushi, Japan – The Brothers of Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. made a powerful impact on young learners at Ikego Elementary School during its annual STEM Day, held on April 23, 2025 in Zushi, Japan.

Five Brothers from the chapter—Michael Preaster, George Garrison, Edward Burden, Christopher Evans, and Leon Hatcher—volunteered their time to lead a dynamic, hands-on science lesson focused on energy transfer and motion. Their interactive presentation introduced elementary students to the concepts of how energy moves between objects during collisions and how speed affects that energy transfer.

Using simple materials and engaging experiments, the Brothers guided students through real-world demonstrations, turning complex science topics into exciting and relatable activities. Students were not only participants but also active thinkers, encouraged to explore, question, and explain the principles behind each

demonstration.

The Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter's involvement in STEM Day is a testament to their dedication to community service and youth mentorship. Their efforts directly support Omega Psi Phi Fraternity's core values of uplift and scholarship and reinforce the fraternity's commitment to promoting academic excellence through its mandated programs.

STEM Day at Ikego Elementary is a much-anticipated annual event, designed to spark interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics among elementary-aged students. With the support of community partners like Upsilon Lambda Lambda, the event continues to grow in both reach and impact.

By bringing science into the classroom in an engaging and meaningful way, the Brothers of Upsilon Lambda Lambda are helping to shape the next generation of innovators, problem-solvers, and lifelong learners.



Brother Michael Preaster assisting the students in building a transfer of energy station.



Brother George Garrison IV instructing students on the principles of energy and motion.



Brother Edward Burden assisting the students in building a transfer of energy station



# Courts of Influence: Shaping Young Lives Through Brotherhood and Basketball

Submitted by Brother Randy Pringle



Dylan Preston (Assistant Coach) on the end right side, follow by Bro. Sentwali Helton, (Head Coach) second from the right, and members of the 2025 Far East Championship Team



Ms. Ashleigh Conteh, team mother, Bro. Helton center, Bro. Walter Young of Lambda Xi (Purple T-shirt); Dylan Preston (Assistant Coach) and members of the Zama basketball team.

**Z**ama, Japan – The principles of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., stand firmly on the pillars of Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift. Nowhere are these values more evident than in the mentorship and fatherhood displayed by two dedicated members who have gone above and beyond to guide young athletes toward success, both on and off the court.

Both esteemed brothers are certified educators, bringing their passion for teaching and mentoring into the realm of athletics. Brother Sentwali Helton, is head basketball coach for Zama American High School and in his inaugural season, led his team to a Far East championship. His leadership propelled the team to a 23 - 1 record-breaking season, changing the culture and building a program that is not only supported by the community but actively involved in it through various volunteer opportunities set up by Coach Helton. This year, he effectively utilized strategic leadership, and an unwavering commitment to the development of the whole player.

He partnered with Brother Walter Young of Lambda Xi, a trainer and motivational speaker; together both brothers have demonstrated the essence of fatherhood by investing in the next generation, not just as athletes but as young men preparing for life's challenges. They have embodied the mission of Omega Psi Phi by fostering discipline, integrity, and ambition in the youth they mentor. Their work is a testament to the transformative power of positive role models who lead with purpose and passion.

Through their efforts, these brothers continue to uphold the rich legacy of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., ensuring that the lessons of mentorship, perseverance, and uplift extend far beyond the basketball court. Their influence will be felt for years to come as they inspire and mold future leaders who will, in turn, pass on these values to generations ahead.



# Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter: Hosts 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Father/Daughter Dance

Submitted By Brother Randy Pringle



Father and Daughter Dance Entrance



Fathers and Daughters in attendance at the event

**M**ainland, Japan – The Brothers of Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter hosted their 9th Annual Father & Daughter Dance on Saturday, April 19, 2025, at the Officers' Club on Yokosuka Naval Base. This year's theme was: "Moana 2". The event was sold out with over 150 participants from the Kanto Plain communities in attendance.

Each young lady received a special gift bag upon arrival. The evening featured live entertainment, special father-daughter photos, face-painting, a buffet meal, and "lots" of dancing. Inspirational words and the invocation were given

by Brother Chaplain Lieutenant Christopher Evans, Commander Fleet Activity, who challenged the fathers to always be the man their daughters can look up to.

All fathers and daughters that attended this year's event were glad to once again have an opportunity to spend quality time together with their young Princesses which strengthened their family bond. This event also left precious memories to cherish in the future. Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter remains committed to uplifting our youth throughout the Kanto Plain communities of Japan.



Brother Chaplain Christopher Evans providing inspirational words



Brother Paul Jones provided the music for the nights event and kept the dancefloor busy all evening



Attendees enjoying an evening filled with dancing, fun, and lasting memories.



# Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter Supports Kinnick High School's AVID Program

Submitted by Brother Randy Pringle



Mr. Travis Stevens, AVID teacher; Bro. Michael Preaster (Basileus); Bro. Randy Pringle (KRS), AVID tutor Mr. Cadin, and AVID class students

**Y**okosuka, Japan - The Brothers of Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter have once again demonstrated their commitment to community and education by supporting the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program at Niles C. Kinnick High School, located on Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, U.S. Naval Base in Yokosuka, Japan.

Mr. Travis Stevens, a dedicated AVID teacher and liaison at Kinnick High School, has long partnered with the Chapter on various student-centered initiatives such as talent shows, school dances, scholarships, and essay contests. This year, recognizing the financial challenges facing the Class of 2025, Mr. Stevens personally reached out to the Brothers of Upsilon Lambda Lambda for assistance in supporting the AVID program's senior graduation activities.

AVID is a vital college and career readiness program implemented across many Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools. While it provides essential academic and organizational support for students in grades 9 through 12, the program remains largely self-funded. Each year, students conduct fundraises to cover the

costs of their graduation celebrations—including decorations, faculty awards, and ceremonial needs. Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts and other constraints, this year's senior class was unable to raise sufficient funds.

In response, the Brothers of Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter approved a \$500 donation to help defray graduation expenses for the AVID seniors. This gesture aligns with the Chapter's ongoing mission to support youth development and educational advancement through charitable giving and social action.

Kinnick High School's AVID program currently serves 72 students and boasts an impressive record of success, with 97% of its participants continuing to college or university. The AVID program plays a crucial role in helping students become independent, confident learners prepared for life beyond high school.

Thanks to the continued partnership between Mr. Stevens and the Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter, students at Kinnick are not only preparing for academic success but are also experiencing the power of community support firsthand.

# NFL Pro Camp Inspires Local Youth at Yokota High School

By Brother Randy Pringle



Football camp participants, attendees, and volunteers.



Bro. Paul Jones running drills with football camps children

**Yokota, Japan** – On April 12–13, 2025, Brother Sentwali Helton, head football coach at Zama High School, and Brother Paul Jones, a prominent community leader from Yokota, played key roles in organizing and leading the NFL ProCamp held at Yokota High School.

Both Brother Helton and Brother Jones are members of the Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., chartered in Tokyo, Japan. Their leadership and service were instrumental in the success of the two-day event, which brought together 194 youth

and community members from Yokota, Zama, and Yokosuka for a weekend of football, mentorship, and personal development. NFL veteran Morgan Fox also participated, lending his professional experience to inspire and engage the young athletes.



L-R: Bro. Helton and Bro. Jones with mentees Damien Johnson, MVP of the football camp; NFL veteran Morgan Fox seated with football camp attendees, Bro. Helton standing in the middle.

The camp featured fundamental football training, skill-building drills, and 7-on-7 competitions, all designed to develop athletic ability and teamwork. To celebrate the participants' achievements, medals and souvenirs were awarded at the conclusion of the camp.

The event underscored the impact of community engagement and the role of mentorship in empowering the next generation.

## Guided by Purpose: The Tomodachi Bridge Builders and the Power of Mentorship

By Brother Kwesi Toney

**Okinawa, Japan** – The Tomodachi Bridge Builders, a dedicated group focused on developing young men while fostering community development and cultural exchange, are mentored monthly by the esteemed Brothers of Sigma Gamma Gamma Graduate Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. This program has been instrumental in guiding the mentees through various initiatives, empowering them with leadership skills, and a deeper understanding of service. The Brothers, known for their commitment to uplifting and mentoring youth, have provided invaluable insights and support, helping the Tomodachi Bridge Builders to effectively bridge gaps and grow as leaders in the community. Through this mentorship, the mentees will not only flourish as individuals but also make significant strides in their mission while progressing.



Brothers of SGG working with mentees on how to set smart goals.



# Theta Rho Chapter Launches “Manhood 101 Academy” at Aviano Elementary

By Brother Lymas Johnson



**A**viano Air Base, Italy – The Brothers of Theta Rho International Chapter partnered with Aviano Elementary School to launch the “Manhood 101 Academy,” an initiative developed in support of the Chapter’s Fatherhood and Mentorship Committee. Held every Wednesday from April 30 through June 4, 2025, the six-week afterschool program provided young male students in grades four and five with an engaging, mentor-led experience focused on character development, etiquette, and life skills.

Manhood 101 Academy was designed to promote positive interaction between students, school staff, and the broader military and local community.

The program’s mission centered on empowering youth through mentorship, teamwork, and camaraderie, all while reinforcing principles of responsibility, respect, and social awareness.

Each two-hour weekly session was led by at least one Brother from Theta Rho Chapter, with support from Aviano Elementary faculty and other community leaders. The carefully structured curriculum introduced participants to important social behaviors, including chivalry, proper hygiene, and how to be courteous and respectful in various social settings.

One of the program’s highlights was a formal dining experience staged to simulate a restaurant setting. This allowed students to practice manners and etiquette in a real-

world scenario, including how to properly set a table, enter a room, and respectfully escort someone to their seat. Attendees also collaborated with participants from the girls’ club during this session, reinforcing mutual respect and understanding.

Additional hands-on lessons included how to tie a single-knot tie, the basics of offering courteous gestures such as opening doors or giving up a seat, and how to safely and respectfully walk with a lady or assist the elderly.

The curriculum also emphasized communication skills through a session on the “Art of Conversation,” where the young men learned the importance of active listening, mindfulness, and building meaningful connections.

In the program’s final week, students toured the local campuses of the University of Maryland Global Campus and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, giving them early exposure to higher education and its possibilities.

The Chapter’s sponsorship provided essential resources, including snacks and funding for the formal dinner, helping to ensure a well-rounded experience and strong attendance throughout the six weeks.

The Manhood 101 Academy successfully modeled the power of mentorship, reinforcing life lessons and social values that will serve these young men for years to come.



# Fostering a Culture of Volunteerism in Okinawa's Youth

By Brother David Dew

**O**kinawa, Japan - On April 26, 2025, the Brothers of Sigma Gamma Gamma Chapter held a mentoring session focused on youth volunteerism, led by Mr. Allan Obace, Volunteer Program Coordinator for Marine Corps Community Services. Mr. Obace provided valuable insight into the benefits of volunteering, including tangible incentives and recognition. More importantly, he emphasized the intangible rewards—such as personal growth, leadership development, and a strengthened sense of civic responsibility—that come from dedicating one's time to serve others.

The Brothers, who are deeply committed to service, reinforced Mr. Obace's message by sharing examples of volunteer initiatives in which the chapter actively participates. Their engagement underscored the importance of giving back and inspired the young men to explore meaningful ways to contribute to their community.



Bro David Dew, Jourdan Ware, Jakai Matthews, and David Dew III. From left to right second row: Bro Elvis Jackson, Bro "Dr" Pablo Ramos, Jaden Ware and Bro Jacquary Bradford. The mentees and the mentors both listen to Mr. Obace expound upon the intangible benefits of volunteering as a teenager

## Brother Cortez Pree Visits Zukeran Elementary to Honor Military Children

By Brother Cortez Pree



**O**kinawa, Japan – On Friday, May 16, 2025, Brother Cortez Pree represented Sigma Gamma Gamma Chapter by visiting seven classrooms, reading stories, and offering words of encouragement to students whose lives are shaped by the unique challenges of military life. His message was simple but powerful: "Thank you for supporting your parents."

The Month of the Military Child is observed globally to honor the resilience and sacrifices of children whose parents serve in the armed forces. These young individuals often endure long absences from loved ones due to deployments, training exercises, and other military obligations. The support and strength they show in the face of these challenges deserve recognition and appreciation.

Brother Pree's participation reflects Sigma Gamma Gamma Chapter's ongoing commitment to community outreach and youth mentorship. By reading to students and engaging in meaningful conversations, he helped remind them that their role in the military family is valued and respected.



# Lambda Xi Chapter Honors Military Children at Humphrey Central Elementary

By Brother Eugene Gibbs

**S**outh Korea – On Monday, April 7, 2025, the Brothers of the Lambda Xi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., joined students, faculty, and community members at Humphrey Central Elementary School to celebrate the return from spring break and kick off the Month of the Military Child.

Continuing a beloved tradition known as the “Clap-In,” Brother Eugene Gibbs and Brother Brandon Spencer lined the school’s hallways, welcoming students with enthusiastic applause, warm smiles, and words of encouragement. This gesture held special meaning, recognizing, and uplifting the school’s military-connected children whose resilience often goes unseen.

The event was part of Omega Psi Phi’s Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative — an ongoing effort to inspire youth through consistent community involvement and positive role models.

Observed throughout April, the Month of the Military Child pays tribute to the strength, adaptability, and courage of young people in military families. The 2025

theme, “Celebrating Military Children and Youth: Building Stronger Character and Relationships,” highlights the Army’s commitment to their well-being and future success.

By taking part in this celebration, the Lambda Xi Chapter reaffirmed its dedication to supporting young minds and acknowledging the unique challenges faced by military children



Brother Brandon Spencer Lambda Xi Chapter Keeper of Finance joins fellow community members in clapping in students on their first day back from summer break, demonstrating collective support and encouragement.

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## Mentorship in Action: Brother Clint Carmichael Inspires Student Leaders at Humphreys Central Elementary

Submitted By Brother Clint Carmichael

**S**outh Korea - In the heart of our community, mentorship remains one of the most powerful tools to shape the next generation—and few exemplify that more than the men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and Brother Clint Carmichael of the Lambda Xi Chapter.

On April 15, 2025, Brother Carmichael took time to pour into the bright young minds of Central Elementary School’s Student Council, leading an engaging and impactful session on the theme “Dressing for

Success.” With sixteen eager student leaders gathered, the session was more



than a fashion lesson—it was a conversation about presence, purpose, and preparation.

Brother Carmichael broke down the importance of dressing appropriately for various occasions, weaving in thoughtful considerations such as weather, safety, and personal presentation. Students learned that how one shows up often speaks before a single word is said—and that respect for the occasion starts with respect for oneself.

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But the true highlight came during the hands-on portion of the class: Necktie Knot Training. Brother Carmichael brought energy and excitement to the challenge, offering two fun competitions to test the students' new skills. The first, a race to see who could tie a necktie faster than Brother Carmichael himself, brought out plenty of laughter and determination. The second, a one-shot

bow tie challenge, offered students a chance to tie a bow tie correctly—and if they succeeded, they were rewarded by getting to keep the tie.

More than just knots and ties, the session was about building confidence, learning life skills, and reinforcing the importance of poise and professionalism. Brother Carmichael's message was clear: excellence starts with the little things.

The Student Council, under the guidance of their advisor Dr. Alfreda

Carmichael (also wife of Brother Carmichael), continues to benefit from intentional mentoring moments like this - lessons that go beyond the classroom and leave lasting impressions.

In true Omega fashion, Brother Carmichael showed what it means to uplift and lead by example, reminding us all that when we invest in our youth, we are investing in a brighter future.

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## Lambda Xi Honors Military Children On Purple Up Day

By Brother Charlesvester Wims

**S**outh Korea – On April 16, 2025, Brothers Eugene Gibbs and Michael Robinson of the Lambda Xi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. proudly joined the national observance of Purple Up Day by wearing purple in honor of the Month of the Military Child. This meaningful Social Action initiative served as a powerful expression of solidarity and gratitude for the strength and sacrifices of military children and their families. By participating in this tradition, established 14 years ago by the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, Lambda Xi Chapter reaffirmed its dedication to uplifting military communities and acknowledging the unique challenges faced by those who serve.



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## Lambda Xi Brothers Inspire Youth at Humphreys West Elementary School Career Day

Submitted By Brother Charlesvester Wims

**S**outh Korea – On May 2, 2025, two Brothers of Lambda Xi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., participated in the Humphreys West Elementary School Career Day, furthering the Fraternity's commitment to academic excellence and community engagement through its mandated programs.

Brother Marcus Shepard, Camp Humphreys Fire Chief, led an engaging fire safety demonstration by coordinating a fire truck setup with fellow firefighters. Students had the opportunity to explore the fire truck, interact with equipment, and learn about the vital role of fire services in community safety.

Brother Charlesvester Wims conducted multiple classroom presentations focused on STEM education—covering topics such as Cyber Security, Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, and Linear Algebra. His sessions aimed to spark early interest in

technology and critical thinking among young learners. The students were especially enthusiastic during discussions about emerging technologies like ChatGPT, asking insightful questions and sharing their curiosity about how AI tools are used in everyday life, even at a very young age.

The event reflected Lambda Xi's dedication to fostering early interest in STEM fields and modeling leadership through service and mentorship, in alignment with several Omega Psi Phi mandated programs.



Brother Charlesvester Wims answering questions from students about Artificial Intelligence and Linear Algebra.



# Strong Men

By Brother Sterling A. Brown, Omega Chapter

They dragged you from homeland,  
They chained you in coffles,  
They huddled you spoon-fashion in  
filthy hatches,  
They sold you to give a few  
gentlemen ease.

They broke you in like oxen,  
They scourged you,  
They branded you,  
They made your women breeders,  
They swelled your numbers with  
bastards. . . .  
They taught you the religion they  
disgraced.

You sang:  
    Keep a inchin' along  
    Lak a po' inch worm. . . .

You sang:  
    Bye and bye  
    I'm gonna lay down dis heaby  
load. . . .

You sang:  
    Walk togedder, chillen,  
    Dontcha git weary . . .  
    The strong men keep a-comin'  
on

    The strong men git stronger.  
They point with pride to the roads  
you built for them,

They ride in comfort over the rails  
you laid for them.  
They put hammers in your hands  
And said — Drive so much before  
sundown.

You sang:  
    Ain't no hammah  
    In dis lan',  
    Strikes lak mine, bebbby,  
    Strikes lak mine.  
They cooped you in their kitchens,  
They penned you in their factories,  
They gave you the jobs that they  
were too good for,  
They tried to guarantee happiness to  
themselves

By shunting dirt and misery to you.

You sang:  
    Me an' muh baby gonna shine,  
shine  
    Me an' muh baby gonna shine.  
The strong men keep a-comin' on  
The strong men git stronger . . .

They bought off some of your  
leaders

You stumbled, as blind men will . . .  
They coaxed you, unwontedly soft  
voiced . . .  
You followed a way.  
Then laughed as usual.  
They heard the laugh and wondered;  
Uncomfortable;  
Unadmitting a deeper terror . . .

    The strong men keep a-comin' on  
    Gittin' stronger. . . .  
What, from the slums  
Where they have hemmed you,  
What, from the tiny huts  
They could not keep from you—  
What reaches them  
Making them ill at ease, fearful?  
Today they shout prohibition at you  
"Thou shalt not this"  
"Thou shalt not that"  
"Reserved for whites only"  
You laugh.

One thing they cannot prohibit—  
The strong men . . . coming on  
The strong men gittin' stronger.  
    Strong men . . .  
    Stronger . . .

By Sterling A. Brown  
Omega Chapter  
1909-1989

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Brother Sterling A. Brown, was born on the campus of Howard University, May 1, 1901, the last of six children and the only boy born to the Rev. Sterling Nelson, a former slave and prominent professor in the Howard University Divinity School, and Adelaide (Allen) Brown. He graduated as the top student from Dunbar High School, Washington, D.C., in 1918, received a bachelor's degree from Williams College and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. In 1923, he earned a master's degree from Harvard University and was employed as a teacher at the Virginia Seminary and College in Lynchburg until 1926. He married Daisy Turnbull in 1927. Two years later, he began teaching at Howard University. Brown is known for his frank, unsentimental portraits of Black people and their experiences, as well as the incorporation of African American folklore and contemporary idiom into his verse. He entered Omega Chapter January 13, 1989, in Takoma Park, Maryland.

Contributed By: John Edgar Tidwell September 29, 2007 Courtesy Smithsonian Institute Tidwell, J. (2007, September 29). Sterling A. Brown (1901-1989). BlackPast.org. <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/brown-sterling-1901-1989>





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