



Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring (FIM) Newsletter



Fatherhood Initiative

Youth Leadership Conferences

Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Project Manhood

Brother, You're on My Mind! ©

My Brother's Keeper

Vol. 8

January, February, March, 2021

NO. 1

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Keith G. Pemberton, Vice
Chairman, FIMC-IYLC



A SPECIAL EDITION OF THE IFMC NEWSLETTER, OUR FOCUS

This Issue:

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES (IYLC)

(We continue our accent on fatherhood initiatives!)

THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (IYLC) team thank the Districts and Chapters for submitting programs and events to the FIMC Newsletter. Your engagement with the youth is integral to a successful IYLC annual event and most importantly, to the academic, social and emotional success of our youth. One of the IYLC goals is to support every district in conducting a Youth Leadership Conference (YLC). District YLC Coordinators will be working with FIMC District Chairman to produce a successful District YLC. The IYLC Team is developing a Youth of the Year Award Nomination and a YLC toolkit.

The IYLC website is: www.i-ylc.org

S. Earl Wilson, Chairman
Fatherhood Initiative and
Mentoring Committee



John D. Cooper, IYLC
Co-Chairman

Please identify programs in your district by completing the information in this link:

<http://www.i-ylc.org/index.cfm?e=inner4&itemcategory=89647>



Jeffery Diggs, 2nd
District



Jerry Leftwich, 4th
District



Michael Frazier, 3rd
District



Andre Butler, 8th
District



Greg Stegall, 8th
District



Cyril Weems, 10th
District



Reggie Harwell 1st
District



L. Bleu Colquitt *** 2nd
District



Lee G. Willis*** 9th
District



Robert Cunningham***
6th District



Sedric Myers 9th
District



Julius Hill 5th
District

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James Lovejoy 7th
District



Kevin Battle 8th
District



Orlando Richards 9th
District



Fredrick Thomas 6th
District



James Turnage 7th
District



Royle King 7th
District



Jimmie Baptiste 9th
District



John Ervin, III 12th
District



Jerry Kennebrew 12th
District



Michael Robinson, 13th
District



Elliott Kelly Jr., Undergrad
Representative



CALENDAR OF DISTRICT IYLCs: **Have had or will have YLC:**

1 st District -	Apr 30, 2021
2 nd District -	Feb 27, 2021
9 th District -	May 1, 2021
10 th District -	Apr 30, 2021
12 th District -	Mar 20, 2021
	Oct 28, 2021

Plan to have a YLC:

3 rd District	Fall 2021
4 th District	Fall 2021
5 th District	TBD
6 th District	Sum 2021
7 th District	TBD
8 th District	Fall 2021
13 th District	TBD

IYLC UNDERGRADUATE SECTION: Brother Elliott Kelly Jr., will be crafting a Directory of IYLC participants who are now Omega Men. You can support this effort by identifying former IYLC members who are now Omega Men and have them complete the form in the link.

Link for Omega IYLC Alumni Directory

<https://forms.gle/EU16Vb5fuEcs9CNh9>

The 2021 IYLC date is TBD.

Please look for future communication regarding the annual event and District YLCs.

The IYLC Team would like to thank Brother Bleu Colquitt, the Manhood 101 Program and the Steve Harvey Foundation for serving as the Youth Engagement program of 2020 IYLC participants.

IYLC Team Meetings are the Third Tuesday of the month 9:00 PM (EST)

Brother Keith G. Pemberton, Vice Chairman, FIMC – IYLC
Brother John D. Cooper, Co-Chairman IYLC

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Pelosi Announces Appointment of Brother Dr. Joseph Marshall

U.S. Commission on Social Status of Black Men and Boys *"A Model of Youth Leadership and Mentoring"*

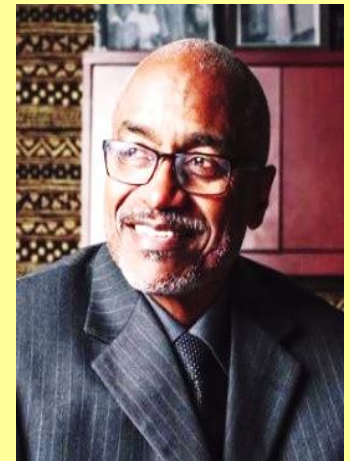
Washington, D.C. – Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced her appointment of Dr. Joseph Marshall, Founder and Executive Director of Alive & Free in San Francisco, to serve on the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, established by the Congress to study, report on and provide recommendations relating to the conditions affecting Black men and boys.

"Our nation has been undergoing a reckoning as we confront and combat the racial injustice and police brutality targeting Black Americans, particularly Black men and boys," said Speaker Pelosi. "The Democratic House, reflecting the outpouring of activism across the country, continues to take action to address these cruel disparities, from passing the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, removing portraits and statues of Confederate leaders and others embodying hate from the U.S. Capitol, and last summer, passing Congresswoman Frederica's Wilson's legislation to establish this Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys. This Commission is part of a long overdue effort to acknowledge and end the institutional racism that Black men and boys face every day in America.

"As Speaker, I am proud to appoint Dr. Joseph Marshall to serve on this essential, action-oriented Commission," continued Speaker Pelosi. "Dr. Marshall is a visionary leader, who is helping to fundamentally transform our communities' and nation's approach to the challenges facing today's Black youth, as he works to eliminate violence across America. His pioneering work has made a difference in the lives of countless young people and has been recognized at the highest levels, including with a MacArthur Genius Award. Now, on the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, Dr. Marshall will bring the innovation, expertise and excellence needed to create real, impactful change in our country."

Dr. Joseph E. Marshall, Jr., is a community activist and founder of Alive & Free, an international violence prevention organization headquartered in San Francisco, which has transformed the lives of more than 10,000 young people. He is a recipient of the MacArthur Genius Award, the Children's Defense

Fund Leadership Award, the Essence Award, and the Use Your Life Award from Oprah Winfrey. Other awards include the 2007 African American Excellence in Business award, 2006 San Francisco Foundation Community Leadership Award, and the 2006 Jefferson Award from the American Institute for Public Service.



Brother Dr. Joseph E. Marshall, Jr.

Dr. Marshall earned an M.A. in Education from San Francisco State University, his Ph.D. in Psychology from Berkeley's Wright Institute, and holds doctorates from Morehouse College and the University of San Francisco. He is the past president and current member of the San Francisco Police Commission and a trustee emeritus of the University of San Francisco.

COMMISSION ON SOCIAL STATUS, BLACK MEN/BOYS

United States Commission on Civil Rights Office of the Staff Director, Washington, DC

- THE COMMISSION SHALL conduct a systematic study of the conditions affecting Black men and boys, including homicide rates, arrest and incarceration rates, poverty, violence, fatherhood, mentorship, drug abuse, death rates, disparate income and wealth levels, school performance in all grade levels including postsecondary education and college, and health issues.
- THE COMMISSION SHALL document trends, report on the community impacts of relevant government programs and propose measures to alleviate and remedy underlying causes.
- THE COMMISSION SHALL make an annual report, to be submitted to the President, the Congress, members of the Cabinet, and the chairs of the appropriate committees of jurisdiction and available to the public.



***** Youth Leadership and Mentoring *****

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: a process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences. **YOUTH LEADERSHIP** is part of that process.



THE "ALIVE & FREE PRESCRIPTION" works to change beliefs, attitudes, values and actions that promote violence. Alive & Free identifies and addresses Risk Factors - the actions that put young people at risk of violence - and the Commandments of Violence - symptomatic thinking that puts them at risk. The Prescription then counters them with the Rules for Living that promote positive lifestyle choices to mitigate against the onset of the disease of violence. Send us an email message: admin@stayaliveandfree.org

***** Alive & Free: Celebrating 34 Years of Service to Youth and Community! *****

International Committee Members on Fatherhood and Mentoring



www.omegafandm.org



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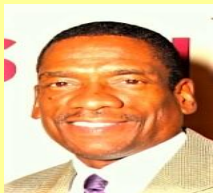
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Brother Robert W. Fairchild, Fatherhood Initiative Advisor

About our Fatherhood Work: MBK Omega UMASS

BROTHERS, IN MY ARTICLE IN THE LAST NEWSLETTER, I discussed the **My Brother's Keeper Initiative (MBK)** launched by the Obama Administration to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color. The intent was to ensure that young people reach their full potential. I also shared the 6 MBK milestones. Our Fraternity entered into a formal MOU partnership agreement with the Obama Foundation signed by Grand Basileus Dr. David Marion.

The partnership agreement focuses on several key areas: (1) Accelerate Impact in Targeted Communities; (2) Mobilize Citizens and Resources; (3) Promote What Works and Strengthen MBK Network; (4) Mobilize Mentor Recruitment; (5) Assist with Leadership and Consultation; (6) Promote Omega Psi Phi Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative through the Obama Foundation MBK Campaigns. The thrust of the partnership was to push a shared mission between President Obama and our Fraternity, lifting up boys and young men of color.

Brother Boone and I are charged with leading the Fraternity's partnership efforts with the Obama Foundation, Government Officials, Community Agencies, Organizations and Institutions, and, provide support and guidance to the Fraternity's chapters. In my previous article, I noted that the intent was to connect the Fraternity chapters with local MBK communities across the country. I mentioned that we were in the process of working toward implementing an MBK

program in the 1st District. We are pleased to report we have moved into the final phase of starting that program.

Brother Boone and I led talks with the City of Boston Mayor's Office MBK representative, Mr. Gregory Blaize and University of Massachusetts Boston Administration Representatives, Dr. Aminah Pilgrim, Matthew Koch and graduate student Tony Martin, who had the vision to start MBK chapter for Black male students. Our talks centered on Initiative planning, mobilizing Brothers to serve as mentors, community



partners MOU and funding. We worked with 1st District, District Representative, Brother Lennitt Bligen, the First Vice District Representative, Brother Raymond Bailey and the District Fatherhood and Mentoring Committee Representative Brother Anthony Lilley in putting the MBK Initiative in place.

We helped support the 1st District's successful MBK Achievement Week Mentoring program. We worked side by side with UMass Boston MBK launch ceremony on February 27th, which inducted 18 College Young Men into the program. Bro. Grand Basileus, Dr. Marion, was available to bring encouraging remarks, which were well received, on behalf of the Fraternity.

Brothers, I want to emphasize several points in closing.

- UMass Boston MBK Initiative is unique in that it's the 1st time Omega will focus mentoring on a college level with Black male students.
- UMass Boston Initiative can serve as a template for what Omega can do with all MBK community

partnerships; particularly with Future Dads Initiative.

- Colleges/Universities like UMass Boston can align with Future Dads program.
- Many of our Fatherhood and Mentoring activities can be housed under our Obama Foundation Omega Partnership.

Special thanks to Brother Boone, who has led the way from the beginning, executing the Obama relationship with the Fraternity and his vision for our Fatherhood & Mentoring Initiative. A special note of thanks goes to 1st District DR, Bro. Lennitt Bligen, 1st VDR, Bro. Raymond Bailey and District Fatherhood and Mentoring Chairman Bro. Anthony Lilley for their leadership and enthusiasm, making sure mentors are available to support the program.

Bob Fairchild

See the Websites:

www.omegafandm.org

IYLC Website: www.i-ylc.org

~~~~~ **NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE** ~~~~~

**2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2021, June 15<sup>th</sup>**; information for April, May, June 2021

**Our Goal: Publish Information from each District, each Quarter; Fatherhood and Mentoring Programs, Youth Leadership Conferences, Project Manhood, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Brother You're on My Mind.**

**Please submit to: [geodtaylor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geodtaylor@sbcglobal.net)**



**Brother Graham E. Martin**

### Our Legacy

**ON THIS DAY (3/18/2021), 77 YEARS AGO**, Brother Graham E. Martin, (12/27/1947, Zeta Phi), became one of the "Golden Thirteen," **the first Black Officers to be commissioned in the United States Navy**. Three years later, he was initiated into Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., through the Zeta Phi Chapter in Indianapolis, Indiana. At the time he became a member of the Fraternity, he was in his first season as a coach at Crispus Attucks High School where he would coach for 24 seasons. According to **Brother Larry Quishenberry, Basileus, Zeta Tau Chapter**, Brother Martin, may have been his father's HS coach (Brother Eugene "Gene" Quishenberry, Omega Chapter). Brother Eugene Quishenberry attended Crispus Attucks High School, Indianapolis, Indiana.///



## International Fatherhood Representative, Brother Thabiti Boone: Dads Matter

**BROTHER THABITI BOONE** WAS INVITED to serve as a Governing Board member of the Official University of Massachusetts-Boston MBKI (My Brother's Keeper Initiative). In this capacity, Brother Boone will represent the interest of the Fraternity's Partnership between the University, City of Boston and Obama Foundation. Brother Boone will help to support, lead initiative execution, and engage in strategic planning on mission, goals and objectives.

Brother Boone has been serving as a distinguished guest lecturer for the Columbia University Graduate School of Social Work, spring semester, Fatherhood Course. The Course was created to introduce Graduate Students towards the Career and Important Field of Fatherhood. The Curriculum covers research, policy, programs, historical analysis of Fatherhood in America, and the impact of Fathers.

Tuesday, February 9, Brother Boone provided a very special presentation as a guest speaker for the National Healthy Start Association Monthly Fatherhood Webinar. National Healthy Start Association is one of the top long-standing Fatherhood organizations in the Country. The monthly Webinar is designed to offer their 100 Male Fatherhood Program Coordinators professional development strategies to improve their work and capacity to service Fathers in their programs. Brother Boone's presentation centered on the Fatherhood work of the Fraternity. For information about these programs and Brother Boone's participation, contact him at email: [thabitinyc@aol.com](mailto:thabitinyc@aol.com) ///



### First District Kicks-off First My Brother's Keeper Chapter

by Bro. Anthony Lilly

**THE FIRST DISTRICT BECAME INVOLVED WITH MBK** when Brother Richard C. Jarvis, Jr., (Omega Chapter) reached out to Brother Boone regarding the possibility of the Initiative coming to Boston. Through the leadership of Brother Jarvis, Brothers Boone and Fairchild, the 1st District began efforts partnering with the University of Massachusetts MBK Boston chapter initiative and launch.

Under the leadership of 1st District FIM Committee Chairman Brother Anthony Lilley, District Representative Lennitt Bligen, and VDR Raymond Bailey, a working Partnership was formed with City of Boston MBK Representative Mr. Gregory Blaize and UMASS Graduate Student Anthony Martin, who is the MBK visionary.

Our first MBK activity was held in November during our Achievement Week. We hosted a successful panel discussion on mentoring which not only included

middle and high school students, but college undergraduate and graduate students as well. The panel facilitated the energy to move forward with forming the MBK partnership between the City of Boston, UMASS and The First District.

February 27, 2021, UMass Boston MBK had an initiative launch induction ceremony for their 18 young men College cohorts. We were honored to have Grand Basileus Dr. David Marion in attendance providing remarks as one of the special guests.

The Brothers of the First District will serve as one-on-one Professional Mentors during the 10-week program. Brothers will provide Mentoring in the areas of personal development and career enrichment.

We continue to thank the ongoing guidance and leadership of Brothers Fairchild and Boone! ///





**The Honorable  
Gregory C. Pittman,  
Esq.**

**"From time to time, I  
will share commentary  
and thoughts, from a  
legal perspective on the  
issue of Fatherhood."**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Presiding Judge  
14<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court  
Family Division  
Muskegon County  
State of Michigan**

## **On Death and Taxes!**

**TO PARAPHRASE THE OLD SAYING**, "Nothing in life is guaranteed...except Death and Taxes." Well, if that be true, the guarantee regarding taxes extends to the issue of child support. And issues surrounding child support do have tax consequences attached to them.

In acknowledgement of this issue coming a couple of weeks before the tax filing deadline of April 15, let's briefly touch on some general considerations related to the tax consequences attendant to child support.

**\*Disclaimer\* I am not an accountant, certified tax preparer, tax law expert or in any legally cognizable manner considered an expert in this area. Accordingly, I do not hold out the information discussed here as actions that you should take without benefit of consultation with a professional who does possess the requisite credentials and expertise.**

The payment of and/or the receipt of child support payments has not only real-world consequences, it has tax consequences too. How your situation is affected can prevent significant difficulty going forward.

First, for tax purposes, what is child support? Child support is a court-ordered payment that one parent (typically the non-custodial parent) pays to the other parent, for the material needs of the child. Also, as a reminder, the right to receive child support belongs to the CHILD, and is enforceable by the custodial parent.

Second, it should be understood that regardless of what state you live in, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) governs what can be taxed, and the general rule is: child support payments made, are not tax deductible by the payer. Often times when the payment of child support comes into the picture, the parents involved lose sight of the fact that the terms of their agreement or the court's order proscribe the terms of how child support is administered. However, no child support order overrides the IRS treatment of child support payments.

Third, and logically reasoned, child support payments received, are not taxable to the recipient. The IRS Code does not require the recipient of child support to declare the amounts received as income, as again, those monies are for the benefit of and the sole right of the CHILD. One of the biggest points of contention, and ultimately biggest potential negative tax consequence issues is controlled by the terms of the court's child support order. That point is the utilization of the tax exemption that the IRS allows for children.

The IRS code allows adult/parent tax filers to take an exemption for minor children in that parent's care, resulting in a deduction to that parents' taxable income.

**Here's where it can get tricky and thereby become contentious:**





**IF THE COURT'S CHILD SUPPORT ORDER DOES NOT** expressly determine who receives or how the allowable tax exemption is to be dealt with, *it leaves both parents with the apparent right to claim that child on their individual tax returns.* The problem is, the IRS only allows that CHILD to be claimed ONCE. So, only one parent can legally claim the tax exemption for that child. If the parents don't agree, and the child support order does not proscribe how this matter should be handled, this becomes a real problem...a problem that falls into the purview of the IRS...and NOBODY should want that to happen!

**This is a situation where the intervention of the court can/does impact how the IRS ultimately deals with the tax consequences of the parties.**

If you are the payer and are substantially in compliance with your payment obligation (typically NO MORE than a month behind on payments) you have a chance to prevail in court. If you aren't in compliance, you have virtually no chance to receive a favorable ruling. A favorable court ruling, allows the prevailing party to submit that ruling as part of the documentation submitted to the IRS as it decides which parent's tax return is in order...and which parent must submit an amended tax return, minus the disallowed deduction...plus, potentially, penalty costs tacked on.

There are a number of ways to approach the issue that do not have to result in the intervention of the IRS or the courts, but they require cooperation and foresight, for example:

**AGREE TO ALTERNATE THE EXEMPTION FROM YEAR TO YEAR:** If there are multiple children involved divide the exemptions equally (i.e., 2 children, each parent claims 1; if 3 children, one parent takes 2 one year, 1

the next year). The parent who receives the biggest benefit from the exemption claims it and shares a percentage of the refund windfall with the other parent.

**THE FINAL TAX CONSEQUENCE - THE REALLY TOUGH ONE, TAX INTERCEPT:** The failure to pay court ordered child support can (and often does) result in the IRS, on behalf of the state in which you live, intercepting your tax refund. That amount is never disbursed to you. Your refund is instead kept by the IRS, and then transferred to the state child support authority to then be forwarded to the rightful child support recipient. I use the term recipient because that tax intercept goes to the state, if the child in question receives some type of state aid (Medicaid, Aid to Dependent Children, or other...) You get credit for that amount against your "arrears" (amount the records show your child support payments are delinquent)

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING THE COURT CAN DO** to hinder the imposition of the IRS sanction of tax intercept. As I always encourage, the more that co-parents are able to discuss and agree to, the less the intervention of the courts, and in this case the IRS, becomes necessary. As a general proposition, if such intervention/decision-making becomes necessary, the prospect of a distasteful resolution increases exponentially...and that child is adversely affected. Above all else,

Stay Patient, Stay Safe, Wear a mask, Get Vaccinated.

In Friendship...For Life!

**F.I.E.T.T.S.**

*Brother Gregory C. Pittman, Esq.*

## Around the Districts

**OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC., -- PROJECT MANHOOD  
GUIDE AND OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS TOOL KIT**

**A Product of the Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring Committee**

**Brother S. Earl Wilson, Chairman**

**For information contact: undenied16@aol.com**

**Ray Bell, Big Brothers/Big Sisters**

**Keith G. Pemberton, International Youth Leadership Conference**

**1/2021**



# ... ITS ALL ABOUT FRIENDSHIP ...

## 1<sup>st</sup> District: Brother Anthony Lilley, Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring

### Creating a Legacy: Through Mentoring and Student-Athlete Development

**New Haven, CT - March 12, 2021** - Brothers Adham Conaway (5-14-Epsilon Iota Iota) and Alex Conaway (6-14-Tau Iota) have taken steps to uplift the New Haven community by providing a mentoring program that focuses specifically on the enrichment of the student-athlete. In January 2020, Adham and Alex founded All Access Training and Student-Athlete Development, Inc.; a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization with the purpose of helping middle school and high school student-athletes optimize their experiences and future opportunities to the fullest through establishing a foundation of personal skills, knowledge, and self-awareness.

Historically within marginalized communities and communities of color in Connecticut, there has been a lack of resources available to young people causing them to struggle academically, socially, and emotionally. Within the athletic community, specifically athletes of color are told to "stick to sports and just shut up and play." For decades, young men and women of color who have participated in sports had their voices silenced and have been seen as just athletes and nothing more.

Bro. Alex Conaway said, "In response to these challenges, we aim to promote a culture that defines student-athletes within the New Haven communities as more than just point guards, running backs, or sprinters. Our mission is to guide middle and high school student-athletes to reach their full potential personally, academically, and athletically..."

Since June 2020, the organization has served up to 50 boys and girls at no cost through:

- Student-athlete athletic development.
- Student-athlete academic development.
- Student-athlete high school and college preparation.
- Student-athlete restorative and reflective circle discussions.
- Student-athlete focused workshops.

"Our ultimate goal is to open a local Student-Athlete Resource Center with a study space and office, multipurpose space, healthy snack and hydration bar, and strength & conditioning equipment. The student-athlete has a unique set of needs and we will take a holistic approach to meet them," he concluded.

Brother Adham Conaway is currently a Connecticut Certified Teacher at Davis Academy for Arts and Design Innovation Inter-District Magnet in New Haven, and Brother Alex Conaway is a Coordinator for the First Year Programs and Leadership Development at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY. You can follow All Access on Instagram [@allaccesstraining](https://www.instagram.com/allaccesstraining). ///





## Lambda Rho Chapter and Granville Academy Continues Virtual

**Waterbury, CT** – March, 2021 – Lambda Rho Chapter continues its Community Mentoring Program. Granville Academy of Waterbury was founded in 1992 by brothers Earnest Mosley-Lambda Rho Chapter and his brother Judge Maurice Mosley. Granville is celebrating 31 years of service to the Waterbury community.

Granville was designed to give students 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade an introductory knowledge of business and STEM. Granville is open to students within the Waterbury School District and outside the city of Waterbury. Lambda Rho has been mentoring students since the creation of the program. This year the Brothers of Lambda Rho have the responsibility of mentoring Fifth and Sixth graders.

Mentoring takes place once a week and is done virtually. Mentors check in once per week with their mentee to ensure that they are engaged in school and check in on their wellbeing. Mentors can have up to two students. Ninety-five per-cent (95%) of Granville's graduates enroll in college or university, e.g., Yale, University of Connecticut, Howard University, and North Carolina A & T. ///



**Waterbury, CT** – March 2021 – Lambda Rho Chapter has been actively involved with the community action agency “New Opportunities in Waterbury, CT” and The Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) for its Fatherhood Program. Due to the COVID -19 pandemic, in room classes were suspended and held via Zoom or conference call.

Recently, meetings were starting to be held by hybrid, meaning fathers were given the choice to either come into the classroom or participate via Zoom video classes. Social distancing is enforced and fathers, and the facilitators wear masks.

The Program uses the 24/7 Dads model in order to help fathers to either reunify with their children, keep their children in their home, and/or improve co-parenting relationships with the mother of their children. This quarter there have been 30 fathers who have successfully completed the Program. ///





## **Let the Games Begin - NBA2k21 Video Game Tournament**

The Community Ques Introduce E-Sports to 2nd District

By Matt Stevens, New Jersey State, Co Chairman for Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring Committee

**East Orange, NJ** – Saturday, February 13, 2021 - Eta Pi Chapter, The Community Ques, hosted the NBA2k21 Video Game Tournament. The event was conducted virtually on TWITCH and streamed through the PlayStation and Xbox consoles of the players. Eighty youth, ages 10 - 16, from various locations *throughout the United States* registered and played in the tournament. The tournament was split into two sections (PlayStation and Xbox); it spanned ten hours from 10 a.m., to 8 p.m. and garnered *one thousand views*.

Students who advanced to the final four were Samuel Hightower (Edison NJ), Cameron Dailey (Atlanta, GA) (Xbox) Monty Melvin, (Silver Springs, MD) and Mike Oliver, (Atlanta, GA). Hightower and Melvin were champions of their respective leagues. When asked what they enjoyed most about the event, eighty percent of the players indicated that they simply enjoyed the opportunity to meet the other players and have fun on a Saturday playing the game. The tournament was the second of three “Introduction To E-Sports” activities conducted by the Eta Pi Chapter, said Barry Devone, Chapter Basileus. “We hosted a seminar on December 3, 2020, to introduce our mentoring program to E-Sports as a possible career option. Our final stage will be a Coding Course titled “Introduction To Gaming”, which is scheduled to be held in May 2021 through June 2021,” stated Devone.

The tournament was funded through a grant received by Eta Pi Chapter from the CLEO CLICKS Organization. CLEO CLICKS is funded through the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Program (OJJDP). Other community supporters included Fraternity Chapters: Nu Beta Beta, Omicron Chi, Phi Upsilon, Upsilon Phi, Lambda Upsilon, Mu Gamma Gamma, Nu Omega (Detroit) and



**Samuel Hightower, 16-years-old, Edison, New Jersey**

Mu Nu (Maryland). The tournament was coordinated by Futures First Gaming (FFG), a black owned E-Sports Company located in Delaware and founded by Stephen Sye, Malcolm Coley and Newby Felton. While all of the eighty players were winners, FFG recognized one little girl (14-year-old Mia McCray from the Nu Omega Chapter Mentoring Program in Detroit) as the honorary Champion.

It was learned that Mia cancelled a bowling match to play in the video game tournament, and with the help of her grandmother (Ms. Tahyanna Williams), purchased a PlayStation 4 the night before in order to participate in the tournament. On the day of the event, minutes before her match, the PS4 went into an upgrade stage that was scheduled to last four hours. As a result, she was disqualified due to the time constraints. Mia will be awarded the Perseverance Award from Eta Pi Chapter. Both the FFG and the Chapter will send her a brand-new Bicycle and numerous other prizes. For more information about the tournament, Introduction to Gaming Course or the Community Ques visit: [www.EtaPiChapter.org](http://www.EtaPiChapter.org) ///



## Helpful Hints for Single Moms Raising Boys

Eta Pi Chapter's Parent Resource Sessions

**East Orange, NJ** – FROM DECEMBER 3, 2020 TO FEBRUARY 16, 2021, Eta Pi Chapter hosted a series of Parent Forums to assist single mothers raising boys. *“The forums are a part of the Dr. Ernest Everett Just Mentoring Program and is used to enhance parental engagement,”* said Brother Barry Devone, Eta Pi Chapter Basileus. The series is coordinated by Brother Matt Stevens, Chairman of the Corridor IV, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring Committee (FMIC).

The forums started on December 3, 2020 and was facilitated by Tavis Taylor, author of the book Perspective Parenting. Ms. Taylor, a single mother that has successfully raised two boys, conducted a series of case studies and role-playing exercises focused on *Improving Communication with Teenage Boys*. She encouraged moms to say less and ensure that the son understands her direction. The group talked and laughed together as they shared strategies used to increase communication with their sons. Ms. Jacquelyn Oliver, aunt of a teenage boy, is helping to raise, said, *“I often think that my nephew is hard of hearing or simply ignoring me! This workshop helped me to understand how to improve communication with him.”*

On January 19, 2021 the focused switched to *Reading and Developing a Family Reading Group*. David C. Miller, author of 10 children's books focused on African American boys, shared information to help parents select books that boys enjoy. He used one of his books, Khalil's Way, a book about a teenage boy struggling with bullying, as an example of how to start conversations through literacy promotion. Cassandra Spamm, Mother of a 16-year-old, shared her thoughts, *“My son is an avid reader, and this session has provided a number of new resources for us.”*

The series concluded on February 16 with a workshop titled *Black Boys and Special Education*. Ms. Love Gaillard, MSW and 20-year Special Education Counselor, led the conversation and helped mothers



**Pictured - Brother Troy Bowers, Rho Lambda Lambda; Love Gaillard, Presenter; Tonya Hayes, Parent, Baltimore MD; Toni Knight, Parent Brooklyn NY**

understand how to increase access to a variety of resources available to their children through the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Gaillard spent a considerable amount of time answering questions about common concerns found in the group which included but was not limited to erasing the stigma of the IEP; preparing for the Child Study Team meeting; and continuing to use the available resources for student athletes. Tonya Hayes, from Baltimore Maryland, asserted *“this session was extremely helpful! I have a child study team meeting tomorrow and I felt 100% more prepared.”* Brother Troy Bowers, Rho Lambda Lambda Chapter and a Special Education Counselor in Irvington, NJ, indicated a level of satisfaction with the workshop. *“I attended this evening to gain some insight on how to improve in servicing parents and was not disappointed,”* stated Bowers.

The program is funded in part by the CLEO CLICKS program. CLEO CLICKS is funded by the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Program (OJJDP). For more information about the *Eta Pi Chapter Parent Resource Sessions* visit: [www.EtaPiChapter.org](http://www.EtaPiChapter.org) ///



## Music Is My Life: Eta Pi Chapter Mentoring Program Career Exploration Forum

**East Orange, NJ** – On Saturday February 20, 2021, the Eta Pi Chapter, invited Grammy Award winning songwriter and producer, Eric Hudson, to talk with the Dr. Ernest Everett Just Mentoring Program about Careers in the Music Industry. Hudson, a former resident of South Orange, New Jersey, has produced songs for many well-known artists to include Kanye West, Mary J, Common and John Legend. The forum provided an opportunity for young people to engage in a question-and-answer session about the industry.

Rashawn Williams, 16-year-old from Bethesda, Georgia and an aspiring music producer asked, *“when you first started to make and sell beats, how did you know how much to sell them for.”* Hudson responded by sharing a few stories of his encounters with artists as it related to making and selling beats. “My parents were music producers during my childhood, therefore, they helped me make good business decisions.”

Brother Keith Pressey, member of the Eta Pi Chapter Mentoring Committee and the Director of the Department of Recreation and Cultural Affairs for the City of Orange, was instrumental in helping to get the word out about the event. *“One of our goals is to find ways to engage boys and girls in meaningful career exploration activities,”* stated Pressey. In this regard, a number of young people attended the session as a part of different mentoring programs.

Seventeen (17) -year-old Amya Ashe, from Tinton Falls NJ, was the first to ask to sing a song to showcase her talent. She sang the song *One Night Only* by Jennifer Hudson and left everyone in the Zoom speechless.

After her performance Rashawn Williams played the group a portion of a song he created. The event was



**Yasmeena Sharif, 16-year-old, Newark, NJ**  
As an homage to Nina, how good it is to be *“Young, Gifted and Black”*

closed out by Ms. Yasmeena Sharif, a 16-year-old young lady from the Unstoppable Girls mentoring program. Ms. Caryl Lucas, Founder of Unstoppable Girls, stated *“Yasmeena is a future star with a voice from the heavens”*. She sang the song “You Put A Move On My Heart” by Tamia.

All of the young people who performed were brought to the attention of the local NJ Chapter’s Talent Hunt Committee just in time for them to compete! Barry Devone, Eta Pi Chapter Basileus, closed out the session by thanking all the young people in attendance, Eric Hudson and his team for attending. *“This has been one of our most successful mentoring events this year and we hope that it inspires young people to strive to be their best”* stated Devone.

The Dr. Ernest Everett Just Mentoring Program is supported in part by the CLEO CLICKS App, which is funded by the Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice Prevention Program. ///

**“Consistency is extremely important in the music industry. Students, follow your heart, improve your skills and be consistent in everything you do!” Eric Hudson, a South Orange, New Jersey native and Grammy Award winning songwriter and producer.**





## 2<sup>nd</sup> District Strategic Direction for Collective Mentoring Impact: Districtwide Mentoring Collective Impact

**N**ew York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland – In August 2020, the 2nd District Committee for the Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring (FIMC) met. Our theme for the new Omega year “Mentoring In The Midst of a Crisis” was envisioned to encourage chapters to continue with their mentoring programs using a virtual platform.

Due to **COVID-19** pandemic, our goal was to provide a collective impact for families, students, parents, guardians, and communities across the five states with significant mentoring activities. We teamed together, planned and organized to make a greater impact in communities across the District with mentoring activities.

For February 2021, we honored the iconic Omega man known as the Father of Black History Month, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson. Since 1976 every American President has proclaimed February as Black History month. February was an amazing month with intentional District-wide Mentoring activities that impacted and touched the hearts and minds of approximately 1,000 lives.

On February 13th, students competed in a 10-hour NBA2k21 Video Game Tournament. The event was conducted virtually on the TWITCH platform and streamed through the PlayStation and Xbox consoles of players ages 10 – 16. The tournament players were from various locations throughout the United States.

The next educational workshop will instruct students on how to code and develop their own video games. Our youth spend countless hours playing video games, but less than 8% are working in the gaming industry. Omega is helping in the paradigm shift to encourage the next generation to become owners, inventors, and producers.

On February 20, 2021, the 2<sup>nd</sup> District directed our families and students to attend the largest HBCU College

Fair in the Country. Our very own Brother Bernard Jackson has been the project director for many years. However, this was the first virtual College Fair planned and hosted by Alfred Street Baptist Church. The District supported the HBCU College Fair in a huge way with our network participation!

Saturday February 27, was the first-ever District-wide Conference for Families. Kelvin Ampofo, 37<sup>th</sup> District Representative asked the question “*why not open the conference to everyone in this virtual environment.*” This conference was designed with families in mind to share information and inspiration on what our focus must be in this moment.

The Annual Game Changer Conference founded by UCF Youth Development Organization uses a “Collaboration Model” that annually brings together other stakeholders that work directly with young people and parents such as the Assault on Illiteracy Committee (AOIC), Churches Youth Ministries, Sororities and other Fraternities along with the Game Changer Conference Co-Sponsors in Montgomery County, Maryland:

Mu Nu Chapter, Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public School System (MCPS) District, The Universities at Shady Grove and the National Pan-Hellenic Council of Montgomery County. ///

**For information about Ques On the Move,  
Cut and paste or click on the URL below:**

<https://www.facebook.com/331771617011111/videos/257005092804562>



## Second District Teams with 100 Black Men of Washington D.C. Conduct CSI - STEM Workshop



**Washington, DC** – On January 30, 2021, 2<sup>nd</sup> District Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring Committee teamed with the 100 Black Men of Greater Washington, D.C. and hosted a virtual STEM program for middle and high school students. Approximately 240 youth participated in the event.

The goal of the STEM Workshop was to inspire, educate, equip and encourage students with increased knowledge to pursue career pathways in Crime Scene Investigations (CSI). This career field is significantly underrepresented with Black and Brown students; it seeks to attract more students of color to learn about forensic science career opportunities. The interactive workshop engaged youth in conversations and activities

regarding what subjects to take in school from high school to careers in forensic science.

Hands-on activities included identifying fingerprints and crime scene evidence(s) using household products. Participants were also tasked with working in small groups to solve a virtual crime scene. The District of Columbia's Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Roger A. Mitchell, Jr. was the keynote speaker. Many of the participants came from the Second District Chapters of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Participants had to match the suspect fingerprints to the weapon found on the scene to win the crime scene challenge. Students indicated they discovered information that they had never come across prior to the program. ///

**Key Message: Mentoring Matters in this ever-evolving COVID-19 pandemic. We want every Chapter to mentor young people and work directly with Dads. ///**

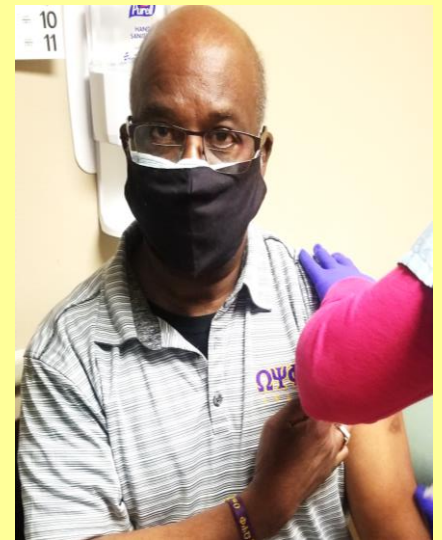
**~~ Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Saves Lives ~~**

**DR. KIZZMEKIA S. CORBETT, (PhD), AN AWARD-WINNING SCIENTIST, is the scientific lead for the Coronavirus**



**Vaccine Team at the National Institutes of Health that developed the COVID-19 vaccine deployed by Moderna.**

**Dr. Corbett said her team took a lot of the knowledge they have gained in the last six years and applied it to a vaccine platform in collaboration with Moderna. The vaccine rolled out 10 months later. "The vaccine teaches the body how to fend off a virus, because it teaches the body how to look for the virus by basically just showing the body the spike protein of the virus" she explained. "The body then says 'Oh, we've seen this protein before. Let's go fight against it.' That's how it works."**



**2<sup>nd</sup> District FIMC Chairman, Brother Donald Williams, demonstrates the vaccines' practical application. When pricked by the needle, he *"did not wince nor cry o' loud."* He took it like a man!!**



### 3<sup>rd</sup> District: Brother Cameron Mix, Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring



**Psi Alpha Alpha | Fairfax Virginia –** The MANUP Program executed on a 4-week virtual Youth Leadership Conference series that covered the topics of military readiness, financial strategies, pre-college initiatives, and teen mental health hygiene. The series titled “Under Construction,” exposed students through a comprehensive course series on strategies that will help them discover and build upon their current foundation.

*Bro. Chester Keller and Bro. Michael Frazier address students from MVHS on March 1, 2021 during the Under Construction YLC Series.*

THE MANUP YLC PARTNERED WITH Mount Vernon (MVHS) and John Lewis (JLHS) high schools in Fairfax County Virginia to host and execute on offering the YLC workshop series to the combined school campuses with 80+ mentees. The YLC series was executed at MVHS from February thru March. The series starts in March and will conclude at JLHS in April 22, 2021.

The military readiness workshop was hosted by Bro. LTC Chester Kelly and Bro. Kenny Cain (Ret.) of the United States Army. They spoke in-depth about their personal military careers, inspiration, and the technical aspects on how to enlist into all branches of service out of high school.

The YLC series included a session on mental hygiene for young adults. This session was led by Bro. LTC Eric Kelly (Ret. USMC) and Bro. Cozy Bailey Jr. The workshop covered topics of bullying, recognizing signs of depression and anxiety, where to get help, who to communicate with, positive releases of stress, and understanding the importance of good health and creating/maintaining positive relationships and environments in your personal circle.



*Bro. Eric Kelly, MANUP Committee Chairman, speaking to students about understanding the physical requirements of each branch of the United States Armed Forces on 1 March 2021.*



**Bro. Kenny Cain | Under Construction YLC | March 2022**

Two of the 4 session series included financial strategies and mental health awareness for teens. The financial strategies session was hosted by Bro. LTC Kevin Williams (Ret. USMC) and Bro. Michael Frazier. They discussed the importance of credit and personal credit scores, in addition, the workshop covered aspects of compound interest, interest rates, retirement strategies, depreciating vs. appreciating assets, and the importance of paying your creditors on time. A good portion of the workshop was dedicated on how to establish good credit coming out of high school that included establishing banking accounts.

The pre-college initiative workshop discussed with student’s SAT/ACT test taking strategies, finding the right college, and evaluating if college is the right move for you out of high school. ///



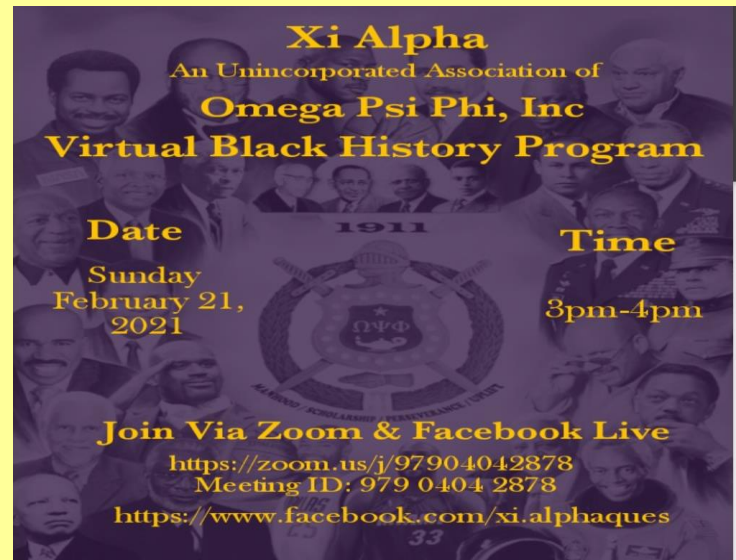


## **Xi Alpha Virtual Black History Program**

**Charleston, WV** – Brothers of Xi Alpha Chapter annually host a Black History Program for the community. It is fitting since Brother Dr. Carter G. Woodson had strong roots in West Virginia, and was an academic dean at West Virginia State University (nee College). We provide a platform for multiple young people to demonstrate their understanding of Black History, through artistic demonstration, dramatic interpretation, speeches, quotations, singing, dancing, and various intellectual presentations of the amazing contributions African Americans have made to the world.

Because of **COVID-19**, Xi Alpha had to secure videos and splice things together, making the 2021 program a little difficult coping with technologic and the like. We had participants from: The Partnership of African American Churches, National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., - Xinos, Martin Luther King, Jr., Male Chorus, Theta Psi and Nu Zeta Chapters demonstrated marches, Leisha English, Talent Hunt finalist, a stellar presentation of Omega's brief history by Brother Donnell Boykin, and a professional video of African American history put together by Brother Terry Cyrus.

Both Brothers Boykin and Cyrus live out of state, but pay their dues and offer their support (in this virtual world). Brother Rico Bradley emceed this outstanding event. We were honored to have the First Vice Grand Basileus Brother Ricky Lewis, the Fourth District Representative Brother Lamar T. Cole, the First Vice District Representative Brother David Reliford, and a host of Basilei and good Brothers from around the District attend. We exceeded 500 viewers through Zoom and Facebook.



Throughout the years our Social Action Committee always attempts to structure activities to impact the needs of our community. Xi Alpha has always participated in multiple mentoring programs to encourage and assist many young minds to display their gifts and intellect. These worthwhile endeavors align with the Fatherhood Mentoring Initiatives of the Fraternity. The Brothers of Xi Alpha are father figures, role models, coaches, and mentors to many youths in the Charleston area. We regularly read to elementary school aged children, and mentor middle school and high school students.

Xi Alpha Brothers esteem others (especially youth) more highly than we do ourselves as we demonstrate our cardinal principles of Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift. This demonstration of service is what our beloved Fraternity stands for, and Xi Alpha loves the privilege to serve others. ///



**"If we can finally succeed in the translating this idea of leadership into that of service, we may soon find it possible to lift the Negro to a higher level. Under leadership we have come into the ghetto; by service within the ranks, we may work our way out of it. Under leadership we have been constrained to do the biddings of others; by service we may work out a program in light of our own circumstances. Under leadership we have become poverty stricken; by service we may teach the masses how to earn a living honestly. Under leadership we have been made to despise our own possibilities and to develop into parasites; by service we may prove sufficient unto the task of self-development and contribute our part to modern culture." (From the book, The Mis-Education of the Negro, by Brother Dr. Carter G. Woodson, 1933.)**



## Xi Alpha Drone Give Away

**Charleston, WV** – Xi Alpha Chapter was blessed by our association with Brother Thomas Hill, 2-93-Theta Psi, and current Vice Basileus of Mu Iota Chapter. When one of Brother Hill's sponsors had an excess number of drones, he thought it not robbery to share with children in Charleston, West Virginia (Brother Hill is originally from this area and understands the struggles of many African Americans). Hence, we set up a give-away station at Dem 2 Brothers (a local African American owned restaurant) on December 22, 2020, and watched kids and parents come in by the droves to get the pre-wrapped drones.

Xi Alpha Brothers were interacting and encouraging the youth to stay focused during this virtual learning **COVID-19** season, and consider this gift as something to inspire them for an appreciation in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Oftentimes, we limit our conversations with youth around sports, music, and entertainment, but the men of Xi Alpha, used this Drone Give Away as a



platform for compassion and challenge. It is our desire to lift our people, especially our youth (Uplift)! ///

### **5<sup>th</sup> District: Brother Michael Milliner, Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring**

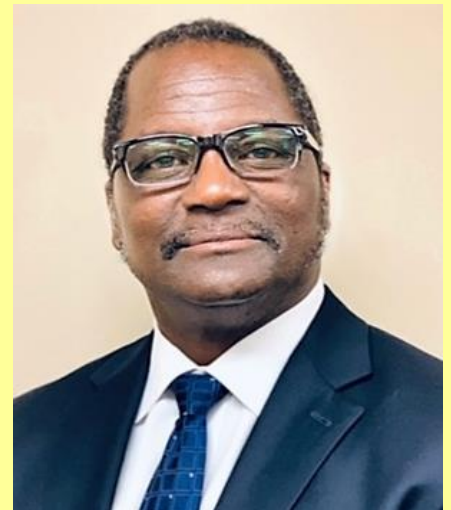
**The Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., under the leadership of its 41<sup>st</sup> Grand Basileus Dr. David E. Marion continues its emphasis on the principle of Manhood by focusing on Fatherhood and Mentoring in the Black Community. This same enthusiasm has been extended through regular meetings of the International Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring Committee (FIMC) chaired by Brother S. Earl Wilson. Locally, as Chair of the Fifth District FIMC, I can directly attest to the passion shown by both the Fifth District Representative Brother Sam McKenzie, and the First Vice District Representative Quincy Snider.**

These articles highlight only some of the 1st Quarter accomplishments of the Fifth District which continues to enrich the lives of Fathers, Father Figures and the Youth of our community through targeted and relevant programming.

### **Omega Lamplighter Program**

**Memphis, TN** – The Memphis Omega Lamplighter Program under the direction of Brother Anthony Patrick continues to flourish and expand. The Memphis Omega Lamplighters Mentoring Programs is an auxiliary organization of the Epsilon Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

This mentoring program serves the youth of the Greater Memphis Area grade levels 5<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>. The Memphis Omega Lamplighters started in 2015, with 8 inductees and has grown to nearly 50 young men. The lamplighter's curriculum is dedicated to helping the young men grow and develop their leadership talents in every phase of human endeavors. Brother Patrick helps in guiding the young men through their participation in local and national networking opportunities, mentorships, and form partnerships with the Brothers of the Epsilon Phi Chapter.





The Omega Lamplighters are more than a social club hanging out having fun. Brother Patrick places a great amount of emphasis on their academic success and social skills, he monitors their grades, progress reports, and the infrequent school behavioral incident, or school disciplinary action. These young men with the assistance and guidance of the Bro. Patrick have participated in numerous community service projects, such as volunteering at the Le Bonheur Children's Hospital's 5K Pumpkin Run, along with delivering Thanksgiving baskets, and Christmas baskets to Memphis families in need. The program also offers these young men the opportunity to explore the world in the form of stepping.

The Memphis Omega Lamplighters also has a competitive step team that has competed in the 5 national competitions and in 2019 Bro. Patrick led his team to the Tennessee State High School Championship in the male division as well as a national ranking of 6th in the Overall National Step League High School Male Division. Due to great success at the 2019 National Step League National Competition. The Memphis Omega Lamplighter Step Team has been recognized in the step community as one of the hardworking and up becoming youth steps in Tennessee.

In August of 2019, they were invited by the Director of Operations of the World of Step International Step Competition to compete in the 2020 World of Step International Competition in New York City. Locally, the Omega Lamplighters have been summoned to perform at the Southern Heritage Classic, the Whitehaven Christmas Parade, the Bridge Builder Youth Summer Festival, and numerous high school step shows and dances. Bro. Patrick says his proudest moments are when the young men that are graduating high seniors share that that have been accepted to the college of their choice, been awarded scholarships, or have been accepted into a branch of the military. ///



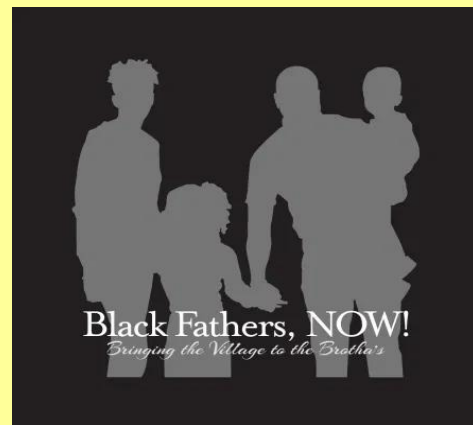
Most recent participants in the Memphis, TN Lamplighter Program

throughout the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2021. Its chief architect Brother Michael Dorsey of Iota Alpha Chapter regularly hosts programs that seek to inform the public of positive, family-strengthening initiatives and ideas that focus on the not always traditional role that Black men play in this basic unit of society.

His ongoing podcast featuring Omega Men and others of the community has the goal of taking control of the narrative defining the Black Father in this country which is often times based on stereotypes and misinformation.

Brother Dorsey has thus far produced 209 podcast episodes which can be accessed by visiting [www.blackfathersnow.com](http://www.blackfathersnow.com).

This continuing program promotes what has been referred to as the Black Fatherhood Manifesto that includes ten major responsibilities:



**Knoxville, TN** – The “Black Fathers, Now” program continues to engage Black Fathers and Father Figures

- **Optimizing Finances**
- **Nurturing Relationships**
- **Effective Communications**
- **Confidently Believing in Myself**
- **Mental, Emotional, and Physical Development**
- **Exposing Family to New Experiences and Ideas**
- **Giving Resources, Time, and Expertise to Others**
- **Being Truthful and Acting with Integrity**
- **Embracing the Changes in Life**
- **Know Myself, My History, My Issues, Gifts, and Talents**

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Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring Newsletter

NO. 1





## 6<sup>th</sup> District: Brother Melvin Williams, Jr., Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring

### Fatherhood and Mentoring

**North Carolina** – We had a blast (December 15, 2020) on our annual Mentees Christmas Shopping outing to Walmart. Special thanks to the management and staff at the **Walmart Superstore in Lexington, North Carolina** for their consistent support in helping us secure the items on our mentees Christmas list! Much love to our members for their fundraising efforts and donations. I really appreciate the sacrifice those members (Delray Anthony, Charlie Bethea, Charles Powell, and Richard Hooker) made to come out, this early morning and share in the fellowship as we fulfilled the mentees Christmas list.



We continue weekly Tele-Mentoring of the 28 mentees in our Omega S.T.A.R.R.S. Mentoring Program. We delivered all birthday gifts for our mentees from December 1<sup>st</sup> until February 26<sup>th</sup>. They are pictured below in order of birthday:



**Syrtonio Barnes (12)**



**Christopher McNeair (11)**



**Jordan Caldwell (13)**



**Zakhi White (13)**

What a wonderful time we had today (December 19, 2020) out spreading some Christmas Cheer during our Mentees Christmas Gift Giving deliveries. It was an exciting time for all! Special thanks to Jacqueline Bethea for wrapping the gifts, our Omega STARRS mentors (Delray Anthony, Charlie Bethea, Ernest

Blakely, Richard Hooker, Van Leonard, and Marcus McNair) members (Marlon Davis, Billy Friende, Wendell Moss and John Rhinehardt) and friends (Brianna Anthony, Maddison Davis, and Chase McNair) for their assistance.







Congratulations to the Omega STARRS (Hezekiah Nick and Jae'Dys Pegese: pictured below) that made A-B Honor Role during the second quarter to earn

incentive and those that had a "C or Better" in all their classes (Syrtonio Barnes, James Gordon and Christopher McNear).



**Please visit our new website at: [omegamanhoodinstitute.com](http://omegamanhoodinstitute.com).  
Fraternally, Charlie W. Bethea, President and CEO**



## Omega Champs: “Another Great Debate”

**Raleigh, NC** – The Brothers of Iota Iota Chapter are still finding ways to keep their mentees engaged through the pandemic. This quarter was focused on speaking and debating skills. The mentees decided they wanted to debate on who they thought were the best in the NBA in different categories.

The first debate was held on January 8, 2021 and with three categories: Best Player of All Time, Best 3 Point Shooter and Best Point Guard. Six mentees volunteered to do the necessary research to defend their position. They were confident and made convincing arguments. Each debater was allotted 2 ½ minutes to present information about his selected player.

Category one Best player of all times was debated by: Mekhi Bailey debated *Lebron James*, Treshawn Barlow debated *Michael Jordan* and Carl Dean debated *Lebron James*. Category two Best 3-point shooter was debated by: CJ Bailey debated *Kobe Bryant*; Taiwan Moore debated *Stephen Curry*. Category three best point guard: Jamari Bridges debated that *Kyrie Irving* is the best.

Brother Julius Cromwell served as debate moderator to make sure each mentee followed the basic rules of debate that were previously provided, and Brother Eric Clark made sure each mentee stayed within the timeframe. Brother Demond Reed managed the anonymous voting that followed each presentation.

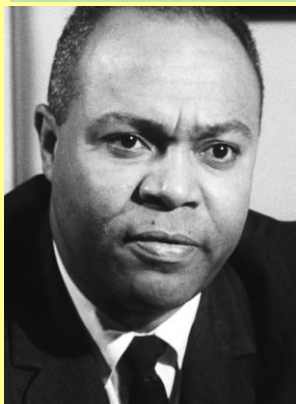
Mentors and parents provided feedback to each participant. The mentees were enthusiastic, very well prepared, displayed good public speaking techniques, and respectful of each other's position.

The goal of this exercise was to get the mentees used to research, defending their position on a topic and willing to openly discuss their point of views.

Also, this exercise gave each mentee to practice their public speaking skills that will go a long way in their growth and development. In April, the mentees will participate in a financial workshop to learn about finances and will open their personal banking accounts afterward. ///



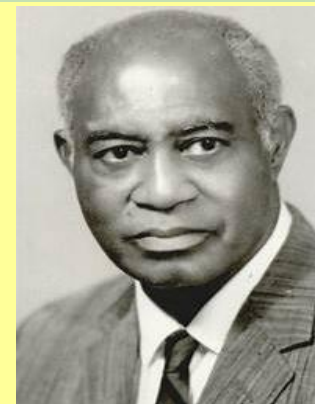
## OUR “Great Debate” LEGACY



**James L. Farmer, Jr.**

James L. Farmer, Jr., was a child prodigy; as a freshman in 1934. At the age of 14, he was recruited to Wiley College, a historically black college in Texas, by English professor and debate coach Omega Psi Phi Brother Melvin B. Tolson for the college's debate team. While there, Farmer enrolled in Tolson's English class, “*to use his analytical mind to dig deeper, study harder, and read more widely than the average student.*” Brother Tolson’s life was portrayed by Denzel Washington in the 2007 movie “The Great Debate”. Actor Forest Whitaker portrayed Dr. James L. Farmer, Jr.

Farmer was the first President of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). He also served in the Nixon Administration in 1969, as Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (now Health and Human Services). The next year, frustrated by the Washington bureaucracy, Farmer resigned from the position. ///



**Bro. Melvin B. Tolson**  
Omega Chapter





## 7<sup>th</sup> District: Brother Jonathan Gaines, Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring

### 7<sup>th</sup> District Fatherhood Initiative & Youth Mentoring Committee Salute 2019-20 State Organization FIMC Service Award Recipients and Chapters

Submitted by:

Bro. Jonathan Gaines - 7<sup>th</sup> District Chairman/ FIMC; Bro. Robert Jones - State of Mississippi FIMC Chairman  
Bro. Albert Ike, Jr. - State of Alabama FIMC Chairman; Bro. Harry B. Williams - State of Florida FIMC Chairman  
Bro. Marvin Broadwater, Sr.- State of Georgia FIMC Chairman

It is with great honor to announce the 2019 - 2020 State Organization FIMC Service Award Recipients from the Great States of Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi. I would like to acknowledge all State and Local FIMC Chairmen, and community partners for their commitment in carrying out initiatives aligned with the overall objectives and goals of the International Fatherhood Initiative, and Youth Mentoring Committee. All listed State Organization FIMC Service Award Recipients and Chapters are eligible to be honored as a 7<sup>th</sup> District FIMC Service Award Recipient/Chapter for (8) categories to be announced during the 84<sup>th</sup> Seventh District Virtual Meeting scheduled for March 26-27, 2021.

The 7<sup>th</sup> District's current footprint consists of one-hundred (100) Graduate Chapters and fifty-eight (58) Undergraduate Chapters. Of the one-hundred (100) Graduate Chapters ninety-one (91) are presently carrying out Fatherhood Initiative and Youth Mentoring Activities in collaboration with undergraduate chapters. Thus, yielding a 90% participation rate.

As district chairman, I have observed growth across the 7<sup>th</sup> District with many graduate and undergraduate chapters working in collaboration. I am looking forward to present for the first time a 7<sup>th</sup> District - Fatherhood Initiative & Youth Mentoring Undergraduate Chapter of the Year Service Award, and a 7<sup>th</sup> District - State Organization FIMC Service Award during our upcoming Seventh District Virtual Meeting. Also, I do foresee in the very near future of adding a 7<sup>th</sup> District Youth Mentee

of the Year Service Award in collaboration with State Organizations and State FIMC Chairmen.

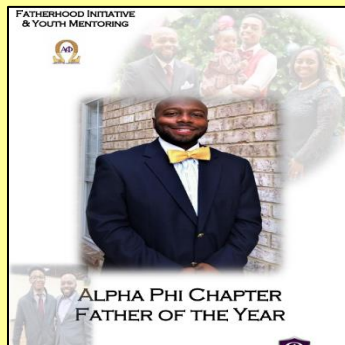
I look forward to continuing to work with State FIMC Chairmen to maintain alignment with the International Fatherhood Initiative and Youth Mentoring Committee. As a Team, we will continue to build upon our portfolio of quality projects and positive results measured by analytical metrics to foster additional corporate partnerships to support programs at the international, district and local chapter levels. Again, it is an honor to acknowledge the great work of all State and Local FIMC Chairmen, and I look forward to reporting all announced 7<sup>th</sup> District Service Award Recipients and Chapters in the next edition of the International FIMC Newsletters. ///

### Father of the Year State Organization Candidates: (Large and Small Graduate Chapters)



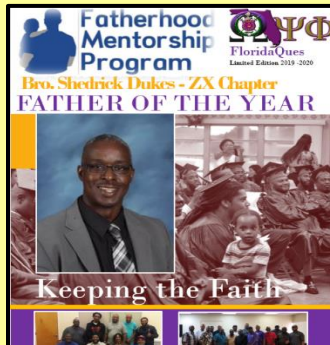
Bro. Dwight Moore  
Beta Rho Graduate Chapter  
Itta Bena, Mississippi

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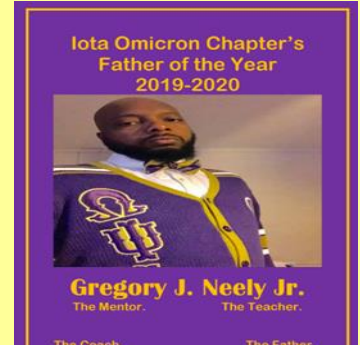


Bro. Demetrius Jackson  
Alpha Phi Graduate Chapter  
Birmingham, Alabama

Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring Newsletter



Bro. Shedrick Dukes  
Zeta Chi Graduate Chapter  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Bro. Gregory J. Neely Jr.  
Iota Omicron Graduate Chapter  
Clarksdale, Mississippi

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Ω Mask UP!



Ω Mask UP!!



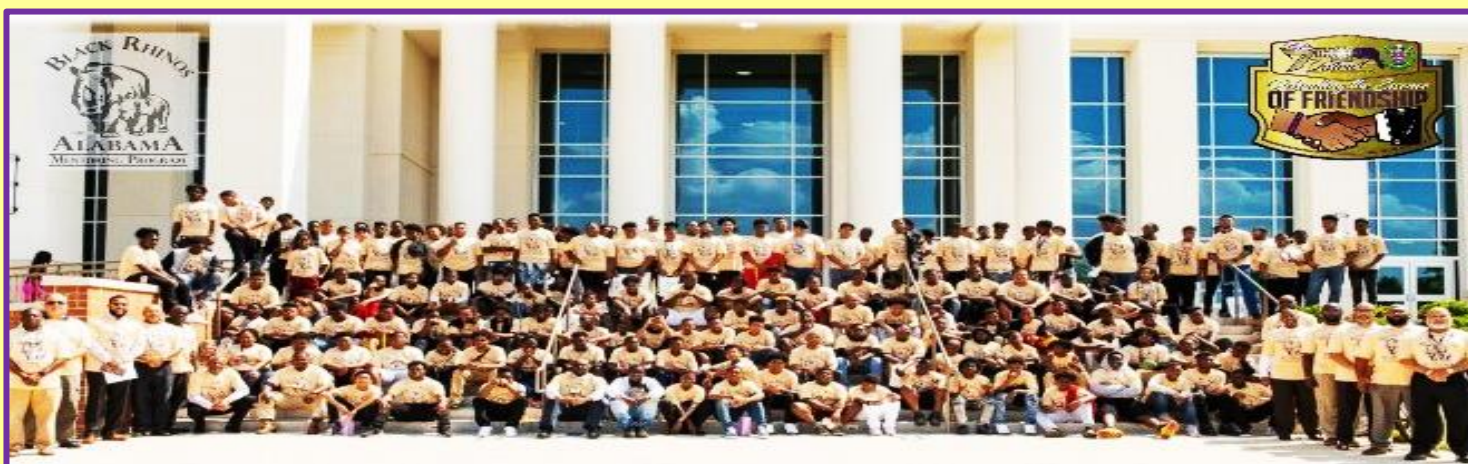
Ω Mask UP!!!



**Fatherhood Initiative and Youth Mentoring State Organization  
Chapter of the Year Candidates:  
(Large and Small Graduate Chapters)**



**PUP Team Youth Mentoring Group, Beta Rho Graduate Chapter - Itta Bena, Mississippi**



**Black Rhinos of Alabama Mentoring Program, Beta Mu Nu Graduate Chapter - Calera, Alabama**



**Omega Lamplighters Youth Mentoring Program, Lambda Iota Graduate Chapter- Columbus, Georgia**







**Bridge to Manhood Youth Mentoring Group, Iota Omicron Graduate Chapter -  
Clarksdale, MS**

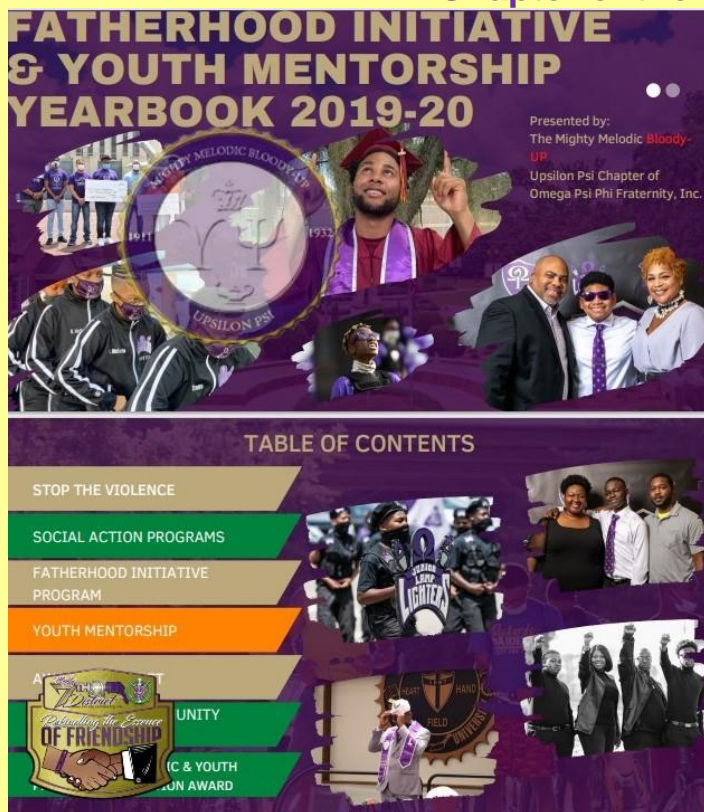


**Omega Youth Mentoring Program, Lambda Tau Graduate Chapter - Brunswick, GA**

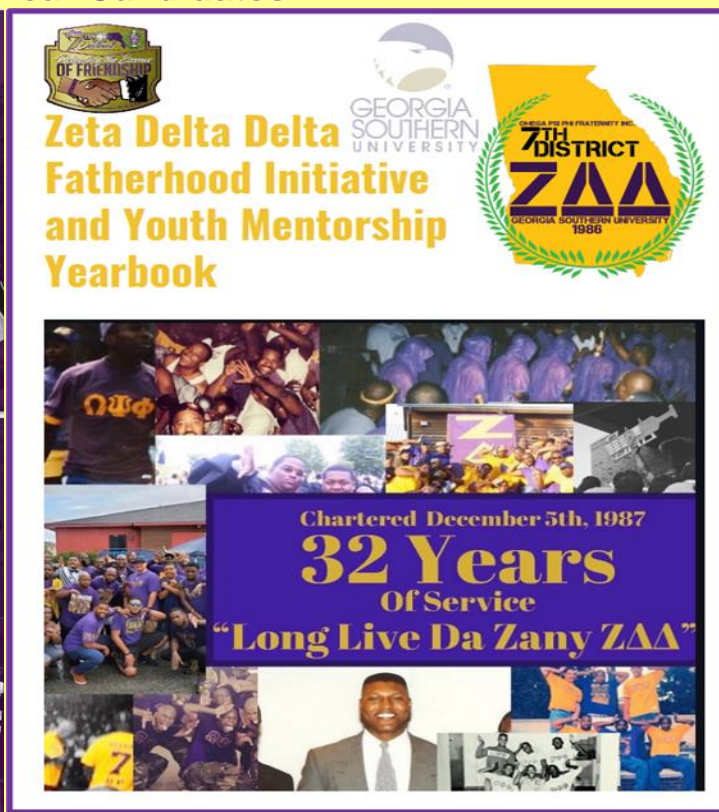




# Fatherhood Initiative & Youth Mentoring State Organization Chapter of the Year Candidates:



**Upsilon Psi Undergraduate Chapter  
Florida A&M University**



**Zeta Delta Delta Undergraduate Chapter  
Georgia Southern University**



**Beta Theta Undergraduate Chapter  
Mississippi Valley State University**





# Omega Sparks Team Up with National Park Services Tuskegee Honoring Black History Month

Submitted by: Bro. Albert Ike Jr. - State of Alabama FIMC Chairman

Manhood Inc./Omega Sparks Youth Mentoring - Sigma Phi Graduate Chapter of Montgomery, AL.

Partners with National Park Services Tuskegee to Honor African American History Month with inspirational treasures from the U.S. Mint. Omega Sparks President Andrew Brown & Mentor Bro. Lovejoy accepts Tuskegee Airmen Minted Quarters, Coloring books, Book Markers & Stickers to be provided for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade class @ Dannelly Elementary School (Montgomery) & Prattville Elementary School.



# Nu Xi Chapter Black History Month Fatherhood Challenge

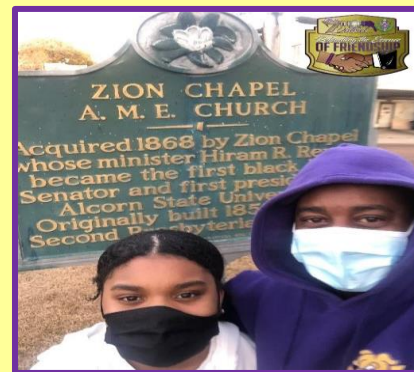
Submitted by: Bro. Robert Jones - State of Mississippi FIMC Chairman

Nu Xi Graduate Chapter - Natchez, MS



**Natchez, MS** – During Black History Month 2021, the Nu Xi Chapter issued a Fatherhood Challenge to local fathers and father figures. The initiative challenged male role models to take a youth on a Black History Treasure Hunt.

The rich history of Natchez provided numerous locations to explore. To assist with the Treasure Hunt, the Chapter shared a list of suggested sites to social media. The list incorporated sites



In doing so, participants visited historical sites of African American significance throughout the community. Participants were encouraged to engage the youth in a conversation about the importance of the site and the Black History it represented. Additionally, those who accepted the challenge were asked to take a picture and tag the Nu Xi Chapter on social media.

that documented the diasporic African experience in America.

Stories of adversity and achievement were shared, such as: the first African American to serve in the U.S. Congress; the enslavement of an African prince on a local plantation; the civil rights martyrdom of local leaders; the establishment of religious and educational institutions that served the black population in Natchez; the tragedy of a historic fire that took the lives of a generation of young black professionals; and the artistic and entrepreneurial endeavors of African descendants in America. ///



# Florida and Georgia FIMC State Chairmen take Proactive Roles in promoting Fatherhood Initiatives and Youth Mentoring

Submitted by:

Bro. Jonathan Gaines - 7<sup>th</sup> District Chairman/ FIMC

Bro. Harry B. Williams - State of Florida FIMC Chairman

Bro. Marvin Broadwater, Sr.- State of Georgia FIMC Chairman



**Brother Harry Belafonte Williams** - State of Florida FIMC Chairman will serve as the keynote speaker at the 2021 Spring Fatherhood Graduation Ceremony sponsored by Fatherhood Mentorship Community Program as part of Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Broward County, Inc., that is located in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Bro. Ron C. Osborne-Williams - ZX Social Action Chairman along with many Brothers of the Zeta Chi and Eta Nu Chapter coordinate efforts to support many of the provided programs year-round. For more information of the program, Brothers can visit the website at: <https://hmhbbroward.org/fatherhood-mentorship-program/>

**B**rother Harry Belafonte Williams has been a servant of Omega for over 45 years. His Service covers the entire realm of Family, Faith, Fraternity, and Community. He has been married to his wife Bonita for over 38 years.

Brother Williams recently retired from the profession of Education where he served as chairman of the Math department, team leader, selected as Teacher of the Year three times, County Zone finalist two times, News Tribune Coach of the Year for Wrestling and Football, Treasure coast conference Coach of the Year, Youth Group Sponsors Award, Omega Man of the Year three times, Saint Lucie County Distinguished Minority Educator of the Year and Saint Lucie County Teacher of the year. He serves as a Eucharistic Minister and a Minister of Welcome at Saint Lucie Catholic Church and a member of the Knights of Columbus.

It is Williams' service to his community through his Fraternity that he enjoys the most. Serving as the lead sponsor for the Lamplighters Youth Group demands many hours of service. Adopt a road project, adopt a family project, feed the hungry, college tours, civil rights tours along with countless hours of Mentoring not only the young men in the youth group but countless students as well as adults in his community. His energy level is tireless as he has served the FSO as State chairman for Achievement week and is the current State chairman for Retention as well as Fatherhood and Mentoring. He also serves at the pleasure of the DR as Florida Region 2 MSP chairman. When he takes a deep

## Events To Look Forward To



breath, he then goes to the park and coaches Little league baseball and continues to Mentor the youth of Saint Lucie County. He continues to enlighten the educational opportunities of students by serving as the Education coordinator for an afterschool tutorial program. Brother Harry Belafonte Williams is a Golden Example of what Omega Service is intended to be. ///





**Bro. Marvin Broadwater, Sr.** - State of Georgia FIMC Chairman has blazed a trail for the Georgia State Organization in promoting Fatherhood Initiatives and Youth Mentoring across his perspective State of Georgia. In collaboration with local chapters and a solid team consisting of local chapter FIMC Chairmen, his team has managed to provide the needed support to many local communities using a virtual platform. As many local government agencies and school systems struggled early during the **COVID - 19** Pandemic. The virtual platform has become a vital tool in continuing to conduct Fatherhood Conversations and Youth Mentoring not just locally, but across the state and nationally. It would seem Bro. Broadwater, Sr. quickly realized the benefits and mastered the use of a virtual platform in scheduling a series of monthly programs to assist local chapters to stay connected with their local communities.



**W**ith the successful use of a virtual platform by all four State Organizations and Local Chapters across the 7<sup>th</sup> District has provided a window of opportunity to visit/drop in virtually on scheduled programs to collectively gauge the pulse to evaluate and report the great work throughout the 7<sup>th</sup>

District. As we move forward as a society and finally emerge from the Covid - 19 Pandemic, I do see the use of a virtual platform as a main stay in promoting Fatherhood Conversations and Youth Mentoring as a strategic tool to maximize resources and the scheduling programs. ///

Fatherhood Initiative & Mentoring Committee







**VIRTUAL MENTORING SERIES**

*A Panel Discussion Featuring Parents*

PARENTS HELPING PARENTS

**SATURDAY, MARCH 13th**  
**9AM-10:00AM**  
 Via ZOOM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89354566876?pwd=THNkU0NCZjU0SjdDZnhYQ3JicC9LZz09>

✓ **ACCESS**  
Using Virtual Platforms

✓ **RESOURCES**  
Finding Resources in Your District

✓ **ENGAGEMENT**  
Staying Engaged with Active Lives

**LIVE**

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.  
State of Georgia

@Omega\_Georgia

@OmegaPsiPhi\_StateOfGeorgia





# FATHERHOOD

— Conversation —

**March 16, 2021**  
**VIRTUAL**  
 via Griffin, GA  
 6:00PM – 7:00PM



Join Zoom Meeting:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82195805639?pwd=NzVzYU9rU2lPQUZKU0FsbEdPR3Btdz09>  
 Meeting ID: 821 9580 5639 Passcode: 620973

@Omega\_Georgia

@OmegaPsiPhi\_StateOfGeorgia

**SERVICES OFFERED INCLUDE:**

Driver's License Reinstatement – Child Support Services – GED Enrollment – Job Training – Job Search/Placement – Volunteer Work Opportunities – Support Order Modification (where applicable)

For More Details, Contact:  
**Marvin Broadwater, Sr.**  
[MBroadwaterSr@yahoo.com](mailto:MBroadwaterSr@yahoo.com) | (706) 315-6454

**Live Streaming via FACEBOOK:**  
 \*Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., State of Georgia  
 \*Georgia Department of Human Services



Georgia State Organization  
Omega Psi Phi



In Partnership With



**Fatherhood**  
PROGRAM  
DHS | Division of Child Support Services



**Upsilon Omega Chapter Omega Squires Mentoring Program  
Mentoring in Uncertain Times – COVID-19**

By Brother Darren Keith Henderson, Omicron Sigma 2006,  
Omega Squires Committee Chairman

**St. Louis, MO** – People were moving around freely and planning activities for weeks, and months in advance. The next day we turn on our televisions and hear the words most of us did not expect to hear, “lockdown, wear a mask, social distance. These words changed our lives in an instant. First, I thought about what this means for me and my family. My second thought was “What does this mean for our Omega Squires? Especially for our young black men. At this point I knew we must find a way to continue engaging with our young men to somehow keep a little normalcy in their lives.

The Omega Squires is a youth group founded in 1993 under the Upsilon Omega 8<sup>th</sup> district graduate chapter located in Missouri. Omega Squires is a mentoring program designed to provide a space for young men to have an opportunity to interact with likeminded young men and engage in several activities: planning, community services, educational and social service events.

In the current environment, the Omega Squires committee had to figure out how to continue to keep the young men involved. Despite the challenge, we were able to keep the program moving forward by leveraging Zoom meetings, holding meetings indoors/outdoors, using masks, and social distancing. Some events included: Early Saturday Zoom meetings asking the young men how are they handling virtual learning? What struggles are they having with the new way of learning? The committee members learned quickly that Zoom is not the platform to keep the young men engaged. The young men wanted to meet in-person, masked and social distance as much as possible. The



**Brother John Head, Upsilon Omega speaking to the Omega Squires about an opportunity to visit a black owned Wildlife Conservation to learn more about fishing, camping, and other outside activities. In attendance were Brothers Vern Wilson, Darren K. Henderson.**

committee listened and made the adjustments. We were successful at having in-person meetings, following the Chapter and International guidelines. The time was spent planning events for late summer/early fall which gave them something to look forward to the near future.

Being involved with the Upsilon Omega Squires during this current environment reminded me of what is important to our young men. It is just spending time with someone they believe care for them and have their best interest at heart, which is priceless. Continuing to have regular meetings with the group was the best move for all. Do not over think what you can do as a mentor, just do something to help our young men to be as successful as possible. ///





## **The Virtual Experience – Omega Sparks Black History – Social Awareness**

**Dallas, Texas** – As a part of an ongoing series on social awareness and utilizing the virtual experience, the Omega SPARKS, parents, Theta Alpha Foundation, and Theta Alpha Chapter brothers participated in mentor sessions on college admissions, college and career readiness, African American history, and employment law as it pertains to the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

On January 10, 2021, Brothers Odell Brown and Darrin Hemphill presented an engaging virtual work session on college admissions and career readiness. SPARKS were able to determine which colleges and universities they were interested in attending and resources they could access to be able to afford their choices. Topics ranged from PSAT/SAT/ ACT preparation to scholarships available from universities, particularly HBCUs. All resources were posted to the SPARKS Landing Page, a newly developed web page for SPARKS, their parents, and those interested in becoming Omega SPARKS.

On February 21, 2021, Brothers Frank Drayton and Kalon Winn presented an interactive session on Black history. The session highlighted Blacks who have had impact on society in many genres, facts, and significant events that have shaped history. SPARKS used interactive software to answer questions and were provided incentives for their participation. Black history goes far beyond the month of February, as a result, each session moving forward with the SPARKS

will highlight significant facts, events, or persons in Black history.

On February 25, 2021, Brother Rodney Hopes facilitated a leadership workshop with the United States Navy. The purpose of this event was to promote the Navy, recruitment, and provide scholarship information. There were four (4) Navy personnel that made their presentation at Mount Rose Church and on Zoom. The SPARKS were represented. The presentation was well received by all.

On March 14, 2021, Brother Tim Fitten presented an interactive session on workplace law as it pertains to the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The brothers felt that the SPARKS needed to be exposed to this information as a critical component in their maturation to becoming productive adults in school and the workplace. Discussion topics included workplace discrimination based on race, gender, and nationality. SPARKS used interactive software to capture their levels of learning on this topic and were provided incentives to keep them engaged with the learning.

The SPARKS continue to prepare for community service projects throughout their communities and have been provided opportunities to engage in programs and informational sessions such as the Accounting Career Awareness Program (ACAP), and the Colorado Association of Black Professional Engineers and Scientists (CABPES), US Navy Scholarship Presentation, and Virtual Financial Camp for Teens. ///

### Omega Sparks Black History Facts

- In 1857, did the U.S Supreme Court decide that Dred Scott of Missouri was a slave or a free man?
- **A slave (and therefore not a citizen, even though he had resided in a free territory and in free Illinois)**





## Houston Area Omega Lamplighters



**Houston, TX** - Determined to create a sense of normalcy, all **COVID-19** measures were in place to facilitate a day of fun for a well deserving group.

On January 31, 2021, the Brothers of the Rho Beta Beta Chapter accompanied 10 young men to engage in the physical, health inducing activity of paintballing. As the group's first face-to-face outing of the year, it served as a good moment to discuss their plans in the new year.

While these teens got to meet with their mentors in a setting that allows them to have fun, they took a lot more away from the day. During the event, Lamplighters put teamwork and strategy at the forefront as groups battled. At the end of a great day of friendly competition, the Brothers spoke with the Lamplighters about community service, college, vocations, and financial literacy.

**LAMPLIGHTER DRESS** for Success: The Brothers of the Houston Area Coalition started the dress for success program to help the Lamplighters understand the importance of their brand and image. This effort has supported over 25 lamplighters to understand the importance of reputation and how they present themselves.

The backbone of the program is supported by working with the suit company, **Charles Tyrwhitt**, to gather dress clothes and casual business clothes for the Lamplighters every few months. The donations include sizes in all ranges from shoes, dress pants, blazers, and dress shirts.

Some of our Lamplighters come from impoverished or single parent homes. This program provides access to some that otherwise would not have it; insight and know-how to some that otherwise would not learn and guidance and mentorship to

some that otherwise would not have. The Brothers look forward to continuing this impactful program and meeting a need that otherwise would go unmet.

**DADS AND DONUTS:** On March 9, 2021, the Brothers of Rho Beta Beta sponsored and participated in the Dads and Donuts program at McGowen Elementary School. This program was designed to recognize the important role fathers play in the home and show appreciation to those hardworking fathers.

McGowen Elementary has a large minority student population; thus, the Chapter partnered with the elementary school to provide donuts and refreshments for the fathers and children. The Brothers felt it is our duty to acknowledge these men and thanked them for their strong paternal presence. ///





## Psi Alpha Working Hard Via Winter Uplift

By Bro Jeremy Neal\*

**San Antonio, TX** – Psi Alpha Chapter Fatherhood Initiative Committee (FIC) participated in seven activities during the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2021. Due to inclement weather (below freezing conditions), the FIC recognized an immediate need to assist homeless people in the San Antonio community. Thus, the Chapter launched the “Haven for Hope” project - a place of hope and new beginnings for people experiencing homelessness in the city of San Antonio and greater Bexar County, TX.

Led by Bros. Kenneth “KT” Tyson and Morris “Butch” Allen, items, such as, men’s and women’s clothing, shoes, coats, masks, hand sanitizer, wipes, blankets, hygiene kits and toys for the children were collected and delivered to the “Haven for Hope” organization for the homeless.

Personifying the motto of the Alamo City Lamplighter’s: “Turning Good Young Men into GREAT Young Men: It takes a Village”, the FIC mentoring initiatives continued to positively impact the youth.

On January 31, 2021, the Weekly Mentoring Program hosted a Juvenile Justice Jeopardy™ (JJJ) forum, which teaches youth how to: navigate interaction with police and peers, understand the legal consequences of their actions, and, discuss strategies for desistance from peer pressure.

“Strategies for Youth Training,” looked at reducing contentious

encounters between police and youth. Mentee Josh stated, “I learned about different rules. I learned about what can happen to your record and how parents can have your records erased. I also learned you can petition your record to be erased or have your charges dismissed. It was fun because I knew more than I gave myself credit for knowing.” Mentee JQ said, “What I got out of the game is how to navigate interactions with police and peers to understand the legal consequences of my actions.”

Mrs. Lisa Thurman, Strategies for Youth Executive Director, SAPD Officer Joel Pope, Quincy Stewart, Sam Houston State Head Football Coach and Bro. Robert Clark, retired FBI agent and current Strategies for Youth board member, recognized **Mentee Ashton** as a future attorney and lauded him for his critical thinking capacity.

Ashton said, “I think the Juvenile Justice Jeopardy game was beneficial and insightful. The law enforcement officials did an outstanding job of expounding on the law and giving the youth clarity on any questions that we may have had. I believe that more programs like these should be present because *the quickest way to a death bed is ignorance*. The meeting was also very structured and organized; however, what else would you expect from the Brothers of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.”

Other participating dignitaries were: 1<sup>st</sup> VGB Bro. Ricky Lewis, Psi

Alpha Basileus George Mayers, Psi Alpha VB John Lester, Lone Star State Ques President John Cooper, SAPD Lieutenant Michele Ramos and SAPD Officer Douglas Greene.

On February 10, 2021, the FIC conducted an interview with Psi Alpha Basileus, Bro. George M. Mayers. One of the major takeaways from the interview was Bro. Mayers’ past military deployment. He stated that he was away from his family so long that once he retired and returned home, he had to find his role in the family and adjust to various lifestyles within.

On February 20, 2021, the FIC partnered with Cleft of the Rock Church and the San Antonio Food Bank to distribute food to over 250 families of the San Antonio community. With the recent week of bad weather and power outages, these activities provided the FIC, Psi Alpha brethren and other community partners the opportunity to uplift the local community.

Finally, on Saturday, February 27, 2021, the Alamo City Omega Lamplighters and Light Seekers volunteered with Psi Alpha Chapter at Blessed Angels Community Center (BACC.). This was a community service project to teach youth the meaning of giving back and establishing a work ethic. Thirty (30) volunteers filled over 500 grocery bags given away during the **COVID-19** Relief Giveaway.

(\*Brother Damon K. Blythe, 12<sup>th</sup> District and Brother Taylor contributed to the editing of this piece.)



## 10<sup>th</sup> District: Brother Gregory Pittman, Esq., Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring



**Flint, Michigan** – Omicron Rho Chapter, in conjunction with their youth fatherhood and mentoring group the Omicron Rho Lamplighters, have been actively involved in the Flint community over the last four months.

The Omicron Rho Lamplighters from the Flint community range in age from 7-17 years of age. These young men are from diverse social-economic backgrounds, including some participants who are the sons of members of Omicron Rho Chapter.

On 11/21/20 the Omicron Rho Lamplighters delivered Thanksgiving dinner to over 500 families in the Flint community. On 3/26/2021 the Lamplighters, recognizing the need still exists even others have

forgotten, delivered 2,000 cases of water to families in the Flint community.

The Lamplighters meet each month with the Brothers of Omicron Rho Chapter to receive mentoring and to work on scholarly and physical attainment. These monthly activities include developing a self-concept map, identifying and learning about significant people and events in Black history...all year around!

Public speaking, learning to control and command their presence and physical training are also part of the valued time shared between the Lamplighters and Omicron Rho. These young men have distinguished themselves in both their mentoring activities and their service endeavors by working and participating with a smile and a very enthusiastic and positive attitude. ///

### Observations About Project Manhood

**E. St. Louis, IL**– Nu Chi Chapter's mentoring effort, Project Manhood, embodied the Fraternity's 2017 Founders Day theme, "When the World Calls, Omega Men Answer". These dedicated brothers persevere, diligently and honestly, in helping their community address the plight of young men trying to see their way through difficult life circumstances, to reach manhood. When East St. Louis, as a community, called for action to save and uplift its young men, Nu Chi Chapter answered that call!

The template created by Nu Chi Chapter is a phenomenal example of how Omega can and should impact young men, and by extension, communities across our nation and world. What is truly impressive about the Project Manhood initiative is that the Brothers are constantly evaluating and refining their approach to

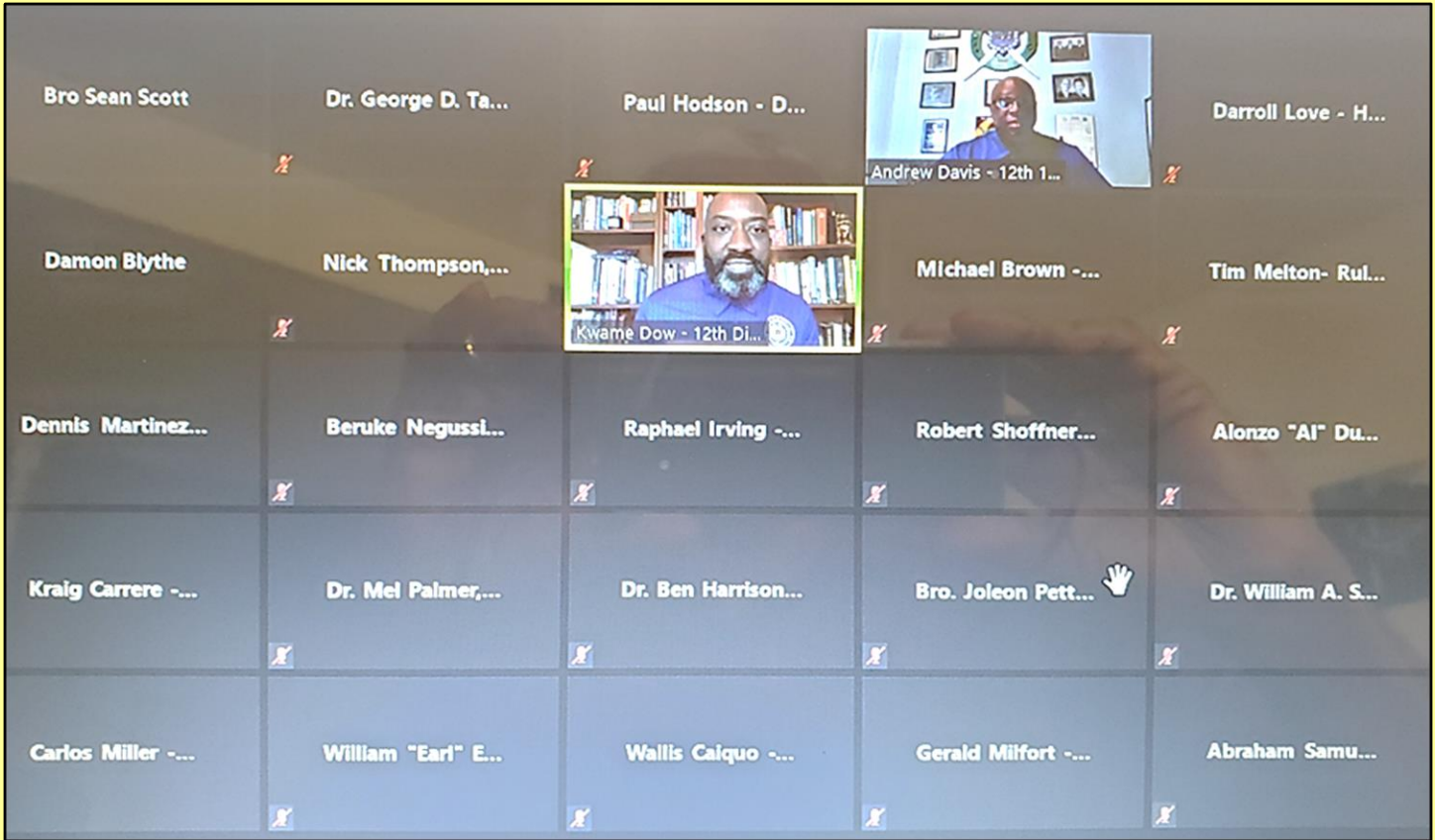
impacting these young men. Project Manhood essentially seeks to address the ever-changing dynamics of E. Saint Louis, through scholarship, strategies, and engagement that offers, real-time, real-world answers.

It would be easy to rest on "what already works". The challenge and the reality are, that making a difference with young people requires healthy self-evaluation, innovation and where practicable, collaboration. Nu Chi Project Manhood checks all of those boxes. ///





## 12<sup>th</sup> District: Brother George D. Taylor, EdD, Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring



L: Brothers District Representative Kwame Dow and, R; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice District Representative Andrew Davis calling the WDC meeting to order!

### Massive and Progressive Twelfth District Hold Winter District Council

At its height, 193 brothers had ZOOMED into the virtual Winter 12<sup>th</sup> District Council Meeting, Saturday, February 20, 2021. They heard reports from district officers: Brothers Kwame Dow, DR; Andrew “Herc” Davis, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice DR; Beruke Negussie, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice DR; Nick Thompson, DKRS and Raphael Irving, DKF.

The focus of the day was what the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice DR, called “the engine” of the District, the work of the eight (8) standing committees and six (6) special committees appointed by Brother Kwame Dow, 34<sup>th</sup> District Representative (DR) along with his trusted Sr. Executive leadership team, Brothers Davis, and Negussie. This leadership team, plus committee chairmen, spans a generational demographic across decades – from the 1960s to the present, sharing data,

information, knowledge and wisdom. They are kindred spirits dedicated to implementing principles of *manhood, scholarship, perseverance and uplift* within the context of the DR’s CEO model which centers on five vectors: *brand, health, partnerships, communication and values*.

We learned that much *rational creative activity* is taking place in the 12<sup>th</sup> District. Brothers heard from the Civic and Community Affairs committee headed by Brother Kraig Carrere; they received information about Achievement Week, Talent Hunt and Scholarship initiatives. The Social Action Committee embraced active participation in community life, and Brother Alonzo Duncan, committee Chairman, called on the brothers to “*get up off of it*” and move around because, “Brothers, You’re On OUR Minds,” he said.

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NO. 1

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Ω Mask UP!!



Ω Mask UP!!!

**A COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING TASKFORCE** headed by Brother Dr. Ben Harrison told the group that community trust and police legitimacy in the 12<sup>th</sup> District and beyond is at an all-time low. Thus, his Taskforce, is developing guidelines aimed at changing the relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Working within our local communities, helping to set or influence local governing policy, whether parking, utility fees, voting, matter when the health and well-being of all are considered.

Brother Robert Shoffner informed the assembly that the financial health of the District is in order. The Investment Committee's investment strategies have enabled the District to earn market rate returns at a time of historically low savings rates in bank insured vehicles. The committee will look to expand finance knowledge within the District. It will develop an educational platform for financial investing and corporate funding.

Chapters were reminded to get their chapter history into Brother Darrell Love, who heads the venerable History Committee. It was Marcus Garvey who told us, *"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."* That tree will never grow. Brother Love emphasized the District has not published an updated history in more than 30 years and *"Chapters do not consistently capture and sustain individual member history."* Chapters were asked to help the District by sending information to the History committee *post haste*.

Brother Dr. George Taylor, briefed the District Council on happenings in Fatherhood and Mentoring. He mentioned brother Dr. Martin Boston's work developing a comprehensive curriculum for young fathers. The curriculum has 7 modules – one for each workshop in the program. Brother John Ervin will report on Youth Leadership Conferences. In response to a question from the gallery, Brother Taylor mentioned the upcoming IVUF Youth Leadership Conference which includes sessions designed for moms and dads.

Brother Dr. William A. Smith introduced ISUTHU (pronounced, Ee-soo-too), a word of African familiarity

that describes rites of passage for young boys. The program aims to help them grow into total men; mentally, spiritually, morally, culturally, and physically. Brother Dr. Smith spoke passionately about the increase in suicide attempts among Black youth. He will be working with Brother John Ervin and the Fatherhood and Mentoring committee to bring attention to this and other issues related to the growth and development of youth.



**Jasper A. "Jack" Atkins**  
**9<sup>th</sup> Grand Basileus, 1921-1924**

Two new initiatives were introduced into the meeting by Brother DR Dow, Omega Lamp and Omega Wellness. The Omega Lamp *light* focused on the life of Brother Jasper A. "Jack" Atkins, whose influence on the growth and impact of the fraternity in communities was enormous, as evidenced by the popularity and growth of the Talent Hunt initiative, as told to the District by visiting Brother Jonathan Matthews, Alpha Chapter, 1983.

The meeting was ended on a "deep" spiritual journey into Omega Wellness under the sturdy leadership of brothers Abraham Samuels and Charles Clemons. Brothers were provided the opportunity to check the state of their own health and well-being in this age of social isolation brought on by **COVID-19**. The DR's brilliant technology crew who pulled together this omnibus virtual WDCM consisted of team leader Brother Sean Scott ably assisted by Brothers Carl Guillory and Damon Blythe; they kept the WDCM moving and on time. In all, it was a memorable assemblage of servant leadership glued together in friendship.

The District Marshal Brother Melvin Jones and the DC is looking forward to seeing all at the virtual District Meeting in May 2021. gdt///





**Project Manhood: Guest Speaker Series**  
**Black History Month Edition: (A Political Scientist and four Dr.'s.)**  
 By Bro. Damon K. Blythe

### “What Does Manhood Look Like?”

**Long Beach, CA** – On February 24<sup>th</sup>, the Fatherhood and Mentoring committee of Rho Iota Iota in conjunction with AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), presented the first of four webinars for its Project Manhood Spring 2021 “Guest Speaker Series.” Bro. Damion Nunley, the Equity Coordinator, Technology & AVID teacher and Director of the Black Student Union at Leuzinger High School in Lawndale, CA, organized and facilitated the webinar via Google Meeting.

With assistance from FMI committee members Darryl Brown, EdD (Basileus), Jonathan Pryor, MD, Craig Carter, OD, Sedrick Spencer, 30<sup>th</sup> District Representative of the Massive and Progressive 12<sup>th</sup> D and guest panelist Bros. Darin Earley, EdD, and Nunley engaged the 21 African-American 11<sup>th</sup> grade males of his AVID cohort with a group of men who personify servant leadership and success.

As the young men of the AVID cohort are determined to go to college, become successful in their chosen profession and who are pillars in their community, the chosen topic of the day helped them to better understand how to exemplify Manhood.

The topic and question of the day was, “*What does Manhood look like?*” Through listening to the personal testimonies and data driven responses of expert panelists, the AVID 21 utilized “Cornell Notes” to identify the effects of both good and bad life choices and how said choices can affect their future. The students were also asked to define manhood in their own words; as such, they addressed the panel with specific questions related to life experiences.

The second of the “Guest Speaker Series,” will take place on March 24<sup>th</sup>. Its topic and question is Scholarship, “*Will school prepare me for the life I want?*” As the African proverb states, “it takes a village to raise a child,” the various panelists of brethren serve as elder advisers of the village.

The premise of the project is to help African-American male youth prepare for their future by listening and speaking to those who have attained both professional leadership and success. The series is designed to give direction, provide real life examples and help students understand that they have the ability to shape their own lives and a responsibility to take part in the advancement of their community. ///



# Change Agents of the Inland Valley: The 12<sup>th</sup> District's Spring YLC

By Damon K. Blythe

**O**n March 20, 2021, the Inland Valley Uplift Foundation, in conjunction with the Zeta Tau Chapter, hosted its 11th Annual and 1st Virtual Youth Leadership Conference (YLC). This YLC is normally held at the University of La Verne. Due to **COVID-19**, it is virtual. With over 250 registered attendees consisting of 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade youth, as well as fathers and mothers, the YLC consisted of three components: youth, mothers and fathers respectfully.

The conference began with invocation by Brother Rev. Jewett Walker, Pastor of the New Shady Grove Baptist Church in Los Angeles, CA. During the 2-hour youth portion, expert panelists discussed pertinent topics, such as, college challenges for both perspective and current students via **COVID-19** by University of La Verve Administrator Shawn Carr.

Brother Simeon Haynes and spoke directly to the youth about the exciting life and career of an environmental engineer. His father, Brother Michal Haynes, who is a chemical engineer, gave a seminar on various STEM careers and pathways to reach them. Each spoke highly of the use and intergration of technology in careers of today and the future.

The one half-hour mother's conference led by Brother Ronnie Walker along with Brother Eddie Slack included best practices and tips for a successful college application and FAFSA submission.

The panelists of the father's conference (Brothers: Larry Hammond, Dr. Quinton T. Ross, Dr. Mel Palmer, Dan Braxton and Dr. George Taylor, 12th District Fatherhood and Mentoring Chairman), shared the benefits of attending HBCU's, the stress and stressors in the age of **COVID-19** and that there is power in choosing values as the bedrock upon which you grow and develop as a father who takes care of himself, his family and his livelihood.

So, how was the conference received? A mother (Rhonda G.), who attended the virtual conference with her 11-year-old son, wrote: *"The conference provided a*



**Bro. Dr. Mel Palmer, Chair  
IE-PHC, Moderator of YLC**



**Bro. Simeon Haynes  
Environmental Engineer**

*lot of interesting information. I particularly enjoyed the college admission and acceptance pointers which I was not aware of...and the segment you [Dr. Taylor] introduced." She continued, "There are so many children who do not have a Father in the picture. It is very sad yet a reality. But it is people like you and your brothers who make a difference, so thank you. Your efforts do not go unnoticed, it changes lives..."*

Brother James Wilson, President of the Inland Valley Uplift Foundation and Coordinator of the conference, expressed great satisfaction and appreciation with the conference participants and attendees. He said, *"I was very impressed with the conference. It was one of the best we've ever had. We hope to be back at the University of La Verne next year."*

Questions and answers from all participants were handles by brother Rodney Jones and the 12<sup>th</sup> District technical team leader brother Sean Scott. For their participation and correct responses via Q & A, the Foundation provided five (5) students Commercial Drones and six (6) students razor scooters to encourage them to consider a STEM Career.

Special guest participants were as follows: Grand Basileus Dr. David E. Marion, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Grand Basileus Ricky Lewis, 34<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> District Representative Kwame Dow, and Bro. Dr. Quinton T. Ross, EdD president, Alabama State University. All in all, the YLC was well received by all attendees. To view the conference Cut and paste in URL or click on the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IySOBI2I0rE>







**Project UPLIFT Mentoring Program: 20 Years of Effective Mentoring**  
 Brother John Ervin, III, Mentor/Founder/CEO



**T**wenty (20) years ago Bro. John Ervin, III, created the vision for the Project UPLIFT Mentoring program. After seeing first hand as an educator the disparities in discipline (suspensions and expulsions) and the disparities in academic attainment (graduation and college going rates) among African American boys, he decided something needed to be done. He felt mentoring was a part of the solution.

Co-founding a mentoring program with Bro. Larry Ross in 1996 in Phoenix, AZ and being a mentor in a program in San Bernardino, CA during his undergrad years, Bro Ervin acquired the foundation to start another mentoring effort in Modesto, CA in 2000. He approached Omega Psi Phi members, Brothers Milton Jordan, Kalangi Satterfield and Shawn Jenkins about the need for Omega to develop and implement a mentoring program to save our “Black Boys,” as our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Grand Basileus Ricky Lewis so eloquently puts it!

The fraternity began its mentoring efforts by identifying the young men to mentor. We started with the most at-risk of not graduating from high school based on several indicators, i.e., homework completion

rate, math grade, English comprehension and reading level and grade and suspensions/expulsion rate. These data were especially important and based on the criteria we established. We found that eighty-percent of the first group of boys we mentored were not on track to graduate from high school. That fact was unacceptable!

What did we do? We implemented a school tracking system to track each mentee; we involved parents and teachers in the process, and, we began meeting with the boys, initially, one hour per week and usually on a Saturday. We attended our first Youth Leadership Conference in Los Angeles making the 5-hour trip with 8 boys. We attended every year until 2019.

In summary, since implementing our model, we have seen a 98% graduation rate...the first 10 years it was 100% graduation in a county where the graduation rate was 54% for African American boys. We dramatically improved attendance, dramatically reduced suspensions and expulsions and have assisted many with going to college (3 Omega brothers among them), attending vocational/technical school and enter the workforce successfully, while engaging the boys in extensive community service. ///



## 13<sup>th</sup> District: Brother Michael Robinson, Chairman, Fatherhood Initiative and Mentoring

### Samurai Fatherhood & Mentoring Program

Donates **COVID-19** Essentials to Schools in

By Brother Michael Robinson

**Mainland, Japan** – **COVID-19** effected the official start of the 2020 – 2021 school year for students and staff members in Mainland, Japan. Families were met with the challenge of children attending virtual classes until the school doors were officially open. The Brothers of Upsilon Lambda Lambda Chapter Samurai Fatherhood & Mentoring Program purchased small bottles of hand sanitizer and packs of wipes for students and staff members to use in the classrooms. The **COVID-19** Essentials were delivered to the following schools in the Kanto Plains Community of Mainland, Japan:

U.S. Naval Air Station Atsugi in Atsugi Japan  
Shirley Lanham Elementary School  
Camp Zama Army Base in Zama Japan  
Zama Middle High School

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan  
Sullivans Elementary School  
Ikego Elementary School  
Yokosuka Middle School  
Kinnick High School

Yokota Air Base in Yokota, Japan  
Yokota West Elementary School  
Mendel Elementary School  
Yokota Middle School



Bro. Michael Robinson presents a box of **COVID-19** Essentials to Ms. Audrey Murphy Counselor, Nile C. Kinnick High School, Yokosuka, Japan.



Wash Hands -- Use Sanitizers- -- Wear Mask -- Battle **COVID-19**





## Sigma Gamma Gamma Uplifts Lady Ambassadors Softball Team

By Brother Toneo A. Gulley



Brothers of Sigma Gamma Gamma Chapter Basileus Cortez Pree, Bro Taylor, Bro Gulley and Bro Singleton present donation to the Lady Ambassadors Softball Team in Okinawa, Japan

**Mainland, Japan** – December 22, 2020 – Sigma Gamma Gamma Graduate Chapter donated \$200 to the Lady Ambassadors Softball Team. The chairman who coordinated this was Basileus Cortez Pree. After receiving the donation, the Lady Ambassadors challenged the boys' softball team. During the pandemic, fundraising for this group of ladies has been difficult due to the restrictions and the increase in cases

of **COVID-19** so the donation from SGG helped them overcome some financial hurdles. SGG received gratitude from the coaches, players, and their parents which was heartfelt and humbling stated Basileus Brother Cortez Pree. The brothers of Sigma Gamma Gamma truly uplifted the community in need on this day. ///

## SGG Assist the Kadena Post Office Submitted by Brother Roderick Singleton



### Kadena Air Base Okinawa, Japan, January 23, 2021

– Brothers of The Sigma Gamma Gamma Graduate Chapter provided uplift and service to the community at Kadena Air Base. Basileus Brother Cortez Pree was contacted by the Kadena Air Force Base Post Office about a service opportunity. The Chapter has told the community that it is always in search of opportunities to serve. Brothers assisted at the Kadena Post Office with a backlog of mail dating back to October and November. Brothers volunteered to help move, sort, and issue over 7,000 pieces of mail.

The volunteer service greatly helped the military community in Okinawa. Many of the DOD employees, DODEA teachers, service members, and families utilize the mail system as their lifeline back to the states. The Post Office on Kadena Air Force Base services more than the families that live on Kadena, but they also service the military community living out in town. SGG also mentored the young Airman on their career choices and benefits of military training, medical disability, and life after the military. This positively impacted the community allowing backlogged mail to get into the hands of waiting patrons. ///



## SGG Host and Assist Okinawa Diversity Council 2021 Black History Program

By: Brother Roderick J. Singleton, Jr.



**SGG Basileus Cortez Pree and Ms. Curtistine Ulceus presents Autumn Ware with a \$50 gift certificate during the Okinawa Diversity Council Black History Month Program**

**On February 27, 2021**, the Okinawa Diversity Council (ODC) held their annual Black History Month Program at the Crow's Nest at Camp Shields Navy Base in Okinawa, Japan. The brothers of Sigma Gamma Gamma were recognized for their accomplishments in the community and their assistance with ODC's initiatives. Basileus Brother Cortez Pree served as co-host and committee co-chairman that ensured a successful event. The event recognized African

American leaders in the community that were experts in their field in the form of an award show. Omega Men Benjamin Crump and Carter G. Woodson were recognized for their noteworthy accomplishments. Additionally, there were performances by youth, adults, gospel choirs and several members of the ODC paying honor to our culture and history. Social distancing and Mask were enforced. ///

### SGG Black History Month, Boyz to Men(Torship)

By Roderick J. Singleton, Jr.

**Kadena Air Base** – On February 20, 2021, brothers of Sigma Gamma Gamma continued to provide Scholarship and Uplift to the youth throughout the community by hosting its quarterly Boyz to Men event during Black History Month on Kadena Air Base.

The event was planned and coordinated the event was Basileus Cortez Pree. It started with breakfast with the youth. After the meal, they conducted a cleanup of the area around Chapel 3. The brothers divided the group by ages and conducted guided discussion on life choices. Afterwards, the practical exercise of car maintenance began. Brothers of Sigma Gamma Gamma taught and instructed groups of boys around the components of vehicles.

At the end of the hands-on practical exercise, the boys had experienced: checking and changing windshield wiper fluid, oil, tire pressure, brake lights, tire treads and so much more. Based on the response



**Brother Roderic Singleton of Sigma Gamma Gamma provide car maintenance instructions to mentees**

form the boys, they were receptive and motivated to work on the cars. At the end, we quizzed them on the components of the vehicles and they were able to point out everything they learned. We will continue to build on this event to educate the youth in the community. Social distancing and Mask were enforced. ///





## Project Aspiration Open-House

By Bro. Christopher Butler



Photo L– Brother Christopher Butler’s home visit with the James Family. Mentees: Kevin (13), Kingston (8), Kory (10) and Father: Jeff (Marine Corps Veteran);

Photo R – Brother Butler handing out Project Aspiration Polo’s new Mentees: Kevin (13), Kory (10), and Kingston (8)

**Honolulu, Hawaii** – The Brothers of the Lambda Beta Beta (LBB) Chapter conducted their Project Aspiration (PA) open-house which was an information session held in January 2021 to provide parents, and potential mentees, with an overview of the mentorship program.

The open-house focused on the program’s mission and vision, and the positive impacts mentorship has on young adults through statistics associated with mentoring programs. Also discussed were the curriculum and all the upcoming events to give the families an opportunity to provide feedback.

As mandated by our social action program, we are charged with developing the character and talents of young males in our communities. This is done in an effort to ensure we are grooming future leaders who can empower and uplift our community as our founders envisioned.

Our vision for Project Aspiration is to extend the cardinal principles of the fraternity by cultivating and encouraging character building, leadership development, scholastic achievement, and community service.

The focal point of Project Aspiration open house was to provide mentees and their families an opportunity to engage with the Brothers of Lambda Beta Beta in an open and interactive forum. Brother Marcus Milhouse led the event and stimulated group participation and feedback from the mentees as well as mentors.

Brother Milhouse presented a PowerPoint presentation via Zoom, strictly following state and fraternal **COVID-19** guidelines. Prior to the official open-house, parents were provided a read ahead by Brother Milhouse; this approach facilitated discussion as families had an

opportunity to identify questionable topics beforehand. The Brothers also ensured that mentees were provided project aspiration polos and were encouraged to wear them during the open house; all the Brothers were similarly wearing their polos.

Project Aspiration open house is value added to the Chapter mentoring program and ensures that parents, mentees and the Brothers of LBB are informed, on course, and focused on upcoming Project Aspirations events.

Brother Ajaya Martin, LBB Basileus, charged the Brothers on the call to ensure that they are actively seeking out need potential mentees, with the goal being 1 mentee per Brother. We look forward to this fraternal year’s mentorship program and are excited to continue to uplift our community!

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# PGG Christmas Toy Donation Drive

By Brother Marcus Griffin



**Kaiserslautern, Germany** –Phi Gamma Gamma (PGG) Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. hosted a Christmas Toy Donation Drive where monetary donations were collected and new toys from the Kaiserslautern Military Community brought Christmas Love to a local orphanage. The Chapter chose Saint Nikolaus Children's Home (Kinderheim) which is an orphanage located in Landstuhl, Germany to be the recipient of this toy donation drive.

The Saint Nikolaus Children's Home serves as an inpatient child and youth welfare facility, in which sixty-one (61) children and adolescents from infants to twenty-one (21) years of age are cared for in seven (7) fully inpatient residential groups with a different conceptual focus by approximately fifty (50) educational specialists. This toy donation drive was held for two weeks with the actual toy drop-off on Tuesday, December 22nd at the orphanage.

The initiative was almost cancelled at the last minute due to the current **COVID-19** pandemic. We were informed less than twenty-four (24) hours, prior to drop-off, that a teenage mother and her children, who are residents of the orphanage, had tested positive for **COVID-19** and that they were quarantining and based on the Host Nation rules and restrictions they were taking the appropriate measures of contact tracing as a follow up. PGG did not know if this drive would happen for the children for Christmas based on these updates.

The morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, we were contacted by the Orphanage and they informed PGG that the Department of Health cleared the event with the appropriate restrictions and social distancing and that we can proceed that day at a different time. Determined to provide UPLIFT for the children, PGG continued to show PERSEVERANCE to execute this toy donation drive!

PGG had several members work as coordinators for the community by receiving the donations and gifts. Employees of the Ramstein Youth Programs and Kapaun School Age Programs led by fellow Bro. VB Marcus Griffin, who is the School Age Coordinator for that Center, received various donations. The Sembach Exchange provided tremendous support by allowing us to have a donation box located at their branch.

German businesses, private organizations, and other volunteers wanted to be a part of this great community service event. The Kaiserslautern Military Community in Germany is the biggest military community outside of the United States, so being a part of this event was truly an honor!

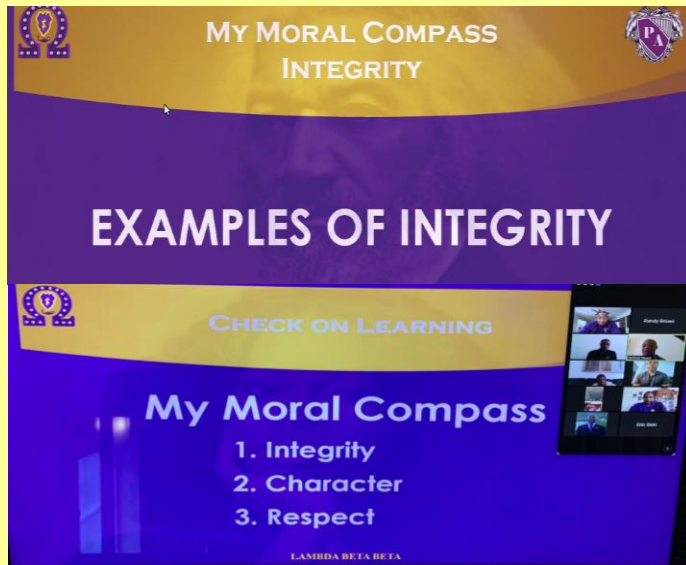
All volunteers received special permission from the Orphanage management team, the event was held outside, while each member wore masks and gloves, and adhered to the **COVID-19** restrictions and social distancing practices. This event resulted in raising over \$900 dollars that went to the orphanage. ///





# Project Aspirations Mentorship Video Conference-Lambda Beta Beta

By Bro Ajaya Martin



**Honolulu, HI** – Lambda Beta Beta Chapter, in conjunction with the Omega Project Aspiration Foundation, Inc., hosted a virtual forum via Zoom. The forum was focused on “My Moral Compass” to mentor young men in developing their goodness so that it guides them in the right direction.

The forum was centered around the mentees understanding the importance of beliefs and how it guides you to do what is right. Topics discussed were Integrity, Character and Respect. The presenters consistently kept the mentees engaged in conversation, confirming their understanding of the material on the

slides. Not to mention, a special participant, Bro. Larry Johnson (Theta Rho 1979) tuned into the Zoom forum from Detroit, Michigan to share his life experiences during and after retirement from the military. The discussion continued and the group consistently engaged, answering challenging questions about values, character and right vs wrong as we forced them to expand their thinking.

The presenters took a different approach. They presented real-life scenarios about moral dilemmas: A friend received the answer sheet for his last exam in order to graduate college. Should you or should you not utilize the answer sheet? The participants immediately erupted with a dialogue. Their belief was that studying the questions prior to the exam would not be considered “cheating”, if the answer sheet would not be present during the exam. Everyone like idea about taking advantage of the opportunity of the resources provided to them.

We can agree the presentation covered the key points about a moral compass. We thought of it as “real life learning”. Even though there was a lack of experience from the mentees, their clear thinking about the material made the discussion very interactive. The mentees were extremely grateful for information given and requested to conduct another forum in that same manner. ///

## Friendship is Essential to the Soul!

