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RACLE

OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INCORPORATED

SUMMER/FALL 2020

SOCIAL JUSTICE EDITION



**OMEGA BROTHERS
HOLD THE FRATERNITY'S
FIRST VIRTUAL CONCLAVE**

MANHOOD, SCHOLARSHIP, PERSEVERANCE AND UPLIFT

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The Oracle

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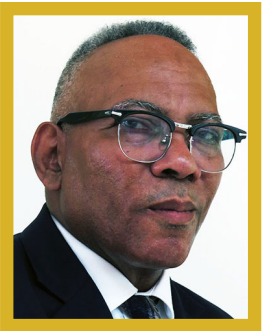
Brother John Howard

41st Grand Basileus

Brother Dr. David E. Marion

EDITOR'S NOTES

This edition of *The Oracle* will be the last one that I will produce as the Fraternity's International Editor of *The Oracle*. I have envisioned that my send-off should include my jersey being hoisted to the rafters as an honorable Editor Emeritus and or relocated to the NBA Hall of Fame in Springfield, MA. I guess- I could hope (smile).



During my nine-year tenure as first the Assistant Editor, and then eventually International Editor of *The Oracle*, I have had the great pleasure of serving under three Grand Basilei: Dr. Andrew A. Ray, Antonio F. Knox, and Dr. David E. Marion, the current Grand Basileus. According to the Fraternity's Robert Gill book, *The History of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity*, Brother Ellis Corbett was the 13th *Oracle* Editor, and he served from 1945 to 1963. Four years later, he was the Grand Basileus. So, I am not the longest-serving *Oracle* Editor for Omega Psi Phi. I probably come in at a distant third or fourth for the length of time as *The Oracle* Editor, after the great Brother Samuel Shepard, whom I met at International Headquarters, then located in Washington, D.C., when I was an undergraduate student. Later, I worked with the wonderful *Oracle* Editor Charles Turner and Omega's first official photographer John H. Williams as a contributing photographer and writer, and an *Oracle* board member.

I began my editorship as *The Oracle* Assistant Editor under the organizational genius of Brother Lt. Colonel Michael Boykin, Esq. He drafted me in 2011, as his assistant when his Army unit was deployed overseas. During Brother Boykin's absence, I was responsible for producing *The Oracle's* Collector's Edition, which featured the Fraternity's 100th Anniversary and the Centennial Conclave.

Other *Oracle* highlights during my appointment as the International Editor included serving as the editor during *The Oracle's* 100th Anniversary in 2019. I also reconstructed the publication's design, which required more vital in-depth stories, better usage of photographs, and new Undergraduate and District News sections.

As a shy second-grader, I was assigned by my teacher, Ms. Piggy to be the classroom reporter to improve my confidence. I ran to my Gary, Indiana home, and told my parents that I was going to college to become a reporter. I was destined to have a career in journalism. Later, I wanted to fashion myself as a writer like Langston Hughes. I had no idea that I was to become an Omega, and Brother Hughes was a Que as well. My first exposure to Omega came from my 5th-grade teacher, Mr. Vernon Smith. He drove a purple car, and he had some funny-looking gold symbols attached to the car's front. In later years, he would become an Indiana State Representative, a Tenth District Representative, and Brother Dr. Vernon G. Smith, my Omega mentor.

Nine years after my initial exposure to Omega, at 19-years old, I was initiated into Omega Psi Phi through Upsilon Beta Chapter at Ball State University in 1976. One of my first assignments using my gifts as a reporter for Omega was during my second week online as a member of the Lampados Club. I met Omega royalty: 29th Grand Basileus Judge Marion C. Garnett and Brother Burnel E. Coulon, the Tenth District Representative, who later became the 31st Grand Basileus.

I was assigned by my Big Brothers to take pictures of Grand Garnett and DR Coulon, and then write a story about their visit at Ball State for *The Oracle*. I do not believe the work was actually published in *The Oracle*, but that was my first experience covering Omega as a reporter.

I have been blessed throughout my four-decade career to have worked in several areas of journalism. I worked as an editor, designer, photojournalist, public affairs writer, and professor of journalism. I have had a fantastic career, from covering major stories overseas to winning a Pulitzer Prize for my newspaper work, as well as writing about and photographing the Brotherhood for over 40-years. But, it was that early appointment as the second-grade reporter that first prepared me to serve the Fraternity in a special way as the International Editor of *The Oracle*. What a journey!

FIETTS,

Brother Dr. Milbert O. Brown, Jr.
International Editor of *The Oracle*
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. +++Upsilon Beta-1976

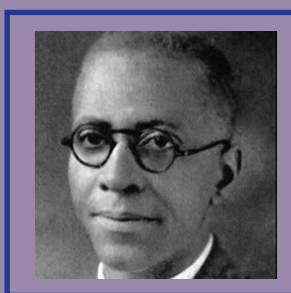
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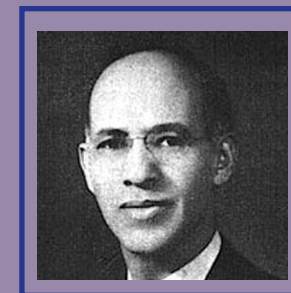
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41st Grand Basileus



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1st Vice Grand Basileus



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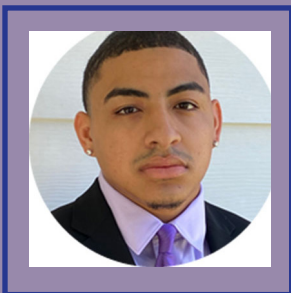
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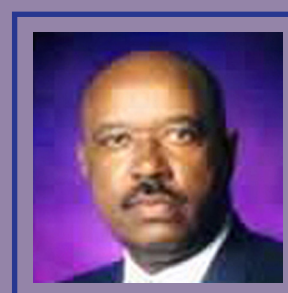
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FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND BASILEUS

Dear Brothers of our Beloved Omega:

I continue to be honored to serve as your 41st Grand Basileus. As I endeavor to represent Omega to the best of my capabilities in this ever-changing world, I remain passionate about addressing the most pressing issues relative to the survival of our communities. Those important matters include police practices and law enforcement accountability. Before I proceed, I acknowledge and pay respect to the many members of law enforcement who are outstanding members of our Fraternity as well as positive contributors to the fabric of law enforcement that blankets our nation and world. Your service and professionalism are appreciated and needed.

The death of George Floyd has galvanized the world and mobilized Americans to demand a more just system of policing, because it's become painfully obvious that what we have right now are two systems of justice -- one for white Americans and a different one for black Americans. Mr. Floyd is one in a long line of black Americans unjustly killed at the hands -- or a knee -- of police, including Breonna Taylor, Pamela Turner, Botham Jean, Michael Brown, Stephon Clark, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, and Philando Castile. It's important that we remember their names.

It's beyond time that we revised the role of police to be peacekeepers and community partners. Of course, they must be prepared to protect themselves and the public in direct, life-threatening situations, but these should be the exception and not the rule.

What we are witnessing throughout our country is not that. Americans are being tear gassed in the streets, hit with rubber bullets, shoved violently to the ground cracking their skulls against the pavement, and beaten bloodied with batons. And for what? For demanding justice for black Americans. Our constitutional rights are under attack - and not in the shadows, but in broad daylight.

Changing the behavior of police and their relationship with people of color starts at the top. We need a national standard for policing behavior built on transparency and accountability. The only reason we know what happened to George Floyd is because it was captured on video. The advent of video evidence is bringing into the light what long was hidden. It's revealing what black Americans have known for a long time -- that too often it's dangerous for a black person to have an encounter with a police officer.

Given the incidents that have led to this moment in time, it should be mandatory for police officers to wear body cams and should be considered an obstruction of justice to turn them off. Like a black box data recorder in an airplane, body cams replace competing narratives with a single narrative -- the truth.

Second, police officers should only use the level of force needed based on the level of threat actually posed by the circumstances. We've seen far too many black people shot in the back, or unarmed black people shot and killed, or a handcuffed black man face down on the pavement asphyxiated by a knee on his neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds though he posed no threat at all.

Finally, how qualified immunity applies to police officers must be reformed. If certain officers know they have immunity, they act with impunity. If certain officers know they can unjustly take the life of a black person with no accountability, they will continue to do so. That's what you saw in the eyes of Derek Chauvin, with his hand casually stuck in his pocket as he extinguished the life of George Floyd. Accountability requires that officers face public consequences for unjustly taking a life or for brutalizing a fellow American that they are sworn to protect and serve.

Too often, many officers are silent in the face of evil because of the blue shield -- the brotherhood of police officers which can foster systemic racism and abuse. But there's a higher brotherhood that God calls us to honor -- the brotherhood of mankind. That's what we're witnessing in the diversity of protestors filling our streets. That's the brotherhood our police officers must honor above all else.

The founding fathers of these United States knew they had not built an infallible union, but they did task us with the perpetual duty to aim for it: "a more perfect union" of justice, liberty, resilience, hope, and compassion. We have to do better and we must strive to live up to those American ideals. We are better than this.

I'm asking for us all to take a breath - the breath that Mr. Floyd was denied. Take a breath to consider how we use police in our society and how we hold them accountable for the tremendous power we place in their hands. Take a breath to consider how we create a more perfect union that extends equal protections to people of color. Take a breath for members of law enforcement who serve and protect our community with integrity. Take a breath for the lives of those we've lost at the hands of officers who lacked that integrity. Take a breath.

Thank you and God bless Omega.

Thank you and God bless Omega.

Faternally,

David E. Marion, Ph.D.

Grand Basileus



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FROM THE DESK OF THE FIRST VICE GRAND BASILEUS

Greetings Brothers,

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Thank you for holding to our fundamental values of steadfast adherence to Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift. These FOUR principles have served us well and have withstood the test of time!

During this pandemic, we are grateful for our first responders and their unwavering commitment and sacrifice as we have seen over 230,000 people lose their life to COVID-19 and/or complications from COVID-19. We all have to stay vigilante and not relax as we continue to battle this virus. Let us maintain our rigorous routine of hand-washing, sanitizing, covering our face when we go to the supermarket or to the cleaners and, of course, practice social distancing.

As Omega men ushering in social change, we still have a few challenges ahead of us that may seem insurmountable. In order to be ready to withstand the grind, we have to commit to staying healthy, eating the proper foods, exercising often, drinking plenty of water, and certainly getting the proper amount of sleep. It's a tall order with all we have to face as fathers, husbands, providers and leaders in our respective communities.

Through all of this pandemic, our International Committee Chairmen and Vice Chairmen continue to do outstanding work for our fraternity. We thank them and the hundreds of committee members for their service and sacrifice to our beloved Omega. We ask brothers to pay your fraternity dues, reach out and reclaim at least ONE brother (Each One, bring One) back to Omega. Continue your commitment to mentoring and fatherhood engagement. Continue to exercise your voice politically, and ask for police reform in our communities. Our communities are depending on us!

Those three undergraduates and their graduate advisor at Howard University possessed a matchless and uncompromising vision of what brothers of like minds and ideals when brought together could accomplish -- and so do those who have come to rely on our brand over the last 109 years. Let us continue to protect our brand and rededicate ourselves to the oath we swore to uphold. Let us continue to be forward-thinking, progressive and responsive even in pandemic times.

Thank you again for this opportunity to serve as your First Vice Grand Basileus. I am honored!

God bless the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

God bless the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Yours in Friendship,

Ricky L. Lewis
35th First Vice Grand Basileus



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Omega Brothers,

Your International Reclamation and Retention Committee continues to play a vital role in the lifecycle of this Fraternity by creating and providing programs and initiatives focused on Reclamation and Retention, and encouraging all members to make this mandated program a major priority of the Fraternity. The initiatives outlined by this committee and under the strong leadership and guidance of our Brother Dr. David E. Marion, 41st Grand Basileus and Brother Ricky Lewis, 1st Vice Grand Basileus are very achievable as we continue to work on promoting and executing our International Reclamation and Retention theme **"Each One Bring One."**

With over 65,000 members eligible to be reclaimed, the commitment of every financial Brother must be ongoing. A viable and aggressive Reclamation and Retention program is hard work for any type of fraternal organization and the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. program is no different in many ways. The one difference in our program from others is the type of individuals that seek and become Omega men. It takes a truly strong commitment on all of our part to actively reclaim, retain, and contribute our talents to help take this great fraternity to the next level.

As members of the boldest and most progressive fraternal organization comprising college and university educated black men worldwide, we must continue to raise the standard by consistently promoting the principles by which Omega was founded on **Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift.**

If you know any Brother who is not financial, work to get him financial and for all financial Brothers, Omega needs you to stay financial and active. The oath that we all took when we were initiated into the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and the bond that this brotherhood represents is part of the legacy that our founders envisioned back in 1911 when they established what would become the greatest fraternal organization in the world. Let's continue to honor them and live our creed (I – Just Love Cooper Coleman). One of the major initiatives that Reclamation and Retention has focused on is our incentive program for districts, chapters, and Brothers working hard to reclaim and retain members. Districts, chapters, and individual Brothers that reclaimed and retained the most members are annually rewarded and recognized for their efforts.

2018 – 2019 International Reclamation and Retention Incentive Winners

The top Reclamation District in the Fraternity was the Second District followed by the 4th District. The top Retention District in the Fraternity was the 6th District followed by the 4th District. Both 1st place Reclamation and Retention district winners received \$5,000 each for their efforts. The top large chapter Reclamation winner in the Fraternity was Mu Phi Chapter, 7th District, Savannah, GA. The top small chapter Reclamation winner was Lambda Iota Iota Chapter, 6th District, Bennettsville, SC. The top large chapter Retention winner in the Fraternity was Psi Alpha Alpha Chapter, 3rd District, Fairfax, VA. The top small chapter Retention winner was Rho Iota Chapter, 3rd District, Danville, VA. All four chapters received \$1,000 each along with a plaque for their Reclamation/Retention efforts. The top individual Reclamation winner was Brother James "Slim" Melvin, Mu Phi Chapter, 7th District, Savannah, GA. This brother was responsible for personally reclaiming 38 members during the year. He received \$1,000 plus a plaque for his outstanding efforts. Other individual Brothers being recognized for their strong Reclamation efforts include: Brother Kenneth Calvin - 2nd District, Brother Ricardo Prude - 4th District, Brother Cedric Blue - 6th District, Brother Chris Gantz, Jr. - 8th District, and Brother Lawton Connerly - 12th District. We thank all districts, chapters, and Brothers for their efforts and encourage others to make Reclamation and Retention a Fraternity priority.

The principles of this Fraternity are rooted in Brotherhood and Service. To all Brothers, **if you are not financial, get financial, if you are financial, stay financial.** Remember, the stronger our numbers, the bigger our voice. Let's challenge every Brother to be actively engaged as a true Omega man.

LONG LIVE THE OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC.

Darryl Moore

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CONCLAVE

OMEGA PRESENTS HISTORIC VIRTUAL CONCLAVE IN 2020



Buoyed by record registration, a voting rights forum and its social action recognition, the 82nd Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Grand Conclave proved to be an historic yet untraditional gathering. The ongoing COVID-19 global health pandemic forced the Supreme Council to forgo the customary face-to-face, ritualistic meeting slated to take place in Tampa, Florida, July 17-19. Instead, the three-day conference convened virtually via Zoom.

"It exceeded all expectations, given the (coronavirus) pandemic," Dr. David E. Marion, the Fraternity's 41st Grand Basileus said afterward. "It was something that we had to do and we had to figure out a way to get it done and conduct the business of the Grand Conclave."

Marion praised the Fraternity's information technology team and International Headquarters (IHQ) staff for "flawlessly executing" the biennial meeting. Marion also noted that other Black Greek-letter organizations recognized the accomplishment and have inquired how Omega executed the virtual meeting.

Some group leaders asked whether Omega would assist their organizations broadcast their own virtual national conferences, he said.

PHOTOGRAPH ABOVE: Members of the Supreme Council congratulates Brother Kenneth Barnes (center) on his retirement as the Fraternity's International Executive Director.
Oracle Photo by Bro. James Witherspoon.



Registration for the Grand Conclave exceeded 3,500 members, making it the highest attended gathering in the fraternity's 108-year history, Marion said.

Delegates overwhelmingly re-elected Marion to a second, two-year term. Ricky L. Lewis, First Vice Grand Basileus and Grand Keeper of Records and Seal, Mark E. Jackson Sr., each secured another two-year term. In other international election results, Caleb G. Love was elected by undergraduate members to serve as the Second Vice Grand Basileus and Johnnie Smith won a highly competitive campaign to become the Grand Keeper of Finance

Civil rights attorney Benjamin Crump won a second, two-year term as Grand Counselor and Eleualio Abraham, Elliot Kelly Jr. and Kenton Kelly were all elected to serve as undergraduate representatives to the Supreme Council. In a surprise announcement, Kenneth Barnes, the International Executive director for most of the last decade, reported that he will retire later this year. Barnes was hired during the Centennial Grand Conclave that was held in Washington D.C. in 2011.

"I was honored to have been named International Executive director during our Centennial and served under three Grand Basilei," Barnes said. "I never imagined in my wildest dreams that I would have served in this position, but I am thankful because of the great team at IHQ."

"I am leaving the Fraternity in a better condition and I am leaving it feeling good," he said.

Fraternal gathering amid protests and pandemic

The 2020 Grand Conclave took place against the backdrop of nationwide protests following several incidents of police brutality against Black people, including the deaths of George Floyd in Minneapolis and Breonna Taylor in Louisville, both at the hands of police officers.

Omega men joined thousands of street demonstrators as they rallied against systemic racism, economic inequality, racial injustice, and police brutality.

"Omega men, when duty demanded, stood on the vanguard many times

before, arms locked with like-minded souls in the struggle for equality — or even our very right to live," Marion had previously said. "That is part of our calling to the Cardinal Principles of Manhood and Uplift. It must be done smartly and strategically but it must be done. We will not sit quietly by and ignore dog-whistle politics."

The death of George Floyd, who died Memorial Day after former Minneapolis officer Derek Chauvin was captured on video with his knee on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes, is what galvanized the protests.

In addition, Omega Psi Phi played a critical role in securing legislative approval of the Georgia Hate Crime Bill. Nearly one million individuals signed the Fraternity's online petition that helped galvanize widespread support of the measure. The law was prompted by the brutal killing of Ahmaud Arbery, who was gunned down while jogging. Video captured an unarmed Arbery being fatally shot by one of two armed white men who had been following him.

"Such imagery conjures up memories from days gone by of unarmed Black men and women being hunted by white lynch mobs," Marion said in an earlier statement to the Fraternity. Before its passage, Georgia was one of only four states without such a hate crime bill.

Marion announced the Fraternity has pledged to register 1 million Black men in time for the 2020 presidential election. The conclave also occurred as the mounting toll of the COVID-19 global health pandemic continued to kill and disproportionately infect Black people and other communities of color.

Omega Psi Phi Perseveres Through Covid-19

Fraternal Business Continues

Unfortunately, Omega has not been immune from the ravages of the ongoing public health crisis. Numerous brothers have succumbed to complications from the coronavirus and are featured on a tribute page on the fraternity's website.

Securing Voting Rights and Celebrating Youth

The conclave kicked off with a virtual town hall symposium on voting rights, voter suppression, voter education and voter mobilization.

The event featured U.S. representatives Karen Bass of California, Bennie Thompson of Mississippi and Brother Jim Clyburn, who represents South Carolina. They were joined by Derrick Johnson, president and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Brother Theodore (Ted) R. Johnson, a retired Navy commander who is now a public policy scholar and a senior fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice.

The 95-minute long conversation was interactive and broadcast on the Fraternity's various social media platforms. Brother Dr. Marion, who moderated the session, compared the virtual dialogue to one typically held inside of a barbershop. He noted that when the door to the barbershop was opened, participants engaged in a critical and provocative discussion about the 2020 presidential election.

"Every four years we say this is the most important election of our lifetime," said Bass, chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, which includes



African American members of the United States Congress.

"This election will affect the quality of life for Black folks and everyone else for the next two generations. This election is a matter of life or death," she said.

Bass noted that the Republican-led United States Senate has confirmed a large number of federal court judges who may adversely impact and reverse a number of long-held civil rights gains.

Derrick Johnson, who leads the NAACP, added: "We stand in at a juncture of history a moment in which we are confronted with a health pandemic in the backdrop of an economic crisis but the reality also that structural racism still exists today."

"It is in this juncture we see the opportunity to move from protest to power at the ballot box," he said. Johnson continued: "And it is only at the ballot box in this democracy that we can decide the direction we are going to go."

A virtual International Youth Leadership Conference (IYLC) was held the following day and included participants from throughout the United States as well as those from Dubai, Canada, Ghana, the Bahamas, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the U.S Virgin Islands, said Brother Keith G. Pemberton, IYLC Vice Chairman. "Given the challenges of the viral and social pandemic the IYLC was able to register more than 300 black males and males of color from around the world to participate in this virtual experience," Pemberton said. Grand Basileus Dr. David Marion always says *#Omegaiseverywhere.*

The Fraternity's OmegaSTEM 2020 Virtual Code Jam also achieved record participation and highlighted high school students who excelled in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

CONCLAVE

While presenting highlights to the Grand Conclave, Marion said the fraternity has expanded its reach internationally, chartering Omega chapters in China, Mexico and Dubai. Omega has chapters in fifteen countries.

In addition, the fraternity has expanded its partnership with civil rights organizations, including launching a massive nationwide Black male voter registration campaign.

"From day one, I have preached about a 'New Omega' and the importance of Omega going to the next level," Marion said. "We are here. And now that we are here, we remain excited about Omega's future and can clearly see and identify even higher levels we can reach. And I will not rest until Omega is cemented as the preeminent Black male organization in the world."

Among the highlights over the past two years, Marion said the Supreme Council approved a five-year strategic plan for the Fraternity. Several cost-savings measures have been implemented and the number of international committees were reduced from 57 to 33.

The International Reclamation and Retention Committee continues to push its efforts to reach 30,000 financial brothers by the end of the 2020 fiscal year. The committee is less than 1,500 to that goal, Marion said.

"Brother You Are On My Mind," the fraternity's signature mental health initiative, remains a top priority for the International Medical and Health Initiatives



Committee. That effort was created to reduce the stigma of mental illness and was derived from a partnership with the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities, Marion said.

A new Fraternity history book, an initiative of the International History and Archives Committee, is expected to be completed by the 2022 Grand Conclave. Omega Day at the United States Capitol continues our history of political engagement. Since the earliest days of its existence, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., has found ways to exercise its political influence, Marion said. Omega men convened over 40 legislative meetings with their respective Congressional Representatives and policy makers. The fraternity sponsored a series of public plenary sessions on a variety of issues critical to the African American community.

In early 2019, Marion and other Fraternity leaders traveled to Ghana to participate in an Economic Development Summit and while there they met with the President of Ghana.

The trip coincided with a Fraternity mission to drill two wells, also known as boreholes in response to a request from Tau Chi Chapter in Accra, Ghana," he said.

"Our people are forced to drink muddy water from creeks and man-made ditches filled with pollutants and bacteria," Marion said.

"The lack of clean drinking water and sanitation systems contributes to 80% of diseases in Ghana. One thousand children under five years of age die each year in Ghana from diarrhea, caused by polluted water."

CONCLAVE



Moving forward, Marion said the Fraternity will increase its financial membership to 40,000 by 2022; increase cash assets by \$2 million, continue technological enhancements and expand the annual Omega Day at the nation's capital.

"Some will lament that this is an aggressive strategy or plan. But, that is what distinguishes Omega men from other men," he said.

"We're aggressive in how we approach life. Most set goals because it helps trigger new behaviors, helps guide your focus and helps you sustain that momentum in life."

Marion continued: "We had big goals in 2018 and look at where we are. We've been successful in meeting goals because of the team we have in place. So, we set big goals because we aren't afraid to dream big."

Service recognition, lifetime achievement and honorary members

The Fraternity continued its time-honored tradition of recognizing longtime members, and those whose service to Omega were also a part of the virtual Grand Conclave.

PHOTOGRAPH ABOVE:

The Grand Conclave approved actors Anthony Anderson and D.L. Hughley, along with musician George Clinton and Cleveland-area football coach and youth mentor Ted Ginn Sr. for honorary membership.

INTERNATIONAL AWARDS 2018-2019

William E. Edmondson of Iota Phi; Franklin J. Henderson of Lambda Omicron; Yewston N. Meyers Jr., and Carroll E. Swain of Gamma Alpha were recognized for their **70 years of service.**

Brother Austin J. Tatum of Eta Chapter, who served as Second Vice Grand Basileus, was awarded **Undergraduate Omega Man of the Year.** Brother Van Newborn of Delta Xi Chapter received the **Graduate Omega Man of the Year** award.

Superior Service Award was received by Brother Dr. Henry L. Hankerson, Xi Beta Beta Chapter.

Dr. Ernest E. Just Undergraduate Chapter Advisor
Brother Jeffery Tarver, Advisor to Iota Psi (Ohio State University) and Sigma Psi (Ohio University) Chapters.

Founders Lifetime Achievement Brother Gary C. Clark, 3rd District, Alpha Omega Chapter.

Colonel Charles Young Military Leadership Award-
Brother Ahmad G. Andrews, Pi Lambda Lambda Chapter.

Citizen of the Year Illinois State Senator Christopher Bell. Nominated by Nu Chi Chapter.

Undergraduate Chapter of the Year Bta Eta Chapter, 7th District. University of Alabama.

Graduate Chapter of the Year Beta Rho Chapter, 7th District. Itta Bena, Ms.

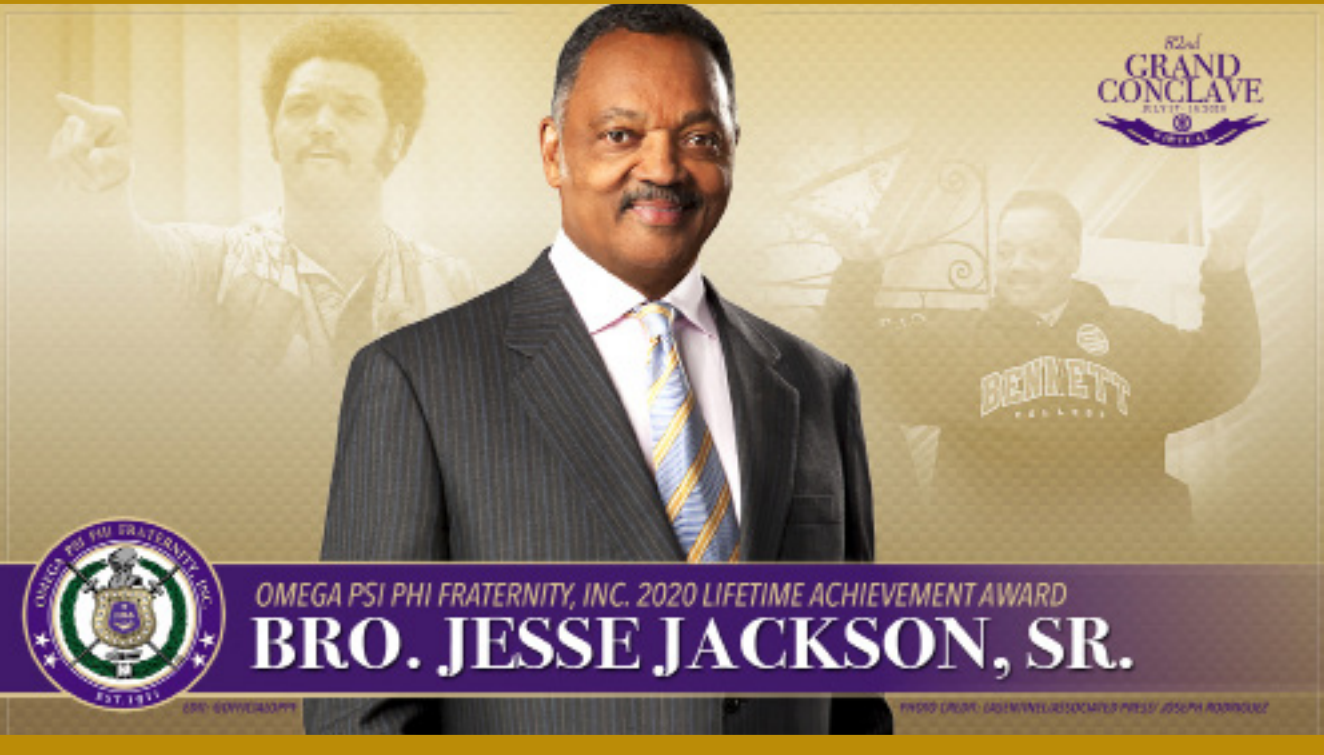
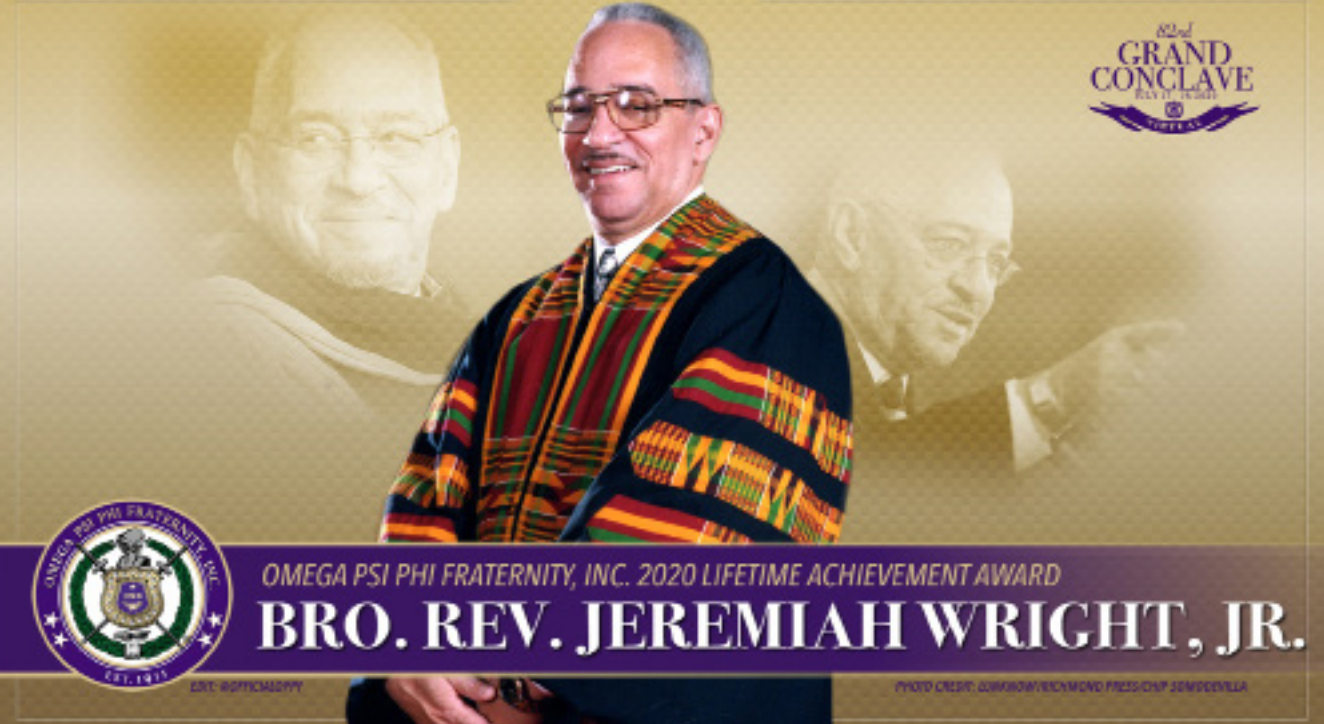
Large Graduate Chapter of the Year Lambda Gamma Gamma, 2nd District. Ft. Meade, MD.

Brothers Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. and Rev. Jeremiah Wright Jr. received the **Fraternity's 2019 Lifetime Achievement Awards.**



2020 CONCLAVE PHOTOGRAPHS
by Brother James Witherspoon
IHQ and The Oracle's
Director of Photography





Omega men Jeremiah Wright and Jesse Jackson have been soliders in the Army for social change. They have marched in the footsteps of Brothers Ben Hooks and Roy Wilkins. The Fraternity salutes our dear Brothers Wright and Jackson for their lifelong service in improving social justice throughout the world and Omega Psi Phi.

Photograph/right:

Reverend Bro. Jesse Jackson walks with U.S. Congressman John Lewis as they exit Brown Chapel AME Church in Selma, Alabama and prepare to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Photograph by Brother Milbert O. Brown, Jr.

"Glory and Honor"

JUSTICE

in Black and White

I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people.
The Book of Isaiah

STORY BY BROTHER DR. MILBERT O. BROWN, JR., INTERNATIONAL EDITOR OF THE ORACLE

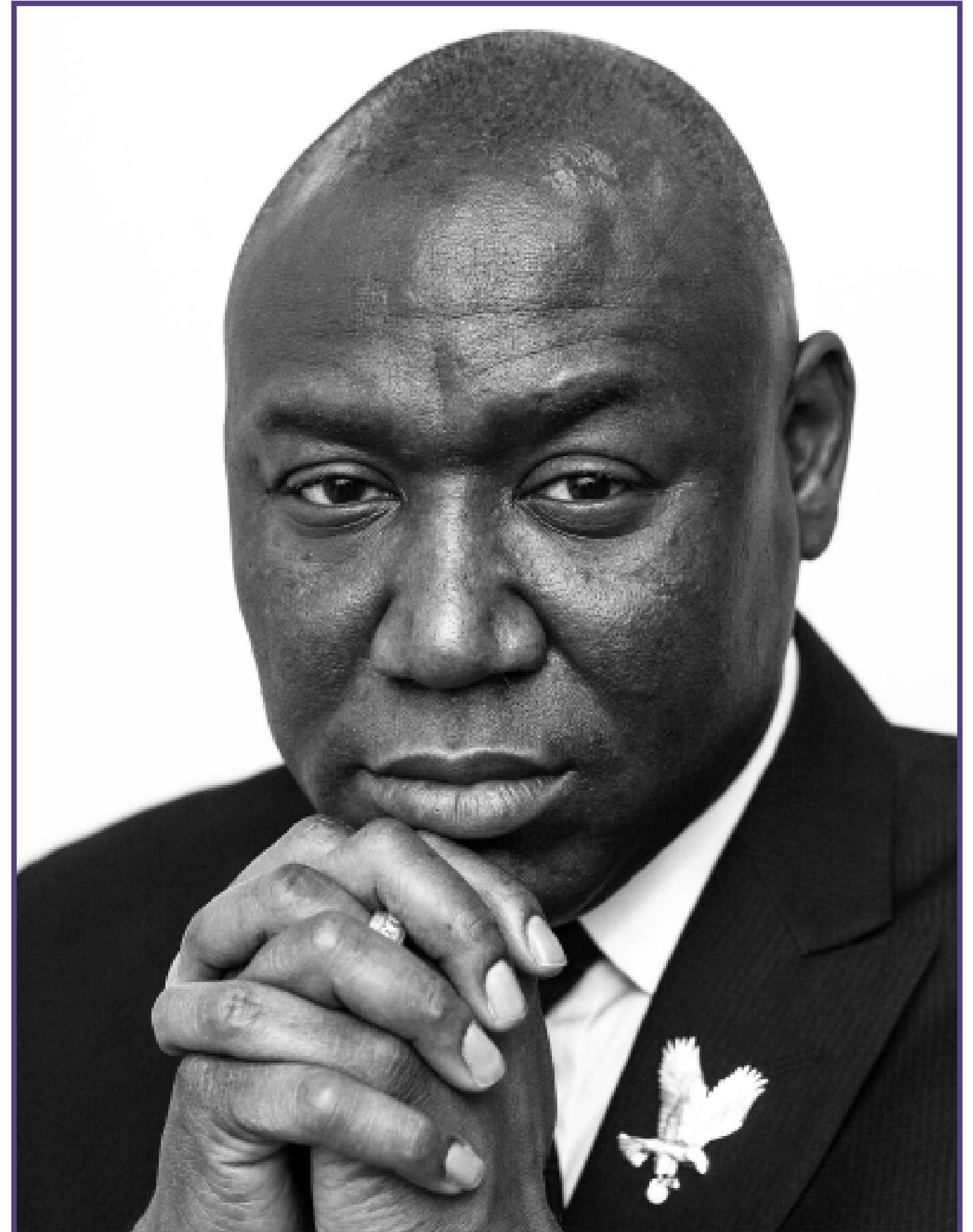
A cloud of agony and disbelief fills the air, causing tears to rain down family members' cheeks. Unanswered questions and worn-out police excuses for why they have snuffed out the life of yet another young Black person loom.

The intense, prolonged weeping suddenly stops when this brother shows up in Mama -'n-em's living room. The soft-spoken dark prince with a liquid southern drawl emerges even before the reporters who have descended on the community like a tribalistic pack of vultures with biased intentions.

When Benjamin Lloyd Crump, one of Black America's most visible and respected lawyers, comes to town, he pierces the sad melodies of a family's discord. Manicured nails accentuate his smooth mahogany hands, which belie the strength they provide during soul-wrenching hugging sessions that inevitably follow his arrival.

Despite the media circus that comes with the job of representing the families of victims of police brutality and violence in high-profile cases, such as Trayvon Martin, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, Attorney Ben Crump displays a quiet, unflappable demeanor at news conferences.

Story continues on next page



Far from flamboyant like Black civil rights attorneys of earlier generations, such as the late Johnnie Cochran, Crump's calm manner reflects his southern upbringing. And like most southerners, he follows tradition when coming to a stranger's home for the first time.

Ben Crump is never empty-handed --he always has something to bring to the table, he said.

Despite the grueling hours, days, weeks, and months involved in collecting evidence, witness accounts and building cases in which a family member's civil rights have been violated, or they have been brutalized or killed by police, Crump usually provides an appropriate solution. He knows firsthand that injustice is a problem in the Black community.

And like the late civil rights attorney and Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, on whose work Crump has modeled his mission, he believes the Constitution applies to everyone, and that's why he's here, the attorney said.

Because of his non-stop involvement with civil rights cases, big and small, Crump, 51, is referred to by his friends--even Vice President-elect Kamala Harris--as Black America's attorney general.

The attorney's connection to the grieving families he represents is woven deeply into the fabric of his own understanding and familiarity with struggle. Early in his life, Crump and his family lived on the poor side of the railroad tracks in Lumberton, North Carolina, a small city near the South Carolina

border where the father of former NBA player Michael Jordan was killed.

In a real way, Crump and some of his clients have both tasted hopelessness. They have eaten the same dirt. As a boy, his family's poverty awakened in Crump a passion for his people and set him on a path to becoming a crusader for civil rights.

Attorney Crump is often asked what it will take to improve how police engage people in the Black community?

Why is it necessary for the excessive brutal force against Black people--like their Lives Don't Matter?

Crump noted that the great civil rights icon Ella Baker, who helped a young John Lewis and others form the Student Nonviolent Coordination

Committee (SNCC); said, "Until white mothers cried just as hard when the police kill little Black boys, as they were their own children, nothing will change in America."

"That is our reality, and we have a role to play in it," said Crump.

"Life ain't fair. Life is hard."

"Me and my two little brothers were raised by a single mother, Helen Crump. She sacrificed everything for us. My mother worked two jobs, just to keep a roof over our heads, food on the table, and hope in our hearts," said Ben Crump.

His fighting spirit, passed down from his mother, gives him strength in weakening moments of fading possibilities. "As her oldest son, I felt bad watching my mother having to struggle so hard for our survival. I remember complaining for a moment, and she said something that I continue to remember throughout my life as lawyer."



"She said, 'Baby, life ain't fair. Life is hard. You make it fair by what you bring to the table, and if you don't bring anything to the table, don't expect anybody to let you sit down at the table.'"

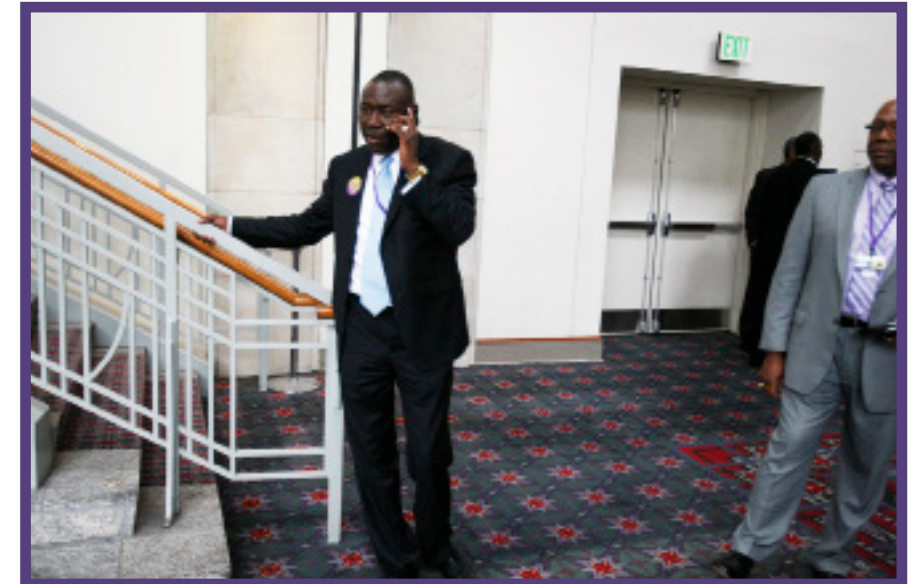
He continued, "Throughout my life, my mother stressed education. She saw education as bringing something to the table. She would say 'Once you got it up here, nobody could ever take it away from you,'" commented Crump.

"When I was in the ninth grade, they integrated us," said Crump. "We were bused from the Black side of town to the white side of town where they had the newer school. The white school had newer facilities with newer technology and newer books. It's like they had everything."

"I remember riding the school bus back across the tracks to South Lumberton, to the Black side of town and seeing all the dilapidated buildings, the school where I went to for elementary that was falling apart. It had a layer of paint and all the raggedy books," Crump said.

"And I kept thinking, I wonder why people on one side of town and certain communities have it so good, and people on my side of town have it so bad," Crump recalled. "And I remember my mother said the reason we got to go to the new school with the new books and the new technology and such, was because of Brown vs. the Board of Education, and an attorney named Thurgood Marshall."

Even at a young age, Crump knew he was going to study law and become an



an attorney like Marshall. His reasoning included that he wanted to give the people in his community an opportunity to achieve the American dream.

"And from that day to this one, that's what I still endeavor to do," Crump said, his usually quiet voice rising with commitment. "So that's how I became a lawyer, and that's why I still have that passion. Doing civil rights work is about having passion."

The Problem

Both Black and white America are now saying there is a problem with police behavior since the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and the shooting of Jacob Blake, according to Crump. Their cries for help shout the simple phrase 'Enough is enough.'

"The \$12 million paid out to Breonna Taylor's family was very significant," Crump said. "What that amount is saying is that we are not disrespecting Breonna Taylor in death like we disrespected her in life. Often Black women are disrespected and marginalized in society."

So, I believe this settlement in many ways declares that Black women's lives matter, too."

According to Crump, Taylor's mother, Tamika Palmer, said the most important thing to them--more important than the money--is defining what her daughter's legacy will be. She said that they "want a legacy that will prevent future Breonna Taylor deaths from happening. This, in turn, will spare Black families from being heartbroken over excessive force by the police."

Unfortunately, the attorney said, police lied to the judge who signed the no-knock warrant that led to Taylor's front door at 1:00 a.m. and her death in a hail of gunfire. "When you consider the fact that even though Black people in America only make up 13% of the population, in most states, we make up 50% of the population where they execute these no-knock warrants. In the state of Kentucky, where Breonna was killed, it was 75% or more that was being executed against Black people in America," said Crump.

Another piece of legislation that must be addressed is the George Floyd Justice and Police Accountability Act. Crump said the legislation calls for abolishing the chokehold, which is still legal in most cities in America. Statistics point out that 75% of the chokeholds are used by police on men of color.

“The George Floyd Justice and Police Accountability Act was passed in the United States House of Representatives. The Congressional Black Caucus led the effort, but the legislation is still sitting dormant on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell’s desk,” according to Crump.

Two Justice Systems

Crump said that passion is required to get equal justice for all citizens, especially marginalized people of color. “We have two justice systems in America, one for Black America, and one for white America.

“When you just see the things that played out over 2020, the fact that white militia can go to the Michigan statehouse with weapons and nobody pepper sprays them,” Crump said. “Nobody is shooting rubber bullets at them and nobody is there to arrest them. Then there are examples of Black people marching peacefully as they go vote, but there are reports that they’re causing a problem.”

Crump points out that in 2020, the enemies of equality rose in Kenosha, Wisconsin. “A white man who had just killed two people walked towards the police with an assault weapon and was not deemed as a threat, but an unarmed Black man was shot after walking away from the police.” He continued, “Jacob Blake Jr. never posed a threat, but was shot seven times point-blank range in the back with deliberate indifference in front of his three young sons.”

At age 7, Crump had a traumatic experience with police injustice similar to Blake’s children while riding in the car with his Uncle Hart. Despite being innocent, his uncle, an educated man with a

nice car, was brutalized by officers.

“Don’t think just because you got a college degree or you live in a certain zip code, or you make a certain salary, that you are immune,” Crump said. “Your children or your loved one can get caught up in this racist criminal justice system because they target our children. That’s when I say legalized genocide; they are legally killing our people, outside the courtroom and inside the courtroom.”

The attorney added that some criminal justice reform issues he often discusses with legal scholars include the importance of economic development, health care, and access to quality education. But merely talking about criminal justice reform is a discussion about surviving, Crump said. “We don’t want to just talk about surviving, we want to also discuss thriving. We want to have an opportunity for our children to be able to achieve the American dream.”

“I hope that one day I can go out of business. My sincere hope is that they will stop killing us, stop discriminating against us, and stop marginalizing us. But, until that happens, I’m going to keep fighting every day of my life to end this injustice system in America for Black people,” he said. “My recurring nightmare is that we don’t have enough time—we are running out of time,” he said. “It’s like every other week there is a new hashtag. They are killing us so faster than we can keep up.”

The moment and the movement

According to Brother Crump, in 2020 Black people have been confronted with two pandemics. Referring to COVID-19, he said: “It seems like everything shut down in America except racism—Black America’s other pandemic. We cannot let this moment go since we have so much attention on social injustice in America. We have to change this moment into a movement.”

Since the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, “young people have refused to remain silent. You see multi-culture, multi-generational, and multi-geographical groups coming together



“just like they did in the sixties. These young people are challenging America to say, ‘we can do better,’” said Crump.

Throughout the civil rights movement of the 1960s young people were part of SNCC, which helped dismantle Jim Crow and segregation in America. Crump draws similarities between today’s civil rights struggle and those of yesteryear. “Once you see that video, of Mr. Floyd’s death, you cannot unsee that video,” said Crump.

He also noted that when young people viewed the video they said ‘we ain’t having that’ and were able to “transform that pain into a collective sense of power.” Today, that transformation of power has turned protest into policy, and the next generation of thought leaders now must figure out how to overcome systematic racism using “good trouble policy,” Crump said.

“John Lewis was Black Lives Matter before there was ever a such thing known as Black Lives Matter. Lewis was called a troublemaker, agitator, domestic terrorist back when he was in his early twenties,” Crump said. “He was working with SNCC, which is the same thing as the Black Lives Matter movement. I believe there’s some young person in the midst of the protest, who’s going to evolve like the late John Lewis.”

While some view today’s movement as the crystallization of discontent and sum up all the marching and protesting as short-lived, yet unstainable change, Crump offers that “a better America --is a just America.”

“An America where George Floyd gets an opportunity to breathe, a more just America where Breonna Taylor gets an opportunity to sleep in peace, and a more just America where Ahmaud Arbery gets to run free and not be lynched for jogging while Black. We’re not talking about the 1940s, 1950s, we’re talking about 2020 when a young Black man was literally lynched, and we saw the video how the trucks chased him and killed him.”

Social Media

Even as statues of Confederate Army generals hit the ground, Crump said he is encouraged by a new group of young ground troops using social media messaging as their modern carrier pigeons. The young people from Bethune-Cookman College and other Historically Black Colleges and Universities used their forces and platforms on social media to help drive mainstream media.

Crump said his young Omega Brothers often text and message him on social media about shifting events on the ground. “Mainstream media knows that we do not depend on it anymore to communicate with our community,” Crump noted.

Social media was responsible for getting out the news about Trayvon Martin, a young victim who was demonized in mainstream media after he was attacked and killed in his Florida community. As the real story surfaced on social media platforms about the teen’s murder, people began saying ‘we have to do something about this.’ And the roots of Black Lives Matter sprouted because of social media activism in reference to Martin, said Crump.

“We have to remember that the media is part of the institutions of America that have tried to permeate the status quo,” Crump said. “The status quo is that they want to make sure that we stay in our place. Just like the police, just like the prosecutors and the judges. So, we have to know that.

He continued: “Often, the media will assist in assassinating the character of our people as they did with Trayvon, Michael Brown, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. Social media is where we can define our own narratives,” Crump said. “You know, Trayvon became the number one news story in America, but not because mainstream media answered the call when I first was begging for people to say that Trayvon Martin’s life mattered.”

Getting Up and Fighting

"I get up every day, and I go all across the country fighting what I define as the legalized genocide of colored people. As bad as it is---we still remember how Trayvon and a 12-year-old baby, Tamir Rice, were killed," Crump said.

"I fight for the late Terrence Crutcher whose hands were up, but he was still shot in Tulsa, and Stephon Clark was killed in his grandmother's backyard when all he had was a cell phone," the attorney said. 'And the list goes on and on; but as bad and horrific as all those killings are, they are not as horrific as how they kill our children every day, in every city, in every state, in every courtroom in America with these trumped-up felony convictions. It's like they're killing us softly."

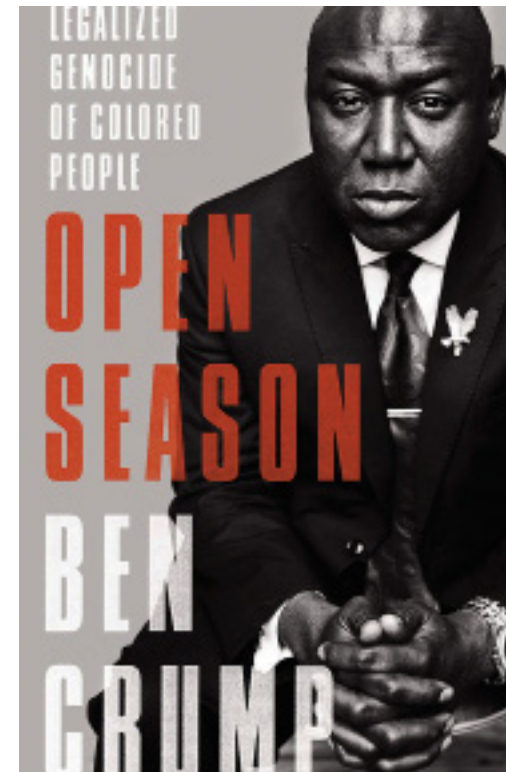
Brother Crump had the opportunity to meet Justice Marshall, his childhood idol, when he was an undergraduate student at Florida State University. He later visited with Marshall a second-time while attending the National Bar Association Convention as a Florida State law student.

Crump had a cameo appearance in the 2017 movie "Marshall," starring the late Chadwick Boseman. The actor, who portrayed Marshall, and Crump spent two days on the set. Crump said while he and Boseman were in the dressing room, he asked me many questions because he wanted to portray Marshall as the top civil rights lawyer.

Boseman was a focused person, Crump said, and asked him: "So how is it when you go into these different cities--how are you received? You're doing what Thurgood Marshall did. "You're our Thurgood Marshall," an emotional Crump recalled Boseman saying, paying the attorney the highest compliment he could ever receive.

Like Marshall, Crump receives death threats because of his civil rights legal work, but they do not deter him. "You report it to the FBI, and then you show up the next day to court or whatever meeting you have because you can't let them intimidate you," said Crump.

"Like mama used to say-- Baby, life ain't fair."



Pick-up Brother Ben Crump's new book "Open Season" at your local bookstore or online.

Brother Benjamin L. Crump, Esq-- is commonly referred to as **"Black America's Attorney General."** He was initiated into Omega Psi Phi Fraternity through Chi Theta Chapter at Florida State University in 1988. Currently, Brother Crump is serving his second term on the Fraternity's Supreme Council as the International Grand Counselor.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) named Crump as one of the top National Trial Lawyers' Top 100 Lawyers. In 2016, he was designated an Honorary Fellow by the University of Pennsylvania College of Law. Brother Crump served as the past president of the National Bar Association.

Brother Dr. Milbert O. Brown, Jr. -- is the author of the profile piece featuring Brother Crump, titled *Justice: In Black and White*. Dr. Brown, an Omega Life Member, has written several membership profiles during his nine-year tenure as the International Editor of *The Oracle*, and the Assistant *Oracle* Editor.

In 2001, Brown shared the Pulitzer Prize in Explanatory Reporting as a contributing journalist at the *Chicago Tribune*. He is an active member of the National Association of Black Journalists. Brother Brown was initiated in 1976 through Upsilon Beta Chapter at Ball State University, where he majored in journalism.



A Member of

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Graduate of Howard University

A PERSPECTIVE ON POLICE REFORM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE'

BEING FIRST CHANGES OUR NATION

Near the end of the 20th century, Brother Jerry L. Demings would ultimately thrust the doors open and take his historic station as the city of Orlando's first Black Police Chief. Demings' monumental ascension could be considered a royal appointment, but for the Demings family, they accept it as a blessing when they are named "The First."

The Orlando native joined the Orlando Police Department in 1981 and was a detective before becoming the department's chief of police in 1998.

During his tenure as chief, his wife, Valdez Venita, called Val for short, was an Orlando police officer, and was moving up in the department's leadership.

After 21 years of service in the department, Brother Demings retired. Shortly after retirement, Demings served as the Director of Public Safety for Orange County, FL.

Years later, in 2008 Brother Demings ran as the Democratic candidate for the Sheriff of Orange County and defeated his Republican challenger. Of course, Demings was "The First" African American to be elected as the county's Sheriff and "The First" Democrat to win.

Like her husband, Val Demings has experienced being "The First" in her own right. The mother of their three sons landed the top position in the Orlando Police Department when she was elected its first female chief.



Brother Demings said that there was always a call for police reform in his almost 40 years in law enforcement. "In 1980, there were riots in Miami, Tampa, and Orlando. Some bad police shootings had occurred shortly after I hit the streets. There was a call for social justice and criminal justice reform at that time," he said.

The former top police chief noted that reform is still needed. He cited the incident involving Rodney King, the Black motorist who was beaten by law enforcement officers. It was one of the first recorded videos that was eventually viewed by the public. Almost two decades later, it is one of many examples of why police reform is still needed. Video evidence began to permeate across the country. "Law enforcement anywhere in America would see people pulling out a personal video recorder," Demings added.

Demings mentioned that after the police killing of George Floyd people could be heard saying, "... the time is now; if not us, then who? If not now, then when?" He added that many are growing impatient and they want change overnight.

Criminal justice reform is evolutionary. It is constantly in motion. For these young adults who are driving the movement now, what they lack is the social experience to understand how you bring about social change.

Nor do they have the experience to be able to bring about the direct action that's necessary to bring about the change now," added Demings.

He also said, "change is not permanent, it's temporary. And so, we're going to have to look for change continuously."

Furthermore, the veteran police chief commented that police departments must be willing to change, to best provide policing in this current climate.

He said, "to adequately bring about the change that people want to see, we have to address the underlying issues with systemic racism. That includes rethinking how we fund healthcare services to ensure access. It includes how we fund and create additional access to quality housing.

"It means that we should rethink how we improve employment opportunities for Black folks. There must be room for reallocation and refocus on spending the limited taxpayer dollars that we have. So, it's not really defunding it. Perhaps they should say, what needs to happen is we need to redefine how we fund the police."



An Omega Man stands in the middle of a Black Lives Matter protest rally in Washington, D.C. Oracle staff photograph by Bro. Milbert O. Brown, Jr.

Much of Jerry Demings and his wife, Val, lives have changed. They are no longer law enforcement officers, but they are still faithful servants of the people. Wife, Val, a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., again broke through glass ceilings and contributed to the list of another series of first-time honors for the Demings family. In 2017, Val Demings was elected as the U.S. Representative for Florida's 10th congressional district and was one of the first Black Americans to prosecute a presidential impeachment before the U.S. Senate. Congresswoman Demings was also one of the first women to participate in the impeachment session against President Trump.

Brother Demings was elected as "The First" African American Mayor of Orange County in 2018. The Florida State graduate received a B.S. in

Finance, and he holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Everest University. He is also a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy, and he studied at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

As the chief executive officer in Orange County, Brother Demings stated some of the solutions to better policing "means we have to elect legislators that will be empathetic to the plight of the average Black American. We also must improve the hiring, recruitment, retention, and accountability of law enforcement agencies.

He also added that clear outcomes and oversight must also be provided within police departments throughout the nation. "If we want to improve policing, we need to end social injustices that exist.

"We have to improve the socio-economic experience of Black people to improve policing. Almost every ethnic group that migrates to America gets better access to capital than Black people. The other groups are accepted and are able to assimilate much easier."

"Change is not permanent, it's temporary; so, we have to continuously look for change."

**Orange County Mayor
Jerry Demings**

As the youngest of five children, Jerry also has witnessed despair as well as triumph. One of his brother's became a victim to the slimy shadows of drug addiction, and unfortunately died.

However, another brother, his twin Terry, also is an Omega Man. Brother Jerry Demings was inducted into Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in 1982 through Chi Tau Chapter.

Brother Demings has been an inspiration also to his family, including his three sons, all of whom are graduates of Florida A&M University.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity's Demings has been an inspiration not only to his family, but also to his community, and to the Fraternity, as one of "The Firsts."

**Bro. Dr. Milbert O. Brown, Jr.,
the International Editor of The
Oracle, had the pleasure of writing
this profile about Brother and
Mayor Jerry Demings.**

Bro. Lt. Boone, A Policeman's Story

Special Interview by Brother James Alexander



Q1. What do you do in your present role in the Prince George's County Police Department (PGPD)?

A. Currently, I serve as the Assistant Commander (Acting Captain) of District II/Bowie Station

Q2. How did you get into law enforcement?

A. My career started in 1996 when I was employed with the US Capitol Police. In 1998 I became a Prince George's County Police Officer where I have been employed for the past 22 years. I have held positions within Community Policing, Special Assignment Team, Violent Crime Unit, Criminal Investigations, Background Investigations and now Assistant Commander of a Patrol District Station.

Q3. You courageously led the filing of a lawsuit against the PGPD. Tell us about that legal action and what is the status?

A. My decision of entering a lawsuit evolved after witnessing the "unfair" practices with promotions, assignments, and punishments, such as lesser punishments for white officers, officers of color being given less important roles during promotions and regulated to patrol division to give the appearance more officers of color are in the ranks. I also disliked the policies within the department that affected the community where I both served and lived. Most notably, the toxic culture inside the department which promotes officers benefiting from citizen demise with quota systems, and a general lack of empathy. We are currently in depositions with the case.

Q4. In your many years of experience, what do you think needs to be changed when it comes to policing in Black communities today?

A. There are several changes that need to be made. In my opinion, the most major change is understanding the true definition of community policing, which includes fully understanding the community that you serve. This also includes an insistence that officers understand the socioeconomic state of the community, as well as have knowledge on mental healthcare and the existence of food deserts that exist in the black community. Once officers understand these issues and how they affect the safety of a community, they will have a clearer understanding of how to better serve the community.

Q5. How does having Black officers on a force impact the way the community is policed? Can it make a difference?

A. Having Black officers on a police force impacts the way a community is policed because a Black officer is more likely to have a better understanding of the community and the citizens who reside there. When an officer resembles those of the community, the communication barriers begin to drop and the dialogue can begin and trust can be built. I also believe the badge no longer becomes a threat if the officer resembles those of the community.

Q6. What has been your experience since filing the legal action? How has it affected your career?

A. Since filing the lawsuit, it has been difficult at times dealing with the passive-aggressive environment which includes working with people I do not trust. It is also difficult realizing this lawsuit caused me to be retaliated against by being removed from an investigative position and placed onto the patrol division.

Q7. What got you interested in policing?

A. After I graduated from Bowie State University, I wanted to go to law school. I had a part-time position at Hecht's department store as an undercover security officer. I enjoyed it tremendously and decided to give policing a chance since my interest was in the legal field.

Q8. Is the misconduct we are seeing today from cellphone video the result of new tensions or is it something that has been going on, but we've not been privy to it?

A. There is nothing new about police brutality or misconduct. Police brutality and misconduct has always been in existence; however, the evidence of the misconduct is just starting to be filmed due to the technology of the cell phone. The true issue is not that the brutality is now being filmed, but rather that politicians and the State's Attorney interpret laws to empower the police and frustrate citizens. That's why people of color feel the justice system only exists to keep them in their place rather than protect them.

Q9. Why hasn't the use of body cameras made the difference we thought it would?

A. Body cameras are not making a difference because officers are not punished, and politicians can sweep bad conduct under the rug. When politicians and State's Attorneys protect the institution of policing more than the citizens in the community, body cameras will continue to be an instrument used to record bad behavior with no repercussions.

"A Moment for Men" by Bro. Luis Hines, Ph.D

Six ways to help protect your colorectal health.

1. Get screened for colorectal cancer. Screenings are tests that look for cancer before signs and symptoms develop. Colorectal screenings can often find growths on the colon or rectum, called polyps that can be removed before they turn into cancer. These tests also can find colon or rectal cancer earlier, when treatments are more likely to be successful. The American Cancer Society recommends testing starting at age 45 for people at average risk; talk to your health care provider about when you should start, and which tests might be right for you.

2. Eat lots of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Diets that include lots of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains have been linked with a decreased risk of colon or rectal cancer. Eat less red meat (beef, pork, or lamb) and processed meats (hot dogs and some luncheon meats), which have been linked with an increased risk of colorectal cancer.

3. Get regular exercise. If you are not physically active, you may have a greater chance of developing colon or rectal cancer. Increasing your activity may help reduce your risk. Learn more about how to meet diet and exercise goals at cancer.org/foodandfitness.

4. Watch your weight. Being overweight or obese increases your risk of getting and dying from colon or rectal cancer. Eating healthier and increasing your physical activity can help you control your weight.

5. Don't smoke. Long-term smokers are more likely than non-smokers to develop and die from colon or rectal cancer. If you smoke and you want to quit, or know someone else who does, see the American Cancer Society guide to quitting tobacco, or call 1-800-227-2345. Getting help increases your chances of quitting successfully.

6. Limit alcohol. Alcohol use has been linked with a higher risk of colorectal cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends no more than 2 drinks a day for men and 1 drink a day for women. A single drink amounts to 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1½ ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits (hard liquor). Research shows that habits related to diet, weight, and exercise are linked to colorectal cancer risk, and those links are stronger than for other types of cancer. Changing some of these lifestyle habits may be hard. But making the changes also can lower the risk for many other types of cancer, as well as other serious diseases like heart disease and diabetes.

Policing has long been a challenge in Prince George's County, a bedroom community located outside of Washington, D.C. Home to the stadium for the NFL's Washington Football Team, a world-class HBCU in Bowie State University and the National Harbor, one of the hottest new entertainment districts on the East Coast. This metropolitan county of more than 1 million residents has had a rocky relationship with police which belies its status as the nation's wealthiest African American-majority community.

In previous years, the county's police department has operated under a U.S. Department of Justice consent decree for excessive force, including the use of police dogs. In more recent years the struggle has involved allegations of racism and bias within the ranks and in its relationship with citizens in the county.

Standing on the frontlines today to reform the troubled department is Bro. Lt. Thomas Boone, a member of Gamma Pi Chapter, which is based in Prince George's County. Bro. Boone is one of 13 then-current and former officers to sue the police department for discrimination in 2018. He is also president of the United Black Police Officers Association.

Bro. Lt. Boone recently conducted an interview with *The Oracle* to discuss his Herculean efforts to bring about change in the department and in the greater community. His efforts also have been chronicled in international news outlets.

RESPECT US LAUNCHES INITIATIVE

At HBCUs And Throughout the Community

Black Lives Matter has been extremely effective in raising awareness about institutional racism in our society, and placing a spotlight on current events that demonstrate many injustices. Now that we are all more aware as a society, what are the next steps that will drive us toward positive change?

The Race, Equality, Security, Policy, Education, Care and Technology Unifying Safety (RESPECT US) movement turns awareness into action.

The RESPECT US movement is the foundation to facilitate meaningful change. It is composed of all citizens and organizational stakeholders who want to see positive lasting change in our communities. The actions first start with empowering the community with the Eye Need A Witness technology to observe, record, and support someone who calls for a witness because they feel unsafe. Nearby users will come to the caller's aid to de-escalate volatile situations, document injustices, and support those who need help.

With this critical technology deployed, the initiative also will bring together communities through the RESPECT Unifying Safety Summits - forums where students, parents, community leaders, corporate executives, elected officials, and law enforcement professionals will have open, honest, and impactful

conversations about inherent bias, systemic racism, economic empowerment, community policing, and police brutality. The RESPECT US Summits will lay the groundwork for new policies and reforms that are necessary to facilitate positive lasting change.

In partnership with the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), the RESPECT US Summits will be held at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) around the country.

Understanding that economic empowerment is another essential element needed to dismantle the systems of oppression, inequality, and denied economic access that still exists in our country, these Summits will provide training and resources to connect HBCU students with top employers and opportunities from a wide range of industries.

The Eye Need a Witness technology and the productive communication and relationship building derived from the RESPECT US Summits will help our nation heal by strengthening the trust, respect, and connectedness between our leaders, law enforcement, and communities of color.

The recent tragedy of George Floyd, which has stirred protests, social unrest and has brought expanded awareness of systemic racism in our society. It also has increased the relevance and need for the Eye Need a Witness

technology. Brother Darryl Beasley, a Psi Chapter brother and Morehouse College graduate, is Vice President of Sales for the Greenline Business Group, the company that developed the Eye Need a Witness technology.

Brother Beasley said the company is committed to working with historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). He noted that HBCUs have consistently educated disproportionately large percentages of competitive and diverse graduates. These graduates give rise to, and help sustain, a robust Black middle class in America. They also account almost exclusively for the diversity in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and growth in other high-need disciplines.

HBCUs are at the creative forefront of American education, offering the tools and skills necessary for students to succeed in today's diverse, globally interdependent, and technologically advanced world.

For more information about the Respect US initiative contact: Brother Darryl K. Beasley, Sr., Esq., Vice President of Sales, Eye Need A Witness Greenline Business Group dbeasley@greenlinebusinessgroup.com

Funding from Social Justice Initiative

Citrix Provides Chapter Grants

Citrix Systems, Inc. is an American multinational software company that provides server, application, desktop virtualization, networking, and cloud computing technologies. As part of its social justice initiatives, and through the leadership of its Black Professionals Network (BPN), Citrix has awarded two grants for \$25,000 to two Omega Psi Phi Fraternity chapters. The two recipients of the grants include Rho Gamma Gamma Chapter located in Chicago and Zeta Chi Chapter based in Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Both chapters will focus on uplifting Black male youth during these challenging time in history. Consistent with the four Cardinal Principles of Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift, both chapter programs also seek to utilize the positive presence and guidance of Omega Men to help young Black males be more responsible.

Rho Gamma Gamma's Omega Y.E.S. program is a male youth mentorship program designed to support 40-50 young African American males in the Chicago metropolitan area who are faced with many adversities and challenges. It offers a comprehensive values-based rites of passage program through a 10-week mentorship process. The program provides instruction and guidance in conflict resolution, life skills, and goal setting. It also encourages the development of strong study habits and critical thinking skills.



Brother Brian C. Johnson of Zeta Chi Chapter (right) instructing one of the chapter's Lamplighters mentees the art of properly washing laundry.

The program promotes the Seven Principles of NGUZO-SABA which are Unity, Self Determination, Collective Worth and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith. The goal for "The Omega Y.E.S." program is for participants to make positive life choices and accept responsibility for their education. Participants leave the program with the desire to seek out higher educational opportunities, increased self-worth, and a stronger sense of community.

Zeta Chi's Lamp Lighters Mentoring Club of Ft. Lauderdale targets up to 25 young Black males ages 10-17. Although the preferred minimum age is 11 years old, they allow students as young as ten this year to reach 5th grade males who will prepare for the turbulent transition to middle school. The primary goal is to instill in them a belief system and a pattern of

positive behavioral habits that help them understand and pursue their value as positive and productive young men in the Ft. Lauderdale community. To reinforce the session topics, they will participate in several community services, community events, field trips, and other activities that allow them to practice the positive behaviors and meet positive people. Since January of 2008, the Zeta Chi chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. has partnered with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Broward County to facilitate the "Lamp Lighters" Mentoring Club.

For more information about chapter grant funding contact Brother Efrem Z. Stringfellow, Vice President, Citrix-efrem.stringfellow@citrix.com

UNDERGRADS EMERGE AS LEADERS



BROTHER CALEB HEATWOLE

Brother Heatwole, a Spring 2020 initiate of Delta Gamma Chapter was selected to participate in the 33rd Annual Thurgood Marshall Leadership Institute (TMLI).

He completed a series of webinars, professional development workshops, and other assignments in preparation for interviews with Fortune 500 and Fortune 100 companies across the nation.

Heatwole had the opportunity to leave the conference with an internship or job offers by the end of the event. The Fayetteville State University student has a 3.1 GPA as a Business Administration major.

The TMLI is an exciting leadership development conference held annually in October for college juniors, seniors, graduate and law students attending our 47 publicly-supported Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs).

Exceptionally strong sophomores also are encouraged to apply. The TMLI is for students who establish themselves as leaders, as well as students with leadership potential who want to build on their skill sets. Prior leadership roles in high school or college is preferred. However, a desire to develop personal leadership and professional advancement skills is required.



BROTHER DAVID MOORE

Brother Moore has been recognized as *Leader of the Year* at Duke University for his outstanding work for the Omega Zeta Chapter, and Black Men's Union (BMU). He is a rising Senior, a Forbes 30 Under 30 Scholar, and Public Policy major with a 3.35 GPA. He also has excelled outside the classroom. He serves as the Co-President of the BMU and is an active mentor for incoming Black students. In his first year as chapter Basileus, he has been involved in the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) step show, organized the annual Black Arts Night, and created new opportunities for collaboration with other organizations.

As a new member Basileus tasked with cementing the sustainability of the chapter, he executed on nearly every measure. With no senior leadership and a total of three members in the Omega Zeta Chapter, he assumed a tremendous amount of responsibility.

He has demonstrated initiative, determination, and intellect. He has pushed through every obstacle and done so without complaint or regret. Under his leadership, Omega Zeta has successfully initiated three tremendous new members into the chapter, revitalizing its presence on campus, as well as in the Durham community, and organized impactful events on campus. His sociable personality has allowed Omega Zeta to navigate many different spaces on Duke's campus. When he first stepped on campus, the Omega Zeta Chapter had been inactive since 2011. Currently, the chapter is six men strong and growing.

GAMMA CHAPTER MEMBER

Town Honors Bro. Dr. Mays



Photograph on Left: A statue of Brother Dr. Benjamin E. Mays is placed in front of the Mays historical preservation site in Greenwood, SC.

mentored many influential activists, including Martin Luther King Jr., Julian Bond, and Maynard Jackson.

Benjamin E. Mays was born on August 1, 1894, near Epworth, South Carolina. Mays was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Bates College, and was influential in the Christian ministry and American education fields.

Mays was recruited by Morehouse President, John Hope to join the faculty as a mathematics teacher and debate coach. Bro. Mays received his master's degree in 1925 and a Ph.D. in 1935 from the University of Chicago.

Dr. Mays was appointed dean of the School of Religion at Howard University in 1934, where he served until 1940. He served as the president of Morehouse College for three decades. Dr. Mays also served as president of the Atlanta Board of Education from 1970 to 1981.

Dr. Benjamin E. Mays' name lives on through the students from his hometown. They will learn, develop, and strive in a building whose namesake was the epitome of excellence.

Many notable historical figures are memorialized by having buildings bear their names. On August 14, 2020, Greenwood, South Carolina's District 50 Schools renamed Springfield Elementary School as the Dr. Benjamin E. Mays Elementary School. Dr. Mays is a hero in Greenwood, home to the Sixth District's Epsilon Gamma Gamma Chapter, which hosted the renaming event. The honor helps to preserve Dr. Mays' legacy and recognizes his contributions as a civil rights activist, minister and educator.

Brother Benjamin Elijah Mays was initiated into Omega Psi Phi Fraternity through Gamma Chapter in 1919. The chapter located in Boston, MA is part of the First District.

Dr. Mays eventually would become one of Morehouse College's most influential presidents. He later was one of the founders of Psi Chapter. He was Morehouse College's president from 1940 to 1967 and as the enrollment increased through his leadership, the college's financial endowment doubled.

At Morehouse, Dr. Mays taught and

Helping The New Haven Community Chapter Fight Against Hunger



Brothers of Chi Omicron Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. are immersed in service. The membership shares a like-mind with tremendous focus on being grass rooted in the community. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, many household providers have lost their jobs. Still, other employees not deemed essentials workers have been asked to stay home amid this pandemic. The New Haven community has shown us; that there are many people who continue to struggle with hunger. One of their first steps was to increase the volunteering services with local soup kitchens.

Partnering with these organizations, Chi Omicron has successfully delivered groceries to several families in need. Also included with the food items was a \$50 gift card to Stop & Shop grocery stores.

The chapter included pamphlets on how to protect yourself during this pandemic. Many of these recipients are elderly or residents who have larger families and need assistance.

The New Haven population is 130,405; 36.5% Black and 28.6% Hispanic (66% total minority) and the poverty rate is at 26%. The food insecurity rate is at 23%.

Chi Omicron has taken a stance to help lower these numbers for the betterment of the community. During the months of May and June 2020, brothers took the fight against hunger into their own hands. Chapter brothers have donated their own monies toward the feeding of the homeless.

The New Haven Green is a heavily populated area in downtown New Haven. Brothers safely packaged and handed out lunches for the afternoon to the homeless community. Another approach they have is volunteering at The Connecticut Food Bank in Wallingford, CT.

The Connecticut Food Bank has worked tirelessly to distribute food to people in need since the COVID-19 pandemic first emerged in New Haven communities in mid-March. The chapter has volunteered many working hours at its facility, helping with the sorting and packaging of frozen meats and poultry.

Assisting with the CT Food Bank helps Chi Omicron to make a difference on a much larger scale. Not only have their efforts helped the New Haven community, but the help extends to other cities within the state of Connecticut as well. Chi Omicron plans to return quarterly to help wherever it is needed.

*Story by
Brother Darnell Tucker
Chi Omicron Chapter*

1619 Event Celebrates Our History

Omega's Dr. Benjamin Foster Honored

Brother Dr. Benjamin Foster, Jr., was one of thirty individuals from throughout the nation that was honored by the 400 Year African Americans History Commission. Foster is an Omega Life Member. The retired educator and human services administrator is an adjunct professor of African American studies at Central Connecticut State University.

Below is Dr. Foster's article featuring his ground-breaking research.



In this advanced-cybernetic society where the transfer of knowledge reigns supreme, African Americans seeks to make the nation acknowledge and commemorate 400 years of African American History in these United States. How true is the old adage "prosperity breeds social amnesia."

This 400 years sojourn began August 25, 1619, when a Dutch Slave ship named White Lion sailed into Port Comfort in Hampton, Virginia with "twenty and odd" negroes. The Dutchmen traded the chained Africans for food, water and other provisions. In so doing, the English colonists began one of the most sordid phases in human history, that is, African "chattel slavery." It is marked by two hundred forty-six years of a people's forced free-labor and another one hundred years of Jim Crow legal racial discrimination.

As the commemoration of the 400 years occurs in various ways and venues across America, it is at once triumphant and bitter-sweet. Triumphant in that the ancestors did not lose their total minds during the Middle passage and subsequent years on plantations of the upper and lower South where their numbers abounded; although African enslavement was not confined to the South. Bittersweet in the sense that African American labor, genius, and martial heroics have enabled the United States of America to become the wealthiest nation in modern history.

The great African America scholar-activist W.E.B. Dubois, in one of his numerous masterpieces, *The Gift of Black Folk*, pondered: "What would America be without her Negro people?"

In short, African Americans became the syncopation of the America socio-economic structure. Yet, their story remains the greatest untold story individually and collectively in this knowledge-based and transfer technology-oriented economic system. Despite being the second pioneer group; despite fighting in every military conflict; despite being builders, horticulturalists, creative culturalists, technological and scientific innovators, African Americans are not included in American history textbooks. Despite this 400 year tenure, African Americans remain the poorest segment of the populace, excluding native Americans. According to recent economic data pertaining to the nation's wealth-gap, whites have approximately \$171,000 and African Americans have \$17,000 in median wealth respectively.

The African American saga represents a protracted struggle to affirm the divinity of humanity. In many instances, our ancestors came off the plantations more civilized than their enslavers. James Baldwin wrote in *The Fire Next Time* the following: "...to accept one's past- one's history- is not the same as drowning in it; it is learning how to use it..."

This history that began in Virginia is a cogently compelling story about a people who were buried in chattel enslavement, but refused to stay in the grave of oppression, repression, and suppression. We celebrate and commemorate the 400 year tenure because we took our pain and fed white supremacy sweet potato pies, fried chicken, okra, collard greens, peach cobbler and banana pudding. Great good getting up in the morning!

We honor the 400 year tenure and our ancestors, because they withstood the whip and inferior schools and gave the world: Crispus Attucks, the first to give his life to establish the Republic of America, Dr. Ernest Just, (Omega Man); Dr. Charles Drew, (Omega Man); Dr. Walter McAfee, Dr. Katherine Johnson, Dr. Howard Thurman, Dr. Benjamin E. Mays (Omega Man);

Article continues on page 49

SECOND DISTRICT CHAPTERS WORKING TOGETHER

COMMUNITY RECEIVES FOOD ITEMS



Omega men from Pi Omega Chapter participated in the District-wide food distribution.

Pi Omega Chapter, in partnership with the Maryland Food Bank, conducted a food giveaway for Corridor 1 chapters on August 22, 2020. The event was held at Matthew Henson Elementary School in Baltimore, MD.

Many of us may not realize the grave disparities that exist in our communities and how many people struggle with hunger in practically every county and Congressional district. People from all walks of life find themselves in need of food assistance—including children, seniors, and working families. The COVID-19 global pandemic has complicated matters and added fuel to the fire of the growing hunger crisis. Collectively, the Second District distributed 10,000 pounds of food between nine chapters in Corridors 1 and 2.

Food items included fresh produce such as carrots, potatoes, onions, and celery. In addition, fruit, snacks, and non-perishable food items were also provided. As families arrived to accept their food as part of the drive-through giveaway, Brothers loaded their cars' trunks to minimize personal contact. Moreover, some Brothers walked to the homes of nearby residents for a unique food drop off.

"This was a great morning of giving and fellowship with other Corridor 1 Chapters," said Brother Scott Hopewell. Pi Omega Chapter Brothers Ron Johnson and Clarence Holiday shared similar sentiments. "We look forward to a continued relationship with other chapters and future opportunities to serve the community collaboratively," said Johnson.

One undergraduate chapter and eight graduate chapters in the Second District of the Omega Psi Fraternity, Inc. came to Pi Omega Chapter to receive food to distribute in the neighborhoods within their corridors in Maryland (MD) and Delaware (DE). The Feeding Across the Second District Project is a collaboration between the Second District, and the Maryland Food Bank.

Project aims to identify communities that do not have access to the food banks.

The Maryland Food Bank provided 6,485 pounds of food for the Brothers to distribute in the community. The scope of the Second District's food distribution in the community, was as follows:

Corridor I

Alpha Delta Gamma Chapter (undergraduate) - Carroll County, MD
Iota Nu Chapter - Harford County, MD
Iota Mu Nu Chapter - Anne Arundel County, MD
Pi Omega Chapter - Baltimore City, MD
Mu Nu Chapter - Montgomery County, MD
Corridor II
Gamma Mu Nu Chapter - New Castle County, DE
Iota Alpha Alpha Chapter - Talbot County, MD
Pi Alpha Chapter - Somerset County, MD
Psi Iota Chapter - Kent County, DE

Hunger is not just about food. Hunger and poverty are inextricably linked. The Brothers in the Second District are attempting to empower people living in food deserts and in poverty, so that they have some say in their own destiny.

Pi Kappa Kappa's Chapter Food Drive

Brothers from the Pi Kappa Kappa Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. participated in a food drive at the Winslow Center in Sicklerville, New Jersey. The Winslow Township Department of health organized the event. During these trying and dangerous times, many of our fellow citizens have been struggling to survive.

The Brothers of the Chapter arrived at the event and encouraged participants to persevere during this pandemic. Utilizing the Center for Disease Control and Preventive's (CDC) most recent guidelines, the Brothers adhered to social distancing and maintained their masks throughout the event.

Many Brothers participated in the project. There were various tasks for the event, and the Brothers were happy to lend a hand. Assistance was provided in the distribution of food.

Drivers would pull up, and the Brothers would place the pre-packaged box of food into their cars. Brothers also helped guide traffic through the lot to ensure safety.

In addition to food distribution, the Chapter also provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to participants.

The Brothers distributed literature that focused on health and wellness. Brothers also engaged by advocating for the use of masks and the safety they provide our collective society.



Tau Pi Distributes Food Chapter Organizes Giveaways

In July, Tau Pi Chapter worked in conjunction with the Men's Ministry at St. Johns Baptist Church and organized the distribution of food items throughout the Greater Howard County, MD community. The food off-load event was held on Saturday morning at Columbia's Harper House. Some of the items included can goods, fruits, and vegetables. Food items also were given to various Maryland food agencies, and some of the items added to restocking the church's food pantry.

Tau Pi Chapter's Social Action Committee included Brothers, Richard Rogers, Henry Bell, Larry Johnson, Shawn Lamb, Eric Astthrop Jr, Earl Jefferson III, Joe Brown, Nicholas Meade, Vernon Curry, Bakari Khalid, Reginald Riddick



and visiting Brother Cameron Ward of Mu Psi Chapter.

PHOTOS:

(Top)- Bro. Eric Astthrop, right placing donated food items in a food pantry delivery truck.

(Bottom) Bro. Dr. Henry Bell. Oracle photos by Bro. M. Brown



KAPPA PSI CHAPTER ATTENDS MARCH ON WASHINGTON

The Brothers of Kappa Psi Chapter celebrated the 57th Anniversary of the historic March on Washington, which featured Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech. Similar to the first march in 1963, this one also called for racial justice and police reform. The families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Eric Garner, and Jacob Blake were guests and spoke at the August 28th event.

The chapter members protected themselves due to the COVID-19 climate while in attendance at the event. Temperature checks were conducted along with mask coverings.

"It's always inspirational being apart of events like this" said Brother Kevin Poplar, who also noted that one person could be part of our country's change.

The National Action Network organized the event. Bro. Poplar added "I look forward to the day when we, as Black Americans, will no longer have to prove our worth as citizens of the United States of America." Brother Billy Holcombe added that "issues regarding race, the enforcement of the law, and access to medical and mental health services are impacting our country now."

"It was amazing being part of something bigger than ourselves. I know marching and voting are only the beginning steps of the change," said Brother Derrick Thornton, the chapter's Basileus. "I can't wait for the day we no longer have to march," he added.

Photograph/Top:

Omega men in front of the King Memorial after the march.

Photograph/right: *Brother Darrell Morrison of Lambda Gamma Gamma at the march. Oracle photo /Bro M. Brown*



Zeta Omega Chapter Aids Older Brothers During Pandemic

CHAPTER CHECKS ON SENIOR BROTHERS



Brothers from Cleveland's Zeta Omega visit the chapter's most senior Omega man, Brother George Whitehead (center) in celebration his 98th birthday.

Obviously there have been many challenges for just about everyone on the planet, including Omega Men, resulting from the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic. Like everyone else, Omega men have had to become creative in navigating daily life with the new restrictions under which we currently live. In addition to the paramount challenges of keeping our families and ourselves safe and healthy, maintaining our careers and financial stability, and keeping our faith throughout it all, the Men of Omega also have had to accept the reality of not being able to commune and fellowship with each other in person. It may seem like a small matter to the uninitiated, but this time apart has underscored a basic tenet for many brothers: the fact that friendship truly is essential to the soul.

Once chapters had to press the pause button on in-person meetings, like many chapters. Zeta Omega began conducting chapter business through the use of virtual meeting cloud platforms, like Zoom. But the brothers of Zeta Omega also wanted to be able to stay in touch with each other between virtual meetings.

So the chapter leadership created an ad-hoc committee of brothers who were tasked with calling every brother on the chapter roster, which includes over 200 in total. The roster was sorted by year of initiation, starting with the most senior brothers who have over 70 years of service to Omega, then 60 plus years, and so on.

Brothers on the committee were prepared, if necessary, to pick up essential items, like groceries and prescription medicine, and then deliver them to the front doors

of their senior brothers, while maintaining the appropriate social distance.

In addition to this outreach to senior brothers, Zeta Omega brothers who were initiated through Iota Psi Chapter at Ohio State University decided to pay a special visit to their most senior chapter brother. Brother George Whitehead (1942 Iota Psi) celebrated his 98th birthday in August and is the oldest living brother in the Fourth District.

He currently resides in an assisted living facility in the Cleveland area and was very pleased when six brothers visited with him outside the window of his room. He shared photographs of him and his family, and was pleasantly surprised when brothers showed him pictures of himself at various Omega events that they had saved on their mobile phones. Brother Whitehead seemed to have enjoyed that portion of the celebration of his 98th birthday!

The brothers of Zeta Omega continue to find creative ways to connect with and check up on brothers in the greater Cleveland area. And they challenge all Omega Men who have not done so yet, to begin reaching out to each other, starting with the most senior brothers in their chapter, to see how they are doing and if they need help with anything during these challenging times.

*Story by,
Bro. Dell Robinson
and Bro. Damon Scott,
Chapter Public Relations*

BETA IOTA CELEBRATES BRO. WILLIAMS' 96TH BIRTHDAY

The Beta Iota Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. celebrated the 96th birthday of Brother Augustus Williams on August 5, 2020.

Brother Williams entered the Fraternity in 1949 through the Rho Psi Chapter at Tennessee State University. Bro. Williams is still an active member of the chapter.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the brothers of Beta Iota organized a drive by parade to celebrate Brother Williams. More than 60 people, which included Fraternity brothers as well as his church members, drove by to celebrate Brother Williams' 96th birthday.

He and his family members were extremely grateful for the love that was shown during the 30-minute procession.

Brother Augustus Williams was born in August 1924. He served in the U.S. Navy for two and half years and was honorably discharged. He returned home to Lexington, KY and graduated from Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School.

He later earned a Bachelor's degree from Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State College, now called Tennessee State University. Brother Williams also completed a Master of Education degree from the University of Cincinnati.

Bro. Williams continues to be a positive influence for the youth in Cincinnati. He has been active in the Boy Scouts of America for most of his life. Even though Brother Williams was unable to earn an Eagle Scout Award, which is the highest achievement for the Boy Scouts, he made a huge impact as a troop leader.

During his 23 years as a charter representative of Troop 772, and as a mentor of Boy Scouts of the troop at Lincoln Heights Missionary Baptist Church, he helped more than 30 Scouts earn their Eagle Scout Badge. Williams taught science and coached track at Princeton High School for 23 years until his retirement.

Xi ALPHA SUPPORTS SCHOOL NAME CHANGE

The celebration of the confederacy and its leaders is another method by which the white supremacist structure of the United States of America can psychologically poison the Black community's minds. The on-going celebration of these figures promotes the racist views of slave owners; even though this system was defeated in 1865, many ideologies exist throughout governance and education. The Brothers of Xi Alpha Chapter attended meetings, marched, protested, and even raised over \$4,000.00 to eliminate one of these figures in their community. The Brothers of Xi Alpha Chapter are actively fighting to change a middle school's name away from one that honors confederate general Stonewall Jackson. The Kanawha County School Board heard from various community members, and Brother Bobby Robinson gave the final speech to the Board.

Brother Robinson said "of all the beautiful places of worship throughout the world: St. Joseph, St. Paul, St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Timothy, St. Luke, St. John, etc., but in all my travels, I have never seen a St. Judas. Ladies and gentlemen of the Board, have you seen a St. Judas? Well, that is probably because no religious group would ever celebrate a traitor, nor would they celebrate a loser! Since we understand scripture teaches the power of life and death is in the tongue, why would we have our young minds always cheering for a defeated soldier. This is completely absurd, it is an atrocity, and this Board can rectify this shameful wrong.

The cornerstone speech by the vice president of the confederacy, Alexander Stephens, went into great detail explaining why they succeeded from the Union. That reason was strictly about enslaving Blacks.

Stephens stated the Creator made Blacks to be servants to the superior race."

Brother Robinson was a past Fourth District Representative of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. His speech resonated with the audience. After the deliberation, the Board called for a motion to remove the name of Stonewall Jackson, it was seconded, and the vote was unanimous to remove the confederate soldier's name. The school is located in Charleston, WV.

While some see the school's name as a minor detail, the Brothers of Xi Alpha understand that young people need to be able to learn without entering hallways that are named after people who wished nothing but the worst for them. The Brothers of Xi Alpha will continue to fight to move their community forward and away from these racist symbols.

Chapters Protest for Social Justice

Iota Alpha and Iota Beta Chapters Lead Community

Iota Alpha Chapter (Graduate) and the Iota Beta Chapter (Undergraduate) of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc jointly organized a voter registration drive and protest march in support of social justice. The Brothers of Omega in the Greater Knoxville area wanted to bring the community together and support the national movement calling for social justice and the fair and equal treatment of Black Americans. Systemic racism and police brutality, along with the senseless killing of unarmed Black men and women, need to end in America.

The Men of Omega led a group of over 300 protesters, including members of the Divine Nine organizations, the leaders from Knoxville College's NAACP Chapter, and city officials. The 1.5-mile march route from Alex Haley Park to Market Square in downtown Knoxville culminated with a silent protest and kneeling for 8 minutes and 46 seconds in memory of George Floyd.

"This protest is not just for the recent death of George Floyd, but for all Black Americans who have been killed throughout history. The death of George Floyd is probably the capstone of years of incidences that have happened; it is just today smartphone cameras have helped the dead tell their story. But it is not only about George Floyd and Breonna Taylor; it goes all the way back to Emmett Till," said Frank Shanklin, Jr.

Story by Bro Errettee Woodruff
and Bro. Jean-Philippe.



Chapter Provide Food Boxes

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many families are faced with financial difficulties in purchasing food in the Jackson, Tennessee area.

In the United States, some 40 million people have struggled with hunger; these are pre-pandemic figures. Thus, the impact of the pandemic has made the problem of hunger worse in many communities. Therefore, the men of Omega Psi Phi, Inc. Theta Iota Chapter in Jackson partnered with the Mid South Food Bank to help address this concern in the Jackson-Madison County community.

On Tuesday, August 11, 2020, Theta Iota Chapter assisted

the Jackson- Madison County by distributing food boxes to more than 600 families. The total dollar value of the food given away was \$72,000.

As one of our beloved Founders, Bishop Edgar A. Love stated, *"Uplift, which puts man in connection with the community in which he lives and lets him realize that he has a responsibility to those who are less fortunate than himself; that he must also do what he does with the idea of service to the community and to the nation."*

The men of Theta Iota Chapter endeavor to serve our community and are genuinely committed to the Four Cardinal Principles.

Omega Honors Bro. Nathaniel Miller 's Service

Photograph on Right; Brother Charles Worth, past Sixth District Representative, Brother Nathaniel Miller (center) and Brother Dr. Abram Liles, Zeta Alpha Chapter Basileus.

DISTRICT NEWS

Brother Melvin M. Mitchell, the past 41st Sixth District Representative, was recently sworn in as a board member on the North Carolina Department of Transportation. He will represent Division 4, which comprises Edgecombe, Halifax, Johnston, Nash, Wayne and Wilson counties.

Bro. Mitchell is the president of Melvin M. Mitchell Agency Inc., which is affiliated with Allstate Insurance Co. He also serves on the Board of Commissioners for Nash UNC Health Care in Rocky Mount. He has a business education degree from Fayetteville State University and has lived in Rocky Mount since 1974.

Mitchell has served as a board member of the Rocky Mount Boys Club, Triangle Bank and Greater Rocky Mount Family Practice. His insurance agency has won several accolades. He serves on the board of directors for Providence Bank in Rocky Mount, and he is a past member of the board of directors for First Carolina State Bank. Mitchell is active with North End Missionary Baptist Church. He also is a member of Alpha Omicron Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.



Zeta Alpha Chapter (Oxford, NC) recognized Brother Nathaniel Miller for 70 Years of Outstanding Leadership and Service. Brother Miller was initiated into Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated through Theta Psi Chapter in 1949 at West Virginia State College, where he graduated.

He began his professional career at Bell Laboratories, where much of his work was focused on creating miniature integrated circuits (MICs) that performed the work of larger electronic devices. These MIC would be the precursor to the printed integrated circuits. Brother Miller was also involved in the design of early satellites with the early computers developed by Bell Laboratories.

He continued to work on computer languages and was an integral member of the team that developed the original UNIX operating system for mainframe computers at AT&T on Knightsbridge Road, Piscataway, New Jersey where he retired in 1986. He then moved his family to Henderson, NC.

In Henderson, he founded Start-Rite Preschool in 1987. Start-Rite Preschool was a thriving childcare organization in which the focus on child development and growth for the total child was the fulfillment of a lifelong dream for him and his wife. The preschool helped educate a generation of children in Vance County. They sold the business in 2005.

After leaving the workforce a second time, Brother Miller continued to lead an active life with involvement in several civic organizations, including the NAACP, the Boys & Girls Club, the Vance County Senior Citizen Center, the Disabled American Veterans Association, and the Riverside Hunting Club.

Additionally, he continues to engage in hobbies that he enjoys such as being a voracious reader, playing chess, tinkering with electronics and computers, photography, gardening, fishing, and hunting.

Throughout the years, he has continued to serve Omega as an active member of Zeta Alpha.

An Interview by Bro. Dr. Timothy B. Hunter, Sixth District's Director of Public Relations

A CONVERSATION WITH BROTHER DR. KNOX

Dr. Hunter: You have just held the highest office in the Fraternity, what's next?

Bro. Knox: *I want to be the best family man that I can be. And along with that, I'm always going to be involved in the community. So the Garner Road Community Center—I really need to take some time in rebuilding it, bringing it back to a standard that we enjoyed seeing it and having it in the community. That's going to take a lot of time, but I will focus on one of those things.*

Dr. Hunter: Of your many accomplishments as Grand Basileus, share one that was unintentional, but just as meaningful and impactful during your administration?

Bro. Knox: *If I can share, it's just two things inside the Fraternity. One is Prostate Cancer Committee Chair. It was before we had the Medical Health Initiative. The rate of prostate cancer is attacking Black men and the number of brothers in the Fraternity. Naming that committee was one of the best things I think I did because it had an impact. It had an impact on the brotherhood. Even though there was a lot of talk about it, one of the things you always look for when forming committees and when you're doing things within the Fraternity or community is whether you can make a difference and save lives. This has certainly done that. It's so important.*

At the time I made the appointment, I didn't realize just how important it was. The number of brothers impacts the education they are getting and the difference it's making. I might talk directly to a diagnosed brother, coming directly to him to coach him through it. Many brothers have fought prostate cancer and have been able to continue doing as they do. I thank God that they have moved on in life to be able to defeat it.

One of the things outside of the community was the documentary on Robert Lawrence. When it was discussed that he was the first African American astronaut—most people did not know who he was. He was an Omega man. So it was a great opportunity. Some of the schools and community programs were able to use it to motivate our young brothers. The Triangle Foundation was able to use it in their program. So it impacted the community, and it will be something there that we'll be able to look back on forever. We were lucky that we had the opportunity. The people who made Hidden Figures are the ones who came to us. They came to me, we talked about it, and I said let's do it.

Dr. Hunter: From your perspective, what is the most challenging aspect of serving as Grand Basileus? What is the most rewarding?

Bro. Knox: *The most challenging thing is politics. When I came in office, one of the things I decided to do was create a balance with all the Districts in bringing as many committee chairs from the Districts as possible in an effort to try to put aside the politics and unite and get brothers to see that working together as one will be a whole lot better. After the election, we are one—on the same team. I think that throughout the term, we had the majority working together. I think that's what allowed us to accomplish some of the things that we did. But one of the biggest challenges was getting caught up in the politics and fighting against the things we were trying to do. There were still some just wrapped up in politics. They were determined to fight against doing things the way that we were proving was the right way. I've been told that the Founders said that was one of their biggest concerns, which was the politics—not allowing the politics to take the Fraternity out. And that continues to be a concern—one that we must overcome.*

Seeing the benefits is the most rewarding as Grand Basileus. Seeing the Fraternity making a difference. When I can go in and meet with youth groups and see the statistics on how they are improving on what they're doing. When I can meet with families or I can take children out to have an opportunity to look at schools or an opportunity to pursue job opportunities. And just to see the benefits come to fruition. We started the career development program and to know that have over 100 young men opportunities from just those programs makes a huge difference. The advanced degree program—knowing that we have provided young brothers opportunities to go to schools with scholarships. Those types of things really make you feel good and let you know that you're doing the right thing. Honestly speaking, working with those kids, and you see a difference. You see them change their focus—getting the opportunities in school, being involved in athletics, and they can actually see they can pursue things and have a chance to be successful. That makes a difference. I really feel good about it because that's always who I wanted to be and always who I try to be—somebody who can make a difference. And to see those things. My great grandfather was a preacher who worked within the community. My grandfather was a truck driver outside of the community. They both believed in helping people and giving young people an opportunity.

Dr. Hunter: As a man, what do you see as one of your most significant accomplishments and why?

Bro. Knox: *The opportunity to lead one of the greatest organizations in the world. And know that I've been blessed and have had a lot of opportunities. To serve as Grand Basileus and see the impact that we've had on our community and our country can be overwhelming to think about. When I look back and talk to my grandchildren, I can be very proud of and have an opportunity to be thankful. I am one of 39 men who have had this opportunity. Blessings—I'm blessed, and I'm so blessed, and I'm very thankful to have had this opportunity. I appreciate you all.*

Dr. Hunter: What book are you currently reading or have just completed?

Bro. Knox: *The book I am reading and that I encourage everybody to read is the Bible. But outside as far as a book, Brother Bender Farr gave me a book--When the People Speak. Quite often, I use that book when I'm speaking and sharing. It's a compilation of many different scenes, thoughts, problems, and a lot of different people. A number of them are Omegas. Not all are Omegas. Some directly from Benny. Ben is a brother, a professor in Hartford, Connecticut. It's really good. It'll give you thoughts on a lot of different people. We have a number of brothers who are authors. And a lot of them have given me books. I haven't read them all. I was looking the other day and saying that I've got plenty that I'm going to read that brothers have written. The other month, I went down to the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Convention, another brother gave me a book that has rap, and it talks about positive things—things that children can learn from. A lot of brothers who have some good books and good materials out there.*

Dr. Hunter: If you have learned anything in life, you know that you will always face a challenge. Share a time in your life where you lived the words of "See it through."

Bro. Knox: *There have been a number of times. I actually went through an illness that a lot of people don't know about. As I was taking treatments, I would say that poem. That helped me to get over. There have been times when you get fed up over certain things within the Fraternity. You see a lot of things going on.*

And you get to the point where you're ready to tell people things they probably don't want to hear. You just pray, "Lord, let me see this through." I have to call on the Lord. Quite often, I repeat, "See it through." There have been times when I don't understand why some just don't get it—putting ourselves and the Fraternity in situations. I pray, "Lord, let me just do this the way you would have me to do it. Let me just see it through. And do it in a way that I don't have to be embarrassed about it.

Dr. Hunter: Any parting words of uplift you would like to share with brothers of the Mighty Sixth District?

Bro. Knox: *First, thank you! The Mighty Sixth District is the Mighty Sixth District because we believe in each other. The support that we give to each other makes all the difference in the world. When I was at a Conclave or at another District or whatever, I was always uplifted with someone from the Mighty Sixth District.*

There was a moment when we were in Las Vegas at Conclave in 2016. I shared this with him recently. Bert Allen said, "Brother Grand, I just want to know that you are not out here alone." That meant the world to me. Just to have a brother say, "You are not here alone." And that's what I can always count on from the Sixth. I am always thankful for all that's been done and recognize that you can never do anything by yourself except fail. But having the Sixth District with me has always been a difference-maker in whatever I have done.

My success in the Fraternity and my opportunity to lead were pure and simple because I grew and came through the Sixth District. I don't know if I could have been anywhere else and got the same opportunity as I got in the Sixth District.

At the Conclave, I recognized that we brought back some awards to some brothers that I would not have gotten votes if it had not been for them. I always hold dear to my heart and thank the Sixth District for what they've done. And I always encourage the Sixth District to continue being who we are. What makes us mighty is the fact that we stick together. The only time that we don't achieve what we want to is when we're not together. When we're together, I don't care what district is; I don't care how large they are; When we're together, you can't beat us.

When I sat down in that chair as an undergraduate, the promise I made was I'd do my very best to be the very best brother. They asked what does that mean. I said, "I'll do whatever I can to make Omega better and wherever that takes me, that's where I'll be. But I never thought when I was giving that answer about being Grand Basileus. But the brothers recognized something within me, and they took me under their arms. Being Grand Basileus was not my initial thought. So I owe to the brothers who said, "You need to run for this or that." Even in my chapter, they told me I needed to run for Basileus.

When it was time to run for First Vice on the District level, I said there were brothers who'd been in the Frat longer than me. A brother said, "It's time for you to run. He said the brothers are looking for someone like yourself. You need to run right now for First Vice." Of course, I ran for First Vice. We went on and it just continued. Once I did get to the Supreme Council, I thought at that point, yes, I need to run. It became more and more clear that I could help the Fraternity.



Chapter Starts HBCU Endowment

In a hotel suite at the 2011 Centennial Conclave, Brothers of Nu Epsilon gathered to formally announce their intentions to establish an endowed scholarship at Alabama A&M University. A small group of Brothers spanning across decades from the 1960s–2000s served as the working committee.

The Omega men left Washington, D.C. on a mission to get started raising funds. Almost from the beginning, friendly competition emerged among various lines, which enhanced the giving process. The committee established key project milestones designed to stairstep to the goal of \$100,000.

The first milestone was to reach the \$25,000 level, which is the minimum amount required to establish an endowment at most HBCUs. Once the \$25,000 level was reached, the Nu Epsilon Men of Omega endowment was official. Over the next couple of years, the brotherhood continued to donate to the fund.

On September 26, 2015, during the Homecoming halftime ceremonies, the Brothers of NE gathered on the field to announce, “Mission Accomplished,” by donating a \$100,000 check.

It was later announced that Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., was the first Greek-letter organization in the university’s 140-year history to endow a scholarship and donate \$100,000.

The university’s president and Omega Brother Dr. Andrew Hugine challenged other members of the Divine Nine to establish their endowments. A year later, the ladies of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., donated \$154,000. Several other Divine nine organizations have started endowments. These efforts are a result of Omega setting the bar. “This is the type of competition we should have among the Divine Nine. In this race, nobody loses, and Black children win,” said Brother Aaron Combs.

Shortlist of Endowment Scholarship Funds and Values

Morehouse College - Psi - \$500,000
 Tennessee State University - Rho Psi - \$500,000
 Claflin University - Lambda Sigma \$250,000
 Fort Valley State University – Upsilon Sigma \$238,000
 Alabama A&M University - Nu Epsilon \$200,000
 Norfolk State University - Pi Gamma – \$200,000
 Virginia State University - Nu Psi \$160,000

AUTISM AWARENESS

CHAPTER DONATES TO LOCAL FOUNDATION

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity’s Kappa Beta Beta (KBB) Chapter recently contributed to an organization centered around assisting children with special needs. The Bradley Foundation, an entity created by the chapter’s Brother Elton Russ, is geared towards raising awareness for children and adults living with autism. Bradley Russ, the foundation’s namesake, is the son of Brother Russ and lives with the condition. Consequently, in 2020, the chapter presenting a donation to the Bradley Foundation.

The chapter’s donation to The Bradley Foundation was \$1,000. Kappa Beta Beta, the Dothan, Alabama based chapter, adopted the foundation as one of its principal charitable organizations for community support.

The partnership with KBB will ensure that the Bradley Foundation of the Wiregrass will have resources available to make strides to increase knowledge about autism.

Russ plans on coordinating swimming lessons for both adults and children with autism once the social distancing conditions are lifted.

In 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that 1 in 54 children in the U.S. is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). This CDC information is from 2016 data. Boys are four times more likely to be diagnosed with Autism than girls.

Early intervention affords the best opportunity to support healthy development and deliver benefits across the lifespan. There is no medical detection for autism. For more info: www.autismspeaks.org

CHAPTER MARCH FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is one of our nation’s most effective federal civil rights statutes. Shelby County, Alabama has filed a lawsuit seeking to invalidate Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, which is widely regarded as the heart of the legislation.

The NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF) is intervening in the case on behalf of African-American residents of Shelby County whose voting rights are directly impacted by the county’s challenge.”

On February 27, 2013, The Supreme Court heard an oral argument in Shelby County, Alabama v Holder. The brothers in the foundation of the chapter felt that it was time for the presence of Omega to become manifest in Shelby County.

On June 29, 2020, the Brothers of Beta Mu Nu marched alongside the Shelby County Chapter of the NAACP as peaceful protesters to bring awareness to the cause of racial injustice, the importance of voting, and performing on-site voter registration.

Georgia Chapters Provide Food Items

On March 14, 2020, Upsilon Gamma Gamma Chapter (UGG) of Fort Gordon, and Psi Omega Chapter of Augusta, held several joint Mandated Program events, which included: a blood drive, a canned food drive, and a NAACP and voter registration drive.

There was a serious shortage in food in the surrounding communities. The chapters collected over 765 pounds of canned goods. The items were donated to local community pantries. Additionally, several participants donated more than five pints to the blood bank.

In March 2020, schools were shut down due to COVID-19. The issue of feeding students during COVID-19 became the primary concern for local leaders. Omega men handed out lunches at seven different schools and as well as participated in deliveries. There were over 1000 meals (breakfast and lunch combos) provided daily.

Brothers suggested to the school lunchroom staff that Brothers of UGG will deliver the leftover food and milk to the homeless, soup kitchens, and food pantries.

Between March 14, 2020, and May 8, 2020, UGG Brothers assisted in providing over 70,000 meals to school-age children, the Salvation Army Kitchen, and the homeless. In the era of so many new challenges, the chapter quickly stepped in and contributed significantly to fill some of those needs and make a big impact.



Brother Paul Prosper of Xi Pi Chapter attends the Black Lives Matter on May 31, 2020 in Oklahoma City, OK.

Ques Part of the Movement BLM Protest in Oklahoma City

The presence of Omega Men at community events are imperative. The Black man has been criminalized in the United States, and an organization of college-educated black men should be a part of the movement in highlighting problems with the police in the Black community.

This protest was in response to murder victim George Floyd. Black Lives Matter movement across the United States have been leading the charge in peaceful protests

in presenting peaceful protests that focus on police brutality towards unarmed Black people.

After the speeches ended, the group marched about 1.5 miles to the Oklahoma State Capital Building, where another few thousand protesters were already in place, letting their voices be heard.

The size of the protesters increased when multiple protesting groups converged on the march to the capitol building.

Chapter Provides Service to Community

On May 27, 2020, Brothers of the Sigma Mu Nu Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. teamed up with the Pulaski County Community Network to assist with distributing over 400, 25lb boxes of produce to the local community.

This produce box distribution continued each week throughout June and was supported by Sigma Mu Nu until complete. The boxes of products were provided by the Local Farmers of Pulaski County, MO. The event took place at Metamorphosis Outreach Empowerment Center, which will remain the community's distribution hub.

This community service dually strengthened the military and fraternity bond within the St. Robert, Pulaski County, and Fort Leonard Wood, MO communities. It truly demonstrated the selfless service of Sigma Mu Nu Chapter and its members.

Members of Sigma Mu Nu were thankful for the phenomenal opportunity to work alongside both the Local Farmers of Pulaski County, MO, for this phenomenal opportunity to work alongside them both during this community service mission.

PHOTOGRAPH ON RIGHT:

Sigma Mu Nu Chapter Brothers begin to package items at one of the four distribution sites. *IHQ Photo by Bro. Jayson Jones*



Dr. Foster's article from page 35 continues

Dr. Martin L. King, Jr., Mary McLeod Bethune, Rosa Parks, Dr. Percy Julian, (Omega Man); Dr. Carter G. Woodson, (Omega Man); Dr. Anna Julia Cooper, Madam C. J. Walker, S. D. Lyons, Margaret Walker, Dr. Ralph Bunche, Edith Sampson, Dr. Booker T. Washington, Toni Morrison, Charles Foster who fought in the Battle of Queens (Charlotte, NC) and the list is never-ending.

And then, 400 years is being commemorated as a testament to that something-ness that was in the Ancestors that bore fruition through the creative expression of gospel, spirituals, the blues, jazz, rhythm and blues, dance, rap and hip-hop, etc. Their messengers have pleased the world. They have often been imitated, but never duplicated. Some of the messengers were: Thomas Dorsey, Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, Bessie Smith, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Paul Robeson, Marion Anderson, Roland Hayes, Aretha Franklin, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Gerald Wilson,

Mahalia Jackson, Dizzy Gillespie, Michael Jackson, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, and the legacy continues in today's artists.

Careful analysis of the African American story will reveal that the 450,000 Africans that were brought to North America in chains became 4 million during the ante bellum period; never stopped their struggle for freedom, justice, equality, economic parity, and full citizenship.

The African American population has been proven to be long-distance runners in the on-going quest for democracy, economic development and productivity, equity, and parity.

I believe the noted novelist, John Oliver Killens, spoke to the African American experience best as follows: "...struggle and frustration is the temporary harvest of all men who want to change the society fundamentally." Ancestors prayed to the Creator, the US and committed to making this nation a better place for all.



OMEGAS Uplift

Theta Chi Chapter partnered with Houston councilwoman Tiffany D. Thomas, Good News Church, T E.L. Kingsley Foundation, and the Houston Food Bank to feed residents in Houston's Southwest community on June 18, 2020.

The chapter was able to prepare and distribute food to well over 1700 families. The chapter also committed to over 200 volunteer hours towards the event. The partnership with the District F Office will continue to engage the Black community in the future.

This partnership also will allow the Theta Chi chapter to continue serving the Houston area during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to note that District F had three zip codes with the highest rates of virus infection.

During CRISIS

Upsilon Rho Chapter donated lunch meals, toiletries, clothes, and cleaning supplies to the Acadiana Outreach Center in May 2020. The Outreach Center provides individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Acadiana with the resources they need to secure a second chance at life.

During COVID-19, the center lacked funding from the government, which led to food and supply shortages for the families they serve. The center's staff were extremely grateful for the meals and supplies received during this difficult time for many. More than 25 Omega Men from the Lafayette, LA., chapter helped serve the community.

PHOTOGRAPH ABOVE: OMEGA MEN FROM THETA CHI AT THE HOUSTON FOOD BANK.

Omega's Rashaun Rucker

EMERGES AS AN INTERNATIONAL ARTIST

Brother Rashaun Rucker of Tau Mu Nu Chapter was recently named as a 2020 Sustainable Arts Foundation awardee for his drawing practice. The honor is accompanied by an unrestricted cash award of \$5000. Brother Rucker was chosen from a field of nearly 1,800 applicants. A total of twenty artists and writers were selected from eighteen U.S. cities, Costa Rica, and Turkey.

The foundation stated, "Rashaun Rucker wowed us with his American Ornithology series: a set of hybridized drawings that at first glance appear to be a clever melding of man and bird. A closer study reveals a carefully calculated subtext that highlights definitions of and biases against the black male and the rock pigeon. These portraits of systemic oppression are intellectually challenging and visually stimulating."

Bro. Rucker holds a bachelor's degree in Visual Arts from North Carolina Central University. He was initiated in 2001 through Tau Psi Chapter at North Carolina Central. Rucker, a Life Member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity creates photographs, prints, and drawings and has won more than 40 national and state awards for his work.

In 2008, Rucker became the first African American to be named Michigan Press Photographer of the Year. He also won an Emmy Award in 2008 for documentary photography on the pit bull culture in Detroit. Rucker was a Maynard Fellow at Harvard University in 2009 and a Hearst visiting professional in the journalism department at UNC-Chapel Hill in 2013. He was also awarded an artist residency at the Red Bull House of Art in Detroit.



He was honored as a 2016 Modern Man by Black Enterprise Magazine.

In 2017, Rucker created the original artwork for the critically acclaimed Detroit Free Press documentary "12th and Clairmount".

In 2019, Rucker was awarded the Red Bull Arts-Detroit Micro Grant,



and he was named a Kresge Arts Fellow.

His work was recently featured in HBO's celebrated series "Random Acts of Flyness" and the movie "Native Son." Rucker's diverse work is represented in numerous public and private collections.

The Oracle - Summer/Fall 2020

Physician Serves on Leadership Team

Having access to highly skilled physicians, medical staff, hospitals, and medical care are paramount to a patient's survival during this pandemic era. Brother Dr. Charles Gibson, Medical Staff Chair of Surgery and Medical Director of Surgical Critical Care and Acute Care Surgeon for Spectrum Health Butterworth Hospital in Grand Rapids, MI was recently appointed to Assistant Operating Room (OR) Director. In this position, he serves as a member on a leadership team designed to improve patient care efficacy. In addition to this, the team seeks processes that will minimize staff exposure to the coronavirus while increasing the preservation of personal protection equipment (PPE). Working in concert with the leadership team, staff allocates scarce resources within OR, while maintaining support for the West Michigan community and beyond. As Spectrum adapted to the rising COVID pandemic and began the hospital's economic recovery of its healthcare system, Dr. Gibson played a pivotal role in getting the hospital back online and developing procedures/surgeries rescheduled for patients that had been delayed. As an acute operating specialist, Dr. Gibson served as the Assistant Director of the Operating Room. In this capacity, he was responsible for determining which patients with and without COVID could safely proceed to surgery during times of limited hospital access. Dr. Gibson developed a safety protocol to perform tracheostomy in high-risk COVID patients who suffered from



respiratory failure. This type of surgery is an incredibly risky procedure for frontline workers, given the potential for exposure and illness. To date, Dr. Gibson has performed five of these delicate and invasive operations on COVID patients.

Brother Gibson was born in East Point, Georgia. He received his undergraduate degree in 2006 from Xavier University of Louisiana majoring in Biology (Cum Laude) and a medical degree (M.D.) from the University of Louisville in 2010. Dr. Gibson was initiated into Theta Omega Chapter in 2007 under the Line Name, "The Fifth Element". He is also a legacy: his father, Nathan, is an Omega man and was initiated into Gamma Psi in 1972. Dr. Gibson's mother, Vanessa, is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

Dr. Gibson is married, his wife Holly, is also a medical doctor specializes in OB/GYN. She is a Delta Sigma Theta (Gamma Alpha Chapter) member. The couple has three children; Addison, Harrison, and Hendrix.

Bro. Gibson is driven by a personal philosophy of servant leadership that is deeply girded in his faith as a Christian. In this regard, he states, "I believe that everyone has a "TAG" talent, ability, and gift to offer the world. He concludes his spiritually based sentiment by saying the following, "I was put here to serve my community, via medicine, with the gifts that God has blessed me with as a surgeon." Brother Gibson is a member of Iota Pi Chapter.

Story by Brother Walter Burt

Chapters Uplift Black Youth



Daniel Fairfax holds a computer donated by Tau Tau Chapter. Fairfax will attend Morehouse College in Atlanta. Daniel (right) stands with his mother.

TAU TAU CHAPTER

On Saturday, August 1, 2020, Tau Tau chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated had donated new laptops computers to three high school graduates that participated in the mentoring program for 16 consecutive years. Brother Ronnie Walker of Tau Tau chapter chaired the mentoring program with the assistance of other Tau Tau Chapter including Omega's Bro. Paul Turner, Bro. Marcus Bedford, Bro. Rodney Brooks, Bro. Carlos Coleman, Bro. Bill Coleman, Bro. Rodney Jones, and Bro. Drew Palmer. Three mentees received laptop computers as they began their college studies.

12th District Launches Operation Omega Relief

As part of Operation Omega Relief, the 12th District coordinated the delivery of \$25,000 worth of medical grade Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to COVID-19 essential workers on the frontlines at local health organizations across four states.

The Ernest E. Just Youth & Community Services, Inc., Aids Healthcare Foundation and New Point Mentoring, Inc. partnered with Omega, donating financial resources in support of Operation Omega Relief. San Francisco, Los Angeles, Phoenix and Tacoma all had medical facilities to benefit from the coordinated effort to help communities that have been hit hardest during the pandemic. A total of 8,700 masks were donated to frontline workers.

an existing partnership with the University of Southern California (USC). Students had ten days of instruction, at-home hands-on exploration, and interactive online engagement.

To supplement resource deficits for African American youth, BBF will add distance tutoring three days per week to supplement the weekly mentor sessions.

The school-based and virtual mentoring platform was funded through grants and in partnership with several community agencies. The community agencies included the Los Angeles County Probation Department, California Community Foundation, Liberty Hill Foundation, and the Pacific Premier Bank. Zeta Rho, Tau Tau, and Rho Iota Iota chapters supported the collaborative efforts of the Bridge Builders Foundation.

In response to the recent COVID-19 pandemic, Bridge Builders Foundation (BBF) has expanded its existing school and community-based program engagement to provide a new distance learning platform.

The initial expansion of BBF's school-based "Thriving Under The Influence" mentor program began via Zoom in April 2020. Led by Brother Dr. Charles Bray, the Bridge Builders mentor program seeks to empower youth with values, attitudes, and strategies required to thrive in school, at home, and in the community.

During the pandemic's stay at home mandates, BBF's Dr. Ernest E. Just Saturday Science Academy, which usually provides classroom instruction, supplemented by community field trips launched bi-weekly BBF STEM@Home classroom sessions on Google Classroom and Google Hangouts. This distance learning platform was also expanded to provide Summer Marine Science sessions, provided through

Ques Serve in Panama City

Making A Difference

February 21, 2020, highlighted Xi Psi Chapter's 1985 Line's 35th Anniversary celebration. The day was not only celebrated with fun and fellowship, it was also filled with service.

Far from the hallowed halls of South Carolina State University where their Omega journey began, the brothers took their celebration to Panama City, Panama. Always enthusiastic about their commitment to service and to mark their historic milestone, the brothers decided also to complete an historic community service project.

Led by former 13th District Representative, Brother Matthew Coleman, along with his Line Brothers Ricarldo Washington, Shelton Shatteen, Duane Brown, Lentford Mitchell, Bernard Kelly, and Darrell Harris, as well as brothers Barry Hodges, Federico Waldron, Eric Nobles, and Francisco Landers, they decided to visit the Hogar Rosa Virginia Center. The facility is a well known outreach center which combines an orphanage for children abandoned by their parents and left at the Capilla Santa Eufrasia Mission, and housing for underaged mothers who were sexually abused and impregnated by a close relative.

The Brothers successfully coordinated with Norma Lewis, Founder and President of Amigas, Friends of Children, a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization, to establish this community outreach event.

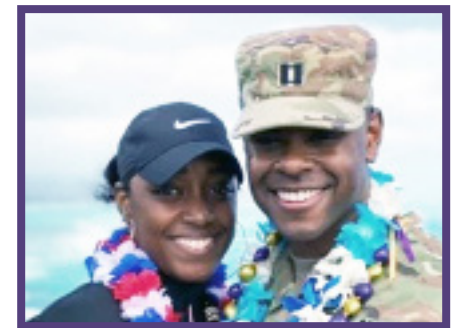
The Brothers were accompanied by Ms. Lewis and received an orientation by the center's director, Hermana Carmen Maria Ramirez. The Brothers toured both sides of the center, gaining an appreciation of its work and the need for external support.

The Brothers held babies and spent time with the kids, playing and being entertained by the children's songs. This time at the center, combined with the brothers' undying commitment to service, motivated the brothers to make an on-the-spot donation to the center to purchase milk and diapers for the children.

Moreover, the brothers were so moved, they pledged monetary support to the center in the amount of \$19,000 over the next ten years. The sum of \$19,000 is in commemoration of 19 Brothers on the Xi Psi 1985 Line. This commitment promises to make a significant impact on the children in these centers. The center's staff was extremely touched by the Brothers' generosity and sincerity.

This experience deeply moved the Brothers, especially Brothers Landers and Waldron, both natives of Panama. More importantly, this experience galvanized each brother's devotion to support this humanitarian initiative. Throughout the weekend, the Men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. were recognized at every public event.

Omega's Rivers Promoted to Captain



On March 7, 2020, the United States Army promoted Brother Marcus Rivers to the rank of Captain. A native of Pensacola, Florida, Rivers graduated from West Florida High School and obtained his Nursing degree and Army commission from Florida A&M University in 2015.

The promotion ceremony took place at the historic Makapu'u Lighthouse Point in Honolulu, Hawaii. The structure was built in 1909 in the easternmost point on the Hawaiian Island of Oahu overlooking the beautiful Pacific Ocean. The ceremony was held in the presence of family, friends, and Brothers of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

U.S. Army Colonel Bryce D. Pringle, the Operations Officer of the 8th Theater Sustainment Command in Hawaii attended the promotion event. Brother Rivers said much of his success has been because of his wife, Toni. "We've been doing this since college, and if it weren't for Toni's direction and guidance, I would not be where I am today."

Brother Captain Rivers is a registered nurse at Tripler Army Medical Center since 2019. In recent months, Brother Rivers was recognized by the 13th District as Lambda Beta Beta's COVID-19 Medical Professional on the Frontlines.



"WHEN WE WEAR THE GLOVES"

**When we wear the gloves
A brother has gone from our midst
And sailed to golden shores.**

**When we wear the gloves
A friend has passed the final test
And walks through purple doors.**

**The circle has an empty place
A voice will raise no more
The song of fellowship and love
Uplift forevermore
When we wear the gloves
When we wear the gloves
A light goes from this earthly life
The visor closed again
Yet all the heavens open wide
To let a new star in**

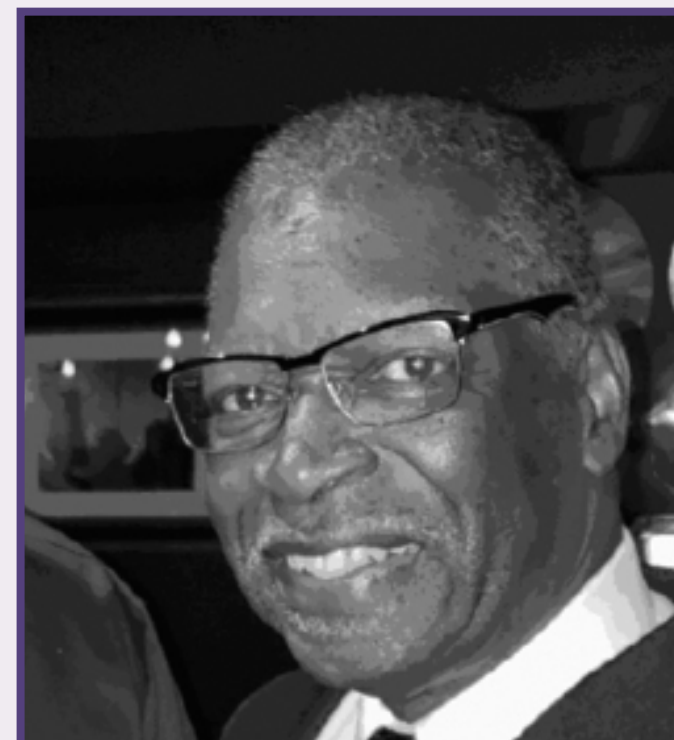
**When we wear the gloves
A brother leaves the chapter rolls
And moves to other worlds
For when we say our last goodbye
He walks on streets of Pearls.**

When we wear the gloves.

by Brother Dr. Carver A. Portlock

Brother Dr. Sears Enters Omega Chapter

One of the Fraternity's Great Omega Men



Additionally, his commitment to education included encouraging post-secondary and post-baccalaureate education during his more than 25 years as an Adjunct Professor at Wayland Baptist University, the University of Alaska Anchorage, and the University of LaVerne in California.

Brother Dr. Sears' service to the community included serving as the past Chairman of the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission, Alaska Black Caucus, NAACP, Mayor's Youth at Risk Committee, and Elks Lodge No. 1351.

Dr. Sears served as a mentor and friend, not only in Omega, but to the community at large. With that in mind, the 12th District renamed its Emerging Leaders Institute, where former District Representatives mentor brothers in leadership in the District, the Bro. Dr. Lewis J. Sears Emerging Leaders Institute

One of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity's greatest giants, Brother Dr. Lewis J. Sears, Jr., entered Omega Chapter on July 1, 2020. Brother Sears, the 21st Twelfth District Representative, was an active member of Gamma Alpha Alpha Chapter located in Anchorage, Alaska. He was also the first Basileus and a charter member of Gamma Alpha Alpha.

Brother Sears, 74, was initiated into the Fraternity through the Lambda Epsilon Chapter at Tuskegee University in Spring 1967. Brother Sears worked as a key and essential member of the Omega Life Membership Foundation as he simultaneously pursued continued excellence in his career aspirations and service endeavors.

Sears was a celebrated educator. His life-long passion and commitment to lift young people up was recognized during his tenure of more than 30 years as a school administrator in the Anchorage School District.

Sears was memorialized at New Hope Baptist Church on July 16 by members of Gamma Alpha Alpha Chapter and 12th District Representative, Bro. Kwame Dow. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, many Brothers of Omega were unable to attend the Services in Anchorage, but the well wishes from the stretched arms of Omega continue to be received by the family.

Brother Sears is survived by his wife of more than 51 years, Betty; daughters, Lisa Boddie (Alonzo) and Lynette Sears; brother, Abdul S. El-Amin; granddaughters, Zoe Boddie and Laila Boddie; and a host of nephews, nieces, cousins and many friends. Lewis was preceded in death by his parents, L.J. and Annie Pearl Sears; and brother, Allen Sears.

We say to Brother Lewis J. Sears Jr., Job Well Done My Son of Blood and Thunder for "Seeing it Through."

Brother Leon Ashford

Counselor

Brother Ashford entered Omega Chapter recently. He was initiated into Omega through Omicron Sigma Chapter. He graduated from Lincoln University in 1953. He later received a Master's degree in Guidance and Counseling from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He also earned his Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Washington University in 1980.

Brother Eugene Boldon

Educator

Brother Boldon entered Omega Chapter on September 4, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Nu Sigma Chapter on the campus of Wayne State University in 1953. He also was an Air Force veteran and a member of the Detroit Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen. He coached basketball on the high school and college level.

Brother John L. Clark, Jr., Esq.

Attorney

Brother Clark entered Omega Chapter on April 3, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Tau Psi Chapter in 1985. He graduated from St. Bonaventure University (BA-1964); Howard University (MSW-1967) and the University of Maryland's School of Law (J.D.-1981).

Brother Orville Dale

Educator

Brother Dale entered Omega Chapter on May 8, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Kappa Epsilon Chapter in 1986 on campus of St. Augustine University. He was an educator for the Detroit Public Schools, and a member of Tau Kappa Kappa Chapter.

Brother Henry Glaspie

FBI Agent

Brother Glaspie entered Omega Chapter on August 24, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Sigma Rho Chapter in 1983. He was a retired Special Agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigations and a member of Nu Omega Chapter.

Brother George W. Jamison

Educator

Brother Jamison entered Omega Chapter on February 26, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Beta Alpha Chapter in 1992. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education. He worked as teacher for the Jackson Public School District before joining the United Parcel Service (UPS). He retired from UPS after 30-years of service. Brother Jamison was honored as the "7th District's Omega Man of the Year" in 2017.

Brother Joseph McCord

Educator

Brother McCord entered Omega Chapter on September 3, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Zeta Psi Chapter at Hunter College in 1965. Brother McCord taught at the University of Chicago's Laboratory School, the Chicago Urban League and the Chicago Public Schools. He was an active member of Sigma Omega Chapter.

Brother Bernard Mitchell

Executive Chef

Brother Mitchell entered Omega Chapter on July 27, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Tau Sigma Chapter on the campus of University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in 1990. He served as Head Chef for several prominent restaurants in Detroit, MI. Bro. Mitchell was a member of Tau Kappa Kappa Chapter.

Brother Ronald Moore

Minister

Reverend Brother Moore entered Omega Chapter on May 5, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Rho Sigma Chapter on the campus of Purdue University. The Army veteran worked at General Motors and was

Brother Johnathan Mosley, Sr.

Human Services

Brother Mosley entered Omega Chapter on March 28, 2020. Mosley joined Omega through Pi Omega Chapter in 1999. He graduated from Morgan State University with a BA in Political Science. He also earned a Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Coppin State University. He served as Pi Omega's Basileus and was selected as the chapter's Omega Man of the Year.

Brother Deon Price

Chef and Entrepreneur

Brother Price entered Omega Chapter on June 28, 2020. He was initiated into Omega through Upsilon Psi Chapter at Florida A&M University in 1985. Brother Price was a successful chef and a longtime member of Chicago's Rho Gamma Gamma Chapter.



Brother Randolph Thompson

Educator

Brother Thompson transitioned to Omega Chapter on August 7, 2020. He was initiated into the Fraternity through Pi Chapter at Morgan State College in 1955. He also earned Master's degrees from Western Michigan University and American University. Brother Thompson served in the U.S. Army achieving the rank of Lieutenant. Later, the Omega Life Member served as an educator in the Baltimore School System.

Brother Vernell Whitaker

Educator

Brother Whitaker transitioned to Omega Chapter on August 24, 2020. He was initiated into the Fraternity through Eta Chapter at Alcorn A&M College in 1970. The chemistry and math teacher retired from the North Chicago School District. He was a former Basileus of Rho Tau Chapter.

Brother Arthur Williams

Law Enforcement

Brother Williams transitioned to Omega Chapter on April 7, 2020. Williams was initiated through Nu Omega Chapter in 1995. He served in the Detroit Police Department, and was appointed as a civilian Deputy Chief.

Brother Ennis D. Winston

Social Worker

Brother Winston entered Omega Chapter in April 2020. He was initiated into Omega Psi Phi Fraternity through Beta Chapter in 1957. He earned his degree from Lincoln University and was a social worker. He was active with Upsilon Phi Chapter.

Brother David C. Wynn, Sr.

Chief of Police

Brother Wynn entered Omega Chapter on March 15, 2019. He was initiated into Omega through Phi Rho Chapter on June 24, 1999. He graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi with a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. He also earned a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. He also graduated from the FBI National Academy.

He was an active member of Phi Rho Chapter in Hattiesburg, MS. and he served on numerous committees as well as being a Life Member of Omega Psi Phi. Bro. Wynn served 22-years with the Mississippi State Highway Patrol. Wynn also was the Chief of Police for the city of Hattiesburg, MS for five years. He served his country in the military for 31 years retired in 2005 with the rank of Colonel. He went on to serve with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) as the Federal Security Director (FSD) at the Jackson-Wiley International Airport in Jackson, MS.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR OBITUARIES IN THE ORACLE

Background and Purpose

To write an appropriate obituary, it is important to capture the spirit of the loved one who has passed. Compose a paragraph that describes not only what the Omega Man did, but also his work in the Fraternity. For example, focus on dates, job, and duties. A short, factual obituary is needed.

The following steps should be taken when writing an obituary:

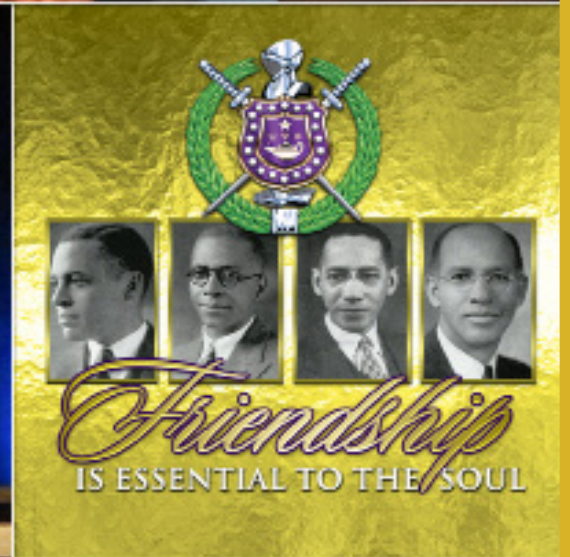
1. Start with the full name of the deceased, and the date he entered Omega Chapter.

2. Provide a very brief summary of the deceased's life, starting from birth and working forward. Do not include every detail, just the key facts/information such as initiated Chapter, schools, profession, and any duties he may have held in the Fraternity.

Example:

Brother John Jones transitioned to Omega Chapter on December 1, 2019. He was born January 16, 1928 in Fayetteville, NC. Bro. Jones was initiated through Alpha Chapter in 1949. General Jones was the head of the Air Force Judge Advocate General Directorate. He was promoted to the rank of General two-months before his untimely death. He served as the Keeper of Finance for his Tau Tau Mu Chapter for five years.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
International Headquarters
3951 Snapfinger Pkwy
Decatur, GA 30035



Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. congratulates Joseph Biden as the President Elect and Senator Kamala Harris as the Vice President Elect. Biden will become the 46th President of the United States of America on January 20, 2021. Harris is a graduate of Howard University and a member of the Divine Nine, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.