On Saturday, February 23, 2008, Tau Kappa Kappa sponsored its annual signature event. The State of the Fraternity Luncheon has become one of the premier events of the state of Michigan, if not the Tenth District.

This year, the current Grand Basileus, Warren G. Lee was brought in to discuss the issues and advancements of the Fraternity as well as the questions and concerns of the brotherhood. Brother Grand Basileus first spoke to the state and direction of the fraternity then addressed some prevailing questions. The floor was then opened for direct questions from the brothers. All questions were answered, some to the satisfaction of the brothers, some not satisfied.

Brother Grand Basileus, Warren G. Lee, availed himself to brothers, as all were able to converse with him one-on-one at the completion of the formal luncheon. He then made his way to the hospitality suite where brothers continued to engage him in conversation, questions and discussing concerns. The beauty in this forum is ability to interact with the Grand Basileus.

This year State of the Fraternity was special for other reasons. On May 23, 1938 Nu Sigma Chapter was founded at the downtown Detroit Y.M.C.A. by Wesley Brown, Spearman Jones, Frank Lean, Oscar Liggett, Ligens Moore, Fletcher Route, Jose Young and Morris O. Williams. Later that year the Chapter was moved to Wayne State University.

During the 2008 State of the Fraternity Luncheon, Brother Spearman Jones was recognized for his Seventy Years of service to Omega Psi Phi. Brother Timothy Jackson (Nu Sigma ’05), Chapter Basileus, spoke to life and times of brother Jones and presented him with a token of appreciation for milestone and his part as a charter member of the Nu Sigma Chapter.

In addition, Past Tenth District Representation (1976-1979) Brother Owlsley G. Spiller, Upsilon ’48, was acknowledged for his sixty years of service to Omega Psi Phi. Brother Gerald Mays, Nu Sigma ’68, reached his fortieth year as well. These brothers alone held one-hundred seventy years of the “True Omega Spirit!”
Introducing The New Assistant Director of Public Relation
Brother Brandon D. Lewis

Brother Brandon D. Lewis was initiated into Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. by way of Tau Kappa Kappa Chapter (Southfield, MI) on April 2, 2005. Brother Lewis has shown dedication and enthusiasm for work in our fraternity. In his three years, Brother Lewis has served as a district delegate, chaired the American Cancer Society Relay for Life Program, Achievement Week and has worked on many committees. Brother Lewis is currently the Tau Kappa Kappa Chapter Reporter.

Omega Men Support Gateway Homeless Shelter

Gateway Homeless Services is the largest and most comprehensive emergency shelter in Missouri. It encompasses the original organization that began in 1975 as the Christian Service Center, and now also includes the Someone Cares Mission.

Gateway provides 110 beds, and more than 100 lunches per day, to homeless people. The shelter serves homeless women and children. Gateway provides at-risk families with programs such as, a family emergency shelter, adult educational services including classes related to computers, sewing, nutrition and fitness, budgeting, hygiene, cooking, and basic life skills amongst others.

This year the men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity supported the shelter by giving them a full course Thanksgiving meal. The men of Omega donated the food and with humbleness, served all the men, women and children who attended.

Bro Mell Holland - Basileus
Bro Andrew Bailey - Editor
CHICAGO - The Men of Sigma Omega Chapter celebrated their Third Annual Scholarship Mardi Gras Ball. The event took place at the historic Grand Ballroom on Chicago’s Southside. The majestic banquet hall was bubbling with life as the Men of Omega Psi Phi filled it with the sights, sounds and smells of New Orleans. The evening begun with a traditional “second line” dance as partygoers strolled to the tune of “When the Saints go Marching In.” The room was decorated in traditional Mardi Gras colors of purple, gold and green with beads and party favors handed out to every person to give the event an authentic Bayou feel. Guests feasted on Cajun style grilled salmon and spicy gumbo. The meal was topped off with authentic New Orleans style beignets for dessert.

After dinner, several items were raffled off including a flat screen television. The Mardi Gras Ball is a costumed event that encourages all the guests to bring out their best disguise in hopes of winning the grand prize. The costumes spanned the imagination with everything from Warlocks, Samurai Warriors, Aztec Kings, Gangsters, Babies and even Flavor Flav made an appearance. There was no shortage of fellowship as brothers from all over the Talented Tenth District came to support the brothers in Chicago.

The Ques were in full fashion as the DJ spun the best in Chicago-style stepping and House Music. Dancing, socializing and an overall good time were had by all. In the upcoming years the Chapter hopes to expand the event to accommodate larger crowds and raise funds various donations. This year, Sigma Omega Chapter has committed to donating $10,000 in college scholarships to worthy young men. The Mardi Gras Ball is just one of the signature events the chapter uses to raise funds for this initiative. Other events include the annual Omega Golf Classic held in the late summer.
W. George Pinnell Award for Outstanding Service

Vernon G. Smith
Associate Professor of Education
School of Education
Indiana University Northwest
Appointed to IU faculty, 1992
B.S., Indiana University, 1966
M.S., Indiana University, 1969
Ed.D., Indiana University, 1978

"Dr. Smith's lessons are taught and they are written. But, most of all, they are written in the lives of those he serves."
--Roger W. Thornton, Superintendent of Schools, Illinois High School District 211

It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. A person stands tallest when bending to help someone in need. If it is to be, it is up to me.

Vernon G. Smith holds these adages close to his heart. They are the guiding principles of his untiring dedication to others and his remarkable record of teaching and public service -- a record that spans four decades and includes 145 awards and more than 100 citations of achievement and appreciation.

From his first postgraduate position as a school teacher in Gary, Indiana, to his current roles as an Indiana state representative and an associate professor of education at Indiana University Northwest, Vernon Smith has always been one thing: a stalwart and compassionate advocate for northwest Indiana.

When he’s not teaching and mentoring students, advocating for public education initiatives, or speaking at local events and national conferences, you’ll find Smith serving meals to prison inmates at Thanksgiving, bringing a boarded-up Gary theatre back to life, or organizing local teens to help senior citizens with household chores. Smith is a "voice for the needs and dreams of the residents of northwest Indiana," says Roger W. Thornton, former executive director of the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents and current superintendent of schools, Illinois High School District 211.
Smith is also the heart, head, and hands behind countless educational programs and civic endeavors. In response to the lack of youth involvement in civic and political activities in Gary, Smith organized Youth in Politics, the Young Citizens League, and Youth Ensuring Solidarity (YES). To revitalize the community’s pride in Gary, Smith organized the Gary chapter of Focus Hope and the Stash the Trash campaign, an annual clean-up effort that focuses on Broadway Street.

He is the founder and president of IU Dons, Inc.; the founder and board president of African-American Achievers Youth Corps, Inc., in Gary; the founder of the Northern Indiana Association of Black School Educators; and the founder and sponsor of the Gary-based Vernon Stars. He is a member of numerous national, state, and community organizations, which include Omega Psi Phi fraternity, the Northwest Indiana Urban League, the Gary Reading Council/Indiana State Reading Association, the Brothers Keepers Shelter for Homeless Men, and the NAACP. In addition, he serves on several committees at the School of Education.

Before he joined the IU Northwest faculty in 1992, Smith was an assistant principal and then principal in the Gary Community School Corporation, as well as an adjunct lecturer at IU Northwest and Purdue University Calumet. An informed promoter of quality public education, Smith carries his messages to civic centers, churches, the legislature, schools, and a host of social service agencies. "Many of these efforts are directly related to research and teacher preparation for student and school success," says Dorothy W. Ige, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at IU Northwest.

As a teacher, Smith finds his truest calling and most satisfying work. He believes in masterful teaching and in being available to students’ needs beyond the classroom -- writing letters of recommendation, being a faculty sponsor of student activities, and acting as a personal motivator and mentor. He received the Trustees Teaching Award in 2006 and in 2000 (when it was named TERA), and he received the Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching (FACET) Award in 1998. Smith sat on the Gary City Council for 18 years prior to his election to the Indiana House of Representatives in 1990. As a legislator, Smith has served as assistant majority floor leader, and he is currently chairman of the Local Government Committee. He is the former chair of the Committee on Families, Children, and Human Affairs and is the founder and current chair of the Indiana Commission on the Social Status of the Black Male. "The cross-fertilizations between Dr. Smith’s pedagogy and scholarly publications with his service commitments are evident," says Ige. Empowering and educating American youth and black male youth are a critical focus of Smith’s political, academic, and personal mission, and Smith has published numerous writings on these topics.

"Vernon has committed himself to bettering the country’s educational system and to the promotion of social justice, focusing on America’s youth," says U.S. Representative Peter Visclosky. "He exemplifies the spirit of concern and giving of oneself by which we hope and believe this country is characterized."
The Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Tenth District African-American Life and History (AALH) committee conducted its second annual Essay Contest Awards Program at the Elder W. Diggs Elementary School in Indianapolis, IN. Sixth graders A’georian Beverly (1st Place), Dayonia Meredith (2nd Place), and E’Monnee Williams (3rd Place) were the honorees as they each were awarded a $50 U.S. savings bond that can mature to a maximum value of $100 if held to full term.

The Essay Contest Awards Program was the result of the collaborative effort of the members of the Tenth District AALH Committee, Principal Kelli Marshall, the staff at the Elder W. Diggs School, and distinguished brothers of the Tenth District. AALH committee members included Chairman Brother Melvin M. Slater, Sr. of Iota Chapter (Chicago, IL), committee members: Benjamin Dirden of Tau Kappa Kappa Chapter (Southfield, MI), Karlos Hill of Sigma Xi Chapter (Champaign, IL), and Kendall Franklin of Rho Gamma Gamma Chapter (Chicago, IL).

Distinguished members of the Tenth District were present at the Essay Contest Awards Program including Tenth District Representative Glenn Mathews, 2nd Vice Representative Alex Gibson, Keeper of Records and Seal Climent Edmond, Chaplain Kim Yarber, Zeta Phi Basileus Curtis White, Credentials Chairman, Economic Development Chairman Andre Garner as well as brothers Kenny Coles (who also doubled as the event photographer), Brothers Ronald Wright and Dwayne Johnson of Iota Chapter, Brothers Michael Falker and Alex Sanders of Zeta Phi Chapter, and Brother Hubert Reynolds of Sigma Omega Chapter.
Next, AALH Committee Chairman Brother Slater provided opening remarks to all of the 6th grade students in attendance. “It’s a blessing to be here today and I’m not going to waste my blessing, how about you?” stated Brother Slater as he then proceeded to explain the three-fold purpose of the event. The first purpose was “to properly honor and recognize a noteworthy black individual [Elder W. Diggs] and make it known to the world that he lived and his life is still touching the lives of the future, YOU.” The second purpose was “to uphold our cardinal principles of Scholarship and Uplift by providing students with an opportunity to exercise their writing skills.” The third purpose was “to inspire students to embrace being Black as a positive...To challenge students to resist the assertion of negativity and be proud to be Black.”

The highlight of the event was the presentation of awards to the 6th grade essay contest winners. Each winner wrote remarkable essays that stirred the emotions of the members of the AALH committee. Additionally, each student who submitted an essay was given a certificate of appreciation for their participation in the essay contest.

After the presentation of the awards, Tenth District Representative Glenn Mathews presented Principal Marshall with a school gift – a beautiful black-and-white framed portrait photograph of Elder W. Diggs. Also accompanying the photograph was a framed one-page biography of Elder W. Diggs. The program culminated with some closing remarks by Brother Mathews, Brother Slater, and Principal Marshall. Brother Slater imparted the following words to the students as he concluded the program.

“Never choose an excuse not to excel. In Omega Psi Phi, excuses are monuments of nothingness, they build bridges that lead to nowhere, those who use these tools of incompetence, are masters of nothingness. You are far from nothingness. It is clear from your writings that you are the best and the brightest! Let Elder Diggs’ inspiration and your light of hope, inspiration, and intelligence shine for all to see. Thank you for being you!”
Minneapolis, MN- One Saturday morning is all it took for the brothers of Epsilon Rho to change the lives of 60 children for an entire year. That was the end result of the recent community service project in which brothers joined Feed My Starving Children (FMSC), a non-profit Christian organization committed to feeding God’s starving children in developing countries.

On the last day in May a group of 20 volunteers (Epsilon Rho brothers, friends, and family) gathered at the largest of three Twin Cities FMSC’s facilities. The "Omega Group" received a brief presentation about the FMSC organization and detailed information about the impact of world hunger. The group then started a 2 hour "shift" of preparing and packaging meals.

Preparing and packaging meals is achieved by groups of 4-5 volunteers working at one of the eight food preparation stations assembling scientifically designed meal pouches which provide six child-size servings per bag. The pouches contain rice, soy protein, vitamins, minerals, vegetarian chicken flavoring, and dehydrated vegetables. This food mixture is culturally acceptable worldwide and allows dissemination without the need of directions which is helpful when providing humanitarian aid across language barriers.

In total, the group prepared 65,700 meals during their shift. That amount is equivalent to feeding 60 children, three times a day, for an entire year. FMSC meals are distributed in over 50 countries around the world through missionary partners at orphanages, schools, clinics, refugee camps and malnourishment centers.

Andre, a 11 year-old boy from Minneapolis participating that day with another group, was caught telling his mother "I want to be like them" after observing fellow station workers from the Omega group and talking extensively about football and Omega Psi Phi’s aspirations of helping the community.

This was the first official visit to FMSC by the brothers of Epsilon Rho and plans are already in the works for the chapter to make another visit late this summer.

Event coordinator Brother Rex Smith was quoted as saying, "This is what Omega is about, helping the community and helping the people of the world."
Our first Cardinal Principle is Manhood. The Cardinal Principle is most important when an Omega Man becomes a father. Fatherhood is very crucial in the day and age especially in the black community. With that in mind, Bro. Thabiti Boone, author the book "Daddy’s Little Girls", came to Chicago to address an expo. This was the Lil SIS Expo Chicago.

Lil' S.I.S. Expo Chicago was a two-day celebration of teen girls (13-18). The premise of Lil' S.I.S. Expo Chicago is that inspiration is contagious, and Bro. Boone was there to address the young about his struggles and successes as a single father. This was a task because many young black women never know who their father is or don’t want to know who he is.

Bro. Boone requested the presence of the brothers in Chicago, and his request was answered. A few Omegas, sometimes that’s all it takes, attended the event, which held at Paul Robeson High School (south side of Chicago). Their attendance was needed because Bro. Boone needed some strong black male, fathers in the room to give the young women a positive look at what is possible. The discussion were intense, but Bro. Boone kept the flow even and quite possibly assisted the young women with some of the pain they have.

Bro. Boone sent a thank you email, which states:

Special thanks to the 10th District/Chicago Brotherhood for their Brotherly love, support and hospitality during my visit to Chicago for the LilSis teenage girls conference. I particularly appreciated the leadership of Bro. DR Clim and Bro. Ben Blakeley and the Urban Prep Chicago Academy, conference coordinator April Preyar was extremely pleased with the support and presence of the Brotherhood during the 2 day conference. I also want to thank the Brotherhood for the book sponsorship, which will go to Bro. Blakeley’s school.

Again, Thanks Brothers

Bro. Boone
Real Omega Men Read:  
A True Success Program

It is a known fact that, the more children read the better they can read. The more they can read, the better the comprehension becomes, and hence, the more they enjoy reading. Reading actually becomes much more than a fundamental need; it becomes fun!

The Real Omega Men Reading program is designed to encourage students to enjoy reading. Also to help students see a positive male role model read to them. This places a positive image in their minds. The men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc, Nu Chi Chapter invested in reading to the students at The Miles Davis Elementary School in E St Louis, IL. The men read to students that were in various grades levels from 1st - 5th Grade.

As a result of the reading experience the staff and students have invited the Men of Omega to return to Miles Davis to read at a later date. Not only is reading a required skill to complete school and then university it is also a needed skill in adulthood. The ability to read and learn new things throughout your life keeps your brain young and health.
The Tenth District of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
District Talent Hunt Committee
Presents
The Annual District Talent Hunt Competition
FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2009 AT 6:00 PM
HOLIDAY INN
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FREE TO THE PUBLIC
HOSTED BY NU PI CHAPTER, JOLIET, IL
The Tenth District of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated

Bro. Climent J. Edmond, District Representative

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