

Grand Polemarch's Message



If we collectively take ownership in our young people, develop within them a strong foundation of values and principles, we will develop God-fearing servants for mankind.

January 20, 2009, is a date we will all remember for the rest of our lives. Every person in America will recall for a lifetime what he or she was doing on that day. For me, and so many others, I was in Washington, DC, for the inauguration of President Barack Obama. As I tried to comprehend the moment, I realized that our shared responsibility as Kappa men multiplied exponentially. Kappa's responsibility as an institution of leaders grew as Mr. Obama took the oath of office as this nation's first African American president.

Our president has to shoulder significant responsibilities at a time when America seems to be at its worst. Crime is up and test scores are at an all time low. Foreclosure rates are at an all-time high, and banks are not loaning money. The Dow Jones, NASDAQ composite index, Standard & Poor's and the Russell 2000 index of smaller companies have tumbled while the Labor Department has seen an increase in layoffs and the premature closure of business operations. The new president takes office at a time when the economy and its citizens are recognizing that the health and moral welfare of the nation is deeply troubled.

The question arises: Is help available? Can Kappa do its part in reversing this downward spiral and help a president who has inherited major responsibilities? I say, "Yes, we can." Throughout the history of this nation, we have rallied behind organizational leaders for direction. Recently, we all observed how working together can be very effective. Brother Myron Rolle working closely with Theta Eta, The Florida State University, and his advisor, Brother Alvin Barrington, set the pace for academic and athletic distinction in 2009 as a Rhodes Scholar. Brother Mike Tomlin, head football coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers, through the collective efforts of his players and coaching staff, led his team to victory in NFL Super Bowl XLIII on February 1, 2009. These two fraternal examples mirror the election efforts of President Obama on how people working together can effectively accomplish things of substance. For Kappa, if the entirety of our organization worked together, we could accomplish just about anything.

Our greatest shared responsibility is to have our membership fully understand that there is a brilliant future for Kappa Alpha Psi on the world stage and the membership's collective efforts play a significant role in developing that future. What is at stake in the areas of health, education, politics, economic equality and service to mankind is too important to be left unattended. This, too, is becoming the business of Kappa Alpha

Psi. It is obvious to me that we must develop men of substance to take leadership roles in these areas of concern.

This issue of *The Kappa Journal* reaches you as we continue to reflect on Black History Month. Many of us were invited to speak to young people about living a life centered on values and principles handed down over generations. It is during this time that we recall the great deeds of stalwart icons in communities throughout America like Martin Luther King, Jr., W.E.B. Dubois, and others. In today's society, as it was then, organizational leadership was central to advocating and reshaping the issues of this nation. Dr. King was effective by mobilizing the efforts of the membership of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Dr. Dubois mobilized black, white and yellow people to assist the NAACP to get traction as an organization bent on social equality.

Each of these leaders and the organizations they led spoke to young people about living a life centered on values and principles. If fraternal and other social organizations work together on common issues and focus on values and principles espoused by former generations of organizational leaders, we will be able to promote goodwill throughout the communities of this nation and grow a people of good conscience.

It is obvious that where there is a lack of values and principles you will find a world wrought with hopelessness, lack of motivation and pseudo thug life as images that young people adopt as the benchmark for how they should behave, dress and speak. If we collectively take ownership in our young people, develop within them a strong foundation of values and principles, we will develop God-fearing servants for mankind.

I say to you, we cannot do it alone; we must do it together. One KAPPA! Creating Inspiration: A Call to Service.

Yours in the Bond,
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31st Grand Polemarch