

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®

Alpha Gamma Eta Omega Chapter



NEWS RELEASE

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***Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® Alpha Gamma Eta Omega Chapter Hosts
Transformative “Free Your Mind” Mental Health Awareness Exhibit
at Middletown Thrall Library***

Middletown, NY, May 17, 2025 – In a powerful display of community, compassion, and healing, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® Alpha Gamma Eta Omega Chapter, under the leadership of President Rasheena Wilson, hosted a mental health awareness exhibit titled “Free Your Mind” at the Middletown Thrall Library on Saturday, May 17. The event was co-chaired by Dr. Lernice Henry and Saalihah Akbar.

More than 60 attendees gathered to experience a moving exploration of mental health through storytelling, art, education, and shared reflection. Far more than a traditional exhibit, Free Your Mind served as a space where vulnerability was embraced, resilience was honored, and mental wellness was deeply valued.

Dr. Lernice Henry, Program Co-Lead “This wasn’t just about awareness—it was about connection,” said Dr. Henry. “It was about seeing and honoring the mental health journeys of ourselves and others.”

The program featured three dynamic speakers:

- Dr. Naeema Burgess, who explored the concept of what it truly means to “free your mind,”
- Dr. Cierra Osei-Buapim, who emphasized the role of self-care in mental health, and
- Ms. Adrienne Willis-Connors, MS, CSP, who addressed the impact of mental health on youth in school settings.

Each speaker’s segment was preceded by a powerful video spotlighting personal testimonies. The video titles —Living with a Mental Health Diagnosis, Counseling/Therapy to Free Your Mind, and Understanding Youth and the Journey to Free the Mind—set the tone for meaningful dialogue. Q&A sessions followed each speaker, creating an interactive and affirming environment. Attendees also enjoyed raffles and prizes, adding a light touch to the deeply meaningful program.

Following the presentations, the Free Your Mind exhibit opened, inviting participants into a multi-sensory experience thoughtfully curated to engage not just the mind but the body and spirit.

Divided into seven zones inspired by the five senses—sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell—the exhibit encouraged personal reflection and emotional connection. Each zone was anchored by original artwork from local artist Judey G, whose pieces expressed themes of self-awareness, vulnerability, and emotional resilience.

The event closed with a call to action: to carry these conversations forward into our homes, schools, and communities—to continue breaking the stigma around mental health, one story at a time.

Saalihah Akbar, Program Co-Lead “Mental health is not a moment. It is a lifelong journey,” said co-chair Saalihah Akbar. “We are proud to offer a space where healing begins, and where community shows up for one another.”

The Alpha Gamma Eta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated and supported the Free Your Mind initiative. Your presence made a difference—and every step we take together brings us closer to a world where mental wellness is seen, felt, and celebrated.

About Alpha Gamma Eta Omega Chapter

Chartered on May 19, 2024, Alpha Gamma Eta Omega Chapter is the 157th Chapter in the Notable North Atlantic Region of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® proudly serving Orange County, NY. Twenty seven (27) women from diverse professional backgrounds rededicated their devotion for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc®. and serving their community.

Since chartering, Alpha Gamma Eta Omega Chapter has been a beacon of leadership and service in the community. The chapter's initiatives have focused on empowering youth, promoting education, and fostering health and wellness. Through various programs and partnerships, they have made significant strides in addressing community needs and providing opportunities for growth and development. For information about our program please contact contact Dion Walker-Duncan, Vice President programs@akaalphagammaetaomega.org.

About Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® (AKA), an international service organization, was founded on the campus of Howard University in Washington, D.C. in 1908. It is the oldest Greek-letter organization established by African American college-educated women.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated® is comprised of more than 360,000 initiated members in graduate and undergraduate chapters located in 12 nations and territories including the United States, Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada, United Arab Emirates, Germany, Japan, Liberia, Nigeria, South Korea, South Africa and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Led by International President & CEO Danette Anthony Reed of Dallas, Texas, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, often is hailed as “America’s premier Greek-letter organization for African American women.”

Editor’s Note: Courtesy photos of the event are linked below:

People in the photo from left to right: Marsha Henderson, Saalihah Akbar, Dr. Cierra Osei-Buapim, Dr. Naeema Burgess, Meredith L Henderson, Rasheena Wilson, Ms. Adrienne Willis-Connors, MS, CSP, and Dr. Lernice Henry - **[PHOTO ONE CLICK HERE](#)**

People in the photo from left to right: (Back Row) Yvonne Holder, Nyhisha T. Gibbs, Saalihah Akbar, Dr. Lernice Henry, Yalitza Sepulveda, Netikka D. Seward-Holloway; (Front Row) Anquinette Hayles, Meredith L. Henderson, Rasheena Wilson, Monica Blackwell Merritt, Marsha Henderson - **[PHOTO TWO CLICK HERE](#)**

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More information on Alpha Gamma Eta Omega Chapter can be found online at www.akaalphagammaetaomega.org

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