

REGION: Sorority's Emerging Young Leaders program launched



/CONTRIBUTED IMAGE

Emerging Young Leaders participants from the Heritage Intermediate site pose with HIS principal, Laura Rowland, EYL Chairman, Kenyetta Suggars, Etowanda School District Superintendent Shawn Judson, and HIS teacher, Candra Loftis.

1 of 2



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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY

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The local chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is charting new waters as it launches a new international initiative program titled "Emerging Young Leaders". The ladies of Eta Nu Omega Chapter have selected 45 middle school girls to participate in this three-year program. The chapter has established two program sites in the cities of Fontana and San Bernardino.

Emerging Young Leaders is the signature program of Alpha Kappa Alpha, created by International President Carolyn House Stewart. Consisting of four academies, the program is designed to cultivate and encourage high scholastic achievement through leadership development, educational enrichment, civic engagement, and character building.

The program seeks to develop the skills and talents of middle school girls, grades 6th, 7th, and 8th, with the intent of grooming future leaders.

Eta Nu Omega members Kenyetta Suggars, Monique Hill, and Richae Kater, have agreed to head this project, and together they oversee both sites. Suggars said, "When I was initiated into Eta Nu Omega last winter, I was eager to get to work in the community. This is the type of program that I always wanted to be a part of; it is such a wonderful way to invest in our future. "

The first Emerging Young Leaders site was launched in September at Heritage Intermediate School in Fontana. Principal Laura Rowland welcomed the program. Heritage teacher Candra Loftis, also a member of Eta Nu Omega, serves as the liaison between the sorority and the school.

After receiving permission from the Etiwanda School District, 25 target young ladies were identified as emerging leaders by faculty and staff. The participants meet with sorority mentors bi-weekly for a maximum of an hour and a half after school. They have already enjoyed various leadership workshops, including special guest visits from Etiwanda School District Superintendent Shawn Judson and Fontana Mayor Acquanelta Warren.

The second leaders site was launched a few weeks later in San Bernardino. This group meets at the Community Hospital of San Bernardino on Saturdays. Likewise, the ladies participate in workshops on leadership topics like parliamentary procedures, team building and etiquette.

Twenty young women meet with their mentors to develop leadership skills about twice a month. During January, the participants from the San Bernardino site took part in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service activity sponsored by Eta Nu Omega Chapter.

Each young lady participated in an applicant process. They were granted entrance into the program based upon their completed application, present extracurricular activities, ability to lead, leadership experience and skills, current grade point average, recommendations from teachers and community leaders, and a 300-word essay.

The participants in the Emerging Young Leaders program have stated that they really enjoy the program and learning new skills to help them become young leaders. Moreover, Eta Nu Omega Chapter members expressed their excitement about the program.

Eta Nu Omega President Yvonne Ashe stated: "It is a pleasure to work with such talented young women. It makes me very excited about our future. It is great to see the innovative minds of tomorrow's future busy at work and eager to learn."