

SPECIAL EDITION 2020



NEWS AND NOTES FROM GAMMA PI CHAPTER



GAMMA PI ANSWERS THE CALL ON COVID-19

April 2 School Chromebook Giveaway

April 8 County Homeless Shelter

April 18 Suitland High Food Bank

April 25 Suitland High Food Bank

May 2 Largo High Food Bank



GAMMA PI STEPS INTO THE BREACH: LEADS LOCAL COVID-19 RELIEF EFFORTS

Since the State of Maryland went into a shelter-in-place posture in March in response to the dangerous COVID-19 crisis, the Brothers of Gamma Pi Chapter have been anything but sheltered when it comes to Social Action. While being careful to follow government-mandated guidelines on social distancing and wearing proper protective equipment, the chapter has been on the move throughout the county helping to provide relief for the residents of the community through a variety of Social Action projects. Dressed smartly in their Royal Purple and Old Gold "PPE," members of The Super Chapter braved the threats of the lurking virus "to be of service."

On April 2, several Brothers directed traffic at four county schools - Wise High, Suitland High School and Surrattsville High and Benjamin Stoddert Middle School - while the students and their families picked up free Chromebooks provided by the Prince George's County Public Schools.

About one dozen Gamma Pi members served simultaneously at the four schools, helping to keep a safe and orderly flow of traffic in and out of the school property. Brothers also helped with the laptop distribution in between regulating the traffic flow.

Fresh Homemade Sandwiches to the Homeless; Groceries to Families

On Saturday, April 8, the Brothers of The Super Chapter strode into the PG Homeless Shelter to deliver sandwiches to the residents. The food was prepared in advance at the home of one Brother whose wife and daughters stayed up into the wee hours of the night to prepare the sandwiches, all while wearing their protective gear in their home kitchen. For the residents and staff in the homeless shelter, the Brothers of Gamma Pi were the light shining brightly through the storm. In the middle of this frightening pandemic, somebody thought enough of them to take the risk to prepare and bring them fresh food.



The Brothers also completed two major free food distribution projects for the community in April and one in early May when the virus was raging in the midst of a stay-at-home order. On two consecutive Saturdays, April 18 and 25, Gamma Pi, partnering with its Friendship Charities Foundation, Inc., 501 (c) 3, led the distribution of more than 1,700 grocery bags full of free food to needy families who represented three area schools in the chapter's adopted community - Suitland Elementary, Drew Freeman Middle School and Suitland High School.

Omega Style Strategic Planning

At these events, the chapter organized the planning and the process involved, overseeing every aspect of food distribution from unloading the truck to unpacking the boxes to putting the packages into the hands of families as they drove through the Suitland High School parking lot. Once the drivers made it in, the bags were quickly deposited into their pop-open trunks by the Brothers.

On Saturday, May 2, Gamma Pi kept the pace going in the local community but at a different location. This time, it was Largo High School in Largo, Md. During the morning and midday, Brothers oversaw the delivery of hundreds of boxes of food for residents in need. Again, it was Gamma Pi leading the way in helping to connect much-needed free foods to families in need, many who suddenly experienced "the bottom fall-



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SERVICE ...

Continued from previous page

ing out" when the shutdown occurred.

The work at Largo actually began the day before when a contingent of Gamma Pi men loaded and unloaded a truck that was used to transport the food from refrigerated storage to Largo High located along Largo Road.

Offering Manpower to Local Government

Basileus Bro. Steven Walls initiated the food drive projects while in conversations with local officials over a period of weeks. Obviously, this was not on the chapter's agenda for this year as COVID-19 appeared out of nowhere and caught fire fast. "We've made a commitment to be of service to this community and we will honor that pledge through thick and thin. When duty calls, our boots are on the ground ready to go."

All the work the Brothers put in during a difficult and uncertain time has solidified Gamma Pi's reputation as a reliable, committed and courageous Social Action pacesetter in the Mighty Second District of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. To the public, this is amazing, but to the Brothers of Gamma Pi, this is everyday Omega Psi Phi. We observe...then we serve...

Thanks to the Social Action team headed by Bro. Ikey Staton, Jr. and Co-Chair Bro. Tony Kelly for doing an excellent job organizing the team into action for The Super Chapter. Other Gamma Pi members who have been singled out for their leading roles are Brothers Mabili Akinyele, Tiresias McCall (distribution manager), Donovan Benton, and Ed Ryans.

Some of the volunteers identified by Vice Basileus Rick Allison have included members of Galilee & St. Paul's Churches, the Ayana J. McAllister Legacy Foundation, Fort Washington Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, The Chi Beta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, the Prince George's County Public Schools, Mettle Works and Pits. Logistical support was provided by the Athletic Republic.



Brothers inside the homeless shelter on April 8



Photos courtesy of Brothers Raphael Terrell, Tyrone Smith and Tony Kelly

"We've made a commitment to be of service to this community and we will honor that pledge through thick and thin. When duty calls, our boots are on the ground ready to go."

Bro. Steven Walls, Basileus

