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From Handshakes to Life Decisions: A Meaningful Day for Our Esquires

1 message

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To: [REDACTED]

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Dear Parents, Guardians, Supporters, and Brothers,

Yesterday, the Alpha Esquire Leadership and Mentoring Program began our Success Seminar with the Etiquette and Project Alpha Seminar, an impactful learning experience designed to equip Esquires with essential life skills, strong character foundations, and age-appropriate knowledge that promotes responsible decision-making. The seminar was facilitated by Robert Jamerson of the Etiquette and Protocol Institute of Michigan, along with Lamar Mills and Angelique Mills, who collectively guided participants through an engaging and meaningful session focused on etiquette, personal development, and healthy life choices. Throughout the seminar, Esquires explored the importance of professional presence and respectful communication. Practical etiquette skills were demonstrated and practiced, including:

- How to properly enter a room with confidence and strong posture
- The correct way to shake someone's hand
- Squaring your body toward the person you are speaking with
- Maintaining eye contact and presenting yourself with confidence and respect

These foundational skills help young men present themselves as leaders in academic, professional, and social settings. The seminar was highly interactive. Esquires, parents/guardians, supporters, and Alpha brothers all took turns sharing their voices, answering questions, and discussing real-life situations. Participants learned techniques for managing emotions and responding thoughtfully when triggered, including taking time to pause, breathe, and think before reacting so that stressful situations do not escalate unnecessarily. Another major theme of the seminar was decision-making and personal responsibility. Esquires were reminded that the decisions they make today can have lifelong consequences and can either move them closer to or further away from their dreams and goals.

A powerful discussion focused on the attributes of a good friend. Through conversation and role-playing scenarios, Esquires examined situations where peers might pressure them into choices that are not in their best interest. These exercises helped them identify the difference between true friendship and negative influence, reinforcing the importance of surrounding themselves with individuals who respect their goals, values, and future. The seminar then transitioned into a portion of the Project Alpha curriculum, which addresses healthy relationships and responsible decision-making for young men. Discussions included:

- Understanding respectful relationships between young men and young women
- The importance of being a gentleman
- Recognizing emotions such as jealousy and peer pressure
- The realities and responsibilities that come with intimate relationships

Facilitators spoke openly and honestly about the potential consequences of early sexual activity, including sexually transmitted diseases, teen pregnancy, and the long-term impact that these situations can have on individuals and their families. Participants reflected on how a single decision can dramatically alter life plans, educational goals, and future opportunities. The group also discussed the importance of protecting themselves, respecting others, and setting personal boundaries. Tools and strategies were shared to help Esquires:

- Think critically before making major life decisions

- Resist peer pressure
- Communicate respectfully in relationships
- Protect their health and future
- Remain focused on their goals and aspirations

Throughout the session, facilitators provided practical frameworks for self-control, accountability, and thoughtful decision-making, reminding Esquires that leadership begins with the ability to govern one's own actions and choices. By the conclusion of the seminar, every participant had gained new insights, practical skills, and a deeper understanding of how their choices shape their future. The conversations were honest, thoughtful, and empowering. Each attendee left the seminar knowing more than they did when they arrived. The experience challenged our young men to think critically about who they want to become and how the decisions they make today will influence the lives they build tomorrow. This seminar was truly a powerful and life-changing experience, and we are grateful to Robert Jamerson, Lamar Mills, and Angelique Mills for sharing their expertise and investing in the development of our Esquires. Thank you to the parents, guardians, supporters, and brothers who continue to support the mission of the Alpha Esquire Leadership and Mentoring Program. Together, we are helping shape confident, responsible, and principled young leaders.



Warm regards,

Matthew Coats
Ann Arbor Esquires Program Coordinator
Co-Program Director Caring and Sharing Basket Delivery Program
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
Theta Zeta Lambda Chapter