



TZL CEI 2026–2027 Information Packet

Building Leaders. Strengthening Families. Empowering Communities.

Official Organization Guide for Families, Partners, Volunteers,
Donors, Community Leaders, and Supporters

A community service initiative of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.®
Theta Zeta Lambda Chapter

President: Matthew Coats
Tax ID: 81-1257797



TZL Community & Education Initiative
Educate. Empower. Elevate.

2026–2027 Information Packet

Official Guide to the Mission, Programs, Impact, Governance, and Partnership Model

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The TZL Community & Education Initiative (TZL CEI) is a community-focused organization that connects youth leadership development, family support, community service, education, and nonpartisan civic engagement into one coordinated system of impact. TZL CEI serves Washtenaw County and surrounding communities while creating practical opportunities for people to learn, serve, lead, and strengthen the places they call home.

ONE ORGANIZATION. THREE SIGNATURE PROGRAMS.

TZL CEI aligns the Esquire Leadership & Mentoring Program, the Dr. Thomas A. Bass Caring & Sharing Program, and TZL Empower under one mission, one standard of accountability, and one commitment to community benefit.

MISSION

To strengthen communities throughout Washtenaw County and surrounding areas by providing educational resources, supporting local initiatives, promoting nonpartisan civic engagement, fostering leadership development, and expanding opportunities for individuals and families.

VISION

A vibrant, inclusive, and thriving community where individuals and families have the knowledge, support, relationships, and opportunities needed to achieve their fullest potential and shape a stronger future.

OUR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

- Educate people through leadership development, academic support, career exposure, community learning, and reliable information.
- Empower families and residents through practical resources, service, civic knowledge, and pathways to meaningful participation.
- Elevate communities through partnerships, responsible stewardship, measurable outcomes, and long-range leadership development.

TZL CEI is a community service initiative of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.®, Theta Zeta Lambda Chapter.

WHY CEI EXISTS

Community needs are connected. Young people are more likely to thrive when family stability, caring adults, community service, civic knowledge, and visible pathways to opportunity reinforce leadership development. Families are stronger when support is practical, respectful, and connected to long-term relationships. Communities are more resilient when residents understand how to participate, collaborate, and lead.

THE CONNECTED COMMUNITY IMPACT MODEL

01 BUILD LEADERS ELMP develops confidence, character, academic readiness, professional skills, service, and leadership.	02 STRENGTHEN FAMILIES Caring & Sharing provides food, essentials, referrals, seasonal support, and services that restore hope.	03 EMPOWER COMMUNITIES TZL Empower advances nonpartisan civic education, informed participation, advocacy, and community voice.
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THE CEI DIFFERENCE

- One mission across youth development, family support, community service, and civic engagement.
- Long-range pathways that build capacity instead of isolated events that end when the activity is over.
- Distinct programs that retain their purpose while reinforcing one another.
- Strategic partnerships that increase quality, reach, expertise, and sustainability.
- Clear governance, documentation, financial stewardship, and measurable outcomes.

ONE MISSION. ONE COMMUNITY. LIMITLESS IMPACT.

When leadership, service, family support, and civic learning operate together, each experience becomes part of a larger development journey.

AREAS OF IMPACT

TZL CEI directs its programs, partnerships, and resources toward five connected areas of community benefit.

EDUCATION • Scholarships and educational assistance • Academic enrichment and tutoring support • College and career readiness • Technology, aviation, and workforce exposure • Leadership development seminars	YOUTH DEVELOPMENT • Structured mentoring and leadership circles • Character and personal development • Communication and professional skills • Community service and teamwork • College, career, and life planning
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT • Volunteer service projects • Community outreach and family assistance • Cultural enrichment activities • Strategic community partnerships • Resource awareness and referrals	CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY • Nonpartisan voter education • Community awareness and issue learning • Public forums and leadership panels • Community voice and respectful dialogue • Civic responsibility programming
HEALTH AND WELLNESS • Community wellness initiatives • Health education and resource awareness • Food security and family wellness support • Healthy lifestyle promotion • Partnerships that connect families to services	LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY BUILDING • Board and volunteer development • Program systems and quality standards • Community partnership building • Financial stewardship and accountability • Replicable tools for lasting impact

Every area of impact supports the same goal: helping people grow, helping families become stronger, and helping communities shape a better future.

ESQUIRE LEADERSHIP & MENTORING PROGRAM

Developing Leaders. Building Character. Inspiring Service.

The Esquire Leadership & Mentoring Program (ELMP) develops young people academically, socially, personally, and professionally through a standardized leadership curriculum, structured mentoring, service, career exposure, and recognition.

CORE EXPERIENCES

LEADERSHIP AND MENTORING • Success Seminars • Structured leadership circles • Approved mentor and adult support • Leadership Council opportunities	EDUCATION AND READINESS • Academic support and tutoring resources • College and career exploration • Professional development • Aviation, technology, and workforce pathways
CHARACTER AND SERVICE • Community service projects • Etiquette and responsible choices • Prepared minds and calm responses • Reflection, accountability, and recognition	HISTORY AND CIVIC LEARNING • History, heritage, and cultural identity • Nonpartisan civic education • Community issue learning • Public speaking and community leadership

THE ELMP DEVELOPMENT STANDARD

- Every Esquire receives access to the same core curriculum and structured group mentoring experience.
- Individual mentor matches are optional, capacity-based, and limited to one Esquire per approved mentor.
- Esquires participate in CEI service and civic engagement experiences so leadership is practiced, not merely discussed.
- Progress is documented through attendance, reflections, service, academic growth, leadership practice, and college or career readiness evidence.

Website: www.a2esquires.org

DR. THOMAS A. BASS CARING & SHARING PROGRAM

Helping Families. Empowering Communities. Restoring Hope.

The Caring & Sharing Program responds to immediate family needs while building a culture of dignity, service, empathy, and shared responsibility. The program connects volunteers, partners, and resources to provide practical support throughout the year.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

FAMILY SUPPORT • Holiday food baskets and meal support • Family Essentials Kits • Seasonal assistance and referrals • Resource connection for families	COMMUNITY SERVICE • Food sorting and distribution • Community cleanups • Volunteer service projects • Hands-on opportunities for Esquires and adults
SENIOR AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS • Support for senior residents • Community-based partnerships • Food security and pantry collaboration • Relationship building beyond one-time assistance	SERVICE LEARNING • Reflection on need, dignity, and responsibility • Youth leadership through practical service • Teamwork and volunteer coordination • A pathway from compassion to consistent action

WHY THIS PROGRAM MATTERS

Family support is most effective when it meets an immediate need and strengthens the relationships that help families move forward. Caring & Sharing combines direct assistance with volunteer engagement, community partnership, and service learning so every project contributes to a stronger community network.

SERVICE THAT RESTORES HOPE

Caring & Sharing treats families with respect, protects dignity, and uses partnership to turn available resources into practical support.

Website: www.tzlcaringsharing.org

TZL EMPOWER

Our Voice. Our Power. Our Future.

TZL Empower strengthens community voice through nonpartisan civic education, voter engagement, issue awareness, public forums, leadership development, and respectful community dialogue. The program helps residents understand how public decisions affect everyday life and how informed participation can improve communities.

CIVIC LEARNING PRIORITIES

LEARN • Roles of local, state, and federal government • How public decisions affect schools and families • Voting history and civic responsibility • Media literacy and reliable information	ENGAGE • Civic education symposiums • Community leadership panels • Public forums and issue discussions • Volunteer and ambassador opportunities
ADVOCATE • Community issue research • Respectful questions and public dialogue • Awareness campaigns • Nonpartisan community advocacy	LEAD • Communication and critical thinking • Public speaking and facilitation • Community problem solving • Informed and responsible participation

NONPARTISAN STANDARD

TZL Empower does not tell participants which candidate or political party to support. Its purpose is to increase knowledge, encourage respectful participation, strengthen critical thinking, and help community members make informed decisions based on facts, values, and community needs.

INFORMED PEOPLE BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Civic education becomes community leadership when people understand the issues, listen respectfully, communicate clearly, and participate responsibly.

Website: www.tzlempower.org

HOW THE THREE PILLARS WORK TOGETHER

The programs remain distinct enough to serve their purpose, but connected enough to reinforce one another. Youth leadership becomes practical through service. Service becomes meaningful through reflection. Civic learning becomes leadership through informed participation.

LEARN	Build knowledge, confidence, communication, and leadership habits.
SERVE	Apply leadership by meeting real needs and strengthening families.
ENGAGE	Use information, voice, and relationships to improve community life.
REFLECT	Connect each experience to values, goals, growth, and responsibility.
LEAD	Use what was learned to plan, communicate, serve, and influence positive change.

ESQUIRE PARTICIPATION ACROSS CEI

- ELMP builds leadership knowledge, communication, character, academic readiness, and professional skills.
- Caring & Sharing gives Esquires supervised opportunities to serve families, work as a team, and understand community needs.
- TZL Empower helps Esquires develop civic awareness, informed questions, public speaking, and community leadership skills.
- Reflection connects all three pillars to personal growth, future goals, and measurable evidence of development.

THE COMMUNITY IMPACT JOURNEY

Learn. Serve. Engage. Reflect. Lead.

COMMUNITY IMPACT AND RESULTS

TZL CEI tracks participation, family support, volunteer engagement, fundraising, and program outcomes so growth remains grounded in real community benefit.

337+ Families directly supported	32 Active Esquires in 2025–2026	24 Active mentors engaged	\$27.8K+ Raised for mission-driven programs
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2025–2026 MISSION IN ACTION

- 40 Esquires committed for the 2026–2027 program year.
- 1,003 pounds of food sorted, representing approximately 836 meals.
- More than 700,000 meals supported through local and large-scale service efforts.
- College tours, career exposure, etiquette, responsible decision-making, mentoring, and community service experiences.
- Family food support, essential items, referrals, seasonal assistance, and volunteer engagement.
- Civic education, community forums, voter engagement, issue awareness, and nonpartisan participation.

IMPACT BY PILLAR

ELMP: LEADERSHIP OUTCOMES Mentoring, academic readiness, life planning, public speaking, professional development, service, and recognition.	CARING & SHARING: FAMILY STABILITY Food, essentials, referrals, seasonal support, service projects, and relationships that restore hope.
TZL EMPOWER: COMMUNITY VOICE Civic learning, public forums, voter engagement, issue awareness, and nonpartisan participation.	CEI: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY Governance, financial stewardship, partnership development, documentation, fundraising, and long-range planning.

Results shown are the current public 2025–2026 impact summary and form the baseline for continued growth.

STRATEGIC GOALS

TZL CEI is building with purpose, structure, and sustainability. Growth will be pursued only when the organization can protect program quality, community relationships, accountability, and responsible stewardship.

1–2 YEARS

STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATION

- Assist at least 150 families annually through community support initiatives.
- Serve at least 100 youth annually through mentoring, education, and leadership programs.
- Host quarterly community engagement events.
- Strengthen partnerships with schools, colleges, businesses, foundations, nonprofits, and public agencies.
- Increase sustainable funding and operating capacity.

3–6 YEARS

EXPAND OPPORTUNITY

- Increase civic education, community awareness, and advocacy initiatives.
- Host annual conferences, symposiums, and community forums.
- Increase scholarships and educational access.
- Develop additional community partnerships and workforce pathways.
- Expand volunteer leadership and community-based program delivery.

7–10 YEARS

BUILD LASTING SYSTEMS

- Reduce educational opportunity gaps.
- Establish sustainable community resource centers.
- Create long-range pathways for leadership development and community empowerment.
- Build a replicable community impact model that other organizations can understand and adapt.
- Create a lasting legacy of service, opportunity, and generational success.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

TZL Community & Education Initiative is committed to transparency, accountability, responsible stewardship, and community-focused decision-making. The Board provides governance, financial oversight, strategic direction, partnership development, and long-range support across all CEI programs.

ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE

BOARD GOVERNANCE • Mission and policy oversight • Strategic direction and long-range planning • Board member duties and one vote per member • Quorum and properly documented decisions	FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP • Approved budgets and expenditure controls • Treasurer reporting and internal review • Donation and restricted fund tracking • Responsible use of charitable resources
CONFLICT OF INTEREST • Disclosure of personal or program interests • Recusal when impartial decision-making could be questioned • Independent Board review of affected requests • Written documentation of the decision process	PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY • Approved program plans and official documents • Outcome, attendance, service, and impact tracking • Youth protection and adult screening standards • Quality review and corrective action when needed

STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES

- Community benefit comes before personal recognition or convenience.
- Funds are used only for approved charitable and program purposes.
- Decisions are documented clearly enough for future leaders to understand what occurred and why.
- Programs use consistent standards, accurate public information, and measurable goals.
- Concerns are addressed promptly, respectfully, and through the appropriate governance process.

TRUST MUST BE EARNED AND PROTECTED

Clear roles, transparent decisions, accurate records, and responsible stewardship protect the community, the organization, and every person who supports the mission.

BOARD MEMBERS AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

The Board guides the mission through governance, financial stewardship, strategic direction, partnership development, accountability, and long-range support.

ROLE	NAME	PRIMARY CONTRIBUTION
President	Matthew Coats	Organization leadership, strategy, partnerships, governance, and long-range development.
Vice President	Ramone Crowe	Board leadership, continuity, and support for organizational priorities.
Secretary	Lyonel Milton	Governance records, documentation, and official Board communication.
Treasurer	Lemar Thomas	Financial oversight, reporting, internal controls, and stewardship.
Board Member	Darrell Hudson	Governance, education, community insight, and program support.
Board Member	Clif Flowers	Governance, youth program insight, and operational support.
Board Member	Lawrence Hood	Governance, education, partnership support, and community leadership.
Non-TZL Board Member	Dr. Sarena Shivers	Independent community perspective, education insight, and governance.
Non-TZL Board Member	Tamika Jones	Independent community perspective, partnership insight, and governance.
Open Board Seat	To Be Appointed	The tenth Board position remains open pending appointment.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Individual members contribute time, insight, service, and relationship-building that extend the organization's capacity.

Jeanice Townsend — Community support, service, education, and organizational engagement.

PARTNERSHIP AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Schools, businesses, foundations, nonprofits, public agencies, volunteers, and individual donors help TZL CEI turn shared goals into practical results. Partnership can include financial support, expertise, volunteers, facilities, transportation, educational access, family resources, or strategic collaboration.

WAYS PARTNERS CREATE IMPACT

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION Work with CEI on education, youth development, family stability, civic learning, workforce pathways, or community service.	VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP Serve as a mentor, committee member, event volunteer, presenter, tutor, or project leader.
COMMUNITY ADVOCACY Increase awareness, connect residents to opportunities, and strengthen participation in community initiatives.	SPONSORSHIP AND PHILANTHROPY Fund seminars, meals, materials, service projects, family resources, educational visits, and recognition.

ANNUAL GIVING LEVELS

PARTNERSHIP LEVEL	ANNUAL SUPPORT
Friend of TZL CEI	Up to \$499
Community Champion	\$500–\$999
Program Sponsor	\$1,000–\$2,499
Community Impact Sponsor	\$2,500–\$4,999
Founding Partner	\$5,000–\$9,999
Visionary Partner	\$10,000+
Strategic Partner	Collaborative partnership

TZL Community & Education Initiative Tax ID: 81-1257797

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

People can support the mission through time, talent, resources, relationships, and informed participation. Every role should be clear, useful, and connected to a real program need.

VOLUNTEER • Serve at a community event • Support family resource projects • Assist with registration, logistics, or outreach • Join a committee or project team	MENTOR OR TUTOR • Complete required training and screening • Support structured youth leadership experiences • Provide academic or career guidance • Serve within approved roles and boundaries
DONATE OR SPONSOR • Support youth development and education • Fund family resources and service projects • Sponsor community forums or educational visits • Provide in-kind goods, facilities, or expertise	COLLABORATE • Connect CEI to schools, businesses, and nonprofits • Develop a strategic community initiative • Create career, college, or service opportunities • Share expertise that improves program quality

A SIMPLE PARTNERSHIP PROCESS

1. Identify the community need or opportunity the partnership will address.
2. Define the partner contribution, CEI responsibility, timeline, and intended outcome.
3. Confirm youth protection, financial, communication, and documentation requirements.
4. Implement the activity with clear roles and respectful coordination.
5. Measure results, document lessons, and determine the appropriate next step.

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

- Use clear, accurate, and professional communication.
- Protect children, families, donors, volunteers, partners, and confidential information.
- Design programs that are practical, welcoming, measurable, and community-ready.
- Review results honestly and improve systems when something does not meet the standard.
- Build tools and practices that can continue beyond any one leader or program year.

PARTNER WITH PURPOSE

The strongest partnerships begin with a shared goal, clear responsibilities, honest communication, and a commitment to measurable community benefit.



CONNECT WITH TZL CEI

Educate. Empower. Elevate.

READY FOR THE NEXT STEP?

Partnership, sponsorship, volunteer, program, and community engagement inquiries are welcome.

TZL Community & Education Initiative

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PROGRAM WEBSITES

Esquire Leadership & Mentoring Program — www.a2esquires.org

Dr. Thomas A. Bass Caring & Sharing Program — www.tzlcaringsharing.org

TZL Empower — www.tzlempower.org

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