



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Xi Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® donates books celebrating African American life to Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries

BUFFALO, N.Y. – The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library gratefully announces a generous donation of 257 new children’s books from the Xi Epsilon Omega Amherst Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®. These books will be housed at the downtown Central Library, 1 Lafayette Square, and the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library, 1324 Jefferson Avenue in Buffalo and will be available for borrowing throughout Erie County to benefit all library cardholders.

The *Xi Epsilon Omega Chapter’s Uplift Our Local Community Committee* organized a series of book drives to collect new books for elementary and middle school students. Most of the organizers are retired educators and all are community advocates. Committee members leading the book drive were:

- **Mrs. Cecelia B. Henderson**, M.Ed. – Xi Epsilon Omega Chapter President, former educational administrator in the Buffalo Public School District, civic leader and community activist.
- **Mrs. Constance M. Moss**, Ph.D. – Xi Epsilon Omega Chapter Vice President, former educational administrator in the Buffalo Public School District, founder of the School Recovery Agency and community activist.
- **Mrs. Barbara Seals Nevergold**, Ph.D. – Co-founder of the Uncrowned Queens Institute, former Buffalo Public Schools Board of Education President, author, educational leader and activist.
- **Ms. Marion L. Mayfield**, M.Ed. Admin – former Elementary School Supervisor for the Buffalo Public School District.
- **Mrs. MaryRuth Morrow-Kapsiak**, M.Ed. Admin – former Board of Education President and Elementary School Supervisor for the Buffalo Public School District.
- **Rev. Althea P. Baines**, M.S. Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) and Audiology – Committee Chairman, former speech-language pathologist and audiologist for the Buffalo Public School District, Senior Pastor and Co-Founder of the New Beginning Church of God in Buffalo, NY, and world traveler.
- **Mrs. Kathy M. Bethel**, M.Ed. Admin – Committee Co-Chairman, former music educator for the Buffalo Public School District, local musician and community activist.
- **Kourtney Baines-Romero** – Corresponding Secretary for Xi Epsilon Omega, Director of Communications & Community Programming and Chaplain for New Beginning Church of God, Doctoral Dissertation pending.
- **Ms. Aida Stewart**, M.Ed. Admin – elementary school teacher.

The curated selection of books highlights African American life experiences through both fiction and nonfiction works, authored exclusively by African American writers.

“We are honored to support the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library with this donation,” said Mrs. Cecelia B. Henderson, Chapter President. “Promoting literacy among young students while celebrating African American voices aligns deeply with our mission of service and empowerment.”

"We view the book donation as a valuable gift that keeps on giving to all library patrons." said *Uplift Our Local Community Committee* Co-Chairman Kathy Bethel.

"This donation not only encourages reading among children but also fosters cultural awareness and pride," said John Spears, director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library. "We are grateful for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's meaningful contribution to our libraries and the young minds we serve. The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library welcomes this partnership, which supports ongoing efforts to provide resources that reflect and uplift the community's diverse experiences."

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