



**Contact:**

Yvette Highsmith (203)560-6167

Carolyn Harris-Burney (860) 930-8573

## **Hartford Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® and The Foundation for Educational Opportunities (FEO) Make Record-Breaking Investments in Students' Dreams**

**Hartford, CT – June 12, 2025** – Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® Epsilon Omicron Omega Chapter, in partnership with The Foundation for Educational Opportunities, Inc. (FEO), proudly announce an historic year of investing in Hartford's next generation of leaders through college access initiatives and scholarship awards.

As part of their two-pronged effort to expand educational opportunities, the organizations sponsored a student trip to an Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) college fair, November 2024. Members of AKA hosted workshops to prepare students to meet representatives from several colleges and universities, including HBCUs with hope of being accepted by their chosen school. The initiative yielded impressive results: of 32 participating students, 29 submitted applications, and 18 students received acceptance letters from multiple HBCUs. In some cases, these acceptance offers included scholarships totaling \$260,000 pending enrollment. One stand-out student received a full-ride scholarship to Simmons College.

The second component of student investments came on May 26, when the AKAs and FEO awarded \$34,000 in scholarships, their largest annual distribution to date. Five outstanding students were recognized for their academic excellence, leadership potential, and community commitment.

### **2025 Scholarship Recipients: (photo captions at end)**

- Gabrielle Blaise – Attending Howard University (Psychology major), Avon High School graduate from Hartford. Award: \$10,000 Allenstine Willis Scholarship (over four years), named for the late founder of FEO, one of the first African Americans to work as a public health scientist, a bacteriologist for the CT Dept. of Public Health.
- Zaeda Reid – Attending Southern Connecticut State University (Political Science major), Avon High School graduate from Hartford. Award: \$10,000 Allenstine Willis Scholarship (over four years), sponsored by the Willis Family.
- Savannah Fulton – Attending North Carolina A&T State University (Pre-Nursing major), Capital Preparatory Magnet School graduate from Windsor. Award: \$5,000 Hartford HBCU Scholar Award, sponsored by The Hartford.
- Mahoganie Leilani Wilson-Little – Attending Morgan State University, Bloomfield High School graduate. Award: \$500 Book Award.
- Zaria St. Clair – Attending Cornell University (Computer Science major, Finance minor), Miss Porter's School graduate from Bloomfield. Award: \$500 Book Award.



“These investments reflect our belief in the power of education and our unwavering commitment to young scholars who are poised to lead and uplift their communities,” said Yvette Highsmith and Carolyn Harris-Burney, presidents of Epsilon Omicron Omega Chapter and FEO, respectively. “As we celebrate 75 years of community service, we continue to improve our impact on the lives of our scholars.” The organizations’ new Recurring Scholarship Program ensures that recipients not only receive financial aid but also benefit from mentorship and wrap-around support throughout their college journey.

### **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®**

Founded in 1908, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® is the nation’s oldest and the first Black Greek letter organization for college women. Its mission is to cultivate and encourage high scholastic and ethical standards, to promote unity and friendship among college women, to study and help alleviate problems concerning girls and women to improve their social stature, to maintain a progressive interest in college life, and to be of “Service to All Mankind,” our national motto.

Under the leadership of International President and CEO Danette Anthony Reed, the organization has 360,000 + members and 1,074 chapters in all states and 11 nations. The Hartford chapter was chartered on May 5, 1950.

### **The Foundation for Educational Opportunities (FEO)**

Established in 1994, FEO is a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing access to educational opportunities. By providing scholarships and funding community initiatives, FEO continues to shape brighter futures for young women pursuing higher education.

### **FEO/AKA Scholarship Reception Photos**

#### **From left to right:**

1. Savannah Fulton, Mahoganie Wilson-Little, Zaeda Reid, Gabrielle Blaise. In the pink and green dress is President of the Epsilon Omicron Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha.
2. Wide shot of Scholarship Ceremony and Reception

### **HBCU Fair Photos**

1. Wide shot of students at auditorium at
2. Two of 18 students who were accepted on site to Fisk University.
3. One of 18 students accepted on site to Virginia State University.

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