

November 19, 2009

**Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:** Madam Speaker, I rise today along with my colleague Rep. *Randy Forbes*, to call attention to a group of young students from Petersburg, Virginia, who have distinguished themselves, their University, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

I direct my colleagues' attention to the brothers of the Beta Gamma Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity at Virginia State University. Over the last three years the Beta Gamma chapter has partnered with Big Brothers Big Sisters and has maintained one hundred percent chapter membership participation rate. They are the first, and only, Alpha Phi Alpha chapter in the country to accomplish this remarkable achievement. I would like to applaud my brothers for volunteering to be responsible role models for at-risk youth, helping them to reach their full potential and to lead vibrant, successful lives.

Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity was founded on December 4, 1906, at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. As the first intercollegiate Greek letter fraternity established for African Americans, Alpha Phi Alpha initially served as a brotherhood and study and support group for minority students at Cornell, but it also recognized the need to help correct the educational, economic, political and social injustices faced by African Americans.

From that initial foundation at Cornell, the core Alpha Phi Alpha principles of scholarship, fellowship, good character and the uplifting of humanity were established. Alpha Phi Alpha now has a presence on hundreds of college campuses as well as in hundreds of alumni chapters in 44 States. The presence is also felt here in Washington, where nine members of the U.S. Congress are members of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

In 1991, an agreement was entered into between Alpha Phi Alpha and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America to unite their efforts to transform communities and the lives of young African Americans. The men of Alpha Phi Alpha have become thoroughly engaged in recruiting volunteers, and cultivating a positive relationship and experience with their Little Brothers.

The brothers of Beta Gamma continue this proud tradition by proactively engaging the Petersburg community's schools and families, in addition providing one-on-one youth mentoring for children at-risk of slipping through the cracks of our society. Studies show that the regular presence of a responsible adult provides lasting, positive impacts on the life of a child. Those children mentored by the Big Brothers of Beta Gamma chapter will be less likely to use drugs and alcohol, will perform better in school, and will have healthier family relationships.

Today, I rise to recognize these young gentlemen for their genuine concern for their local

community and for their dedication to public service.