

# The Connecticut General Assembly



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Contact: Tess Koenigsmark  
860-240-8790

## Rep. McGee, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Kick Off Literacy Initiative with School Reading Visits

State **Rep. Brandon McGee** (D-Hartford/Windsor) and members of his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, Inc. kicked off a reading initiative today to promote literacy in schools in the Greater Hartford area.

At a press conference prior to visits to local schools, fraternity members were joined by school superintendents Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez of Hartford, Dr. Nathan Quesnel of East Hartford, and Craig Cooke of Windsor as they outlined the initiative.

The fraternity's iPlay, iRead Initiative seeks to increase literacy levels by having fraternity members visit and read to classes at local schools. Later that morning, **Rep. McGee** and around 100 Alpha Phi Alpha members read to approximately 80 classrooms at the following local schools: Capitol Prep, Hartford; Global Communications Academy, Hartford; John F. Kennedy, Windsor; and Silver Lane Elementary, East Hartford. Copies of the books read were donated to the classrooms.

"I'm excited to help bring this initiative to Hartford and neighboring towns. When students are not reading at grade level, that struggle can follow them throughout their education and hinder their chances at success after high school," **Rep. McGee** said. "Today's event is the start of a long-term commitment to creating a bond between fraternity members and community schools. The more support our students have, particularly from individuals who can serve as role models, the more they can achieve."

"Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated has long been in the forefront of providing service and advocacy for our communities. The iPlay, iRead initiative, started by our Eastern Region Assistant Vice President, Harold Daniels III, continues those same lines of service through direct impact. There are undeniable correlations to successful communities and access to quality information, which includes books. Through this initiative the Eastern Region of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity continues to be invested in our children in the Hartford community," said Lucien J. Metellus, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Eastern Regional Vice President.

“As a scholar in Political Science, focusing on Urban Politics, it is evident that black communities have a history of developing alternative justice systems, which cause crime rates to spike. In consideration of the foregoing, African-American students are disproportionately impacted by the shortcomings in our education system, which prevents them from achieving their full potential. This among many, are the things we are up against in our urban communities. Thus, reading through the iPlay, iRead Initiative will become a legitimate tool in combating the unprogressive system,” said Harold Daniels, III, iPlay, iRead Initiative founder.

“Our goal is to inspire the love of reading in all students. We hope to show students, especially young men, that reading is essential to achieving all they desire, both now and in their future,” said Trevor Beauford, Board Member of the BSL Education Foundation, a non-profit serving middle and high school aged youth of the Greater Hartford area.

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