

Evans To Lead Oldest Black Sorority

Group Pays Off Mortgage For International Headquarters

Dr. Eva L. Evans, deputy superintendent of the Lansing, Michigan public schools, is the new chief executive of Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA), Inc., America's first Greek-lettered organization for Black women. She became president of the 130,000-member-association at the close of its 56th national convention, held earlier this month in Indianapolis, Ind.

As part of the seven-day conference, AKA also burned a \$3.5 million mortgage on its international headquarters, donated \$50,000 to the United Negro College Fund, awarded \$40,000 in scholarships, showcased award winning programs, presented biennial and annual awards, and inducted honorary members.

Dr. Evans was a board of directors member, national committee chairman, and chapter officer prior to her election as AKA's first vice president in July, 1990, and has spent the past four years preparing for her automatic ascension. She holds a bachelor's degree from Wayne State University, and master's and doctorate degrees from Michigan State University.

Well known in academic circles, Dr. Evans has served as a resource consultant for both the U.S. Department of Education and the Michigan Department of Education. She regularly provides insight on varied educational topics, including leadership management, effective schools, and educational management systems.

The retirement of a \$3.5 million

debt on AKA's headquarters was one of the first acts of business. "It's ours once again," said outgoing president Dr. Mary Shy Scott of Atlanta as she burned the note for AKA's headquarters located in Chicago. The debt was incurred as a result of the addition of a third floor, bringing the building's appraised value to \$6 million plus.

The \$50,000 to UNCF puts AKA closer to the one million mark in donations to the organization in the past two decades. AKA also awarded \$40,000 in college scholarships through its educational foundation.

In a parade of programs, selected chapters showed off their award winning community service project which were on display throughout the week at a



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mock Ivy AKAdemy, a replica of centers from which AKA programs are administered.

Among the awards given at the convention were the Anna Eleanor Roosevelt Medallion of Honor for outstanding achievement, and Peace and Justice awards for equity actions. U.S. Rep. John Lewis (5th Dist., Ga.) received the former, and State Senator Daryl Jones (Florida), writer-columnist Les Payne, and TransAfrica president Randall Robinson received the latter in law, media, and international relations, respectively.

Five prominent women also joined the AKA ranks as honorary members. Actresses Lynn Whitfield and JoMarie Payton-Noble, writer Bebe Moore Campbell, assistant surgeon general Marilyn Hughes Gaston, and Miss America 1990, Debbye Lynn Turner became members of the elite club which numbers less than 100.



Representatives of Alpha Kappa Alpha from across the country lead a parade to recognize community service projects.

FHA Program Good But Can Be Made Better, NAR Says

A recent report states that mortgage interest rates are headed up and housing starts activity is down, emphasizes the need to expand and responsibly improve the Federal Housing Administration's single-family mortgage insurance program, the National Association of Realtors said.

"FHA's mortgage insurance is a valuable government program that generates its own income and helps low-, moderate- and middle-income people achieve the dream of home ownership," said NAR President Robert H. Elrod. "Congress now has a chance to improve on a good thing by making FHA easier to use and available to a greater number of people." Elrod added, "Housing bills now before the U.S. House and Senate could make the FHA program accessible to more home buyers at a time when financing costs are increasing and housing construction is teetering."

Elrod's remarks came on the heels of Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan's warning to Congress that interest rates may need to move higher to ensure that inflation remains in check. Also, the government reported that housing starts were down 9.8 percent in June from May.

NAR-supported provisions in the House and Senate housing bills would raise the maximum FHA loan limit in high cost areas from \$141,750 to \$172,675 and would increase the

FHA base amount -- the loan limit in places not designated as high cost -- from \$67,500 to more than \$100,000.

Raising the FHA base loan amount to \$100,000 would allow 1.5 million more families to buy homes, according to NAR analysts. In addition, raising the maximum FHA loan limit in high-cost areas so it's indexed to 85 percent of the Fannie Mae-Freddie Mac loan limit would allow another 250,000 families to buy homes using FHA-insured mortgages, the analysts estimate.

Increasing the FHA limit in high-cost areas would be especially helpful to potential buyers in New England and California cities, where home prices are far higher than elsewhere in the country. These prices are well above the U.S. median existing-home price of \$106,800 for 1993. "People in these high cost areas simply aren't able to use the program, regardless of their income," Elrod said.

The real advantage to people using FHA is that they don't have to come up with all the up-front costs in cash, as required in the conventional market. Instead, they can finance the up-front mortgage insurance premium and most of their closing costs. As part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), FHA has insured single-family homes for more than 21 million borrowers since its creation in 1934.

Enhancement Committee

Metro's North Portland Enhancement Committee has chosen seventeen projects to receive \$240,680 in enhancements funds for the 1993-94 year. Additionally, Delaunay Family of Services will receive its second and third installments of \$50,000 each during this fiscal year.

The committee said it was especially pleased this year to award Portland Housing Center a \$200,000 recoverable grant for the down payment assistance fund. The money will help low- and moderate-income families purchase homes in North Portland. Realtors and other granting sources provide \$1 million to the fund.

The goal of the committee is to fund projects to help meet the needs of the community, create real changes in the community and add to its enrichment and enhancement. Funds are provided by a 50-cent-per ton surcharge collected on garbage disposed at the now-closed St. Johns Landfill.

Others grant will be used: to help fund a feasibility study for the proposed Peninsula Crossing Trail, par-

tial funding of Christmas in April/Portland to enhance the lives of the elderly, low income and disabled Portland residents, to help support the Health Club project, special summer program for low-income and at-risk youth, to conduct an annual music festival series in Cathedral Park., to install a new 50-gallon hot water heater in Columbia Cottage, to install a second 220-watt powerline to the facility and shelving materials, to purchase a popcorn vending machine to be used for meetings and fundraising purposes, to obtain handicapped-accessible playground equipment for the St. Johns Park, to help fund the annual St. Johns Parade, to help provide emergency assistance to 30 additional families needing occupancy or utility assistance, and finally, to provide personal services expenses to the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crew leader who coordinates extracurricular activities.

For more information, call Kathleen Dowdall, Metro community enhancement coordinator, 797-1648.

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