

## MEDIA ADVISORY

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**AKAs WILL EXECUTE 1,908 MOVES TO  
ADDRESS MENTAL ILLNESS  
*Mass Dancing and Public Forum in Grant Park  
will Promote Awareness of Mental Illness***



CHICAGO, IL (July 2, 2015) - As part of its efforts to increase awareness and address mental health issues, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® (AKA) along with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), will host “AKA Launching 1908 Dance Moves for NAMI” from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Thursday, July 16 in Grant Park (Upper Hutchison Field). The event, which is open to the public, is one of several service projects that will take place during the sorority’s Leadership Seminar July 15-19 in Chicago, IL. Nearly 600 sorority members and guests, along with NAMI representatives, will participate in line dancing and other instructor led moves to promote awareness of mental illness. In addition to the dancing, a panel discussion consisting of professionals in the mental health field will speak on the effects of mental illness, its treatment, and recovery.

“Because of the stigma attached to mental illness, it is disease that often goes misdiagnosed and untreated, especially in the African-American community,” said Dorothy Buckhanan Wilson, the sorority’s international president. “By hosting this mass dancing activity and panel discussion in Grant Park, we are hoping to attract individuals from the Chicago area who may not participate in a formal gathering to join us and increase their knowledge of mental illness. Our panelists will share invaluable information and provide personal testimonies that will educate and enlighten participants.”

In addition to Buckhanan Wilson, panelists will include AKA International Program Chairman Jasmine D. Adkins; NAMI CEO Mary Giliberti; Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart; Project 375 Co-founder Michi Marshall; Cook County 1<sup>st</sup> District Commissioner Richard Boykin; and NAMI Nashville leader Sylvia Phillips.

July is also designated as BeBe Moore Campbell Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Prior to her death, Moore Campbell, an Alpha Kappa Alpha member, was a strong advocate and activist for Mental Health Awareness in the minority community. She was also the author of the book, *72 Hour Hold*, about a mother’s frustration and desperation when dealing with a daughter suffering from mental illness. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority will be donating 1000 copies of the book to the Chicago Public Schools and the City of Chicago to assist children, city officials, and city government workers as they interact with others in their community that may suffer from mental illness.

AKA and NAMI began a partnership in January 2015 to increase awareness of mental illness in the African-American community. AKA chapters throughout the country work with their local NAMI affiliates in presenting various programs and activities in their respective communities.

**About Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.**

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (AKA) is an international service organization that was founded on the campus of Howard University in Washington, D.C. in 1908. It is the oldest Greek-letter organization established by African-American college-educated women. Alpha Kappa Alpha is comprised of more than 283,000 members in 989 graduate and undergraduate chapters in the United States, Liberia, the Bahamas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Germany, South Korea, Bermuda, Japan, Canada, and South Africa. Led by International President Dorothy Buckhanan Wilson, Alpha Kappa Alpha is often hailed as “America’s premier Greek-letter organization for African-American women.” For more information on Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and its programs, log onto [www.aka1908.com](http://www.aka1908.com).

**About the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**

The National Alliance on Mental Illness is the nation’s largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness

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