

TAKE NOTE!

Soror Tiffany Flowers pens ...



It is so important to celebrate the accomplishments within the ranks of our sorority. Many Sorors are flourishing in business, entertainment, print and other fields. Sigma women make their mark no matter what field they are in, because Sigma teaches leadership with an emphasis on excellence. Soror Tiffany A. Flowers is an example of a true Sigma woman, a native of Chicago, and the founder of Golden Butterfly Publishing. Born the child of an artist, she spent the majority of her childhood attending poetry readings, festivals, and art shows with her mother. Tiffany considers herself to be a teacher, writer, and entrepreneur. After graduating from Virginia Commonwealth University with a bachelors of science degree in psychology and a masters degree in early childhood education, she went on to complete another masters degree in education from the University of Iowa. After completing her degree, she began her teaching career in both public schools and colleges. During this time she was inspired to tell her students

stories about her life. Both her public school and college students encouraged her to write down her original stories and publish them. So, she began writing her stories in journals for the next seven years. She spent many nights and weekends crafting her books while simultaneously working on her Ph.D. The majority of her stories reflect a culmination of all of her experiences from childhood to adult. However, the ultimate goal of her work is to promote hope and creativity, and to bring joy into the lives of children.

The Aurora spoke to Soror Flowers for a brief interview:

Where did you get the idea and inspiration to write *I Am A Sigma Gamma Rho Legacy*?

I wrote *I am a Sigma Gamma Rho Legacy* about seven years ago while I was teaching kindergarten. During the first two weeks of school, I always have a time where my students and I get to know each other. So, I would bring pictures to my classroom and share them with my students. I would tell my students about my sorority, but I always wondered what their reaction would have been if I had a book to share some of the experiences that I was exposed to being a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. So, I wrote *I am a Sigma Gamma Rho Legacy*, because I wanted to have a way to convey the rich and beautiful history behind my sorority to young children.

What has been the response to *I Am A Sigma Gamma Rho Legacy*?

I began promoting my book by reading to elementary classes during Black History Month. I was really pleased with the response of young children toward my book. I have read hundreds of books to children. However, I noticed that as I flipped the pages of *I am a Sigma Gamma Rho Legacy* and read the book, the children would ooh and ahh. All of the students seemed to relate to the story and the images in the book. So, I believe that the response from children has been positive thus far.

My release date for my book was May 2009. However, I started self promoting the book during the first week in April 2009. The response has also been truly positive from lovers of African-American children's literature. I believe that the positive response to the book has been because of James Eugene's (my illustrator) vivid and lifelike illustration on the

cover of the book. I think that once the readers buy the book they will be pleased and surprised by the modern, and tasteful images in this book as well as the warm story line.

As an author, what are the keys to your success that lead to *I Am A Sigma Gamma Rho Legacy* getting out to the public?

I started promoting my book with my own social network on many different sites (Facebook, Myspace, and Divine 9 online). I plan to work with several businesses to get my book advertised. However, what I have found is that as an author it is imperative that whether you go with a large company or self-publish you must promote your own book.

As an author, what is your writing process? How long did it take for you to start and finish *I Am A Sigma Gamma Rho Legacy*?

As an author, I always keep journals in a tote bag at my side to write whenever I get the inspiration to create. I do not really like carrying laptops around. I found that laptops are way too bulky. I would rather copy my work into a journal and type the story later. As far as how long it took me to start and finish my first book, it took me almost two years to complete this book. I took 6 months to write this book. I took another 3 months to read the story aloud to myself and make my own edits. Then I worked closely with an editor for another 3 months. Once that was done, I took 9 months to work with my illustrator doing countless revisions. I studied children's literature in school. So as a children's author, I feel that it is important to make sure that the illustrations are an accurate depiction of what the writer is trying to convey. I believe that the illustrations should tell the story as much as the written text in the story.

What's next for *I Am A Sigma Gamma Rho Legacy*?

I will continue to market the book. I believe that I have a pretty large market of consumers that would really enjoy this children's text. So, I plan to schedule book signings, appearances, and readings. I look forward to working with community centers, libraries, book stores, schools and colleges to market the book. If lovers of African American children's literature are interested they can purchase the book at

www.goldenbutterflypublishing.com. Tiffany A. Flowers is also available to present literacy workshops for students, and teachers in grades Pre K-5.

Web site link:

www.goldenbutterflypublishing.com

Myspace link:

www.myspace.com/goldenbutterflypublishing

Tiffany lives in the South and spends her time teaching, writing, reading, and spending time with her family.