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# The Compass

Elizabeth City State University's award-winning student newspaper



Gary Cohen presented the better grades seminar on September 30.

Photo by Rich Harvey

## ECSU STUDENTS REACT TO WRONGFUL DEATHS BY SORORITY

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In Los Angeles, California, two women drowned in the ocean, as a result of an alleged Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority hazing act. Kristin High, 22, of Los Angeles, and Kenitha Saafir, 24, of Compton were supposedly pledging for the Sigma Chapter of AKA Sorority Incorporated, at the campus of California State Los Angeles. According to a preliminary investigation done by the Los Angeles Police Department, the deaths "appeared to be accidental" and unrelated to the young women's efforts to join the sorority.

High's family has implied that a private investigation tells a different story. This story includes that the women were blindfolded, and tied by their hands and their bodies, and led into the rip tide conditions of the ocean. The rip tides were 6 to 8 feet, at the Dockweiler State Beach in Playa del Rey.

The parents and fiancé of High have filed a \$100 million wrongful death lawsuit against the AKA sorority corporation, CSLA's regional chapter, and individuals from the sorority who were present that night. The campus sorority has denied the claims, and furthermore, it has been said that the Sigma Chapter on the campus, that the women were supposedly pledging, had not been active since 1989.

The family of High wants to send a message to sororities and fraternities around the country that pledging and hazing must come to an end. They do not want these women's deaths to be in vain because they had their futures ahead of them, and they died needlessly at the beach.

On Elizabeth City State University's campus, where sororities and fraternities are active, students, who are Greek affiliated and students who are not, are concerned about the acts that led up to these deaths.

"There are more important things to achieve other than a two-colored, 3-lettered jacket. Once they receive the 'achievement' the prospective candidates will realize Greek Life is not all it's cracked up to be. Besides, there are more within a sorority or fraternity than there are in the world, and they are supposed to be 'brothers and sisters,'" an anonymous student said.

"If there was no chapter on the campus at the time, I am not understanding why these women would even consider going out to the beach in the first place," said Takia Winrow,

a junior member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated.

One student who wanted to remain anonymous felt that they took the pledging part out of proportion.

"Even though you are supposed to go through some things, this was something that should not have been done, but those women should have had common sense enough to know, that being blindfolded in the ocean was quite enough," said anonymous student.

There were also comments about the situation where students felt that risks were taken, on the part of the women who died.

"I felt that it was an unfortunate event, however the thirst of being accepted by a prestigious group is a risk that, the particular individual is willing to take. Fate is a two-way street that always provides avenues of departure, and no matter what happens, you are always in control," said Damiyon Sledge, a junior member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated.

"Personally, I think that there had to be some involvement or why else would a great risk have been taken, if there was to be no grand result," said Gingah Battiste, a junior.

Feelings about poor judgment were also expressed in other students' comments.

"The girls were stupid for walking into the water blindfolded, and the girls behind it should be charged for manslaughter, if not murder," said Shawn Capehart, a senior.

"Personally, hazing has been a problem with Greek letter organizations since I can remember. The incident that occurred in California with the "alleged" sorority only reflects those women who took it upon themselves to put their lives in danger. There is no organization or anything for that matter in this world that is worth losing your life over. No one can make you do anything without your consent, therefore this incident only reflects the stupidity of those individuals who chose to lose their life," said Kevin Wade, a senior member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated.

High's family realizes that this is not the first time people have died from the pledging process. They feel that the only way for it to stop is for potential members to refuse the abuse, and to be knowledgeable of what you are getting into and why. Acceptance and popularity are nothing to lose your life over.

Information in this article was taken from other sources: Los Angeles Police Department,  
<http://www.cnn.com>.

## SEMINAR HELPS STUDENTS ACHIEVE BETTER GRADES

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A seminar was held on September 30, 2002 at 7:00pm in the Fine Arts Auditorium.

The theme was "Better Grades In Less Time," which helped the students learn how to read faster and understand what they have read.

Gary Cohen presented the seminar. He was asked to come because he had a "proven track record for helping students achieve success in school," said Dr. Jean Holt,

Cohen began the seminar by giving the students a reading package. Everyone had to read as much of the introduction as possible in one minute. Afterwards, he told the students how to calculate how many words they can read per minute. To calculate the total words per minute, count the number of lines and multiply it by 10.

Then, he had a prize-giveaway session. He tossed three, big, different-colored balloons and played a game, hitting or tossing the balloon around the auditorium. Whoever held the balloon when the music stopped told Cohen how many words per minute they read. He played this game until eight people were called.

As the seminar continued, he listed some facts about memory. People tend to remember more information through visuals by 40% and taking notes by 30%. A good diet can help students to have a better focus on our work. Cohen said that when students study, they usually forget about 50% of what they have read. In three hours, they forget at least 80%.

To help students to gain better concentration, he encouraged the students to eat a light meal. When students eat heavy meals, our brain is being deprived of the proper oxygen that people need. This is why people tend to get tired and sleepy after a large meal. Also, if the students are studying and need a snack, Cohen suggested fruit.

After this session, he took a basket of fruit and tossed the fruit, one-by-one, to the enthused audience. He had red apples, green apples, golden apples, and oranges.

After the fruit toss, he told students about the stages of reading: silent lip reading, mental reading, and finger-guided reading.

As a test of motivating people to read, he had a little girl from the audience to make a mark on a piece of paper that was taped to the wall. After the girl made the mark, Cohen taped five dollars on the wall and taped another five dollars over the first. The girl's aim was to mark the higher five dollars so that she could get ten dollars. Cohen asked the audiences for suggestions. The girl listened to the advice for the audience. She stood away from the way, ran towards the wall and jumped and made a mark on the higher five dollars, therefore, winning ten dollars. The idea was that when motivated, students could achieve their goal.

He then showed the students the four-minute reading technique. He gave reasons why it is better to use our hand as students read. The reasons were that the hand acts as a personal trainer and pushes you to read faster; it forces you to see more words at a time and keeps you from repeating the words over to yourself; prevents rereading; and you are more alert.

To do this technique, place the middle three fingers under the line that you are reading. Read the text for one minute, taking in what you are reading. Calculate the words per minute. During the second and third time, reread the same text, but do not read for full comprehension. On the fourth time, read from where you left off the third time, using your fingers. After a minute, calculate your words per minute and compared it with the first time. Your reading should have increased by two or three times.

The seminar was very enjoyable and the presenter had a great sense of humor which caught the students' attention.