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Founder and President, The Kitchen Table

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“THE KITCHEN TABLE”

Tyrelle J. Collins
Founder and President
The Kitchen Table

Three young men, who were tired of seeing student organizations, administration and faculty saying they stand for one thing and do the total opposite, founded "The Kitchen Table."

Strategies to create a more positive campus climate
"The minute you get away from fundamentals whether it's proper technique, work ethic, or mental preparation, the bottom can fall out of your game, your school work, your job, whatever you're doing.' –Michael Jordan.

Often times in higher education and in organizations, fundamentals are forgotten. The main focus for many institutions is to increase in enrollment, funding, and research. The main focus for organizations is to follow their guidelines or principles, increase membership, and provide service to die are in which their in to create a better environment and society. For both groups these are their objectives are important for their success, but they often forget the "little things" such as individual's feelings, conduct, and ethics.

Three young men, who were tired of seeing student organizations, administration, and faculty saying they stand for one thing and do the total opposite, started The Kitchen Table. The founders were also tired of seeing organizations, faculty, and administration competing against each other to gain superficial power on campus or "The Yard" with little to no benefit. There were issues that needed to be brought to the attention of the whole campus such as recruitment/retention of minority students and the treatment of minority student-athletes that people were afraid to bring forth and address. The Kitchen Table was created to bring awareness and facilitate discussion on these issues. It also sought out to get individuals from all walks of life on campus such as athletes, Greeks (Fraternities and Sororities), religious affiliations, and ethnic groups. The motto chosen to represent what was to be accomplished by this organization was: "Facilitating and Environment that creates togetherness." Three fundamental principles were chosen to compliment the motto they are: Education, Business, and Entertainment.

The first principle Education stands for the organization's commitment to teaching and sharing knowledge with others. It is important that everyone comes with an open mind and willingness to learn from one another. The Kitchen Table stresses to its members that just because we are all different does not mean we cannot learn from each other. It also does not mean we cannot help each other. Everyone is educated and talked to at the same level, because we want everyone to feel that they are equal. By keeping things at the same level also builds up respect and admiration towards one another. No one person feels that they are above another and if they know something that others do not know, they share it. The more we share, the more we all can learn and the better we become as

people and as an organization.

The second principle Business consists of each individual and the organization having the ability to conduct and handle business. When doing "real business" whether it is with local businesses, corporations, other student organizations, and the university you are dealing with or will be dealing with "real money". Therefore, The Kitchen Table considers business as the overall presentation. Three stages compliment this principle. The first stage is the "Get Right" stage, which means the individual and organization must be serious about promoting diversity and committed to creating an environment where the campus can unite as one. In this stage everyone must get out of his or her comfort zone. The next stage is the "Get Tight" stage, where the individual and the organization must conduct themselves in a manner that is business-like and respected. In this world reputation and respect is everything so we keep this in mind in this phase.

The third stage is the "Keep it Together" stage, this is where the individual and the organization is open to embrace new ideas, solutions, activities, and partnership, but must not lose its identity. The Kitchen Table has a philosophy where they will respect and be willing to work with any person, place, or things, but will stand strong on its beliefs, values, and ethics. The Kitchen Table will not hesitate to question things that they feel is not in line with or helps promote the things they are trying to accomplish. There is a saying that goes "What good is it for a person to gain the world, but lose his or her soul."

The final principle is Entertainment, which means The Kitchen Table and its members will do with fun and with massive enthusiasm quality events and activities for the campus and surrounding communities. If you are not having fun at doing something, it probably won't turn out like it should. It is a priority of The Kitchen Table to do things on campus that are innovative, fun and exciting. Also the events are designed to have the whole campus and community to attend. Having free giveaways, door prizes, and discounts and coupons are ways you can increase attendance at events and also a good way to rewarded the audience for attending and participating. The more diverse the entertainment, the more diverse audience you will get and a positive campus environment will be established.

Presenter:

Tyrelle James Collins is a senior at Purdue University majoring in Communications and African American Studies. While at Purdue, Tyrelle has participated in several campus activities and organizations. He was a four-year member of the Purdue Men's Track and Field team where he excelled in the 400-meter dash. Off the track, Tyrelle has served on The President's Roundtable and Campus Appeals Board. He recently founded a student organization on called The Kitchen Table, which promotes togetherness and diversity. Also Tyrelle was a College Representative for EA SPORTS, in their College Experience 1999 & 2000 program. In his spare time he enjoys reading, coaching and speaking to young children about being successful in athletics and academics. In the future, Tyrelle plans on writing an autobiography as well as a book on The Kitchen Table and owning a sports company.