For our first newsletter in 2018, I sat down with SAAB advisor and Assistant Dean of Multicultural Affairs Dr. Jarvis Watson for a tone setting conversation of the state of our organization and the strides he has witnessed personally over the course of his professional and personal journey.

From an advisory standpoint, Dr. Watson is pleased with the growth our organization has experienced at the conclusion of last semester. He spoke about the status of SAAB at the close of last semester, admittedly straggling with most of the active members being on the executive leadership team. However, with the newest brothers joining the organization with a true hunger for achievement and “bringing a new flavor” meant a new era for SAAB. He noted that the involvement and hunger doesn’t reside within the executive leadership team alone. General body members continually prove themselves and prosper whenever they are placed before an audience of administrative faculty. Despite this year’s younger appearance, Dr. Watson recognizes that “the movements you all have made in such a short period of time is commendable”. There are surely greater things to come for SAAB, but the stage we set last semester has primed us for a tremendous starting point this year.

We also spoke about some aspects of brotherhood and some elements we should all reflect upon. “Being able to check one another has left the black male experience. I think its needed.” Our first principle is accountability, a pivotal part in being your brother’s keeper. Dr. Watson noted that we may often hesitate from addressing one another. Incidences of hostility and anger or frustration can complicate the process of keeping your brother on track. However, as men and as professionals we should remain open not only to constructive criticism but to ego checks as well. “I think it’s important that you have more conversations face to face, to each other”. Part of our growth comes conflict. Disagreements are natural, but disagreements don’t necessitate outrage. Instead, productive dialogue which illuminates the scenario serves as a far superior mechanism for resolution.

Our conversation ended with comments on image and perception. During his time as an EOP counselor towards the beginning of his professional career, he worked closely with students who persisted through disparaging conditions. As should be noted. Dr. Watson takes both pleasure and pride in catering towards student needs and helping in their developments as people and as students. Obstacles are not defining. Our image and societal perception are entirely within our control. So often, we place emphasis on the logos and graphical representation of our different organizations, SAAB included. However, with that logo comes a greater image. We assume the mantel of a visual presentation of our organization. Every action we take with or without becomes a representation of SAA and what we stand for. We control our brand, our perception. Dr. Watson encourages us to continue striving upwards in our professional and personal development and serves every day. He always has been and will continue to be his brother’s keeper.