



The Links, Incorporated – Trinity (TX) Chapter held its annual kickoff for the So SMAART (**S**et on **S**cience/**E**ngineering, **M**ath, **A**rt, **A**viation, **R**eading and **T**echnology) Program on Saturday, September 23, 2017 at Paul Quinn College.

The program is designed to expose girls in grades 4-8 to non-traditional careers for women. Throughout the school year, monthly sessions are held at T. L. Marsalis Elementary School and William Hawley Atwell Middle School/Law Academy to address all components of the So SMAART program.

During the summer, our girls attend various camps geared toward the So SMAART program. The success of the program has been realized through the number of girls who have chosen to pursue more challenging fields in college. The kickoff allows the girls to visit different booths where they personally experience and interact with female, minority, community role models.

This year, we were extremely excited to have two representatives from the field of aviation; Jill Louis, Partner, K&L Gates LLP and member OBAP (Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals) Board of Directors and Capt. Beth Powell, IOC Duty Pilot, American Airlines who shared the history and statistics regarding African American Aircraft Pilots and Flight Engineers (specifically African American females), and the outstanding women who are making a difference in the field of aviation and on the OBAP Board of Directors.

The So SMAART girls learned what education preparation is required and the challenging job responsibilities. The girls asked questions and interacted with a female minority pilot which enabled them to fully understand, appreciate and embrace the world of possibilities available to them if they are prepared.