

# RITE NOW @ ROP



Rite of Passage programs strive to create communities where youth are encouraged to be engaged academically, athletically, artistically and socially through positive relationships with their peers, ROP staff, families and other community members. This year, Uta Halee Academy created a new opportunity for engagement through the formation of its inaugural Color Guard Team. The team, which has presented colors during on-site celebrations and for visitors to the academy, expanded its repertoire of performances to include the Omaha City Council.

The Color Guard was invited to present colors of the American, State of Nebraska and Rite of Passage flags at an Omaha City Council Meeting, and were asked to lead a distinguished panel in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. The performances were seamless due to the many hours of practice which preceded their demonstration. Through an exemplary display of discipline and respect, the team was an honorable representation of the program at Uta Halee.

In our thirty-five years of experience, we have learned that empowering youth through opportunities to participate in the community increases the likelihood of their success once they return to their home communities. This type of involvement increases our student's sense of belonging and purpose. Through opportunities like Color Guard, our students begin to understand that they, through hard work and dedication, can make a positive difference in the world.