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**Statesmen Pioneers light up OKRAtation 2025**

**CLEVELAND, Miss. —** The first week at Delta State didn’t just begin with unpacked boxes and campus maps. Thanks to the Statesmen Pioneers, OKRAtation 2025 kicked off with foam cannons, block parties, and a lot of new friendships. For hundreds of incoming students, it wasn’t just orientation — it was their first taste of life at DSU.

Their leadership was on full display during OKRAtation 2025, Delta State’s weeklong orientation held August 16–21 under the theme *“Your Journey Begins Here.”* From Move-In Day tours to a high-energy Foam Party finale, the Pioneers helped launch the year with excitement, connection, and Statesman pride.

The schedule was packed: a Live & Lit on Leflore block party, the Parent’s Presidential Preview, a lively Union Takeover, the first-ever Statesmen Walk, and a colorful Carnival Kickback on the Quad. For students who couldn’t attend in person, Virtual OKRAtation on Canvas provided key resources.

For Pioneer Ilayda Hacioglu, an international student from Turkey, the goal is simple: belonging. “We create events to make sure that Delta State really feels like a home away from home,” she said. “At Live & Lit, people danced, laughed, and got to know one another—it was amazing.”

Her fellow Pioneer Jyquon Wallace, a junior from Baldwin, added that being part of the group means leading with heart. “We just want to be those first friendly faces new students see,” he said. “OKRAtation gives them a chance to connect—not only with academics, but with the organizations and social groups that make DSU special.”

With the Statesmen Pioneers paving the way, OKRAtation 2025 was more than orientation—it was an epic welcome to life at Delta State.

Cutline: DSU students enjoyed a variety of games on the quad during OKRAtation’s Carnival Kickback.

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**About Delta State University:**Delta State University is a four-year public institution whose nearly 2,700 students come from most U.S. states and more than 45 countries. Acknowledging its beginning as a teacher’s college, the University sustains excellence in teacher education while continuing to expand offerings in traditional as well as unique fields of study. Programs such as those available through the Delta Music Institute, the Commercial Aviation Department, and the Center for Interdisciplinary Geospatial Information highlight the University’s commitment to meeting the evolving needs of the students it serves with world-leading, industry-acclaimed programs. Situated in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, Delta State offers top-notch academic programs in business, arts, sciences, nursing, education, and more. DSU Athletics has won 14 national championships, 70 conference championships, and 37 regional titles.