

The Aurora

Fall/Winter 2012

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated

**The
Power of 7**
*Honoring Our
Legacy of Service
and Progress*

**Where It
All Began –**
*Butler University
then, Butler
University now*

**Breast Cancer
Awareness:**
Sound the Alarm!

**Sigma spotlights
Hydeia Broadbent**
HIV/AIDS activist

**Highlights of
the 54th
Biennial Boule'**



**23rd International Grand Basileus
Bonita M. Herring**

"Uplifting Our Legacy of Sisterhood, Leadership and Service"

***If you wear a seat belt
every time you
get into a vehicle,
you're more likely to:***



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So, buckle up on every trip. Every time.

The Aurora

Volume 81, No. 3

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Upcoming Features

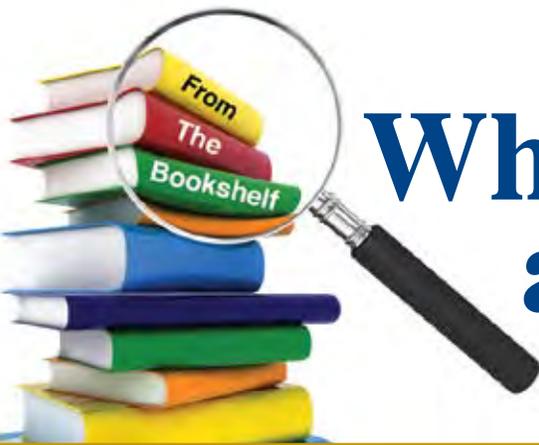
In the Next Aurora!



Moment in Black History ...

Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington – Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. remembers

In recognition of National Women's History Month in March, the Aurora will feature the Top 22 Sigma "Women Inspiring Innovation Through Imagination: Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics"



What Sorors are reading

PLUS Returning Sections ...

Alumnae on the Move, Undergraduate Pulse & Affiliate News

DON'T MISS THE AURORA!

Send us your questions, comments & concerns! E-mail the editor at theauroramag@sgrho1922.org and we'll find an answer.

90th



SIGMA GAMMA RHO
SORORITY, INC.

FOUNDERS

CELEBRATION

1922

2012

90 Years: Honoring our Legacy of Service and Progress

Nov 3 **Remembering Mary Allison**
Celebratory Memorial Service honoring Founder Mary A. Little in *Inglewood, CA*

Nov 7 **Undergraduates in Motion**
Nationwide Promotion of Youth Service Project

Nov 10 **National Day of Service**
Local Community Service Activities

Nov 11 **Day of Worship**
City chapters come Together for Worship and Reflection - Faith, Hope & Love

Nov 12 **Founders Day Rededication**
Meditation on Our Pledge & Day of Sisterhood for Sorors across all generations

Nov 17 **Where It All Began...**
Celebration at Butler University: Campus Tour and Cemetery Walk *Indianapolis, IN*

Nov 22 **Prayers of "Thanksgiving"**
Nationwide Prayer Call 7:22am & 7:22pm

Nov 30 **Affiliate Celebration**
Philo & Rhoer Clubs highlight Service & Scholarship Initiatives

More details:
www.sgrho1922.org

Greetings from the International Grand Basileus



**Soror
Bonita Herring**
23rd International
Grand Basileus

"Uplifting Our Legacy of Sisterhood, Leadership and Service"

As I begin my term as your 23rd International Grand Basileus, I must let you know just how much I appreciate all of the cards, letters and e-mails that you have sent to this officer. You have called to make sure that I am well and you have included me in your prayers. So let me take this opportunity to thank you for your support and the many well wishes that you have shared. It is an honor to serve as your grand basileus.

These are very exciting times for our sisterhood. Very soon we will celebrate 90 years of "Greater Service, Greater Progress." We will hold Founders Day celebrations and during those programs we will acknowledge the work of our sorority in local areas. Nationally, we will hold a celebration in Los Angeles to celebrate Founder Little and then we will travel to Indianapolis to celebrate our remaining Founders. During the month of November we will hold luncheons, dinners, community service activities, and we will give thanks.

We are excited because, our 90th Celebration is a major milestone and in observance of this accomplishment, we encourage members and friends to engage in a yearlong celebration. We celebrate this milestone because in 1922 seven African-American women dared to dream of forming a women's organization on a predominately white campus. If we just think about those times, we know that our Founders had to be determined women to get this done.

We celebrate this year because in 2012 we have made great strides; however, some issues that impacted these young women on the campus of Butler in 1922 are probably still alive today. We celebrate, but we know that our work is not finished.

So let us all celebrate, rededicate and prepare for our continued work to enhance the quality of life in our communities. It is what our Founders would want us to do!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonita M. Herring". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, flowing "H" and "ing" at the end.

Bonita M. Herring



Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated

International Board of Directors 2012–2014



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A Word from the Editor



**Soror
Glyndell B.
Presley**
Editor-In-Chief

"Sometimes, reaching out and taking someone's hand is the beginning of a journey. At other times, it is allowing another to take yours."
- Vera Nazarian

What I've learned while briefly serving in the capacity of interim editor-in-chief of The AURORA was valuable. It was valuable to me because it helped me see the collective spirit of sisterhood that resides in Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. by working together for a common cause, for a greater good. It showed me how sisters can unite and give of their talents and skills.

As I embark upon my new role as editor-in-chief, I am sure there are many more valuable lessons ahead. The key to any endeavor is the "team" factor. In this illustrious sorority, we have depended upon the "team" factor for many years. As we celebrate 90 years of founding, as you will read about in this edition, we must remember the principles of which this great sorority was founded. Our founders knew when creating this organization, that there is strength in unity. My personal promise to you is to bring to you a polished product that educates, entertains, informs and persuades you to take positive action in your respective communities. On this journey, I hope to accomplish a new appreciation of The AURORA.

As a point of personal privilege, I would like to thank all of my sisters for your confidence and trust in me with this noble job of communicating all of the wonderful and exciting news in our sorority. I am committed to making sure that not only the sisterhood knows about our great accomplishments, but that the world can read about it in this vehicle.

In this edition we take an in-depth look at our new International Grand Basileus, Bonita Herring, and the administration's seven-point plan for the organization. The 90-year Founders Celebration package includes: The Power of 7 — 90 Years: Honoring Our Legacy of Service and Progress and Where it All Began: Butler University then, Butler University now. We take a look at Breast Cancer Awareness and recap the 54th Biennial Boule, plus you will see our standing sections, Alumanae on the Move, Undergrad Pulse, news from our Affiliates, Omega Rho, Let's Give 'Em Props and What Sorors are Reading.

As you read this edition, be sure to pay close attention to deadline guidelines and submission processes. These guidelines have been refined to continue to deliver a quality magazine, but to provide more timely articles and information. I hope that you enjoy this edition, and every other edition that you read under my tenure.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glyndell B. Presley". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Glyndell B. Presley

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."
- Henry Ford

On behalf of the International Corporate Headquarters, I welcome each of you to this new sorority year! I hope for a fruitful sorority year for each of you. I ask that you stay engaged and proactive as this is a thrilling and inspiring time for our illustrious sisterhood as we are welcoming the new administration under the leadership of the 23rd International Grand Basileus Bonita M. Herring. We are confident that her vision, knowledge and most of all, her deep commitment to our organization, will help us continue on the path set by our 22nd International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless.

At the international corporate headquarters we are constantly improving the way we operate to increase our ability to provide stellar customer service and answer the needs of the membership. Many recommendations were passed at our boule putting some great changes into place this new sorority year, and the staff is being provided the adequate training to meet these new recommendations. We will continue to work with the new administration in the hopes of securing a new membership enterprise system that will allow us to be at the cutting edge of technology. We should all be very proud of where we are today and excited about where we are headed. I encourage you to move towards, as the great Vince Lombardi said, "Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

Before I close, I would like to thank each of you for attending our 54th Biennial Boule in New Orleans and for helping make it a historic event. Thanks to the devoted endeavors of the past administration, all the committee members, headquarters staff and the incommensurable support of our sponsors and partners we were able to hold a memorable and record setting Boule. I hope that you enjoyed your time in *The Big Easy* and found the experience to be invigorating and inspiring. I know you all were just as recharged as I was and returned home ready to continue the invaluable work that our great organization does in the community.

In keeping with the theme, "Uplifting Our Legacy of Sisterhood, Leadership and Service", let us continue to forge ahead and open new gateways to the future. In doing so, we will continue to fulfill the mission of "Greater Service Greater Progress."

Sisterly,



Rachel E. Morris

Greetings from the International Headquarters



**Soror
Rachel E. Morris**
Executive Director

LET'S GIVE 'EM THEIR PROPS

Soror Dolores L. Bergquist-Coye'



Soror Dolores L. Bergquist-Coye', Basileus and a longtime member of the Epsilon Sigma chapter, was selected by the New Orleans Branch of the National Association of University Women as "Woman of the Year." The official ceremony took place at NAUW's Founders Day Luncheon in March 2012

at The Roosevelt, a landmark hotel restored after Hurricane Katrina. Soror Bergquist-Coye' has been a member of NAUW since 2003 and is the immediate past president of the local branch. She is considered an education specialist, having held a long, successful career as a teacher, principal, curriculum resource specialist, trainer of teachers and an adjunct professor at the University of New Orleans (UNO). She has traveled to more than 31 foreign countries and islands.

Soror Frankie M. Brown



Soror Frankie M. Brown is devoted to making a difference in the lives of others. In 2011, she earned the Outstanding Administrator of the Year Award from Wichita State University, where she serves as director of Human Resources. Other awards and accolades include the Wayne Carlisle Distinguished Service Award and the Janet Jackson Community Service Award from the Wichita Branch of the NAACP. She serves as the Central Region

Epistoleus and as past Central Region Grammateus, Philo Coordinator and scholarship chair. She is serving a second term as the National President of the National Council of Urban League Guilds and is state president for the Women's Auxiliary of the Missionary Baptist State Convention of Kansas.

Soror Brown was also one of a 20-member team selected to participate in the 2012 African-American delegation that traveled to Beijing China earlier in the year.

Soror Terri Hurdle



Soror Terri Hurdle earned a Doctor of Education in urban leadership from the University of Cincinnati in May 2012. Hurdle, a program coordinator for Student Activities and Leadership Development, has dedicated much of her career to building leadership among students of color. Hurdle earned a bachelor's degree in

political science and a master's degree in criminal justice, both from Xavier University.

Schaunta James-Boyd



During the last 20 years, the Wichita, Kan. community has witnessed many heroic acts of selfless service by Soror Schaunta James-Boyd through her efforts to educate families. Soror James-Boyd is a graduate of Wichita State University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in health service organization and policy, with

a minor in Spanish. She currently serves as executive director of the E.C. Tyree Health & Dental Clinic, where she has worked for the past 10 years. Under her guidance the clinic has developed several programs aimed at encouraging healthy lifestyle and behaviors. Her community involvement includes: 2011 Sunflower Advocacy Fellowship Class, 2010 Leadership Wichita Dental Champions Class of 2009-2010, Board of Directors of the Kansas Association for the Medically Underserved, Board of Directors of the Non Profit Chamber of Service, Business Plan Advisor for the Youth Entrepreneurs of Kansas and member of the Sedgwick County Oral Health Coalition, to name a

LET'S GIVE 'EM THEIR PROPS

few. She has served as basileus and currently serves as parliamentarian of Gamma Chi Sigma.

Soror Ruby Lea Pope

103 Years Old and Still Active



From left, Joann Loveless, 22nd International Grand Basileus, Ruby Lea Pope, Brenda Canty, Southwestern Regional Syntaktes and Bonita Herring, 22nd International First Grand Anti-Basileus.

Ruby Lea Potters Mitchell Pope was born on April 9, 1909 in Washington County, Texas on the Brazos River near the town of Navasota, Texas. She grew up in

Houston's Fifth Ward area and graduated from Booker T. Washington High School on January 24, 1930. She earned her Bachelor of Science in elementary education from Texas State University for Negroes-Houston. Soror Pope earned her Master of Education from Texas Southern University on May 28, 1956 and completed post-graduate study at Texas Women's University.

She is a founding member of the Gamma Phi Sigma Chapter, where she has been an active, life member. During the 71st Southwestern Regional Conference, sorors, International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless, Southwestern Regional Syntaktes Brenda Canty and International First Grand Anti-Basileus Bonita Herring, honored her as she celebrated her 103rd birthday.

Soror Eikner Thompson

Soror Eikner Thompson of Alpha Xi Sigma, Tulsa, Okla., received the John Hope Franklin Excellence Award in recognition of outstanding dedication during the third annual "Reconciliation in America" Symposium sponsored by the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation.

Send us the following information and we'll share with the world your reading treasure. So hurry, get your information in today!

From the Bookshelf *What Sorors Are Reading*

Please include:

- Name
- Chapter/City
- Name of book currently reading
- Author
- Brief synopsis
- Why do you like the book?
- Why should others read it?
- How has it impacted your life?

Don't forget include a color headshot of yourself. Submissions may be sent to: theauroramag@sgrho1922.org

All documents should be submitted using Microsoft Word. All submissions are subject to editing and potential exclusion based on timeliness of content. Include the chapter name/what sorors are reading in the electronic submission. Photos must be at least 300 dpi (high resolution).

Reading a good book?



**Well, we want to
know about it for our
next Aurora!**

The Power of 7



Grand Basileus Lawrence (center) with four of Sigma Gamma Rho's five living founders



Soror Juanita Simpson, Executive Secretary

90 Years: Honoring Our Legacy of Service and Progress

The Vision

Seven educators joined forces to create an organization 90 years ago that was built on the foundation of service, scholarship and sisterhood. Its motto, "Greater Service, Greater Progress," has been the guiding light for Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. throughout the years. It was the spirit of completion and perfection that seven women from similar backgrounds worked towards a similar goal, to enhance the quality of life within communities.

Founded on November 12, 1922, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. is the only national Greek organization to be founded at Butler University in Indianapolis, Ind. The sorority was incorporated as a national collegiate sorority on December 30, 1929, when a charter was granted to the Alpha chapter. Today, there are more than 500 chapters and some 85,000 members throughout the United States, Bermuda, Virgin Islands, Bahamas, Germany and Korea.

While it is now known internationally, developing an African-American based organization like Sigma during the 1920s, particularly on a predominantly



Second Grand Anti-Basileus Erma Jenkins (standing) meets with Grand Basileus Williams and Soror Gracie Parks of Beta Chapter at D.C. Teacher's College.

white college campus, brought with it many obstacles. The racial climate in the state of Indiana was inundated with many occurrences of attacks by the Ku Klux Klan on African Americans in an effort to keep the state segregated. Blacks were not allowed to join white sororities. In fact, according to information included in the history of Butler University, in the early 1920s, the policy of admitting students of color was highly protested by the Klan. However, the University upheld its policy and continued to offer African-American adult education classes.

The prominence of the Klan was at its peak in politics and society after World War I and was said to have been the most powerful in Indiana, according to documents in the Indiana Collection of the Indiana State Library. Even though the cloud of intimidation lingered over Butler University, it did not dissuade Mary Allison Gardner Little from being the catalyst to organize the group with the assistance of six others: Nannie Mae G. Johnson, Vivian White Marbury, Bessie R. Martin, Cubena McClure, Hattie Mae Redford and Dorothy Hanley Whiteside.

Fannie
O'Bannon,
Grand Basileus,
1927-1931



Soror
Annie W. Neville,
Grand Basileus

Edythe Ward



Alpha Chapter, 1924 — (seated, l-r) Sorors Delight Hinton, Maude Flack, Vivian Marbury, Georgetta Bardwell; (standing) Sorors Effie Allen, Helen Brooks, Blanche Edwards, Esther Powers, Hattie M. Redford, Emily Clay, Ruby Rankin, Bessie Martin and Alma Bolen.

Founders

Little, who was the principal founder, was born in Indianapolis, so she was no stranger to the consequences of pursuing a venture such as organizing a group of African Americans. Yet, she was also aware of what might happen if she did not. After both her parents were killed, a family friend took her in and raised her. In 1915, she graduated from Shortridge High School and earned a diploma from the Indianapolis Normal School in 1918. Four years later, she began to lay the foundation for a group where education was the focus. In 1928, Little moved to Los Angeles with her husband and finished her undergraduate teaching at UCLA. She taught in the Los Angeles school system until she retired in 1967.

Johnson was a product of the Indianapolis public school system and earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Butler University. In 1923, she received her first teaching assignment. She served as principal to one of the largest elementary schools in Indiana. She retired in 1966.

Marbury earned her bachelor's degree from Butler,

but her master's from Columbia University in New York. She taught at Morehouse College and served as director of practice training for teachers from Butler University, Indianapolis University and Indianapolis State University. In addition, she taught in the public school system, and was instrumental in organizing Public School No. 87. After serving as principal for 39 years, she retired in 1967.

Martin graduated from the Manual Training High School and the City Teachers Normal. For some 25 years she taught school. She was a devoted wife and hard worker.

McClure graduated from the Indianapolis City Normal School and attended Western Reserve in Cleveland, Ohio. She won a scholarship that she planned to use to further her studies, but could not accept it because of an illness.

Redford earned a bachelor's degree from Indiana State Teachers College and her master's from Butler University. She also attended Western Reserve in Cleveland and Indiana University extension. She taught a year in Terra Haute, and 37 years in Indianapolis.

Whiteside attended Indianapolis Normal School. While training as a cadet teacher she met the others who became her best friends. She taught school until 1951 when she retired. She started her own millinery business that she operated with her husband from 1955-57. In 1959, she returned to her first career, teaching, where she worked until she retired in 1970.



The Aurora, 1929-1974

Past Basilei

Then, in 1925, Little became the first Basileus of the sorority and served from 1925-1926. Following in her footsteps through the years include: Edith Malone Ward, 1926-27; Fannie O'Bannon Robinson, 1927-1931; Edith Roach Walker, 1931-1934; Bertha Black Rhoda, 1934-1944; Ethel Ross Smith, 1944-1948; Sallie Johnson, 1948-1954; Edna Douglas, 1954-1959; Lorraine A. Williams, 1959-1962, 1967-1971; Cleo S. Higgins 1962-1963; Annie L. Neville, 1963-1967; Annie Lawrence-Brown, 1971- 1976; Evelyn Hood, 1976-1980; Alice M. Swain, 1980-1984; Rejesta V. Perry, 1984-1988; Katie Kinnard White, 1988-1992; Corine J. Green, 1992-1996; LaRona J. Morris, 1996-2000; Helen J. Owens, 2000-2004; Mynora Bryant, 2004-2006, 2006-2008, Joann Loveless, 2008-2010, 2010-2012; and Bonita M. Herring 2012-Present.

The Mission

Although the organization's founding was that of educators it progressed to include women from every profession. Public service, leadership development and education of youth are the framework for Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.'s programs and activities. Globally, the organization's arm reaches across seas into places like Africa through programs such as Program for Africa and Project Mwanamugimu.

Projects and Programs

The Program for Africa for many years has assisted in providing thousands of dollars to purchase grain grinders for African women to help alleviate back-breaking work. The project focus has now grown to address the needs HIV/AIDS awareness, education and treatment.

Through Project Mwanamugimu the sorority provides an opportunity for students to increase their knowledge of the historical and contemporary development of Africa. Its objectives are to provide the target population with opportunities that allow structured ways to learn about Africa; heighten awareness of African cultural heritage; and improve writing and research skills. The project title Mwanamugimu is a proverb from the Republic of Uganda that means "from small acorns come mighty oaks."

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.'s reach also includes active participation in networking with other organizations such as the National Council of Negro Women, Urban League and the NAACP. Its signature program, Project Reassurance, is the umbrella under which numerous projects fall. Project Reassurance was originally developed to provide health education, support and nurturing for expectant teen mothers and teens who are parents. The program has now evolved to focus on Healthy Choices, Healthy Living and Healthy Generations (H³) to help reduce teen pregnancy through a comprehensive year round program addressing the factors that lead to teen pregnancy - low self-esteem, diet, economic issues - while also providing support and guidance when it does occur. The March of Dimes has partnered with the sorority as part of its National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

*Sigma
Gamma
Rho's First
Boule, 1925*



Other projects include Project Wee Savers, Operation BigBookBag, Sigma Youth Symposium, National Marrow Donor Program, Hattie McDaniel Cancer Awareness and the HIV/AIDS Grant Project A34Life.

Project Wee Savers is designed to develop awareness of banking facilities and available services. The goal of Wee Savers is to allow participants to become knowledgeable of the real life skills of saving and buying stocks and bonds, ranging from ages 6 to 18.



*Grand Basileus
Lawrence, at a
reception in her
honor, with her
husband — Attorney
George Lawrence and
Soror Evelyn Hood —
First Grand Anti-
Basileus*

Operation BigBookBag is designed to make available to selected facilities across the nation, bookbags notebooks, writing and drawing paper, pencils, pens, dictionaries, thesauri, rulers, glue, construction paper and other needed school items. The program also assists shelters, centers and schools in an effort to meet some of the educational needs of the children and young adults housed at the facilities.

The Sigma Youth Symposium focuses on some prevalent concerns that negatively impact youth: drugs, teen violence, abuse, low self-esteem, suicide and teen pregnancy.

National Marrow Donor Program was designed to address and reduce the number of African-American deaths due to a lack of sufficient numbers of race appropriate bone marrow donors. The program focuses on the education and recruitment of sorority members, affiliate and community donors.

Hattie McDaniel Cancer Awareness provides education on and active support of early detection and research for the prevention of breast, prostate, ovarian, colon and other types of cancers.

The Act Against AIDS Leadership initiative is a \$16 million, six-year, Center for Disease Control partnership that utilizes leading organizations to fight HIV in populations hardest hit.

The legacy continues

In 2012, an organization founded 90 years ago from a precept and strong will, continues to stand on the shoulders of Little, Marbury, McClure, Martin, Redford, Johnson and Whiteside. As young women graduate from college, they are mentored to continue service at the graduate level.

Every day in communities across the world, the spirit of seven, of completeness, of perfection continues to live through members who have accepted the charge to go forth and make a difference in the world. The legacy of the seven exudes power, the power to change, the power to stand up and be heard. This was the vision of Little who stood up to the injustices surrounding her in Indiana and in Indianapolis to make an impact on society, educationally, civically and economically.

Photographs and portions of the text from the Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Incorporated website and from Behind These Doors – A Legacy, The



Butler University then, Butler University now

The Alpha chapter upholds legacy of its founders

By Glyndell B. Presley

Step on the campus of Butler University located in Indianapolis, Ind. today, and the atmosphere is warm, inviting and collegial. However, 90 years ago, the atmosphere in the state of Indiana was not quite as welcoming.

Brittany Spiller, a senior pharmacy major and member of the Alpha Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. located on Butler's campus, said she can only imagine what it must have been like in 1922 when seven educators dared to start a sorority.

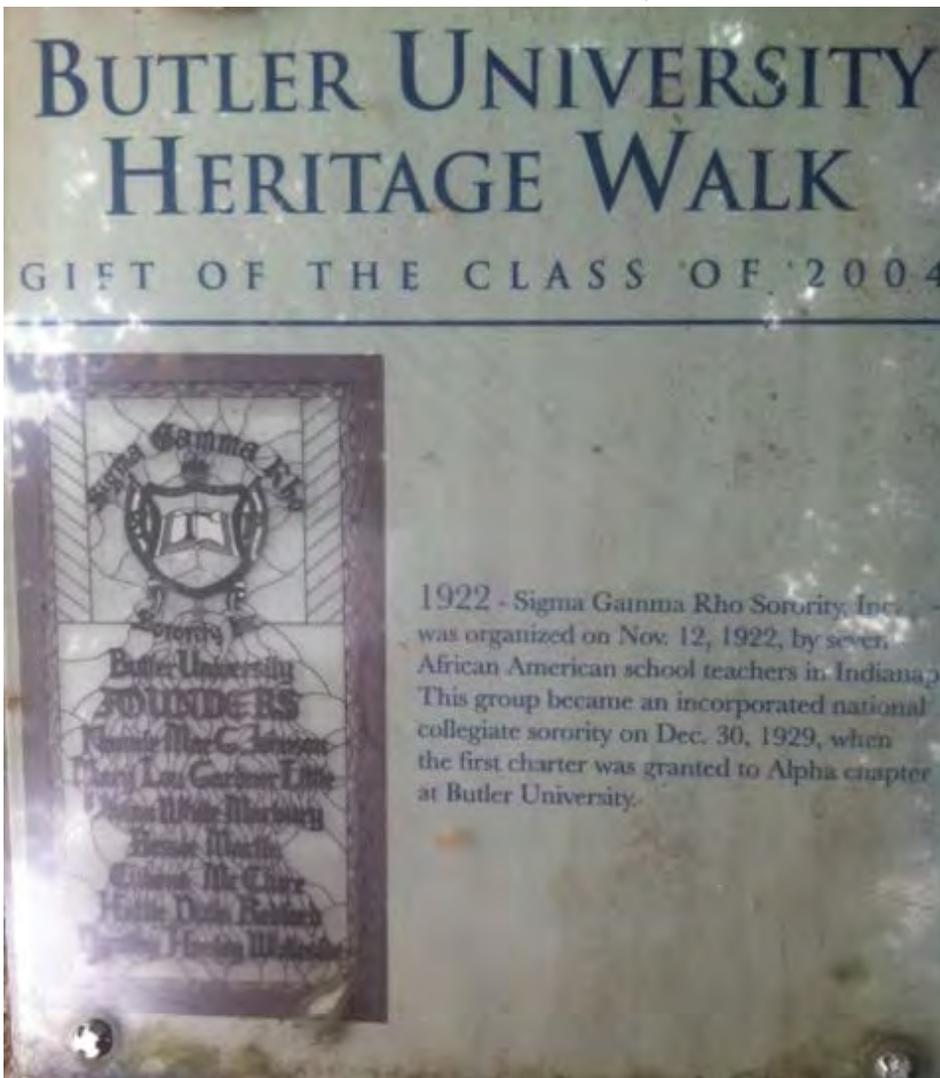
It wasn't a popular concept to the mainstream - a black organization on a predominantly white campus. According to Butler University's Office of Institutional Research & Assessment (OIRA), by 1924, there were some 305 females enrolled at the University; however, records did not show a breakdown of race for that number. It is well known that blacks were not allowed at that time to join white sororities not just on Butler's campus, but on campuses nationwide. However, today, OIRA said that 2.5 percent of the student population is African-American. The racial make-up of the university has changed dramatically since the early 1920s, and all students are free to join whatever organization they choose.

When Mary Lou Allison Little birthed the concept of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. on the campus of Butler, she was looking for an outlet for black women to bond and make a difference in the world through service. It was Little's determination and perseverance that kept her motivated to press forward.

"I know Soror Little must have had a really difficult time starting the organization when members of the Ku Klux Klan lived across the street," Spiller said. "The founders had to be really strong women. Starting a black sorority in Indiana during the time they did was an extremely great achievement. I don't know if I could have done the same thing."

Spiller, who is president of the chapter, said she and the rest of the members are working hard to uphold the legacy of the seven founders.

"If the sorority has been around for 90 years that means obviously the members of the organization are doing something





Alpha Chapter members (left to right), Kazmyn Perry, Brittany Spiller and Amanda McSwine

right for it to last this long,” Spiller said. “It makes me think the founders would be proud. I’m sure when they started it they didn’t know it would become this big. I’m sure they are somewhere above smiling at us.”

A journey through Butler’s Heritage Walk shows a plaque with historical information about Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., a gift from the class of 2004. In Atherton Union, a framed stained glass lists the names of the founders. Bricks line a walkway leading the way to a sorority plaque nearby. All of these landmarks indicate the presence of a sorority that has made its mark in the history of the campus.

Spiller, the Morton-Finney Scholar said she accepted the position of president this year because she wanted to continue the legacy that has become associated with the Alpha chapter. The chapter’s goal is to become more interactive with wider campus activities. Spiller said she and chapter are proud of the accomplishments they have made. For example, the Anti-Raw Bash, which is centered on HIV/AIDS awareness and safe sex, garnered participation of more than 100 students.

Another project the chapter is actively involved with is working at the Coburn Place for Battered Women and Children.

“A lot of people know us for our love of children and education,” she said. “We go to the center and talk to the children, and do workshops, like Project Wee Savers. They actually had to balance a checkbook, purchase items and understand how to budget and not over spend.”

Spiller said she, like the thousands of other members nationwide, understands the importance of the 90th celebration. It is a chance to celebrate all of the sorority’s accomplishments and look forward to the future.

“We are all pushing for another 90 years,” she said. “Sigma Gamma Rho is a great organization based on service and sisterhood.”



Plaque on the Sigma tree



Plaque by the Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.’s bricks



Central Region plaque



Sigma bricks



Stained glass in Atherton Union



Irvington replica

International Grand Basileus

Bonita M. Herring

"Uplifting Our Legacy of Sisterhood, Leadership and Service"

Experience

Inducted: June 27, 1970

- Beta Rho Chapter, Chicago, Ill.
- Transferred Delta Sigma Alumnae Chapter, Chicago, Ill.

Chapter

- Beta Rho Chapter – Basileus
- Delta Sigma Chapter –
 - Rhoer Advisor
 - Financial Grammateus
 - Second Anti-Basileus
 - Advisor to Beta Rho Chapter
 - Membership Chairwoman (two non-consecutive terms)

Region

Served as the first chairman of the Life Member Luncheon for the region.

National

- International First Grand Anti-Basileus (2008-2012)
 - Supervise Regional Syntakti
 - Coordinate the Undergraduate Chapter Coordinators
- Chair, Honorary Membership Committee
- Chair, National Membership Committee
- Chair, Personnel Committee
- Chair, National TORCH Committee

Executive Director for 23 years

- Worked with seven Grand Basilei



As we prepare for our future, I offer my proven experience to lead the team that will continue to move the sorority forward. I am a committed servant leader who is prepared to serve as Grand Basileus of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc."

- Bonita M. Herring

By Glyndell B. Presley

American Novelist and Poet Don Williams Jr. wrote, "The road of life twists and turns and no two directions are ever the same. Yet our lessons come from the journey, not the destination."

Williams' quote holds many truths for newly elected 23rd International Grand Basileus Bonita M. Herring. It is the journey that has taught her many lessons – of purpose, of knowledge and of perseverance.

Poised to lead the more than 85,000 members of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. into the next millennium, Herring acknowledges the path along the journey that has brought her to this place in her life. She understands the mission and has accepted the challenge. The shoulders she stands upon are anchored by the seven founders who built the sisterhood to withstand the test of time. In November, the sorority celebrates its 90th Anniversary. This celebration highlights the organization's many accomplishments since its founding in 1922.

"This is truly an exciting time in our sisterhood," Herring said. "In celebrating this milestone, we acknowledge the strong foundation that our founders built for our sisterhood. We were founded in Indiana in the midst of segregation and the Ku Klux Klan. We are the only sorority, of the National Pan-Hellenic Council, to be established at a predominantly white campus. This was not an easy task. But through the power of seven women who persevered, we stand strong today."

The strength Herring says she possesses comes from a long line of strong women who impacted her life on a number of levels and helped her along the path. Her hunger to learn more about the sorority was fed by nurturing members who were just as eager to share knowledge as she was to learn.

"Two of the most important things [that prepared me for the journey now as the sorority's new leader] are knowledge of sorority information (what happened before) and the eleven things to remember," she said. "The hunger to learn more about our sorority began when I first became a member. As an undergraduate, I attended regional conferences and boules. I admired sorors who went to the microphone and knew sorority history and policy. I wanted to be like them."

Two sorors that impressed Herring were the late Sorors Gertrude Hackett and Florence Anthony from Indianapolis, Ind., who served as Grand Grammateus and Grand Tamiochus, respectively.

"Soror Hackett shared a lot of history with me when I first took the position of executive director," she said. "She gave me numerous history lessons. I have also worked with seven past basilei and had the opportunity to talk with other past grand basilei who I didn't serve under. Talking to and working with our leadership served as my training ground. By watching these women, I have seen the sacrifice that one must make to be a leader and the joy that they experienced from sorority accomplishments."

A strong point in the arsenal of leadership is the "art of negotiation and necessity to be firm in your convictions even when others don't see your vision," Herring added. "Leadership is a delicate balance which I observed and now implement."

This delicate balance of which the Grand Basileus speaks also involves 11 things to remember which assisted her with preparation.

"I learned the 11 things to remember when I first became a member," she said. "I have tried to incorporate them in how I interact within and outside of the sisterhood. As a review, they are: the value of time; the virtue of patience; the wisdom of economy; the

worth of character; the pleasure of working; the power of kindness; the dignity of simplicity; the obligation of duty; the joy of originality; the improvement of talent; and the success of perseverance."

Preparation for leadership

Herring said she uses the 11 things to remember as affirmations to help her through the day.

The day for Soror Herring begins long before most are up preparing for work and ends long after the average person has gone to bed. But this is the life she has prepared for since she was a young girl listening to stories from her late grandmother, Nellie Miller, about growing up in the South – in Birmingham, Ala. in a small area called Ensley.

"She shared history and wanted her grandchildren to know how things were in early days. One situation that I remember was visiting her home in Birmingham and being told that we needed to move back on the bus because we were sitting too close to the front," she explained. "My grandmother told stories and she always included those adages which many of us still use today. She gave us messages like 'You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink' or that 'We should avoid being big I and little you.' This was her way of letting us know the importance of respecting everyone."

Herring said her grandmother, Nellie, and mother Philo Juanita Cook, were the two most influential women in her life.

"My mother encouraged me by letting me know that no matter what I thought I had achieved, I could always do a little better. She also encouraged me to stand tall, speak up and be proud of my accomplishments. My mother worked nights but she always made it to school programs and special events. She was proud of what we did and she wanted to be there to share in our joy. I didn't really understand all that she had to do with four children as a working mom until I became an adult. These women were my heroes. They taught me the importance of encouragement."

With an opinionated grandmother and encouraging mother, Herring was groomed to accept life's tests. Now with everything learned from her family and Sigma mentors, like Soror Lynette Frazier, past international headquarters fund chairman, and Soror Adah Hull, past grand grammateus, Herring begins her leadership noting the past while preparing for the future.

Herring's work with Soror Hull helped her understand the idea that people can't control all of the things that occur in life; however, people do have the ability to control how they react to a situation.

"No matter how big the job that had to be completed, Soror Hull always reminded me that the only way to get things done (when there was a monumental job) is one step at a time," she said. "I look at things that way now and it keeps me from feeling overwhelmed. She also showed me (by example) how to keep things in perspective."

The new visionary, sees her leadership mirroring that of Sigma's founders by focusing on the those principles that have made the organization what it is today.

"When I look at our sorority's mission, of leadership development and education, I am reminded that our founders were educators," she said. "As a former educator, I have always supported the idea of teaching, mentoring and preparing members to lead our organization. Our founders prepared women for leadership because they knew the importance of preparing for the organization's future. That is how we grew and expanded from our birthplace to have five regions. Educators teach and train so that all will be better prepared to address the issues of the day. Therefore, the focus of this administration will be to train young women to build our pool of leaders. This is part of our continuity plan (or sustainability) for our sisterhood."

Herring's Seven-point plan

The seven-point focus of Herring's plan include: sustainability, membership, finances, infrastructure, training, community service and communication.

"I have set seven goals which I will focus on throughout my administration," she noted. "I have chosen these seven points because they are comprehensive and cover all areas needed to move our sisterhood forward."

A more comprehensive explanation of the points are:

- **Sustainability** – continue continuity planning, develop a strategic plan
- **Membership** – continue to develop and implement plans for growth; as first grand anti-basileus she promoted a new membership program, Operation R3 2022, the plan currently place now
- **Finances** – identify additional revenue streams
- **Infrastructure** – review sorority operations to insure best practices
- **Training** – continue training members and affiliates to enhance sorority operations; identify additional training tools such as webinars, etc.
- **Service** – continue to focus on service while doing ongoing evaluation
- **Communication** – continue to build positive organization branding through internal and external communications

"These goals are organization goals which will keep us in a mode of evaluation of where we are and where we want to go," she said.

Balancing family and career

Soror Herring was raised by her mother and grandmother. Her mother was divorced at a young age, so her father was not in the household. She said her grandmother was often the family's caregiver. She is the oldest of three – two sisters and one brother.

"One sister laughs about being an eternal Rhoer, the other saw me participate in the pledge process (a legal process in earlier years) and she was a little too militant to pledge an organization. These were the years of campus unrest and protests."

Married with one daughter, Chevonne, a legacy, Herring reminisces of meeting her husband, Chester, in college. She says he is very supportive of her obligations to the sorority.

"When we met I was basileus of my undergraduate chapter so he has always known that I am very involved in sorority life," she said. "He is not Greek so when we first met he wanted to know why we had so many meetings. Now, he doesn't ask questions about the number of meetings or travel, he just tells me to 'have fun.'"

Chevonne, a graduate of Florida A&M University, became a member of the Alpha Epsilon chapter in Tallahassee, Florida. Soror Herring said she is proud of her daughter and her accomplishments thus far.

"She gives me a perspective of what young sorors have on their mind," she said. "I know that what I do as grand basileus will position our sorority for the future. This will affect my daughter and all young women who wear our letters or who would like to wear the Greek letters Sigma Gamma Rho."

Keeping the family perspective in mind, Soror Herring must also carve out time for her career. In between family and the sorority, she finds the necessary time to earn a living.

"As far as the job, that is a delicate balance with family and sorority. Sigma is a second full-time job. I can only share with you what I tell others, 'Take care of yourself first.' I know each of us must take care of our health and 'breathe' sometimes. When we do that we get the energy to continue and do the work that lies ahead."

Sigma formula = 90 more years

When asked what is the formula for Sigma to remain a visible, poignant force nationally and internationally, for 90 more years, Herring replied, "We must continue

to work toward organization sustainability. Each member has a responsibility and must be involved in this. Sustainability is what we must do to keep the organization in existence and insure that our organization is viable. We must continue to support the sorority financially, we must continue to develop plans for growth, and we must continue to adhere to our mission of service."

Herring added, "Finally, we must strategically set goals for where we want Sigma Gamma Rho to be in 2022 and beyond. We must set 'blue sky' goals for our sisterhood. An old saying is 'the sky is the limit' let us 'keep our head to the sky' my sisters."

The Herring Legacy

Herring believes one of the most important things the sisterhood can do is support the projects and programs.

She urges that in cities throughout the nation and internationally, that members continue to build a positive sorority brand.

"We can do that by planning events where we inform and support the local community activities and be visible," she said. "When we do this we provide service to others, fulfill our mission and let our local communities know that Sigma is there. The second most important thing that sorors can do to promote 'Greater Service, Greater Progress,' is to support the sorority financially. We know that it takes dollars to do the work that we want to do in the community. We must all commit to doing our part."

The Grand says she wants people to remember her as a soror who is fair, dedicated, and one who handles business, and also knows the importance of the power of kindness and sisterly support.

In recognition of National Women's History Month in March, The Aurora is looking for the Top 22 Sigma Women who are "Inspiring Innovation through Imagination: Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics."

If you or someone you know meets the criteria below, send us a short essay explaining why you should be selected to be in the top 22, and a color photograph. The deadline to receive entries is December 15, 2012. Email the editor at theauroramag@sgrho1922.org



Criteria:

- The nominee is unique and a pioneer in her field.
- The nominee has achieved peer recognition in science, technology, engineering or math disciplines.
- The nominee has published extensively and/or has a patent record.
- The nominee has developed new knowledge, products or improvement to products in a corporate, academic or government setting.
- The nominee is a mentor/leader.
- The nominee is an innovator of technology.
- The nominee uses technology to promote learning and educational content.
- The nominee has triumphed over obstacles in the field.
- The nominee has promoted STEM or other professional development through community service.



2012-2014 International Officers at a Glance



International Grand Basileus **Bonita M. Herring**

Chapter: Delta Sigma, Chicago Ill.

Region: Central

Sorority Offices Held:

Local Basileus, Grammateus, First-Anti-Basileus and Second Anti-Basileus

National First Grand Anti-Basileus, Executive Director (23 years)

Affiliate Organizations: Chicago State University Chapter of Toastmasters International, Southeast Chicago Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners, and member of The Chicago Area Alliance of Black School Educators (CAABSE)



International First Grand Anti-Basileus **Deborah Catchings-Smith**

Chapter: Eta Mu Sigma, St. Louis, Mo.

Region: Central

Sorority Offices Held:

Local Basileus, Anti-Basileus, Grammateus, Anti-Grammateus, Tamiochus, and Nominating and Elections chair

Regional Central Region Syntaktes, Undergraduate Chapter Coordinator, Grammateus, Nominating chair

Affiliate Organizations: Association of Fraternity and Sorority Advisors, Order of Omega (National Honorary Greek Society), SPEAR Foundation Board Member, United Way St. Louis/Citigroup Financial Education Foundation (Impact Panel member) and Professional Organization of Women (POW)



International Second Grand Anti-Basileus **Emmanuela Ebunilo**

Chapter: Pi Rho, Pomona, Calif.

Region: Western

Affiliate Organizations: American Marketing Association and Black Business Student Association



International Grand Anti-Grammateus **LaTonya Nelson**

Chapter: Epsilon Chi Sigma, Antelope Valley, Calif.

Region: Western

Sorority Offices Held:

Local Basileus and Anti-Basileus

Regional Western Region Syntaktes, Undergraduate Chapter Coordinator and Anti-Grammateus

Affiliate Organizations: Association of Fraternal Advisors (AFA), Western Regional Greek Association, National Council of Negro Women, Women Empowered, American Business Women and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People



2012-2014 International Officers at a Glance



International Grand Grammateus **Ronica O. Mathis**

Chapter: Beta Delta Sigma, Tallahassee, Fla.

Region: Southeast

Sorority Offices Held:

Local Tamiochus, Grammateus, First Anti-Basileus and Basileus

Regional Tamiochus and Grammateus

Affiliate Organizations: National Association of University Women and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People



International Grand Tamiochus **Vanessa Tyson**

Chapter: Alpha Sigma, Indianapolis, Ind.

Region: Central

Sorority Offices Held:

Local Basileus, Anti-Basileus and Grammateus

Regional Tamiochus

Affiliate Organizations: Silvanus International Ministries Inc., Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA), Oaklandon Youth Organization (OYO) and Butler University Minority Alumni Council



International Grand Epistoleus **Tiffany Hightower**

Chapter: Eta Xi Sigma, Oak Lawn, Ill.

Region: Central

Sorority Offices Held:

Local Second Anti-Basileus and Anti-Grammateus

Regional Central Region Anti-Grammateus

Affiliate Organizations: Christian Poet's Society, National Association for Female Executives, National Anger Management Association (NAMA), National Association of Black Journalists and National Council of Negro Women



International Editor-in-Chief **Glyndell B. Presley**

Chapter: Beta Delta Sigma, Tallahassee, Fla.

Region: Southeast

Sorority Offices Held:

Local Basileus, First-Anti Basileus, Second Anti-Basileus and Epistoleus

Regional Southeast Region Epistoleus

Affiliate Organizations: Order of Omega (National Honorary Greek Society) and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

54th Biennial Boule'

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.



Eliminating Barriers to
Worldwide Positive Change

54th Biennial Boulé

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. paint New Orleans royal blue and gold during 54th Biennial Boulé

New Orleans bustled with royal blue and gold July 12-17, as members of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. converged on the city known for Mardi Gras and jazz. The delegation of women were there to participate in the 54th Biennial Boule. The welcome mat was rolled out for the nearly 2,000 women who traveled thousands of miles to attend the meeting.

While remnants of Hurricane Katrina, the storm that hit the area hard in 2005 were still visible, the smiles, robust laughter and cheerful attitudes seemed to compensate for the recollection. The Boule' was packed with an agenda inclusive of meetings, entertainment and fun. However, when it was time for members to conduct the business of the sorority, the theme "United 4 Service: Eliminating Barriers to Worldwide Positive Change" was placed on the front burner.

The charge was issued



Brenda J. Canty, Southwestern Region Syntaktes, Chantay Canty-Doyle, international grand grammateus and daughter



Carolyn Williams, corporate liaison and Brenda Smith, international programs coordinator



International First Grand Basileus Bonita M. Herring



Sorors enjoy the atmosphere of New Orleans



Joann Loveless, 22nd international grand basileus, Patricia A. Daniels, Ph.D. and Kasi Self, international second grand basileus.

54th Biennial Boule'



22nd International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless with husband, Glenn Loveless III



Sorors participate in Grand Processional



Eta Xi Sigma, Oak Lawn, Ill



Linda D. Brown of the Eta Xi Sigma Chapter with her mother, Neboma A. Brown, Life member No. 216 of the Alpha Kappa Sigma Chapter.



Eric and Paulette A. Waite, Southeast Region Philo Coordinator



Tiffany Hightower and her grandmother, Patricia A. Daniels, Ph.D.



Sorors participate in Mardi Gras Parade



Sorors with the late Alecia Johnson, immediate past national music director

from headquarters to the body of sisters prior to arriving in New Orleans that over the course of five days a “consensus on the forward movement” of the sorority would be decided.

On Friday, July 13, a leadership breakfast was held with the board of directors and Basilei from chapters in the five regions. This gave Basilei an opportunity to meet and greet other leaders from chapters throughout the sisterhood. The day also brought with it a new member workshop, Rhoer meeting, membership training, the candidates’ forum, and an honorary member and a Cultured Pearl reception. A step competition and party followed later in the evening. A late-night sister share to bond and discuss necessary strategies to propel the sisterhood was held by undergraduates.

On Saturday morning, the banquet room of the hotel was filled with the sounds of jazz compliments of the Tornado Brass Band, who played for the SPEAR breakfast. SPEAR was founded in 1993 as a component of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. In 1995, it received 501(c)3 status and became an autonomous body

54th Biennial Boule'

with Sigma Gamma Rho affiliation. It serves as the official 501(c)3 organization of the sorority. Its goals emphasize the development of public education and advocacy programs that will reduce poverty, and improve the quality of life for minorities, women, and children. At the event, SPEAR collected items from chapters to donate to a local organization.

The Annie Neville Talent Luncheon and St. Jude's Service Project featured talent from undergraduate winners from all regions. Representatives included: Soror Ta Tiana Keisha Marie Sanders, Central Region competition winner; Soror Diomara Delvalle, Northeast Region competition winner; Soror Ashley Danielle Lesley, Southeast Region competition winner; Soror Tatyanna Turner, Southwestern Region competition winner and Soror Kali Neal, Western Region competition winner.

At the luncheon, the sorority recognized the St. Jude's Foundation with a monetary presentation. Discoveries made at St. Jude's have completely changed how the world treats children with cancer and other catastrophic diseases. St. Jude's is a leader in cutting-edge research and revolutionary discoveries.

The luncheon is held in tribute to Soror Annie L. Whitehead Neville, who while serving as 2nd Grand Anti-Basileus introduced the creation of the campus chapter coordinator, known as the undergraduate chapter coordinator for each region to assist the regional syntaktes with campus chapter building. The talent contest was established in her honor in 1969 during the 32nd Boule in Atlanta, Ga.



Singer Kelly Price embraces Dawn Lewis at Prayer Breakfast



Evelyn H. Hood, National Education Fund President Emeritus and 14th International Grand Basileus, Elma Hairston, National Rhoer Coordinator and Katie K. White, 17th International Grand Basileus



International Sergeant-at-Arms Karen Y. Williams with the 22nd International Grand Basileus, Joann Loveless



New Orleans Jazz band performs at the Achievement and Awards Banquet



Sorors after the Achievement and Awards Banquet



Pamela Kadirifu enjoys a laugh during the conference



Sorors enjoying the ambiance at the Achievement and Awards Banquet

Legendary Lyricist, DJ, and Entertainer Lana Moorer aka "M.C. Lyte"

54th Biennial Boule'



Sheryl Lee Ralph performs at Divas Simply Singing



First Grand Basileus Bonita Herring with Joann Loveless, 22nd International Grand Basileus at the Achievement and Awards Banquet



Gwen Carmen, March of Dimes representative (front) with members who received awards for Project CRADLE care.



Sorors at the Awards and Achievement Banquet



Kasi Self, second grand basileus with Joann Loveless, 22nd international grand basileus



New Orleans was festive for all



During the afternoon, the sea of royal blue and gold dispersed on both sides of Loyola Avenue and nearby streets to watch the parade comprised of national, regional and local leadership. The parade was comprised of floats, cars and walking units. It was a Mardi Gras parade, Sigma style. Later in the evening, sorors attended the public meeting and an HIV/AIDS Benefit Concert -- DIVAS Simply Singing that featured Sheryl Lee Ralph, Maysa, Vanessa Bell Armstrong, Gaynell Colburn and a host of talented sorors.

On Sunday, July 15, the Omega Rho Ceremony was held in Empire I/II, followed by a Prayer & Praise Breakfast. The National Education Fund Luncheon and Plenary Session III began. Elma Hairston, National Rhoer Coordinator facilitated the Rhoer Pageant, which was emceed by Soror Lana Moorner, known as M.C. Lyte. The contestants included, Rhoer Autumn Odum, (Central Region), Rhoer Cecile Harris, (Western Region), Rhoer Whitney Ashante' McWilliams, (Southeast Region), Rhoer Kemberlie Denise Spivey (Southwest Region) and Rhoer Meagan F. Whitfield (Northeast Region). Rhoer Harris of the Western Region was crowned Miss International Rhoer. The Philo First Lady Pageant was also held that night. Wanda Nelson, Ph.D., the National Philo Coordinator facilitated the event, which was followed by a reception.

On Monday, July 16, sorors attended

Photos by John Leach

54th Biennial Boule'

a Life Membership Luncheon earlier in the day. The afternoon was filled with presentations from the sorority's Strategic Partners, including Donna McCree, Ph.D., associate director of Health Equity, Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention, Center for Disease Control and Prevention; Susan Swanson, vice president membership and volunteerism, Girl Scouts of USA; and Gwen Carmon, March of Dimes.

The Legacy Luncheon was held on Tuesday, July 17, and the evening brought with it excitement galore, as the sorors showered the 22nd International Grand Basileus, Joann Loveless with appreciation for her years of service to the sisterhood. The Awards & Achievement Banquet also was the time when Grand Basileus Loveless expressed her thanks to sorors and bestowed upon them accolades for their dedication. At the banquet, the sorority's new officers for the 2012-2014 were installed. They are: Bonita M. Herring, Grand Basileus; Deborah Catchings-Smith, Grand Anti-Basileus; Ronica O. Mathis, Grand Grammateus; LaTonya Nelson, Grand Anti-Grammateus; Vanessa Tyson, Grand Tamiochus; Tiffany Hightower, Grand Epistoleus and Glyndell B. Presley, Editor-In-Chief of the Aurora.

As sorors departed the hotel to travel home on Wednesday, July 18, the spirit of sisterhood lingered in the air. "Until next Boule' take care and be safe," many sorors were heard saying as they passed each other. 🌸



National Philo Coordinator Wanda Nelson, Ph.D.; 22nd International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless, Philo Debra Lee-Williams, Most Photogenic; and Philo Marcia Hall-Hyman



Western Region Philo Coordinator Zeretha Washington; National Philo President Marcia Hall-Hyman; Philo Rena Gamble, First Lady Pageant Winner; 22nd International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless, and National Philo Coordinator Wanda Nelson, Ph.D.



Philo Rena Gamble, Western Region Contestant and Philo Catherine Green



Philo Geraldine Jones, Philo Maxine Steele, 25 year membership pin recipient, and 22nd International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless



Holding trophies: Philo Helen Crockett, Philo Odessa Howard, and Philo Thelma Goodwin; National Philo President Marcia Hall-Hyman, National Philo Coordinator Wanda Nelson, Ph.D.; and 22nd International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless



Southwest Region Philo Coordinator Elaine Doyle and Philo Sharon Carter, Southwest Region Contestant



Philo Edith Debnam, Northeast Region Contestant



Philo Debra Lee-Williams, Central Region Contestant

54th Biennial Boule'



2012-2014 National Philo Officers: Philo Marcia Hall-Hyman, president; Philo Arlecia Stamps, vice president; Philo Lenora Crockett, recording secretary; Philo Mary Byers, financial secretary; and Philo Tbelma Goodwin, treasurer



Central Region Philos with Central Region Philo Coordinator Soror Karen Evans



Philos' Grand Processional "Second Line"



Carolyn McKenzie and Southeast Region Contestant Philo Ann Jones



National Rhoer Coordinator Elma Hairston; Lana Moorer "MC Lyte," Autumn Odum, Central Region Rhoer of the Year; Alyse Cecile Harris; Miss International Rhoer and Western Region Rhoer of the Year; Kemberlie Denise Spivey, Southwest Region Rhoer of the Year; Whitney Ashante McWilliams, Southeast Region Rhoer of the Year; Meagan Whitfield, Northeast Rhoer of the Year; and 22nd International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless.



Western Region Philo Coordinator Zeretba Washington and Western Region Philo Contestant Rena Gamble



Rhoers representing at the Miss International Rhoer Pageant

Photos by John Leach

A Moment of Recognition

22nd International Grand Basileus Joann Loveless issues her thanks to the following individuals and chapters for their outstanding support and leadership during her administration.

Above & Beyond Award

For Consistently Doing Much More Than Asked or Expected

Michelle Allen
Alyce Boyd Stewart (*posthumously*)
Claudette Brazile
Glenda Clausell-Elliott
Joy Collins
Brigitte Cook
Lisa Cooper
Alexandria Crumble
Vy Engles
Pearlie Gill

Gwendolyn Goins
Thomasina Gore
Elaina Hamilton
Pandora Hardtman
Sandra Hunt
Erica Jackson
Thelma Johnson
Richelle Jones
Shirley Jordan-Seay, Ph.D.
Joy Kennedy

Roland Lemonius
Davina Powell
Effie Sanders
Felicia Shaw
Brenda Smith
Natasha Smith
Virginia Wall
Carolyn M. Williams
Karen Williams
Pat Tucker Williams

Beacon of Light

Efforts with Far-reaching Impact that will Extend Beyond This One Administration

Chantay Canty-Doyle
Deborah Catchings-Smith
Barbara Eikner-Thompson
Elma Hairston

Delia Harris
Bonita Herring
Secenario Jones
Rachel E. Morris

Keisha Simmons
Karyn D. Thomas
Carolyn M. Williams

By Each Soror

Exhibition of Long-term and/or Extraordinary Acts of Sisterhood

Daryl Lott (*posthumously*)
Linda Brown

Sandra Hunt
Ann Broughton

Exceptional Customer Service

International Corporate Headquarters Staff Appreciation

Elaine Cheers
Victor Dhong
Garry Fife

Elaina Hamilton
Brenda Lenford
Aminata Mbaye

Latesha McIntosh
Barbara Morton

If you were not present and you have not yet received your award, please contact Brenda Lenford at our International Corporate Headquarters.



Giving Your All

Trailblazing Efforts in Support of National Programming & Branding

Janet Armand
Frankie Brown
Jennifer Crittendon
Dianna Davis-Bailey
Alice Cryer-Sumler
Eta Gamma Sigma
Eta Nu Sigma

Danielle Frazier
Mae Frances Frazier
Janice Gaiter
Shari-Lyn Gordon Jackson
Sandra Hunt
Jeannine Hunte
Frances Jackson, Ph.D., R.N.

Alecia Johnson
Sequoyah Jones
Sandre Mitchell
Clarybel Peguero
Lillie Reed

Step Up

Outstanding Success with Volunteer or Assigned Projects

Xorica Adams
Jackie Alexander
Venita Brown
Evanjuani Bynum
Alice Cryer-Sumler
Winifred Daugherty
Tiffany Davis-Nealy
Delta Nu Sigma
Eta Zeta Sigma
Michelle Flowers

Sheshe Giddens
Jerrilyn Hitch-Fuller
Ashley Hopkins
Cynthia Horner
Darlene House
Debra Hughes, Esq.
Schaunta James-Boyd
Chloe Jones
Kappa Sigma
Robin Kelly
Lambda Delta Sigma

Dale Mason
Kay Merrill
Rhonda Norman
Glyndell Presley
Nicole Rodden-Bowen
Shirley M. Smith
Angela Spears
Anna Trunnell
Inez Venable

Faith E. Foreman Williams, Ph.D.

Upon Your Shoulders

Honoring Those Who Build the Foundation for Our Efforts

Cleo Higgins, Ph.D.
10th International Grand Basileus
Annie Lawrence Brown
13th International Grand Basileus
Evelyn H. Hood
14th International Grand Basileus

Katie K. White
17th International Grand Basileus
Corine J. Green
18th International Grand Basileus
Helen J. Owens
20th International Grand Basileus

Mynora J. Bryant
21st International Grand Basileus

Wind Beneath My Wings

Outstanding and Consistent Personal Grand Basileus & Administration Support

Beta Epsilon Sigma
Delta Alpha Sigma
Delta Pi Sigma
Delta Phi Sigma
Epsilon Lambda Sigma
Eta Sigma
Uolanda Campbell
Dorothy Cummings
Patricia Daniels, Ph.D.
Mae Frances Frazier
Shari Lyn Gordon Jackson
Georgette Green-Hodnett
Sheena Hancock

Joyce Hatney
Tiffany Hightower
Frances C. Jackson, Ph.D., R.N.
Alecia Johnson
Vivian Johnson
Sammyette Jones
Pamela Kadirifu
Jacquelyn Mays
Wanda McAfee-Randle
Mildred McDuffie
Anilsa Nunez
Lorenda Porter
Arzelle Pressley (*posthumously*)

Virginia Price-Booker
Lillie Reed
Alice Simpkins
Anita Spann
Margaret A. Thornton (*posthumously*)
Lillian Tutt
Waltene Whitmire
Erika Williams
Karen Williams
Zeta Sigma
Zeta Theta

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

Sound the alarm!



Statistics show that African-Americans are disproportionately affected by cancer, the highest mortality rate of any ethnic group. This high mortality rate is most often linked to barriers to receiving proper preventative health-care related services or lack of information for early detection. When it comes to breast cancer; however, in 2011 the American Cancer Society (ACS) estimated that some 230,480 new cases of invasive breast cancer would occur among women in the U.S. with 2,140 new cases expected in men. Breast cancer ranks second as a cause of cancer death in women.

According to the ACS, improvements in treatments, fueled by the latest research, has helped save the lives of millions of women and men. Health professionals say the key to changing these numbers continues to be dependent on a number of factors, including early detection, treatment and a healthy lifestyle.

Throughout the month of October, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. joined the nation in helping support awareness through its Hattie McDaniels Cancer Awareness program. The program focuses on providing education and active support of early detection as well as research for the prevention and cure of breast cancer.

Members donned pink ribbons in support of the breast cancer awareness and of Hattie McDaniel, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in the early 1950s, and was the first African-American to win an Academy award.

Early detection is important to saving the lives of many women and men. Research

shows that the more a person knows about his or her body, the more likely they are to detect a problem and seek medical attention. For example, a woman can notice changes through periodic self-exams. These self-exams use a step-by-step approach and a specific schedule of examination, a process ACS says that every woman should use. The self-examination does not lessen the importance of regularly seeing a physician to have a clinical breast exam or have a mammogram. A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast and is used to diagnose breast cancer disease in women and men who have symptoms or an abnormal result on a screening mammogram. It is recommended that women age 40 or over have a mammogram every year.

In addition, to the self- and clinical exam and the mammogram, women and men should be aware of the following signs and symptoms according to ACS: swelling of all or part of breast (even if no distinct lump is felt), skin irritation or dimpling, breast pain, nipple retraction (turning inward), redness, scaliness, or thickening of the breast skin and discharge other than breast milk.

It is equally important to know that breast cancer can spread in lymph nodes under the arm or around the collarbone and cause a lump or swelling. All of these symptoms should sound the alarm to seek professional medical advice as soon as possible.

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.'s call to sound the alarm on breast cancer awareness does not end in October, it is a year-long initiative to help all women and men become more educated about breast cancer and ready to take action if necessary.

Sandra's battle was about walking in grace



By Soror Noel Williams

The American Cancer Society reports there is a 1 in 8 chance of a woman having invasive breast cancer some time during her life. It just so happens that this particular 12.5 percent hit home for me in 2008 when my mother, Sandra Johnson Williams, was diagnosed with Stage IV Metastatic Breast Cancer.

As National Breast Cancer Awareness Month is upon us and everyone dons their pink ribbons, I am reminded of my mother's two-year battle with the disease. I recall the internal faith tug-of-war that ensued when I learned of her diagnosis and preparation for a mastectomy. It was as if the prevalence of cancer became a reality in my world and took a seat in my living room. In the months to follow, my mother endured rounds of chemotherapy and radiation. I saw firsthand the physical toll of cancer staring me right in the face, and it hurt. Breast Cancer had become a big ugly beast in my eyes, and its onslaught was my wish.

I couldn't understand how something so grave could be happening to someone so undeserving. My mother was the healthiest person I knew. She ate in moderation, exercised regularly and even had a healthy body mass index. It seemed unfair for a person so completely selfless to suffer through this horrendous event. My mother was far from a bad person. She was a diligent servant of Christ, a leader within her ministries and a total giver of her time and gifts. I couldn't help but wonder, "Why do bad things happen to such good people?" After a brief course of remission and repeat therapy treatments, my mother's faithful fight with Breast Cancer ended nearly eighteen months later.

Presently it has been two years since my mother's passing but I often reflect on how she endured her battle with breast cancer. Through it all she wore a smile and spoke of the

goodness of God. It was as if she never missed a beat, still living a life of service for others all the way up until the end. I believe that her commitment and accountability to others pushed her through.

Losing a mother to breast cancer has ignited a new sense of purpose within me. Like many of us, I participate in breast cancer awareness activities year-round and especially during the month of October. I look forward to uniting for purpose with others at the walks, seminars and community outreach activities. Participating with the sorority in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk is my chance to celebrate the life of not only my mother, but also the lives of other women who have fought the same battle.

Sandra's battle wasn't just about fighting the physicality of cancer, but about walking in the grace of God's faithfulness and being a testimony through example. I truly feel that she acquired the secret of being content in her situation, no matter the circumstances and outcome. My mother's favorite scripture passage, Philippians 4:6-13, spoke to this matter. Her battle encourages us all to touch the lives of others and to be the mirror through which Christ can be seen. Just as Sandra Johnson Williams fought her battle with a smile and service to others, I urge us all to do the same.

Soror Noel Williams is a member of the Beta Delta Sigma Chapter, where she serves as Parliamentarian.

My Opinion

The Widespread Epidemic of Breast Cancer: The Call for a Call

By Cassie Rogers

Breast Cancer has taken many women captive. This form of cancer has caused so much hurt and pain within the community. Families are hurt on a daily basis by what seems to be something manageable. Many women have no clue of how to deal with it. Society is quick to paint a pretty picture of it. Throughout October; the streets are embellished with pink.

The most innocent and pretty color is used to symbolize it. But, what's so pretty about Breast Cancer? Like many other things in the world, it steals joy. It creeps up like a thief in the night and slowly lurks around looking for its prey, which just happen to be women and men.

Forget defeat, fear, or anguish. There is a need for help. There are many calling on Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Are we going to answer? Women all around the world need assistance in their fight against breast cancer. We must suit up for war and get on the battlefield alongside them. The first step is to get informed. We must know our enemy. Many people do not know the meaning of the term "cancer". This deadly disease is very dangerous. According to American Cancer Society," cancer is a group of diseases that cause cells in the body to change and grow out of control". In some form or fashion we have all been affected by breast cancer. We have encountered the destruction it facilitates. We have had a friend, a family member, or been a breast cancer victim.

Let's challenge ourselves to stay abreast with women all over the world and our nation in the fight to overcome breast cancer. This calls for action! We must be active and be passionate about our mission. We must intentionally seek solutions to such a widespread disease. Our slogan is "Greater Service, Greater Progress." Sigma Gamma Rho, Inc. must continue to strive for excellence and do our best. There are many ways we can get involved: participating in the breast cancer walk, creating fundraisers, volunteering to help those who have breast cancer, praying, getting informed, and informing others.

The world is calling, but are we answering? I challenge you to pick up the phone and answer. Be the voice that calls for change. Be courageous and sprint after a cure. Let the women around the world know that the battle is not over yet because Sigma Gamma Rho, Inc. has arrived. Remember, we are our sister's keeper and we are on fire to serve!

A Conversation with Soror Uhunoma Osazuwa: In Her Own Words

By Soror Charmaine J. Davis-Bey, Central Region Epistoleus

A month and a half after competing in her first Olympic Games as a heptathlete, Soror Uhunoma Naomi Osazuwa (Ooh-who-no-ma O-sa-zu-wa) and I spoke on September 8, 2012 (via conference call) about her overall experience in London, her professional goals and her love of Sigma Gamma Rho.

Soror Osazuwa, originally from Las Vegas, Nev. and a fall 2008 inductee of Theta Tau Chapter, attended Syracuse University and graduated with a degree in Biochemistry in 2010. While at SU, her desire to compete took center stage – being named three-time Big East Champion (Twice for Heptathlon – outdoor and once for Long Jump – indoor) and NCAA All-American for the Pentathlon in 2010 (Indoor). After college, she set her sights on not just doing what she loved, but honoring her heritage at the same time. After being accepted and beginning the pursuit of another passion of hers, through the Doctorate of Pharmacy program at The University of Michigan, she set her sights on the Olympics – training at U of M and becoming a Nigerian record holder in the process, breaking a 12-year-old national record of 6,049 points in May 2012. All along, as she prepared for London, she knew this was the best opportunity to represent her nationality not just as American, but as a Nigerian-American. The decision did not come easy, but with the support and pride she received from her family, friends, sorors and those from her home country, she knew this was the right decision moving forward – in making her Olympic dreams come true!



Soror Davis-Bey: "First of all, I want to thank you for taking time to speak with me today! To get started, I wanted to clarify something - you were born here, but your nationality is Nigerian. What led you to represent Nigeria as opposed to The United States?"

Soror Osazuwa: "... I grew up here in the U.S. and I'm proud to be an American, but being Nigerian is such a huge part of my identity. That's my heritage, that's what I identify as. I've always seen myself competing for Nigeria. In retrospect, I could have competed for the U.S., and I'm very confident I would have had a pretty good shot at making the team. But for me, I was more excited to honor my heritage and represent my parents' country. I won't say competing for Nigeria is easy – it's run differently [from the U.S.], but Nigeria really supported me out of college, making it possible to continue to compete post-collegially."

Soror Davis-Bey: "That is really awesome! I have to say, you have to respect that you could have competed here. You could have, but knowing who you are, you did what was best for you and represented your home country. Thank you for sharing that information, for sorors and others who are reading your story!"

Soror Osazuwa: "Thank you Soror! For me, as a young athlete, Nigeria was the best choice for me, in order for me to be where I am today athletically."

Soror Davis-Bey: Speaking about training, what motivated you to do track and field, specifically the Heptathlon and Pentathlon?



Soror Osazuwa: "Well, my initial motivation for the heptathlon started in high school – playing basketball. When the season ended, some of my teammates started running track and I always wanted to do it, but early on in life, my parents being typical Nigerian parents, wanted me to focus on my education – nothing extra like doing too many sports. So, I ended up choosing strictly track and field, joining many of my former basketball teammates and I enjoyed it! I picked up events fairly quickly, starting off with sprinting, then high jump, then long jump. I was very indecisive about what events to do, so when I learned about the heptathlon, I got really excited because I could do all of them. I read about Jackee Joyner-Kersey and how she performed [as a heptathlete] at such a high level – and was the best in her field, when she competed. My high school didn't have a heptathlon, so I had to wait until I attended Syracuse to expand into that area. My coach at Syracuse attended college in Reno [Nevada] and was a decathlete (men's version of a heptathlete) so that connection kept us on the same page from the time I started my journey there – giving me a good scholarship to move forward in accomplishing my athletic and academic dreams."

Soror Davis-Bey: "You attended Syracuse, graduated in 2010 and you're now between that and attending U of M for your doctorate program. What ultimately led you to compete in the Olympic Trials? How did you feel when you got your ticket to London?"

Soror Osazuwa: [Laughs] "This is the part of the story that's funny to me. Okay, so I graduated from college, getting ready for Pharmacy School, in between meets and trainings, I could feel it [track and field] all coming to an end. I had made a lot of improvement my senior year in college and was sad that it was getting ready to end. I then went to my coach to talk to him about how I could continue competing because I wasn't really sure at that point. He suggested doing the Olympics. At first, I was like, 'that's crazy!' After I got to Ann Arbor for Pharmacy School, I started classes and, based on that previous conversation, reached out to the coach at U of M to train with the team there – even though he and the team didn't really know me. We spoke and I told him I wanted to keep competing and asked what I needed to do because I had this desire to keep going. He then took me under his wing and trained extensively for the Nigerian National Trials. The first time, I didn't have good enough scores and was a little distraught, but I knew I could do better. The next chance I got, in 2012, with the strong support of my U of M coach, I finally performed to my standard and got my ticket to London. It was more of a relief than anything, very surreal. It was like, all of the hard work I put into my training, hearing my coaches and teammates tell me I was going, then to actually have it happen was like 'did that just happen? Am I really going to the Olympics?' It was so surreal!"

Soror Davis-Bey: "So, now that you're officially an Olympian, what was your most memorable moment during the London 2012 Olympic Games?"

Soror Osazuwa: "One of my most memorable moments, easily, was the Opening Ceremonies. That night was fun, just getting to get dressed up in your country's attire and, before we got to the stadium, we walked around it as well. Once we entered in, waving our flag and being acknowledged, you felt there was

so much energy, everyone was so happy to be there, filled with so much hope before the Games actually started. Another memorable moment was definitely waiting in my blocks for the 100 meter hurdles, and the introduction of the athletes. When they called my name, they added that I was the Nigeria national record-holder and, when I looked up, I saw my name on these two huge tele-prompters. There were like 80,000 people there, screaming and cheering for me – that was a defining moment, one that I ALWAYS dreamed of. Unfortunately, I had to pull out of the competition during long jump because of my groin injury, but I left feeling a sense of accomplishment - knowing that I made to London and did my best."

Soror Davis-Bey: "What about Rio in 2016?"

Soror Osazuwa: "Oh yes, definitely. Of course, you don't know what's going to happen over the next 4 years, but as far as I'm concerned, I'm definitely looking to continue training and, in between, competing in the Track and Field World Indoor and Outdoor Championships – to stay in olympic form. I will continue to juggle training, school and working part-time, graduating in a couple of years – all the way through to the next Olympic Games."

Soror Davis-Bey: "Let's talk about being a woman of Sigma Gamma Rho. What was it about Sigma that stood out and attracted you to our sisterhood?"

Soror Osazuwa: "Okay, so when I got to college, I had known about [Black] Greek Organizations, but it didn't really catch my eye at first. Then later on, in my college years, I learned about Sigma Gamma Rho by doing my research and meeting some of the sorors at a few events. It was something about those experiences that stood out. What I loved about Sigma is that it's different from the rest of the organizations – just the way and where we were founded [Butler University, Indianapolis, IN], the challenges we faced in starting this organization in 1922. Sigma women aren't afraid to stand out, not afraid to boldly be different but with elegance and uniqueness. We always stand out in a positive light – filled with genuine warmth, sincerity and the heart to serve our communities!"

Soror Davis-Bey: "Speaking of sorors, how do you feel about the support you've received from sorors internationally, as you competed this past summer in London?"

Soror Osazuwa: "Oh that was awesome! I actually brought that up at the [Rho Sigma] chapter meeting today. I told the sorors there that I was SO grateful for all of the support – from those I knew and those that just heard about what I was doing and wanted to show some Sigma love. Anybody that wrote on my [Facebook] wall, sent me emails or even said a quick prayer for me, I truly appreciated it because the support was unreal and overwhelming. I really felt it and it was so encouraging to have the support of all of my sorors from around the world – I felt like you all were there with me [laughs]."

Soror Davis-Bey: "What words of wisdom/lessons would you like to share with those reading this article, those who look up to athletes/Olympians such as yourself, aspiring to be just like you – accomplishing their goals and dreams?"

Soror Osazuwa: "For me, I would say, just take a risk. Don't doubt yourself and don't be afraid to go after something you want to accomplish ... dream big and you will get there!"

Soror Davis-Bey: "What are your future plans: Academically? Professionally? Within Sigma?"

Soror Osazuwa: "As far as future plans go, academically, I have a few more years left with my doctorate program here [at U of M], so ideally I want to practice Pharmacy in a clinical setting. With the focus on training through the 2016 Olympics, I would work part-time to support myself. After all of that, I would like to go back for a Masters in Public Health – to help me find more opportunities to practice pharmacy, with a focus in public health. With Sigma, I'm excited about joining a graduate chapter in Rho Sigma, seeing what I can accomplish and to keep Sigma in my life through serving the community."

Soror Davis-Bey: "Before we end, do you have any last remarks you would like to share?"

Soror Osazuwa: "I want to, once again, thank everyone for their support through this experience. I hope that, by reading through this article and going through this journey with me, anyone would be inspired to keep on pushing through to accomplish your own personal goals and dreams!"



Beacon of Light

“As I Knew Her”

By Soror LaTasha Williams, M.P.A.

I attended a funeral the other day of a former church member of mine. While all funerals are sad occasions, there was a particular point in this service that has stayed with me. At the appointed time in the program, a woman in a royal purple dress suit walked up to the microphone, with tears in her eyes, to speak to those in attendance about “As I Knew Her as a Friend”. She spoke of the day that they met, the fun times that they had together, the encouragement, the love, and the support that she received. She spoke of the secrets that they shared, the places that they visited and of the happy occasions that they experienced together through the years. As this greatly bereaved sister ended her speech, she gave thanks to God for the gift that He had given her- the life of her best friend.

Sorors, as we live from day to day – juggling our multiple roles and responsibilities as daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, and grandmothers – we must not forget to make time for what is truly important. We must remember to make time for our sorors and our sister friends. Webster’s dictionary defines a friend as “one attached to another by affection or esteem”. Scripture tells us that “a friend loves at all times” (Proverbs 17:17) and that “a man who has friends must himself be friendly” (Proverbs 18:24). Ecclesiastes 4:9 speaks to the value of a friend, stating that “two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor.”

When was the last time that you stopped to reconnect with an old friend or a soror with whom you have lost contact? A phone call, a hand written note dropped in the mail, a quick email message, or a short visit to her

home are examples of simple ways to let your sister friends know that you are thinking of them. In these uncertain times in which our country continues to struggle with economic distress; as evidenced by unemployment and large scale home foreclosures; global warming, which exposes itself through extreme weather patterns that result in national wild fires and massive flooding; and frequent reports of random acts of public domestic violence, it is critical for us to have a solid foundation of support to make it through the ups and downs of life.

We must not take for granted the true value of our sister friends. We must also make sure that we are doing our part to be “our sister’s keeper”. Ask yourself, who can you turn to when you need a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on? Do you have a sister in your corner who you can call on when you need advice? What about someone to pray with you when you need it? You must also ask yourself, am I making a conscious and effective effort to play the true part of a sister to my sorors? Sorors, we must remember that we are daily writing the story of our lives. We have been charged by our Founders, and our Creator, to “let our lights shine”.

When the final chapter of your life story has been written, what will those that you leave behind say when asked to speak on “As I knew Her”?



Editor’s Note: If you would like to contact Soror Williams her email address is bluenole@yahoo.com

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. among China delegation

By Soror Emerald Woodland

This August, four members of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. were selected to participate in a two-week study visit to China. The China-US Exchange Foundation hosted the endeavor. Delegation members included Divine Nine organizations and the National Urban League's Black Executive Exchange Program (BEEP).

The delegation was developed in support of President Obama's 2009, "100,000 Strong Educational Exchange Initiative," to increase the number of Americans who study in China. In addition, this was the first ever African-American student delegation. Undergraduate sorors, Whitney Alaina Brown (Southeast Region), Davonia Stuart (North East Region), Emerald Woodland (Western Region), and chaperone Dr. Rhonda Norman (Central Region), eagerly complied with the opportunity to represent the organization on an international platform.

While in Beijing, China, accommodations were at Beijing Normal University's Jingshi Hotel. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China and one of the most populous cities in the world, with a population of 19,612,368 as of 2010. Beijing is China's second largest city by urban population after Shanghai and is the country's political, cultural and educational center. Thus, Beijing was a fitting location for the 22 undergraduates in the delegation.

While in Beijing, sorors participated in classes to learn more about Chinese culture, politics, and economics. When not in class, the sorors engaged in discussions with students at the Beijing Normal University, ventured out to experience the city and enjoyed tours by their hosts. These sorors experienced the Great Wall of China, the Lost City of Mudu, Tiananmen Square, and the Forbidden City, to name a few.



Left to right: Sorors Whitney Alaina Brown, Emerald Woodland and Davonia Stuart on the first day of courses



Sorors Davonia Stuart, Whitney Alaina Brown, Emerald Woodland and Dr. Rhonda Norman



Entire Divine Nine delegation, Sorors Whitney Alaina Brown, Emerald Woodland and Davonia Stuart; Thais Ridgeway and Alycia Thomas (Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.); Donyel Hill, Justin Potillo and Jeremy Thompson (Iota Phi Theta Fraternity Inc.); Najee Sanders (Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.); Frederick Cox (Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.); Bryce Grimes, Stan Parker, Jeremy Williams and Marcellus Taylor (Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.).



Violence against women, property rights most pressing indigenous issues – UN expert



Special to the Aurora

Violence against women and girls and the indiscriminate extraction of natural resources are among the most pressing issues that indigenous peoples face today, a United Nations human rights expert said.

"A recurring issue that has come to my attention in various contexts is that of violence against indigenous women and girls," said the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya, in his statement to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.



In the past year, Anaya has collaborated with various countries, UN agencies and indigenous peoples in several studies and country assessments on the challenges indigenous peoples face on a daily basis. He has also made recommendations to States of good practices and responded to cases of alleged human rights violations.

Anaya said that in his talks with representatives on indigenous issues, they had stressed the need for a holistic approach to combat violence against indigenous women and girls. The implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, he stressed, will be crucial to address this issue.

Adopted by the General Assembly in September 2007 after more than two decades of debate, the Declaration sets out the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, as well as their rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health, education and other issues.

"In particular, indigenous self-determination and cultural integrity must be enhanced, along with efforts that are designed to prevent and punish violence against indigenous women and girls," he said.

Anaya also pointed to the extractive industries as a source of tension, as companies do not tend to consult with indigenous peoples before beginning work on their property.

"There is now a common, often narrow focus on principles of consultation and free, prior and informed consent," he said. "A better approach starts with examination of the primary substantive rights of indigenous peoples that may be implicated in natural resource extraction.

"These include, in particular, rights to property over land and natural resources; rights to culture, religion, and health; and the right of indigenous peoples to set and pursue their own priorities for development, as part of their fundamental right to self-determination."

One of the fundamental problems with the current model in the extractive industries, Anaya said, was that extractive projects are developed by corporations with some or little involvement from Governments, but without participation from indigenous communities which are greatly affected by these initiatives. Greater participation and control would bring benefits to the indigenous population, he added.

During his statement Anaya also presented his reports on the situation of indigenous peoples in Argentina and the United States, reiterating that while positive steps have been taken by both governments to advance indigenous rights, much more remains to be done.

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. among 15 safety advocates and organizations recognized at annual Lifesavers Conference

The NHTSA contributed to this article.

Lifesavers is a national, non-profit organization of private and public groups and individuals dedicated to improving highway safety. David Strickland, administrator for the NHTSA, said, "While safety has always been our agency's highest priority, we rely on the continued leadership of safety practitioners across the country to help tackle the most dangerous driving practices – whether the issue is drunk driving, seatbelt use, or distraction."

According to data provided by the NHTSA, highway deaths fell to 32,885 in 2010, the lowest level since 1949. The record-breaking decline in traffic fatalities occurred even as American drivers traveled nearly 46 billion more miles during the year, an increase of 1.6 percent over the 2009 level. 2010 also saw the lowest fatality rate ever recorded, with 1.10 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in 2010, down from 1.15 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in 2009. Early estimates for 2011 fatality and injury data indicate these historic lows continued through last year.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said the success of keeping roadway deaths at "historic lows" is a reflection of the contributions made by the "2012 honorees, who exemplify the highest level of professionalism and dedication to saving lives every single day."

In addition to Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., the other public service award winners include: Sonja Atkins, coordinator, Safe Kids Greater Sacramento Coalition, Carmichael, Calif.; Chief John R. Batiste, Washington State Patrol, Olympia, Wash.; State Senator Shirley Breedon, Nevada Senate, Henderson, Nev.; Dia Gainor, executive director, National Association of State EMS Officials, Falls Church, Va.; Kevin Greene, Chief, Ground Safety 436 AW/SEG Dover Air Force Base – Wing Safety Office, Dover AFB, Dela.; Captain Bill Hisle, Shawnee, Kansas, Police Department, Shawnee, Kan.; Ludorum, PLC Corporate Owner of the Chuggington Children's TV and Web Media, New York, N.Y.; Col. Ret. Kenneth L. Morckel, former director, Ohio Department of Public Safety, Dublin, Ohio; Lowell M. Porter, former director, Washington Traffic Safety Commission, Gig Harbor, Wash.; Stephen K. Talpins, chief executive officer, National Partnership on Alcohol Misuse and Crime, Davie, Fla.; State Senator John Tassoni, Rhode Island General Assembly, Providence, R.I.; Stewart Wang, M.D., Ph.D., FACS Director, International Center for Automotive Medicine, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.; State Representative Katharine M. Watson, Pennsylvania House of Representatives, Warrington Township, Penn.; State Representative Anastasia Williams, Rhode Island General Assembly, Providence, R.I.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recently recognized 15 safety advocates and organizations at the 30th Annual Lifesavers Conference. Among those organizations honored was the Baton Rouge, La. chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. for "dedication and passion for traffic safety and its efforts above and beyond the call of duty to educate African-American residents," according to the NHTSA.

Lifesavers is a national, non-profit organization of private and public groups and individuals dedicated to improving highway safety. David Strickland,

administrator for the NHTSA,

said, "While safety has always been our agency's highest priority,

we rely on the continued leadership of safety practitioners

across the country to help tackle the most dangerous driving practices – whether the issue is drunk driving, seatbelt use, or distraction."



HONORARY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Soror Hydeia Broadbent



Hydeia Broadbent has a notable list of accomplishments at the age of 28. Broadbent became an HIV and AIDS activist at six years old. Broadbent was named one of the Most Influential 150 African Americans in 2008 and 2011 by *Ebony* magazine. She can now add being a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated to her list.

Broadbent was inducted at Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.'s 54th Boule held in New Orleans, La. The sisterhood and the welcoming feeling stood out to her, she said, which influenced her decision to accept the honorary membership.

"This is where I felt the most comfortable and welcomed," Broadbent said. "Just being there (boule), if I wasn't speaking I knew I would be socially in an environment where I would be okay without a title to my name."

Broadbent helps share HIV/AIDS prevention message to sisterhood and masses

By Crystal Starkes

Soror Secenario Jones said that Broadbent explained she has spoken all over the country and never thought it would be an option for her to join a sorority.

Broadbent also spoke to the sorority, affiliates, and guests at the public meeting during the conference about her experience living with AIDS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Let's Stop AIDS Together campaign.

Hydeia was abandoned at birth and was adopted by the Broadbents as an infant. Her medical condition was passed through birth to her. However, Broadbent was not diagnosed as HIV positive until the age of three. As a first generation child born with HIV, Broadbent spent the majority of her childhood in hospitals being tested and examined with her other first

generation friends. It was her experience in the hospitals and with support groups that prompted her to openly speak to others about her condition.

Broadbent said at first her parents did not want to her speak about it publicly, but she wanted to reach out because a lot of her friends were not public about it at all. Broadbent's parents instilled in her that her status was something that happened to her, but it did not define who she was as a person.

Despite her adversities, Broadbent said she is just like any other 28-year-old with dreams of getting married, having children, and opening her own business and foundation.

Broadbent has been a guest on various talk shows, including Oprah. She also participated on a show on Nickelodeon with Magic Johnson about her condition and HIV/AIDS prevention. She spoke at the 1996 Republic National Convention where she told its participants, "I am the future and I have AIDS."

Recently, she joined the Let's Stop AIDS Together campaign through the Center for Disease Control. She works with actress and HIV/AIDS activist Jurnee Smollett-Bell, who is also her best friend, to speak about AIDS.

For example, she shared her frustration about applying every six months to qualify for health insurance which helps pay

for medicine that costs anywhere from \$800 to \$2500 per month, doctor visits, and blood work.

In July, she attended the International AIDS Conference in Washington, D.C. The International AIDS Conference was the first international conference in United States in more than a decade that focused on HIV/AIDS due to a ban to prevent individuals who lived outside of the United States with HIV/AIDS to travel to visit the country. However, the ban was lifted under President Barack Obama's administration. The conference featured a variety of key HIV/AIDS activists including Alicia Keys and Smollett-Bell.

Broadbent and some of the first generation children born with AIDS have developed a campaign called, "No Child Born with AIDS" where they educate the community.

"We have the knowledge and it's about enforcing it," Broadbent said, who is also writing an autobiography that she hopes to be completed by next year on World AIDS Day.

Now, as a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc., Broadbent believes it is a benefit to herself as well as the organization, particularly with the partnership with the Center for Disease Control.

"Together we can help spread awareness," Broadbent said. "We can really work as a very powerful team."



Regional Conferences

Central | 73rd Central Regional Conference

March 14-17, 2013

Milwaukee, WI

Southeast | 73rd Southeast Regional Conference

March 21-24, 2013

Franklin (Nashville), TN

Southwest | 72nd Southwestern Conference

April 4-7, 2013

San Antonio, TX

Western | 61st Western Regional Conference

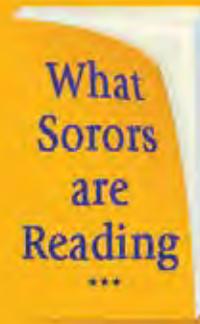
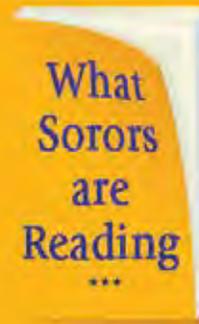
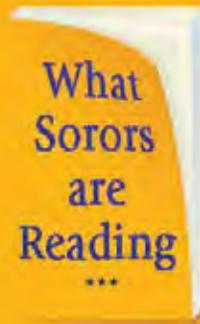
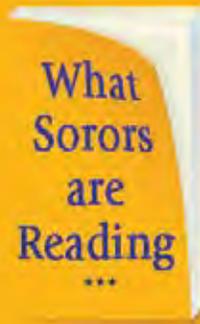
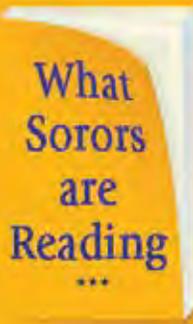
April 18-21, 2013

Long Beach, CA

Northeast | 71st Northeast Regional Conference

April 25-28, 2013

Boston, MA



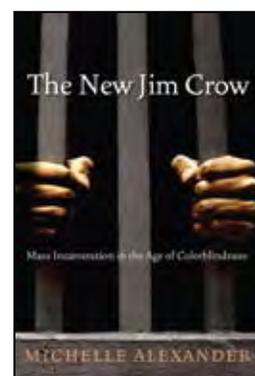
THE NEW JIM CROW: MASS INCARCERATION IN THE AGE OF COLORBLINDNESS

by *Michelle Alexander*

Who is Reading:



Andrea K. Griffin
Beta Delta Sigma,
Tallahassee, Florida



Synopsis:

Although the United States has celebrated the election of the nation's first Black President, Barack Obama, we still see an overwhelming number of young black men being jailed and labeled as "felons" for life. Even though Jim Crow laws have been wiped off of the books, an astounding percentage of the black or African-American community remains trapped in a subordinate status, much like their grandparents before them. The author argues that we have not ended racial caste in America, but instead, we have simply redesigned it.

Why I like this book

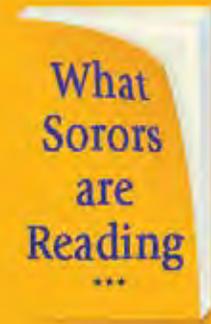
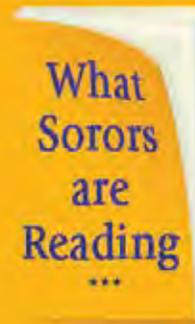
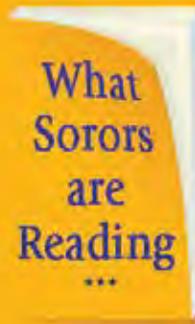
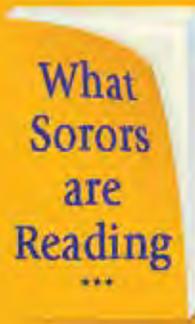
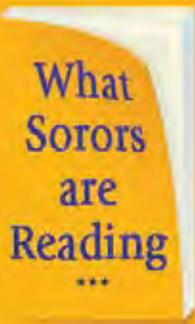
I like this book because it speaks to how the black race is incarcerated, both in and out of the system, especially black men. It helped open my eyes about how the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control, adhering to the principle of colorblindness.

Why should others read it?

I believe others should read *The New Jim Crow* to get an understanding or maybe even an appreciation of the Civil Rights Movement, yesterday and today. It helps challenge us, as well as others, to embrace a new movement for racial justice in America.

How it has impacted my life

This book makes you go hummm... I've realized it doesn't matter that our nation's Commander in Chief is of color, but the majority of people the same color as him couldn't even vote for him. And four years later, look at what is happening to the voting system. When reading, you begin to make note of a couple of things: 1.) 50 years is not really that long ago, when changes were beginning to be made in this country for the betterment of Blacks/African-Americans and 2.) This nation's system is not designed for people of color to succeed. Some fights are not just for the Civil Rights community alone, but also for all of us to join in. Growing up, my teachers used to say, "you all are the future." Well, we're all grown up now and should be doing everything we can to ensure that our children can conquer racial inequality and be successful in anything they put their minds to because now, they are the future.



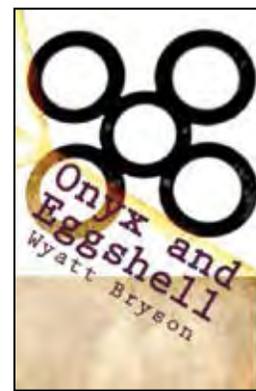
ONYX AND EGGSHELL

By Wyatt Bryson

Who is Reading:



Khadija D. Jenkins
Theta Eta Sigma



Synopsis:

The book is about a "fifth" sorority and five different young women on a journey of self-discovery and membership into Gamma Beta Alpha. Although they differ in ability, sexual orientation, religious preference and race, they must learn how to come together to learn about the sorority, its members and its purpose or risk not becoming members.

Why I like this book

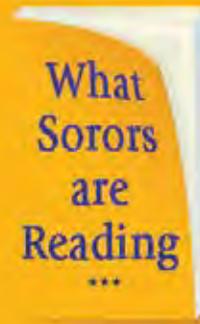
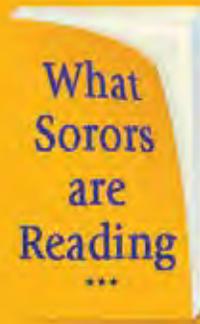
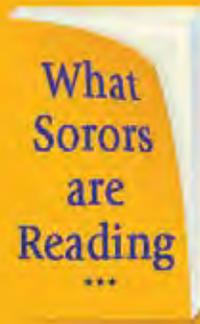
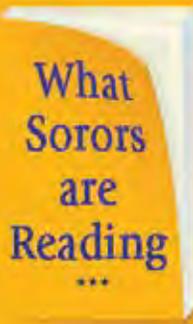
I joined Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. as part of a large Torch class. We all had very different personalities. Many of us did not know each other. We had to learn how to spend extra time together to get to know and love each other. It touched me as it reminded me of my class.

Why should others read it?

It reminds us of what true sisterhood is and how much work is put into learning to love and accept others from different races, backgrounds, and with different disabilities or lifestyles. The book is powerful and would be beneficial to any chapter to read and bond.

How it has impacted my life

The book not only made me reflect on my membership, but also on how undergrad and graduate chapters bond as sisters. As our chapters continue to grow, it is vitally important that we show the meaning of true sisterhood daily in our lives.



GO, TELL MICHELLE, AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN WRITE TO THE NEW FIRST LADY

By Barbara Seals Nevergold, Ph.D. and Peggy Betram, Ph.D.

Who is Reading:



Barbara Eikner Thompson
Immediate Past
International Grand Tamiochus



Synopsis:

This collection of letters to Michelle Obama Says a great deal about the lives, the hopes, prayers, fears and aspiration of African-American women today and how they share life experiences with the first lady of African American descent.

Why I like this book

It communicates to the first lady of the United States how we, her sisters, feel about an experience that we both share as part of the American political and social experience.

Why should others read it?

So they can see and feel the heart and souls of women of color for Michelle Obama and her family, role in the country and in the world. This book helps us to understand what true sisterhood is all about — caring and sharing.

How it has impacted my life

The election of President Barack Obama was a historic event, one that I did not read about, but one that I could see, touch, feel and be a part of history in the making.



The Seven Pearls Foundation, Inc. was established December 2004; and received its permanent 501 C-3 status in 2008. The Foundation is headquartered at 1000 Southhill Drive, Suite 201, Cary, NC; is registered with the State of North Carolina and the Internal Revenue Service.

Foci:

- To develop strategies that promote a positive service image of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc
- To develop partnerships that support sorority programs and projects
- To network with corporations that will garner corporate and grant contributions and funding
- To support the technology initiatives at headquarters
- To identify resources and strategies that will assist in eliminating the mortgage
- To protect the real property of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.
- To host the Life Member Luncheon during the Boule

MAKE A DONATION

Please make checks payable to: Seven Pearls Foundation, Inc.

Mail to:

P.O. Box 3055

Cary, North Carolina 27519-3055

Greetings from the First Anti-Basileus



**Soror
Deborah
Catchings-Smith**

It is indeed a privilege and an honor to serve as your International First Grand Anti-Basileus. I appreciate the cards, phone calls and prayers received as we work together on the continual forward movement of our sisterhood.

Sigma Gamma Rho takes immense pride in our extraordinary vision to harness like-minded exceptional women with a passion to make positive impacts in the communities we serve. Through our diverse membership population, collaboration and sharing perspectives across disciplines while focusing on solving societal issues, Sigma Gamma Rho continually defines new strategies while developing innovations that serve to provide the much needed solutions for many of the challenges facing our communities.

It is our collective responsibility to continue the path set forth by our Illustrious Founders to share our rich history with prospective partners, potential members, family and friends. We are each called to continue our active engagement in the sorority - that involvement happens through the sharing of our time, our talents and our resources.

While celebrating our 90th year of existence, let us strive to operate in strong culture of excellence as we expand our reach on the local, regional and national levels through sisterhood, leadership and service. We must remain focused on achieving the maximum return on our investment; ensuring positive outcomes in our communities.

With the determination of our Founders while working collectively towards common objectives, we can make a difference that will impact the society at large.

In Sisterhood,

Deborah Catchings-Smith

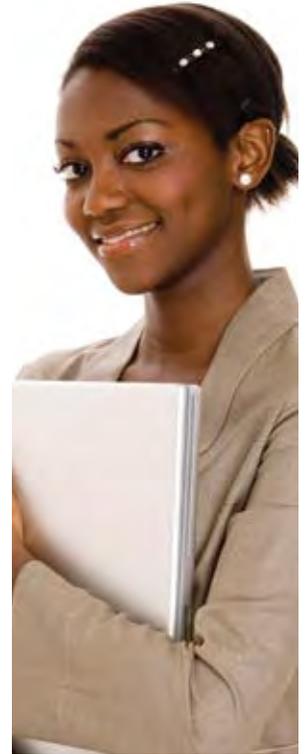
Undergraduate Pulse

Western Carolina University welcomes new members



Sigma now has reached Western Carolina University with its first TORCH class. The WCU members are Jazmyne Baylor and Myia Franklin, both sophomores. They are sponsored by Lambda Epsilon Sigma Salisbury Alumnae Chapter and advised by Sorors Zella Sistrunk-Moore and Zaria Davis-Humphries. The new members were greeted by the entire greek

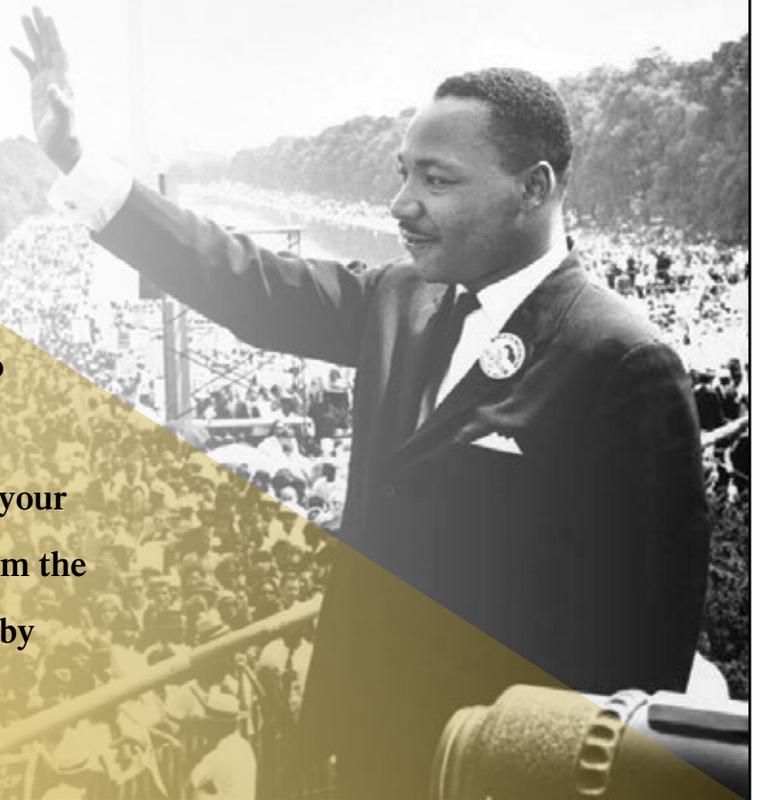
community and are looking forward to being examples of Sigma women by upholding the slogan "Greater Service, Greater Progress."



In Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington,

The Aurora is looking for recollections and photographs from Sigma members who experienced that moment in Black History.

Email us at theauroramag@sgrho1922.org, your recollections, thoughts and photographs from the era, along with your name and photograph by December 15, 2012 for the next edition.



Alumnae On The Move

Alpha Zeta Sigma

Bessemer, Ala.

Alpha Zeta Sigma chapter holds first awards banquet

The Alpha Zeta Sigma chapter and Rhoers, held its first awards banquet on Saturday June 30, 2012. The ladies gathered to celebrate a year of accomplishments and community service. The chapter plans to host the event annually.

This year, Alpha Zeta Sigma won second place for Outstanding Alumnae Chapter at the Southeast Region Conference held at the Birmingham, Ala. During the awards ceremony, the chapter recognized Cultured Pearl Soror Carolyn Cunningham, posthumously, for a lifetime of outstanding service. Soror Geneva Polk, Anti-Basileus, was honored as "Soror of the Year." Ernestine Williams of "Save the Youth," a youth outreach program in Bessemer, was honored for service and support of the chapter. Distinguished guests included Judge Patricia Stevens and past members of the chapter.

Delta Omicron Sigma

Columbus, Ohio

Focused on sisterhood through recruitment, retention and reactivation

The Delta Omicron Sigma chapter has been busy being the premier chapter in the capital city by continuing to focus on recruitment, retention and reactivation, answering the charge to sorors from the Central Region and Basileus Carolyn Dixon.

Delta Omicron Sigma continues to be "On Fire to Serve" through various activities that promote the sorority. The chapter participated in Iota Phi Theta Fraternity Inc. Columbus Alumni Chapter's Annual Thanksgiving Dinner; held Sigma Socials; collaborated with the Iota Nu Sigma chapter on the Annual Youth Symposium; and attended programs sponsored by the Rhoers and undergraduate chapters.

-Soror Dana Johnson

Delta Upsilon Sigma

Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Chapter exceeds March of Dimes fundraising goal for second consecutive year

The Delta Upsilon Sigma chapter in collaboration with the Eta Eta Sigma Chapter, collected mouth swabs

from more than 30 donors in support of the Judy Davis Bone Marrow Project at Fort Lauderdale's Sistrunk Festival held earlier this year.



The annual Youth Symposium was presented to middle school students at SOS Children's Village in Coconut Creek. Students participated in fun-filled science projects such as making silly putty-like goo and sticking skewers into balloons without bursting them.

In addition, for the second consecutive year, the chapter exceeded the national goal of \$1,922, and raised \$2,628.72 in support of the March of Dimes March for Healthy Babies.

The chapter's signature fundraiser, "A Gold Affair Gospel Brunch," raised scholarship funds for a deserving high school senior. Delta Upsilon Sigma celebrated its 36th anniversary with a chapter photo shoot and luncheon at Bimini Boatyard Restaurant.

- Soror Annette Wilson

Epsilon Alpha Sigma

Opelousas, La.

Double duty equals double service for Epsilon Alpha Sigma

The Epsilon Alpha Sigma chapter has doubled its service by participating in two community service projects on the same day, at the same time. Chapter members separated into two groups – one half attended the March of Dimes Walk, while the other half hosted the chapter's annual spelling bee.

The walk was three miles through the campus of The University of Louisiana at Lafayette. The purpose of the walk is to bring awareness to March of Dimes' mission of improving the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

Alumnae On The Move

Epsilon Alpha Sigma set a local March of Dimes goal of \$200, and exceeded it by \$80. The chapter also met the sorority's national March of Dimes goal of raising \$1,922!

Nearly 70 students from the St. Landry Parish area competed in the 31st Annual Spelling Bee sponsored by the chapter. All participants received a shirt and bag. The spelling bee was spearheaded by Epsilon Alpha Sigma's Basileus and charter member Hazel Red. Soror Red is very passionate about hosting the event and getting members energized about the community's educational needs.

- Mechelle A. Kirts

Epsilon Sigma

New Orleans, La.

Epsilon Sigma has something to crow about

The focused, fearless, friendly, faithful members of the Epsilon Sigma chapter have been working tirelessly during the last year and a half to fully realize the sorority's national motto: "On Fire to Serve." The chapter committed to greater interaction with the communities served, conducted frequent visits to neighborhood schools, expanded resources to help address health issues in targeted areas and implemented wider involvement in civic concerns.



Efforts in the area of networking were visible in the numerous meetings and forums shared with other city agencies and national groups, including the Children's Defense Fund, CNN Network, Charter Schools of New Orleans, Dillard, SUNO and Xavier Universities, the March of Dimes, Second Harvest Food Bank, DARE, Habitat for Humanity, the Urban League and the NAACP.

Establishing a more defined relationship with teenagers of the Greater New Orleans area is a goal

of Epsilon Sigma. The challenge the chapter faces is gaining additional help from agencies to deal with health, emotional, social and educational issues of youth in a particular age group.

The chapter's social calendar included a "Welcome Back" picnic, a joint Founders Day church sit-in and luncheon along with the Epsilon Phi Sigma chapter from Gretna, La., a large sorority-sponsored group viewing of CNN's "Black in America," and the annual "Focus on Women" luncheon honoring 12 to 14 outstanding female activists from the area.

Gamma Chi Sigma

Wichita, Kan.

Chapter helps soror celebrate 95 blue and gold years, hosts 27th Romania Image Awards Scholarship Banquet



The Gamma Chi Sigma Chapter celebrated the 95th birthday of Mary E. (Nave) Adams, a charter member, earlier in the year with a dinner party at her retirement center in Wichita, Kan. In attendance were chapter members, Soror Adams' husband, Fred; son, Reginald; grandson, Marcus; and several friends. Soror Adams and her husband have been married for more than 60 years. She has been a member of the sorority for more than 71 years, joining on April 5, 1941 at Langston University, in Langston, Okla. She was instrumental in the chartering of two chapters – the Iota chapter at Langston University and Gamma Chi Sigma. Throughout the years, Soror Adams has worn many hats – wife, mother, grandmother, retired teacher and faithful member of Calvary Baptist Church.

Alumnae On The Move



The chapter hosted its 27th Annual Rhomania Image Awards Scholarship Banquet on May 5, 2012 at the Marriott in Wichita, Kan. The event honored local citizens for helping to improve the lives of others in the community. The event's theme was "Celebrating Service in Excellence." A VIP reception was held prior to the banquet for platinum sponsors, honorees and escorts. Awards included: the Golden Eagle Award; the Twya J. McFall Young Achiever Award; the Lifetime Achievement Award, for 25 years or more of outstanding service to the community; the Tri-Strand Award, for a couple who worked to improve the community; and the HEROs Award which honored those who "protect and serve" the community. Thirteen outstanding, high school students also were honored with scholarships.

- Soror Willena M. Beemer

Gamma Pi Sigma

Saginaw, Mich.

Serving with a smile in the Great Lakes Bay Region

It has been a busy year for Gamma Psi Sigma! The chapter is the northernmost in Michigan, not quite at the Mackinaw Bridge and the Upper Peninsula, but a nice drive from Flint and Detroit. The chapter sponsored a table featuring Project Reassurance and H3 at the St. Paul Baptist Church Annual Health Fair. Dr. Fenobia Dallas conducted a budget workshop for 10 participants. The George Washington Carver Day exhibit was displayed at Ruben Daniels Middle School, where Sorors Rose Mary Sanders and Marva Gordon held a school-wide presentation on the life and legacy of Dr. Carver. The annual youth symposium was held in conjunction with Saginaw's Project Future 2012. Sorors Fenobia Dallas, Alexis Ervin, Marva Gordon, Rev. Omega Price, Rose Mary Sanders and Shirley Sangster conducted a self-esteem workshop for more than 70 teens. The chapter has continued to work with fellow Greeks, by participating in the annual Pan-Hellenic

Picnic, the Kappa Alpha Psi & Silhouettes reception, the Saginaw Pan-Hellenic Mardi Gras, and "More Chocolate After Dark." The latter events were fundraisers for the Pan-Hellenic Fine Arts program. During election, Gamma Pi Sigma's Soror Marva Gordon, was elected as vice president of the Saginaw Pan-Hellenic Council.

- Dr. Fenobia Dallas

Iota Sigma

Richmond, Va.

Newly installed Sorors to lead chapter in next Biennium



The Iota Sigma chapter held its annual retreat on June 2, 2012, which included installation of the new executive committee. Incoming officers included: Trina B. Davis, Basileus; Kimberly Braxton, First Anti-Basileus; LaTrice Morton, Second Anti-Basileus; Shameera Carr, Anti-Grammateus; Diane Callendar, Grammateus; Sylvia W. Mullen, Tamiochus; and Jenine Stallings, Epistoleus. The outgoing Basileus, Shirley L. Smith, presided at the installation ceremony and presented each officer with gifts to promote efficiency in each position. In addition, she gave brief highlights of past terms and welcomed the new executive committee.

Newly installed Basileus Trina B. Davis presented Soror Shirley L. Smith with an appreciation gift – an engraved gavel – representing the leadership and service to the chapter and the sorority. Sylvania Preston, past Syntaktes of the Northeast region and current member of the Delta Beta Sigma Alumnae chapter in Norfolk, Va., attended the retreat as a presenter for the conflict resolution portion of the event. Additional topics discussed included program planning and reporting, membership development and moving

Alumnae On The Move

forward. The wealth of knowledge shared during each session led to a successful retreat.

- Soror Jenine Stallings

Kappa Nu Sigma

San Fernando Valley, Calif.

Serving the Community with Class

The Kappa Nu Sigma chapter hit the ground running this spring as the host chapter for the 60th Western Regional Conference in Manhattan Beach in April. The conference offered many unique features including an outdoor Annie Neville banquet, which overlooked the hotel's golf course. In addition, an undergraduate-directed health fair was held to provide health tips and free HIV testing.

The chapter hosted its 5th annual scholarship luncheon in June, where more than \$4,000 was awarded. The Mary Lou Allison Little Scholarship was awarded to two students who demonstrated excellence in academics and community service. The Ten Pearls and Two Rubies Scholarship was awarded to three sorors for academic excellence.

Soror Alexzandria Washington earned a master's degree in human services with concentration in organizational leadership. Soror Jessica Howard earned a master's degree in Business Administration.

- Soror Erin Nash

Lambda Epsilon Sigma

Salisbury, N.C.

Alumnae chapter introduces new members



The Lambda Epsilon Sigma Alumnae chapter recently inducted new members into the organization.

The spring 2012 Torch class includes: Sorors La'Ronda Arnold and Kindra Starnes. They are wonderful additions to the growing chapter that serves Salisbury-Rowan, N.C. and surrounding areas. Visit the chapter's website at www.salisburysgrho.com for more information about upcoming events and programs.

Lambda Eta Sigma

Pinson, Ala.

A vision becomes reality – chapter growth reflects mission



What once started as a vision has now manifested into a reality. In less than a year, the Lambda Eta Sigma chapter has doubled in size and has almost tripled in size in less than two years. A chapter that started out with nine charter members – seven, that were reactivations – has grown to 22 members. Lambda Eta Sigma believes strongly in community service. Its members have volunteered at Girls Inc., the Neurofibromatosis Walk, March of Dimes, tutored students at a local public housing center, Project Homeless Connect and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Walk.

The chapter has donated to Jimmie Hale Mission to provide and serve meals to those in need. Lambda Eta Sigma held its first Sigma Round-Up. School supplies were collected for Operation Big Book Bag. Family, friends and sorors from various chapters attended to enjoy fun, food and laughs.

Lambda Eta Sigma recently won the alumnae stroll competition at the Blue and White Weekend in Birmingham, Ala. Sorors not only recruited new members for Lambda Eta Sigma, but also for two other graduate chapters nearby.

- Soror Tara McBride

Affiliate News

SIGMA'S NATIONAL PHILO AFFILIATE

A single rose can be my garden ... a single friend, my world. Leo Buscaglia

2012 -2014 National Philo Officers



L – R: *Philo Marcia Hall-Hyman, National President (Southwest Region); Philo Arlecia Stamps, National Vice President (Central Region); Philo Lenor Crockett, National Recording Secretary (Southeast Region); Philo Mary Byers, National Financial Secretary (Southeast Region); and Philo Thelma Goodwin, National Treasurer (Northeast Region).*

Seventy Philos, the highest number in history, attended the 31st National Philo Conference held concurrently with the 2012 Boule'in New Orleans, Louisiana. In addition to the plenary sessions, committee meetings, and awards competition, the most spectacular event was their signature fundraiser, the National First Lady Pageant. Gold and white sparkled at the "Jazzy Elegance in the Big Easy" event as the Philos rocked the house with a second line grand processional. To culminate the event, Philo Rena Gamble, the Western Region Contestant, was crowned National First Lady for 2012-14. Funds raised from this event will provide donations to sorority programs, such as the National Education Fund, Miss Annie Neville Book Scholarship, and St. Jude Project. The Philos continue to uphold their motto, "Providing Friendship and Support" through friendship to the sorority and support to the community.

Dr. Wanda L. Nelson, National Philo Coordinator, wants to remind each Philo that Sigma is glad you decided to join this sorority's adult affiliate group, and sends a thank you for being a wonderful "friend."



RHOER NOMINATED FOR SCHOLARSHIP

Rhoer Quierah Bradford was nominated for the "Best and Brightest" Scholarship Award in two categories: Music and performing arts. Bradford is a senior at Amos P. Godby High School in Tallahassee, Florida.

OMEGA RHO

*Soror
Dolores Thompson Aaron
Epsilon Sigma*



Soror Dolores Thompson Aaron, veteran educator, high school counselor, assistant superintendent and former New Orleans Recreation director, died on January 18, 2012 at the age of 88 after a brief illness. She was an active member of the Epsilon Sigma chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. since 1947. She attended the public schools of New Orleans and graduated from McDonogh 35 Senior High School. Soror Aaron earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Dillard and Xavier Universities, respectively. She completed additional graduate work at the University of New Orleans.

Affectionately known as "Mama Dee Dee" she distinguished herself as a caring, nurturing, resourceful teacher and counselor. Soror Aaron retired from the New Orleans Public School system with the rank of assistant superintendent, after more than 37 years of service. She served for several years as director of the Youth Services Bureau, operated by the New Orleans Department of Welfare. Later she enhanced her city service as the director of the New Orleans Recreation Department. During her eight years in this position she increased the staff,

broadened volunteer services and revived the theater and ballet programs.

Soror Aaron was a longtime supporter and fundraiser for Xavier University, and is credited with impacting the lives of hundreds of young people. She was active in several organizations including the Black Child Development Institute, the Xavier University Alumni Association, the McDonogh 35 Alumni Association, and the Associates of the Sisters of the Holy Family. She was a life member of NAUW.

She was preceded in death by her husband of more than 50 years, William D. Aaron Sr. She is survived by her son, Attorney William D. Aaron Jr., daughter-in-law, Santa Jennings Aaron and four grandchildren.



*Soror Marion F. Walker
Kappa Sigma*

A native of North Carolina, Soror Marion Walker graduated high school as valedictorian of her class. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from Shaw University and migrated to New York to pursue her career as a clinical chemist, laboratory manager and as an instructor of Clinical Laboratory Medicine. Soror Walker obtained her Masters of Science from CUNY Hunter College in

OMEGA RHO

Biological and Physiological Sciences and furthered her studies at the New School of Research and Brooklyn College. After working for many years in the field of clinical chemistry, Soror Walker retired but continued to make a difference.

She became a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. through the Beta Theta Chapter at Shaw University in 1952. Since joining the Kappa Sigma NYC Alumnae chapter, she had served as Basileus, Grammateus, Anti-Grammateus, Tamiochus, Program and Education Chair, Founders Day Committee Chair, co-chair of the Sick & Welfare committee and spearheaded the “Can to Span the Gulf of Hunger,” a signature program of the Kappa Sigma chapter. Soror Walker was awarded the Philo Advisor of the Year award from the Northeast Region in 2010. The life member and cultured pearl has also served as nominating committee chair and vocational guidance chair for the region.

She has held life memberships in the NAACP and the National Council of Negro Women. In addition, she was active in Shaw University Alumni Association and the New York Academy of Science. Soror Walker was appointed to the Committee of Women in Science at the New York Academy of Science, served on the general board of the Concourse Village Special Adults and served as the chair of the Frontier District Boy Scouts of America Fundraiser, to name a few.

Soror Walker entered Omega Rho on January 7, 2012.

Soror Reatha Alvin Whitehead *Gamma Delta Sigma*

Reatha Alvin Whitehead was born on June 28, 1927 in Riceboro, Ga. to the late Mack LeCounte and Virginia Alvin. Her grandparents, the late Titus and Laura Alvin, raised her. Soror

Whitehead was the second oldest of three girls and two boys, all who preceded her in death, except for sister, Ervin B. Gardener. She was the product of the Liberty County school system. She attended Savannah State University, where she graduated with a bachelor's in home economics in 1949, and later elementary education. She received her master's in curriculum supervision from Northern Colorado University.

Soror Whitehead, an educator in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, was a life member and legacy. She served on the first board of directors for the chapter's facility — The Allene V. Taylor Memorial Center, Inc. During her 41-years of service to the Gamma Delta Sigma Chapter, she served more than a decade as Grammateus. She also worked with Rhomania (two years chair of the Buds of spring journal) and the chair of the hospitality committee. Additionally, she held membership in Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. and The Egelloc Civic and Social Club, Inc.

Soror Whitehead was the recipient of numerous sorority awards including Soror of the Year 1979, Florida's Soror of the Year, Allene V. Taylor Award, and Outstanding Service Award.

On May 12, 2011, Soror Whitehead entered Omega Rho. She is survived by two sons, Ronald R. Whitehead, and James H. Whitehead III; a daughter, Annette T.W. Brantley; a son-in-law, Rickey R. Brantley; two grandchildren, Nicholas Antonio Brantley and Antanise Nicole Brantley; sister, Ervin T. Gardener; brother-in-law, Alphonso Gardner; cousin, Thelma Axson; sister-in-laws, Delores Beacon and Martha Howard; a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, Sorors, students, loved ones and friends.

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-  Include contact name, chapter name, location, school, city, state and **headline**.
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