



THE ODYSSEY

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR
AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER
DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

JANUARY 2023

Presidential Press

Vol. 5

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Sorors, don't forget to register
and attend our upcoming
January Chapter Meeting,
Saturday, January 7 at

10 a.m.,

held virtually!

Tap here to register,

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlUkfu6ggzwrGNXkl6CL3zhJtzqBQm2U4y0s>

Register for January 2023
(Jan. 12 at 6:00 p.m.)

Budget & Finance Meeting here,

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJllcUqhpszosGdQ8OmWlglIDCjuc4bz-ftq6>

In 1978 "The Wiz" was released and we witnessed Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion overcome their fears, obstacles, and ups and downs on their journey. After defeating Eveline the wicked witch, they begin to sing (hear the tune in your head)

"Everybody look around 'Cause there's a reason to rejoice, you see; Everybody look up, And feel the hope that we've been waiting on... Can't you feel a brand new day? Can't you feel a brand new day?" Can you Sorors, Can you feel a brand new day? As we have ushered in a New Year, I am reminded that 2022 and all that it brought, ups and downs is now behind us and we have the opportunity to write a new chapter in our personal lives and in this chapter.

Sorors welcome to 2023! Now I'm not a resolution girl, but at the dawn of a new year, I always like to reflect on what has passed and where I want to go. So instead of resolutions I set goals for the year to come. One goal for me this year is to focus on taking care of my mental, physical and spiritual well-being. Sorors we are part of an organization that focuses on giving back to the community, well I want to give each of you permission to take some time to care for yourself.

As we prepare to celebrate 110 years of scholarship, sisterhood, service and social action I am reminded of the sacrifices that our 22 Founders made to ensure a better life for everyone. While sometimes it may feel like we have not made any progress with the injustices we continue to see, rest assured my sisters we are making a recognizable footprint in our communities. Sorors lets continue to Move Forward as One as we Engage in the work of Delta.

Sorors I am wishing you a Happy and Prosperous New Year! Can't you just feel a brand new day, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fc7_1GAYNOW?

Yours in Service,

Soror Robin Blackmon



Chaplain's Message

by Soror Dedurie V. Kirk, Chaplain

Unexpected Kindness

I said I wasn't going to do it, but I was in the grocery store the day before Thanksgiving. I couldn't believe it. I was in the same store two days before.

I needed one more thing...which turned into five. The store was full of people, but it was surprisingly peaceful. The holiday rush had dissipated. On top of that, I was able to get in the 15 items or less line with an actual cashier.

There were only two people ahead of me. A lady carrying a handheld basket came up behind me. The basket looked heavy. I told her to go in front of me so she could take the weight off of her arm. She asked, "Are you sure?" I told her yes. I entertained myself by looking at magazine covers until it was my turn to check out. I was about to pay when the cashier said, "The lady ahead of you left \$20 on your grocery total. She didn't want me to say anything until she was gone." My mouth opened, but I had no words for the unexpected gift.

Doris Akers was right when she wrote the song, "You Can't Beat God Giving." When your goal is to live by the Word of God, you are blessed to bless others. In Mark 12:31, Jesus commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

And 1 Corinthians 13:4 reminds us love is kind. Sharing kindness with those we know and those we don't is a powerful way to let the light of Jesus shine through us. God gifted us with Jesus. Let's share that gift by being kind.

God bless you and wishing you a wonderful New Year!

Prayer Corner

Sorors, please continue to lift the following in fervent prayer:

- Soror Del Watson recently had heart surgery, please keep her in prayer for recovery and healing;
- Soror Tamera Diggs-Tate for the recent loss of her Sister
- Soror Carrie Swisher for the recent loss of her Sister;
- Soror Gwen Bingham for challenges from a previous eye surgery and plan for healing forward;
- Soror Carla Emery-Culberson and family for the loss of her Sister, Dr. Cynthia Jewell Chapel;
- Soror Cathy Ellison and family for the loss of her Nephew;
- Soror Lorlie Ellis and family for the loss of her Father (Earnest Ellis);
- Soror Sandra (Sam) Willis and family for the loss of her Father-In-Law (KC Willis, Jr.);
- Pray for the family for the loss of her Soror Dorothy J. Strong, a former member of AAC;
- Soror Thedencia Horne and family for the loss of her Sister (Shaunice Andrea-Lynn Peebles);
- Sorors La'Kisha Crenshaw and Antonia Crenshaw for their Father and Grandfather, respectively, who is recovering from an accident;
- Soror Nancy Knight Brown and family for the loss of her Father (William Knight);
- Soror Anita Roberts for healing and completely recovery after her surgery;
- Soror Jonna LaGrone-Haynes and family for her Father (John LaGrone) who has kidney disease;
- Soror Kerri Lang for health and healing; and
- Soror Sandra "FeFe" McCrary-Marshall for health and healing.

Sorors, tap the enclosed link to submit your prayer requests and bereavement notices,

<https://dstatx.org/contact-page/pb-request-form/>

December Omega Omega Assignments

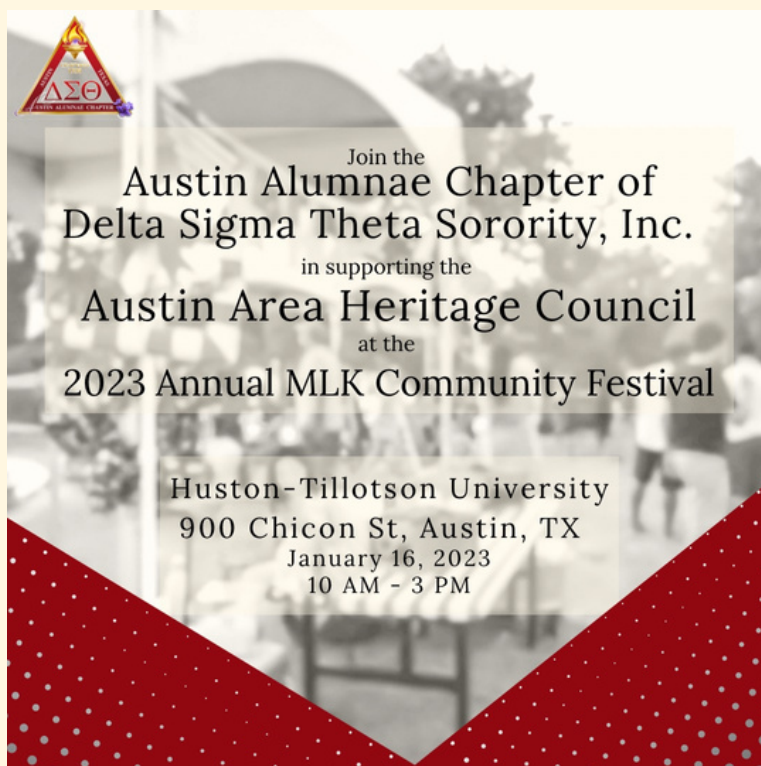
Soror Mary Lewis-Winston through
Soror Lisa Newman



This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

News from our Social Action and Educational Development Committees!



The Social Action Committee alongside the Educational Development Committee will be leading the efforts to support the Austin Area Heritage Council's 2023 Annual MLK Community Festival. Members of Austin Alumnae Chapter will have the opportunity to serve, as the team led by Soror Freda Mills will have a table in which to share current voter registration information, Texas legislative priority information, and so much more. **The charge, sorors are to attend the MLK Community Festival January 16, 2023 (10 a.m. - 3 p.m.; and if you are available to assist with setup, please arrive at 8 a.m.), manning the table, and/or breakdown please contact Soror Mills fmills60@gmail.com or the Social Action Committee Co-chairs Soror Veronica Pickett-Johnson and Soror Celeste Williams dstatx.pai@gmail.com.**

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

News from our Social Action Committee!

This month, Soror Brenda Kennedy's portrait was unveiled in the CJC 403 District Court! Austin Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. Social Action Committee Co-Chair Celeste Williams was in attendance alongside newly retired Judge, Soror Lora Livingston and Soror Toni Williams Davis.

On behalf of the Social Action Committee, Soror Kennedy was given a small token of appreciation for her judicial service in Travis County.

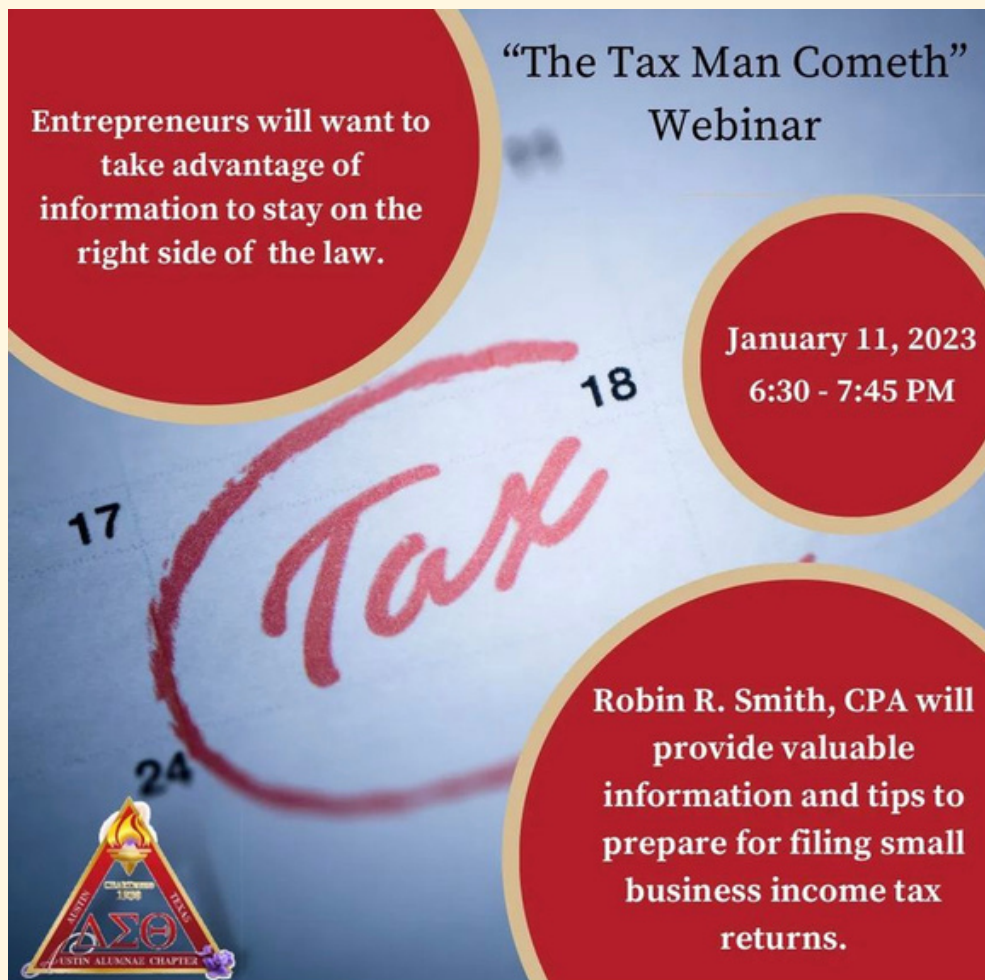


Congratulations

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

News from our Economic Development Committee!



Sorors, please join the Economic Development Committee for our next Wealth Wednesday Quarterly Webinar, "The Tax Man Cometh" on **Wednesday, January 11 at 6:30 p.m.**

Setting up a new business can be challenging as it is exciting! Entrepreneurs will want to take advantage of any breaks and credits offered by the Internal Revenue Service, but they also need to stay on the right side of the tax man! Robin R. Smith, CPA will provide valuable information and tips how to prepare for filing small business income tax returns.

Register here, https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dmfv7BEScec-uYY4nyFeg

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

News from our Emergency Response Team

FREE WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS TOOLS

NORTH BRANCH 8716 Research Blvd., Suite 115

TUE 1.10.23

8:00 A.M. while supplies last

EAST BRANCH Rosewood-Zaragosa Center | 2800 Webberville Road

WED 1.11.23





8:00 A.M. while supplies last

SOUTH BRANCH 1901 W. William Cannon Drive, Suite 100

THU 1.12.23

8:00 A.M. while supplies last



For updates and instructional videos go to austinwater.org
follow us on    

This Month's Highlights

NEWS FROM OUR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

What's Happening in Our Community,
Courtesy of Our Educational Development Committee!



**AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF
DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.**

College Tour

MARCH 12-16, 2023

ARKANSAS
Schools: Philander Smith College @ Little Rock
University of Arkansas @ Pine Bluff

TENNESSEE
Schools: LeMoyne Owen College @ Memphis
Fisk University @ Nashville
Tennessee State University @ Nashville
Meharry Medical @ Nashville

Book Now
\$285
Per Person

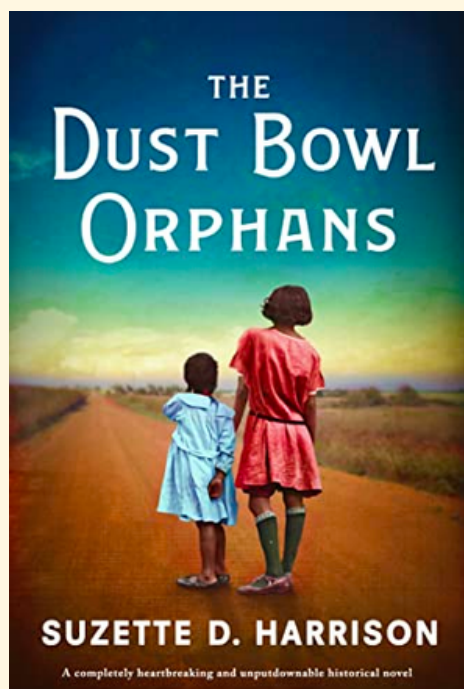
Sorors, only **6 spots** left for the 2023 college tour! Sorors, EdDev needs your help to promote this event and fill up our remaining 6 spots. Remember this is co-ed, so it's open to both girls and boys. Only \$285, March 12-16. Have them reach out to dsteddev@gmail.com to receive pertinent information and forms. **Jan 11 is the deadline.**

Please share with your circle of friends.

This Month's Highlights

NEWS FROM OUR ARTS & LETTERS COMMITTEE

What's Happening in Our Community,
Courtesy of Our Arts & Letters Committee!



DSTATX Book Club

Saturday, January 21, 1:00 pm. - 3:00 p.m.

The Dust Bowl Orphans by

Suzette D. Harrison

Sorors, our January meeting will be held in person at the Black Pearl Bookstore located at 7112 Burnet Road, Austin, Texas 78757.

All memebrebrs are welcome to attend!

March 28 - April 2, 2023

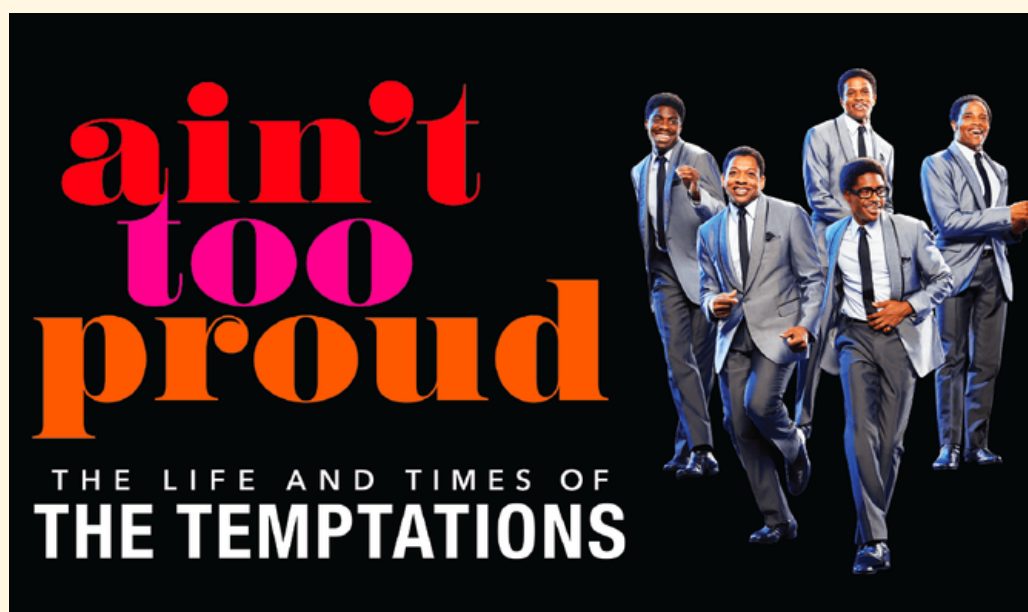
ain't too proud

The Life and Times of

The Temptations

Bass Concert Hall

2350 Robert Dedman Dr.



This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

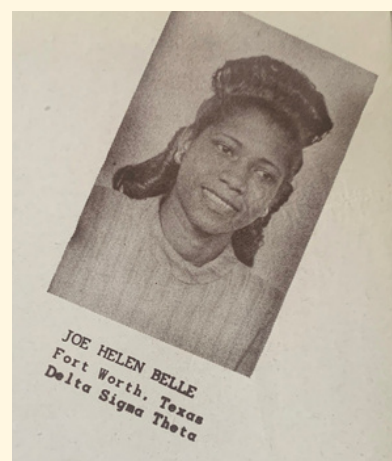
A Request from Our Historian and Heritage Archive Committee!

Heritage Archive Committee Collection Efforts

It is a National Initiative for chapters to preserve their history. We have been working at the Foundation House going through containers, closets and boxes looking for items to preserve our history. Our goal is to identify, categorize, label and preserve our history in one location, in a climate/controlled facility.

We need from Past Presidents.....

- Certificates
- Awards
- Trophies
- Plaques the chapter received during your tenure
- Chapter Rules of Order
- Policy and Procedures
- Constitution and By Laws during your tenure
- We need from chapter members.....
- Pictures of Charter Members
- Pictures of Past Presidents
- Founders Day programs
- Jabberwock programs
- May Day programs
- Brochures
- Newspaper clippings
- Journals
- Programs



Pictures of various events identifying the people in the picture and the name of the event. We need your help Sorors. Start looking in your closets, old photo albums, souvenir bags for the items we need. Please contact us by email at dstatx.ha@gmail.com or by cell phone Soror Nancy Thompson, Chair 512-565-1855; Soror Tashia Coleman, Co-Chair 512-897-9971 to arrange how we will pick up the items.

This Month's Highlights

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS



REP YOUR LETTERS



January 29, 2023
Brushy Creek Lake Park, 10am

Start the New Year right! Put on your para and join us at our annual 5K. Award will be given to orgs with most participants. Enter your org for team name.



[Register Here](#)

WWW.LADDERSFORLEADERSTX.ORG

Sorors, let's kick off this new year with some exercise! Join Soror LaKissa Bright in the Ladders for Leaders 5K on January 29! Make sure you enter **Delta Sigma Theta** as the team name. Enter code **DELTA** for a \$5 discount. We are having a competition between Pan-Hellenic Council organizations so let's show up and win this thang!

Click here to register:

<https://www.betterunite.com/laddersforleaders-5kfunrunforthefutureworkforce>

This Month's Highlights

IMPORTANT COMMUNICATION FROM AUSTIN DELTA FOUNDATION



Since 2001, the Austin Delta Foundation and Austin Alumnae Chapter have awarded over 100 scholarships to assist female high school seniors in achieving their academic endeavors; a total of \$140,000 recorded to date. Austin Delta Foundation in partnership with Austin Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. continue the scholarship fundraising efforts through Austin's Got Talent. This event on February 18 celebrates and spotlights a variety of new and seasoned talent in the greater Austin area. Food, music, laughs, dancing, and a hand clapping, toe tapping, finger snapping experience await you. Tickets \$45 through January 22. \$55 after January 22. Full table or VIP tickets for preferred seating are available. Here are some ways you can ensure this scholarship fundraiser is a success:

Purchase Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/austins-got-talent-sponsored-by-austin-delta-foundation-tickets-460552594207>

Don't want to Purchase Online? You may get your ticket at Will Call at the event by mailing your payment to the ADF house - 1190 San Bernard, Austin, TX 78702. Your payment must be received no later than February 11 to ensure seats are still available. Our goal is to have 75% of tickets sold by January 31, and to date we've only sold 14%.

Recruit Talent to Compete: Know someone with talent who wants to compete for a monetary prize? Feel free to share the Performer Interest Form by sending them this link, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Kr49GgTlpY50w9Jo5uj8UYKmlNlFxiIm/edit>

Recommend Sponsors: If you are interested in learning about sponsorship opportunities for this event, please email austindeltafoundation@gmail.com or visit with a Foundation Director or Foundation Member before February 1, 2023 to get a sponsorship form.

Membership Spotlight

Congratulations on Retirement!



Judge Brenda Kennedy
403rd District Court



Judge Lora Livingston
261st District Court



Membership Spotlight

Congratulations!

Honorable Brenda Kennedy

Judge Kennedy was elected to the 403rd District Court in 2002 and is the Presiding Judge for the Criminal Courts. She presides over both Drug Court and the Youthful Offender Support Court (YOSC). Drug Court is a multi-disciplinary drug treatment and case management intervention program. The YOSC offers select participants an opportunity to participate in a program that utilizes a collaborative effort between the Judiciary, community supervision and counseling staff to provide specialized supportive supervision, intervention, treatment and resource linkage to youthful felony clients. Prior to her election, she served as an Assistant District Attorney in Travis County. After serving on the bench for 35 years, Judge Kennedy is retiring at the end of her term in office on December 31, 2022.

Honorable Lora Livingston

Judge Lora Livingston was elected to the 261st District court in 1998. She Livingston is a graduate of the UCLA School of Law. She began her legal career as a Reginald Heber Smith Community Lawyer Fellow assigned to the Legal Aid Society of Central Texas in Austin. After completion of the fellowship program, she continued to work in the area of poverty law until she entered private practice and later opened the law firm of Livingston & Parr. In January 1995, she was sworn in as an associate judge for the District Courts of Travis County and later elected presiding judge. She is the first African American woman to serve on a district court in Travis County. She has received numerous awards for her leadership and community services, including the Outstanding Attorney award from the Travis County Women Lawyers Association and the Women of Distinction Award by the Lonestar Girl Scouts Council. After serving on the bench for 27 years, Judge Livingston is retiring at the end of her term in office on December 31, 2022.



Both Judge Kennedy and Judge Livingston are the epitome of “Black Girl Magic.” As the first African American females to serve as judges in Travis County, these women are trailblazers in the legal community and role models to all little girls and women of color proving that “we” can be whatever we aspire to be.

On behalf of the Austin Alumnae Chapter and the Membership Services Committee, we salute Judge Kennedy and Judge Livingston for jobs well done in maintaining and upholding the impartiality and independence of the Texas judiciary.

We are DELTA proud!



Membership Spotlight

Happy Birthday, Sorors!

Happy Birthday to our January birthdays!

01/01: Monica Brewer & Stephanie Shipp

01/03: Elnita Lee

01/08: Pretesia Hunt

01/09: Stephanie Charles, & Vanessa Henry

01/10: Antowonett Parks, Suzanne Piper, &
Sandra Williams-Willis

01/11: Sherrie Edwards

01/13: Sharlene Andrews & Cherry Thompson

01/14: Alnita Foote & Avis Gipson

01/19: Delphea Jester

01/20: Barbara Wilson

01/22: Tamela Saldana & LaPortia Smith

01/23: Kelsey Woodward

01/27: Cleann Cameron

01/30: Estella Akins

Coming Your Way....!

Odyssey and MIDpoint Message Deadlines

- January MIDpoint Message -- Submit all content by Tuesday, January 10
- February Odyssey -- Submit all content by Tuesday, January 24
- February MIDpoint Message -- Submit all content by Tuesday, February 7

*Please note due to swift publication constraints, content not received by the stated deadline, may appear in a subsequent edition of the desired Odyssey or MIDpoint Message publication. Questions?

Please email Soror Autumn Caviness (dstatx.journalist@gmail.com).



Austin Alumnae Leadership Team

2022-2023 Committee Chairs

Economic Development

Sylvia Holt-Rabb & Avis Gipson

Educational Development

Tiffany Tillis-Lewis & Bethany Bell

International Awareness & Involvement

Dena Bryant & Akeshia Johnson Smothers

Physical and Mental Health

Courtney Nolan & April Brisco

Political Awareness and Involvement/

Social Action

Celeste Williams & Veronica Johnson

Arts and Letters

Jonna LaGrone-Haynes & Stacey Cleveland

Risk Management Coordinator

Dewi Smith

Internal Audit

Julie Dixon-Cartwright

Rituals and Ceremonies

Michelle Scruggs

Technology

Kathryn Foster & Khaison Reed

Emergency Response

Suzanne Piper & Tonja Walls-Davis

Founders Day

Sheldy Starkes & Donna Jackson

National Pan Hellenic Representative(s)

Kim Whitlock, Bre' Stafford, & Darralyn Johnson

Nominating Committee

Tamela Saldana

Parliamentarian/Chair of Policies and Procedures

Patricia Shorter

Charitable Partners

Sonya Harry & LaTasha Dennis

Protocol and Traditions

Cedel Evans & Sandra Marshall

Records Management and Retention

Vacant

Ways and Means

Alnita Foote

Communications and Public Relations

Autumn Caviness

Heritage and Archives

Nancy Thompson, Historian & Tashia Coleman

Chaplain

Dedurie Kirk

Strategic Planning

Courtney Robinson

Officers

Robin Blackmon, Soror President

Jacqueline Habersham, 1st Vice President

Kacey Hanson, 2nd Vice President

Demitra Alexander, Treasurer

Deborah Shaw-Boatner, Asst. Treasurer

Janet Marshall, Recording Secretary

Tiffany White, Corresponding Secretary

Anita Daniels, Financial Secretary

Tennile Thomas, Asst. Financial Secretary

Kendra Wesson, Sergeant at Arms

Autumn Caviness, Journalist

Lisa Newman, Immediate Past President

Sorors,

Please don't forget to register and attend our upcoming
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Saturday, January 7 at 10 a.m.,
held virtually!

Tap here to register,

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUkfu6gqzwrGNXkl6CL3zhJtzqBQm2U4y0s>



Sorors, HOT off the press!

- The National Scholarships and Standards Committee have approved our Chapter Rules of Order and Policies and Procedures;
- Our Policies and Procedures and signed Rules of Order Form are now available on our Members Only portal;
- Visit our Members Only portal located here, <https://dstatx.org/login/>



Austin Alumnae Chapter
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
P.O. BOX 143381
Austin, Texas 78714