



THE ODYSSEY

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

SEPTEMBER 2023

Presidential Press

Vol. 1

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Hezekiah Walker sings a song that eloquently depicts what sisterhood means to me. The lyrics start with

I need you, you need me

We're all a part of God's body

Stand with me, agree with me

We're all a part of God's body

It is His will that every need be supplied

You are important to me, I need you to survive

You are important to me, I need you to survive

This lyrics end with....

I pray for you

You pray for me

I love you (come on, y'all)

I need you to survive

(Hold somebody hand and tell them, come on)

I won't harm you with words from my mouth

I love you

I need you to survive

Sorors as we embody the theme **Moving Forward: One Delta, One Bond, One Love**. We are One! The words of this song penetrate my heart as I think about what our sisterhood means to me. The last two years have been nothing short of spectacular and as we begin this biennium the best is yet to come. Everything this chapter accomplished took each of us in whatever role we played to make sure that Austin Alumnae made a recognizable footprint in this community. Soror, you are important to me, I need you to survive. Austin Alumnae needs you to survive. We are **One Delta**.

The 56th National Convention was one for the history books, with the initiation of a grand class of honorary members, to include Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Soror Ketanji Brown Jackson (continued on the next page),



REMINDER:

Our chapter meeting is in-person at **10 a.m. on**

Saturday, September 9 at Highland Campus, Austin Community College

(Building 2000, Room 1550).

Parking is available in the South Parking Garage:

6018 Wilhemina Delco Drive,
Austin, Texas 78752

Presidential Press, continued...

We were also honored to have Vice President Kamala Harris as a guest speaker during the Social Action Luncheon. Congratulations to the Founders Day and Heritage and Archives Committee for the celebration that ensured Austin Alumnae returned home with The 2023 Delta Heritage Celebration Award. As always, the convention was a great experience, but one of my highlights was during the opening as we sang "I'll Be There". Hearing in unison "Just call my name and I'll be there", reminded me that Delta's all over the world share this **One Bond** and we are there to support each other.

Flying high from the energy of the convention, Austin Alumnae worked to make sure the chapter leadership was ready to start the sorority year with a successful committee chair training. Membership services planned an epic chapter retreat. About 100 sorors traveled to Belton, TX for two days of sisterly fun, fellowship, and learning. It was important that we had an opportunity to connect, meet new sorors, and begin fostering and nurturing new Delta relationships. I introduced my Presidential Initiative, the **Sister II Sister Circle**. Each member has been grouped with sorors in their area with four goals in mind: socialize together, support each other, security during emergency situations, and serve your community. You should be hearing from your group leads soon. Sorors as we move forward in our circles promoting **One Love**, I know that we will continue to have an impact on this community. Step aside the Delta's are coming, no step aside the **Delta's** are here.

Sorors let's show up and show out and have a great year!

One Delta, One Bond, One Love. We Are One!

Soror Robin Blackmon



Chaplain's Message

Shared by Chaplain, Soror Dedurie V. Kirk

Somebody's Waiting on You

Have you ever received something then realized you had been waiting for it? It's exactly what you needed.

Several days ago I went to HEB to pick up some items. I was already tired when I got there. One item I wanted had a digital coupon. I tried to scan the coupon with the app, but it didn't work. Frustrated, I took a picture of the tag. When I reached the register, the clerk asked me if I needed bags.

"Yes." Then in my head, "Uggg. HEB – Austin...take me back to Pflugerville." I forgot about Austin's plastic bag policy, although the store is about to sell me...a plastic bag.

"How many bags do you need?"

"I don't know. Can't you just ring them up as you go?"

"No ma'am. We have to ring the bags up first. I will start with two."

"Ok," I said, trying to keep my frustration in check. It was finally time to pay. I pulled up the app and the clerk scanned the digital coupons. Then I showed her the picture of the one that didn't scan.

"I can't use that," she said. "But I can show you how to look up the product in the app."

Now I am on full tilt frustration. Your app is not working, you can't use the picture, and you want me to take the time to look it up. No. I'm done. She was truly trying to be helpful. But I was done.

"It's ok. There are people in line behind me and my sister is waiting on me. Let me just pay (and go)."

I walked out to the car, rehearsing in my head all the little things that were frustrating. After unloading the groceries, I took the cart to the return area. A lady who was also returning her cart, got there a few seconds before me. As she turned to go to her car, she said, "Have a blessed day." Instantly, the switch flipped. I remembered how blessed I am. That lady was an angel unaware who blessed me with her words. Those four words elevated my attitude, reset my mind, and allowed me to move forward in a positive light. I had been waiting on her and didn't know it.

Matthew 5 informs and reminds us: You are the light of the world. Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. As members of Delta Sigma Theta, Incorporated, we have a torch. We have so many gifts

and multiple avenues in which to share them. We can't afford to sit on our gifts or hide them or wait until next year to use them. The time is now. Somebody is waiting on us.

People are waiting on you to change the trajectory of their lives and they don't even know it. But you do. Be that angel unaware. Let the Delta Symbol become a reality in someone's life, a true change agent. Glorify God through this Christian principled sisterhood by serving the community. Let your light shine and change someone's day, someone's trajectory, someone's life.

Prayer Corner

Members are encouraged to send cards, visit (if allowed by the family), or telephone sorors for additional courtesies. Sorors, please continue to lift the following in fervent prayer:

- Soror Kimily Johnson and family for the loss of her aunt Soror Elvira Harris Montgomery;
- Soror Pamela Hall and family. Her mother is ill and currently hospitalized;
- Soror Celeste Williams and family. Her aunt's recent passing; and her cousin who was admitted to the hospital;
- Soror Del Jester and family for the passing of her sister; and
- Soror Lenora Waters and family for the passing of her brother.

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

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

September Omega Omega Assignments

Soror Tanya Rippenkroeger
through Soror Patricia Shorter



This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Nominating News



Austin Alumnae Chapter 2023 Call for Awards

DELTA OF THE YEAR

VIOLET IN BLOOM

THE FOUNDERS AWARDS

Frederica Chase Dodd

Myra Davis Hemmings

Zephyr Chisom Carter

Jessie McGuire Dent

Nomination Packet

Nominations may also be submitted using the google link below:

<https://forms.gle/gPfBnDoutZpJ4g1YA>

Submissions open September 9, 2023 (September Chapter Meeting)

Submit this nomination form, as an attachment, by email to nominating.aacdst@gmail.com with subject line: "Founders Day Award Nomination."

Nominations are due to the Chair of the Nominating Committee, by 11:59 PM Central on October 12, 2023 (the second Thursday of October). Late nominations will not be accepted.

Chapter Awards Guidelines are in The Policies Procedures, Appendix 7, page 52 and can be accessed via the chapter member only portal. Access the nomination form here, <https://forms.gle/gPfBnDoutZpJ4g1YA>

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Social Action News!



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Weekend



Hey Sorors!

SIGN UP HERE TO VOLUNTEER:

- Football Games
- Black Businesses
- Sunday Mornings

- ✓ **VERIFY VOTER REGISTRATION STATUS**
- ✓ **REGISTERING TO VOTE**
- ✓ **UPDATE VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION**



SEPT | 22-24 | 2023

For more information contact us at:
dstatx.pai@gmail.com

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Social Action News!

Social Action continues to drive the change in which we would all like to see in our communities. All activations will align to the current 2023 National Social Action priorities: Voting and Civic Engagement, Health Equity, Reproductive Justice, Economic Justice, Reimagining Public Safety, Environmental Justice and Education.

As such, members of the social action committee have begun our efforts by supporting the local school boards. On August 17, three sorors attended the Round Rock ISD school board meeting (Kacey Hanson, Belinda Williams and Celeste Williams). This academic year, the social action committee has designated liaisons for the local school board meetings. Our target school boards are Austin ISD, Hutto ISD, Manor ISD, Pflugerville ISD and Round Rock ISD. Chapter members are being asked to engage by attending the meetings, to stay informed, and to help identify key community issues that Austin Alumnae may desire to address. Submit all concerns here, dstatx.pai@gmail.com.

September is Voter Registration Month

Many of our members are volunteer deputy registrars. Volunteer Deputy Registrars ("VDRs") are entrusted with the responsibility of officially registering voters in the State of Texas.

VDRs are appointed by county voter registrars and charged with helping increase voter registration in the state.

Duties of a VDR include:

- Providing registration applications to voters;
- Assisting, accepting, and reviewing voter registration applications; and
- Ensuring accurate records of voter registration applications.

Sorors, please complete the Volunteer Deputy Registrar Tracker Form, <https://forms.gle/iTRkNUoV9ko87wEr5>

To become a trained Volunteer Deputy Registrar tap here, <https://tax-office.traviscountytexas.gov/voters/volunteer-deputy-registrars>.

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Social Action News!

Sorors, if you are a VDR, please complete the form below. When prompted to select "Chapter Event Type" select *Chapter Program/Activity*. Then when prompted to put in the specific "Program/Activity" please enter Volunteer Deputy Registrar.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc72poO_RI4rxlap_jFXYL6mX74PbhfALgXODHKQPrjsJrUeA/formResponse

This year, National Voter Registration Day is September 19! We are preparing for a social media takeover with a PSA video. Members are asked to LIKE, SHARE once our PSA is released!

Social Justice Weekend is coming! Please mark your calendars and prepare to support the voter registration efforts at the local football games, Black owned business, community festival and local churches September 21 - September 24. Members please sign up to volunteer via the sign up genius,

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0F4FA4AF2EA7FC1-social2>

Questions or concerns contact our SJW organizers Sorors Erica Knox & Lisa Newman.



**Round Rock ISD School Board Meeting,
held earlier this year on August 17**

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Emergency Response Committee News!

HSEM **Get Ready Central Texas** **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNTY**

Emergency Preparedness Fair

FRIDAY, SEPT. 22ND 3:00 P.M. TO 7:00 P.M.

FEATURING
DJ CHORIZO FUNK

JOIN US AT
ACC EASTVIEW CAMPUS
3101 Webberville Rd.
Austin, TX 78702

AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

COME LEARN

- What resources are available during a disaster
- Safety tips
- How to make an emergency plan for your family

Make Emergency Preparedness Your SUPERPOWER!

Get Prepared For All Seasons

Free to attend and family friendly | Refreshments provided | Play games, make friends and meet your neighbors

GET STARTED ON YOUR EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT.

Interpretation services available in Spanish and ASL. Request another language interpreter by calling 3-1-1 no later than five days before the event.

Find out more at: readycentraltexas.org or scan the QR code to learn more

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Emergency Response Committee News!

The City of Austin Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) is hosting the second annual Get Ready Central Texas Emergency Preparedness Fair on Friday, September 22 at Austin Community College Eastview Campus. The event is free, family friendly and open to the public.

Event: Get Ready Central Texas Emergency Preparedness Fair

Time: Friday, September 22, 2023, 3-7 p.m.

Location: ACC Eastview Campus, 3101 Webberville Rd., Austin, Texas 78702

"The Get Ready Central Texas Emergency Preparedness Fair is an opportunity for people to learn what to do to stay safe before an emergency," said Austin HSEM Director Ken Snipes. "The time to get ready is before a disaster happens. Community members who join us for this event will have fun, empower themselves, and come away with knowledge and supplies to put them in a better position when—not if—a disaster occurs. Together, we can make Austin a more resilient, more prepared community."

Attendees will learn tips to prepare their home, family, and community for emergencies. A basic emergency kit will be available to those who attend, one per household and while supplies last. Copies of the Neighborhood Preparedness Guide will be available to help attendees make a plan. Kid friendly games, sips and snacks will be provided. Interpreters will be available on-site in Spanish and American Sign Language. Other languages can be requested by contacting 3-1-1.

The Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management will teach attendees how to make a plan, build a kit, stay informed and help meet neighbors, and attendees will learn emergency preparedness information from the following partners (listed on the following page):

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Emergency Response Committee News!

- National Weather Service
- American Red Cross
- AT&T FirstNet
- Austin Disaster Relief Network
- Seton Ascension – Texas Medical Response Unit
- Integral Care
- Travis County Office of Emergency Management
- University of Texas Center for Disability Studies
- Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services
- Austin Energy
- Austin Fire Department
- Austin Public Health
- Austin Office of Resilience
- Austin Watershed Department
- Austin Water

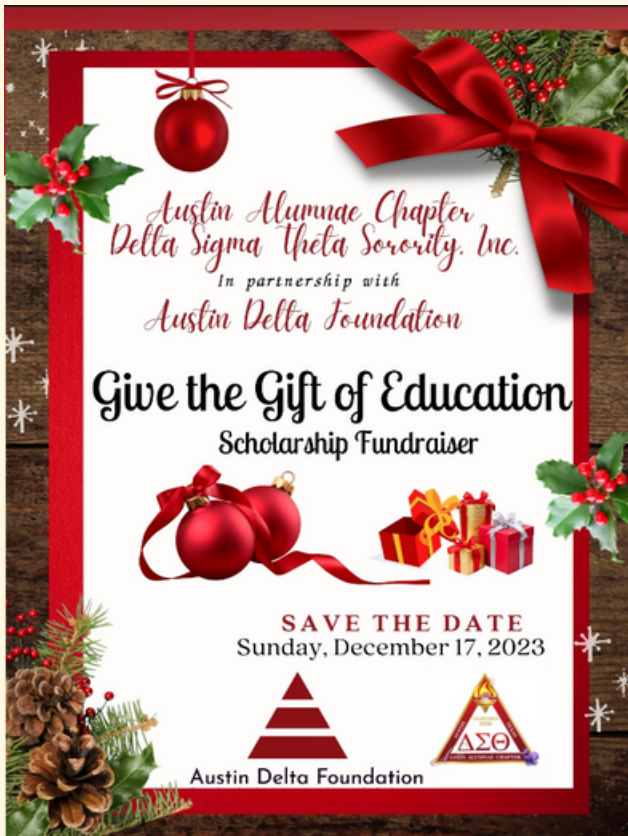
And more!

For more information on the Get Ready Central Texas Emergency Preparedness Fair visit www.ReadyCentralTexas.org.

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Ways and Means Committee News!



Ways & Means and Austin Delta Foundation

**Goal is to raise
over \$30K**



Alnita Foote

dstatx.wm@gmail.com



Gwen Bingham



Austin Alumnae Chapter
DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

Ways & Means and Austin Delta Foundation

Austin Delta Foundation

Pamela Sherman
Vanessa Henry
Sekoya Waddy
Pam Hall
Joan Roberts-Scott

Austin Alumnae Chapter

Robin Blackmon
Alnita Foote
Gwen Bingham

**We Need
You!!**



Austin Alumnae Chapter
DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Educational Development Committee News!

The Presidential Youth Conference was held in Montgomery, Alabama, June 28 - June 30. The theme was "Our Legacy from enslavement to Empowerment: Achieving Our Ancestors Wildest Dreams." Jaya Coats was selected to represent Austin Alumnae Chapter. She has been a GEM for three years. Soror Latasha Robinson chaperoned Miss Coats to the conference.



This Month's Highlights

ARTS & LETTERS COMMITTEE NEWS

DST ATX BOOK CLUB

Saturday, September 16

1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Join the Arts & Letters Book Club on Saturday, September 16 for our first meeting of the year! Our book selection is the memoir "I Am Debra Lee" by our new honorary member. Debra Lee is the former CEO of Black Entertainment Television (BET). Her memoir is "a page-turner, filled with deeply personal revelations, juicy celebrity intel, and electrifying behind-the-scenes stories that reveal how she went from a girl raised in the segregated South to leading the first Black company traded on the New York Stock Exchange and how she juggled social responsibility while managing a company targeted toward the Black community."

2023

2023



CONTACT US

dstatx.arts@gmail.com



This Month's Highlights

COMMUNITY NEWS



The Austin Delta Foundation serves the needs of the Austin African American Community by providing, partnering, and promoting resources to enable the community to improve the quality of life.

The Austin Delta Foundation is seeking ten new directors to serve on the board for the 2024-2026 term. We need your time and talents! Please consider joining the foundation and help us fulfill our commitment to the community while honoring the legacy of our sorors who made so many sacrifices to create ADF.

To address our strategic priorities moving forward, we especially need Directors with skills, experiences, and/or connections in the following areas:

- Realtor (with commercial property experience)
- Grant Writer
- Contractor (with knowledge of zoning/city ordinances for construction)
- Attorney
- Fundraiser (with access to major donors)
- Event Planner/Project Manager

If you are interested in becoming a director on the Austin Delta Foundation Board, please visit our website www.austindeltafoundation.org and complete the application. The deadline to submit an application is October 31, 2023.



Membership Spotlight

Happy Birthday, Sorors!

Happy Birthday to our July, August, and September birthdays!

July

07/01: Joe Helen Belle & Shannon Hickson
07/02: Tasha Burton & Elizabeth Morton
07/03: Cedel Evans & Natalie Tindall De Torres
07/07: Anna Holliman & Pamela Sherman
07/08: Patricia Shorter
07/09: Melva Evans & Kelly Smith
07/10: June Murphy
07/12: Ashley Coffin
07/13: Kennedy Thompson
07/14: Ollie White
07/16: Carrie Swisher
07/17: Kathryn Foster & Stephanie Washington
07/20: Tanya Rippenkroeger
07/22: Toni Williams
07/24: KeShana Odom
07/26: Kenyatta James & Judith A. Mitchell
07/28: DeAnn McKenzie
07/29: Latasha Robinson
07/31: Ashley Johnson

August

08/01: Dedurie Kirk
08/04: Sherri Fleming
08/07: Khaison Reed
08/08: Mary Lewis-Winston & Sekoya Waddy
08/10: Kimberly Dukes, Freda Mills, & Janice Sumler-Edmond
08/14: Janet Scroggins Marshall, Frances Smith, & Kendra Wesson
08/15: Sylnovia Holt-Rabb
08/16: Del Watson
08/17: Alexandra Parker
08/18: Crystal Robinson
08/21: Michelle Bias & April Briscoe
08/22: Gwendolyn Bingham, Robin Blackmon & De'Ja Nelson





Membership Spotlight

Happy Birthday, Sorors!

Happy Birthday to our July, August, and September birthdays!

August, continued

08/24: Nola Marie Dilworth & Belinda Williams

08/26: Donna Jackson

08/31: Shereena Johnson

September

09/03: Dena Bryant & Gloria L. Williams

09/04: Renee Jones & Brenda Kennedy

09/05: Thedencia Horne

09/06: Brooke Wilkerson

09/07: Betty Austin & Nancy Brown

09/08: Antonia Crenshaw

09/09: Inette Brown

09/12: Lola Westbrook

09/13: Debra Overton

09/14: Jeffrey Archer, Catherine Lee, & Jaria Martin

09/16: Joan Roberts-Scott & Emily W. Thompson

09/20: Valarie Rice-Smith

09/24: Julie Dixon-Cartwright

09/25: Pamela Jessie

09/26: Valerie Baker

09/28: Akeia Madyun



Soror Scrapbook!

A few of our favorite photos from the past several months!
Sorors, please email your wonderful photos to
dstatxphotos@gmail.com.



Soror Scrapbook!



Soror Scrapbook!



Soror Scrapbook!

This 'D' train is gon' keep on rolling



Soror Scrapbook!

This 'D' train is gon' keep on rolling



Soror Scrapbook!

This 'D' train is gon' keep on rolling



Soror Scrapbook!

This 'D' train is gon' keep on rolling



Soror Scrapbook!

Words to the “Welcome Song” at the Chapter Retreat.

The D Train – Cover Song of Keep on Rollin by King George

The D Train

If you wanna Do
Come on and doooo Delta
Cause one thing that we found out (Know)
One Delta can't work it all out.
One Delta just to set the vision
Two Deltas just to hold us up
And All our Delta Sisters ready to cut a strut.

If you wanna work Sorors
Get on the D Train
Cause one thing that we found out (Know)
One Delta can't work it all out.
One Delta just to set the vision
Two Deltas just to hold us up
And All our Delta Sisters ready to cut a strut.

If you wanna work Sorors
Get on the D Train
One thing that you got remember
We all got to get in the **game**.

If you wanna work Sorors
Get on the D Train
One thing that you got remember
We all got to do this **thang**

This train gon' keep on rolling
This thing called Delta
Gon' keep on going, oh yeah
This train gon' keep on rolling
This thing called Delta
Gon' keep on going, oh yeah

So Soror Please
We gotta get the work done
Soon as you walk (pause) in the door
Our committee is set to run

In our committee we work real hard
And Prove Delta Strong
And when it's all said and done
We all are One.

If ever in need
And we gotta move along
Just pick up the phone call a sister
Cause that's how Deltas done

If you wanna work Sorors
Get on the D Train
Cause one thing that we found out (Know)
One Delta can't work it all out.
One Delta just to set the vision
Two Deltas just to hold us up
And All our Delta Sisters ready to cut a strut.

If you wanna work Sorors
Get on the D Train
Cause one thing that we found out (Know)
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We all got to get in the **game**.

If you wanna work Sorors
Get on the D Train
One thing that you got remember
We all got to do this **thang**.

This train gon' keep on rolling
This thing called Delta
Gon' keep on going, oh yeah
This train gon' keep on rolling
This thing called Delta
Gon' keep on going, oh yeah

This train gon' keep on rolling
This thing called Delta
Gon' keep on going, oh yeah
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This thing called Delta
Gon' keep on going, oh yeah

Austin Alumnae Leadership Team

2023-2024 Committee Chairs

Economic Development

Sylvia Holt-Rabb & Avis Gipson

Educational Development

Paulette Walls

International Awareness & Involvement

Akeshia Johnson Smothers

Physical and Mental Health

Sherri Fleming

Political Awareness and Involvement/

Social Action

Celeste Williams & Veronica Johnson

Arts and Letters

Jonna LaGrone-Haynes & Tamara Diggs-Tate

Risk Management Coordinator

Nancy Knight-Brown

Internal Audit

Sophia Williams

Rituals and Ceremonies

Michelle Scruggs

Technology

Kathryn Foster & Khaison Reed

Emergency Response

Ollie White & Tanya Rippenkroger

Founders Day

Tamela Saldana & Kelly Smith

National Pan Hellenic Representative(s)

Kim Whitlock & Darralyn Johnson

Nominating Committee

Carla Grace

Parliamentarian/Chair of Policies and Procedures

Patricia Shorter

Charitable Partners

Pamela Hall & Sonya Harry

Protocol and Traditions

Cedel Evans & Sandra Marshall

Records Management and Retention

Darralyn Johnson

Ways and Means

Alnita Foote

Communications and Public Relations

Autumn Caviness

Heritage and Archives

Nancy Thompson, Historian & Tashia Coleman

Program, Planning, and Development

Kacey Hanson

Chaplain

Dedurie Kirk

Strategic Planning

Dewi Smith

Officers

Robin Blackmon, President

Jacqueline Habersham, 1st Vice President

Kacey Hanson, 2nd Vice President

Deborah Shaw-Boatner, Treasurer

Kimily Johnson, Asst. Treasurer

Darralyn Johnson, Recording Secretary

La'Kisha Crenshaw, Corresponding Secretary

Courtney Nolan, Asst. Corresponding Secretary

Anita Daniels, Financial Secretary

Tennile Thomas, Asst. Financial Secretary

Laronica Moise, Sergeant at Arms

Autumn Caviness, Journalist

Immediate Past President Lisa Newman

Sorors,

Please don't forget our
first general meeting of the new
sorority year is in-person at 10 a.m. on
Saturday, September 9,
Community College
(Building 2000, Room 1550).
Parking is available in the South
Parking Garage:
6018 Wilhemina Delco Drive,
Austin, Texas 78752

Sorors, please remember, we have several key documents available on our [Member Only Portal](#). Please review the [Austin Alumnae - Delta Sigma Theta Audit](#), located on our Member's Only portal prior to September's Chapter Meeting.



Austin Alumnae Chapter
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
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