



THE ODYSSEY

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

OCTOBER 2023

Presidential Press

Vol. 2

THIS ISSUE

- Presidential Press
Page 1
- Chaplain's Message &
Prayer Corner
Page 2
- This Month's Highlights
Page 3
- Soror Scrapbook
Page 16

Fall, a season of change is upon us. As Delta women we are all too familiar with change as it was the desire for change that sparked our Founders to do something different. That spark is carried on today throughout our organization as we remain in the front line of change.

This week Delta women rallied before a judicial hearing regarding Texas Senate Bill 1, the restrictive voting law enacted in September 2021, demanding change. This unjust law disproportionately targets voting access for people of color and individuals with disabilities. The lawsuit challenges multiple provisions in S.B. 1, including its limitations on early voting hours and a ban on 24-hour voting; the elimination of drive-thru voting centers and many more. Sorors the fight is still on and we must make sure our voices are heard. We all must find a way to do our part right here in our community. Voter registration deadline for the upcoming November election is Tuesday, October 10.

Sorors the work of Austin Alumnae is plentiful and we need each of you to engage. The Economic Development Committee will be hosting a webinar on Financial Fortitude: Financing for College/Dollars and Cents. The cost of education is expensive and this is an opportunity to help families prepare. Educational Development is off to a great start with over 20 youth registered to participate in our programs. We are excited to partner again this year with the Austin Alphas to take youth on an HBCU tour to Atlanta. So sorors as you can see, we are busy working and need you to engage. If you are not a member of at least one committee please take a moment to sign-up using this link, [Committee Sign-up](#) - we need you!

Sorors thanks for continuing to work out your commitment to Delta Sigma Theta in Austin Alumnae. Let's keep Moving Forward as One!

Yours in Service,

Soror Robin Blackmon



REMINDER:

Our chapter meeting is in-person at **10 a.m. on Saturday, October 7 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

Chaplain's Message

Shared by Soror Tanya Rippenkroeger

Be Still

Psalm 37: 5, 7 LB (5) "Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust Him to help you do it; and He will." (7a) "Rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him to act."

Notice these verses suggest we do two things: 1) be still, and 2) wait patiently. Both of these things are quite challenging in our modern age. Given the fast pace of our daily lives, full of responsibilities that range from childcare to work to household chores, to committee, Executive Board, and Chapter meetings, we are rarely still. The closest many of us come to being still is at bedtime when we are unconscious, rather than engaging before the Lord.

Sure, we can also be still during our prayer time. But how often do we fill that time with chatter, instead of actually listening for God to speak to us? We are asking for help with our daily lives, our children, our jobs, and maybe even to lead us through the coming committee meeting. But once we have said our request, what do we do? We normally say Amen, then get up and go on about our day.

The result is a typical experience of missing His voice and direction.

The second aspect of these verses is to wait patiently. Another very difficult habit in our modern age.

Patience is difficult since our days are consumed with constantly growing to-do lists. Patience with prayer requests is challenging but there is a benefit to remember God appreciates FAITHFUL prayer – the repeated prayer itself brings God joy as it illustrates our faith in His goodness to answer our prayers.

God will guide our steps and allow His righteousness to shine brightly through us (in our meetings) when we seek the answers to life's challenges in the stillness of His magnificent presence.

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 Khasion Reed and family for the loss of her cousin Soror Mary Wyandon-Ray;
- Soror Alyssa Patterson and family for the loss of her mother Soror Vahnita Loud;
- Soror Elizabeth Morton as she recovers from surgery in her left knee;
- Soror Tanya Rippenkroeger's mother, as she recovers from hip surgery and goes through rehabilitation;
- Soror Cynthia Robinson who was recently diagnosed with lymphoma. Please pray for her healing and recovery;
- Soror Kimily Johnson and family for the loss of her aunt Soror Elvira Harris Montgomery; and
- Soror Pamela Hall and family. Please pray for her mother's health and healing;

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

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

October Omega Omega Assignments

Soror Faye Sigers
through Soror Tennille Terry-Thoma



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

Policies and Procedures News!



NOTICE FROM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

Recommendations for Changes in Policies and Procedures and Rules of Order

Austin Alumnae Chapter members are invited to submit recommendations for change regarding the Chapter's Policies and Procedures. The below timeline reflects the open and closing period for recommendations as well as the review, submission, and approval of the recommendations for changes:

△ **October – November**

- **October 1, 2023:** The period to submit recommendations for changes in the Chapter's Policies and Procedures/Rules of Order using the Recommendation for Change Form opens.
- Email recommendations to dstatxpolicies@gmail.com using the Recommendation for Change Form located in the AAC member portal.
- **November 30, 2023:** The period to submit recommendations for changes in the Chapter's Policies and Procedures/Rules of Order using the Recommendation for Change Form ends.
- Email recommendations to dstatxpolicies@gmail.com using the Recommendation for Change Form located in the AAC member portal.

△ **December - January**

- Policies and Procedures Committee meets to review and evaluate all proposed recommendations.
- **January 30th:** Policies and Procedures Committee provides committee's decision on proposed recommendations at the Executive Board meeting.

△ **February - March**

- **February 3, 2024:** Policies and Procedures Committee review and discusses proposed amendments at chapter meeting.
- **February 20, 2024:** Chapter is given written prior notice for review, and then approves by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at the next chapter meeting.
- **February 27, 2024:** Policies and Procedures Committee report presented at executive board meeting.
- **March 2, 2024:** Austin Alumnae members vote on the proposed recommendations at the chapter meeting.

△ **April - May**

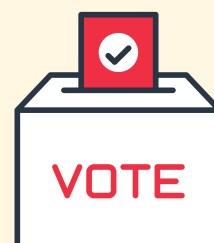
- President and/or Policies and Procedures Committee submits the Rules of Order Form; and
- President and/or Policies and Procedures Committee submits Policies and Procedures, if changed.

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Social Action News!

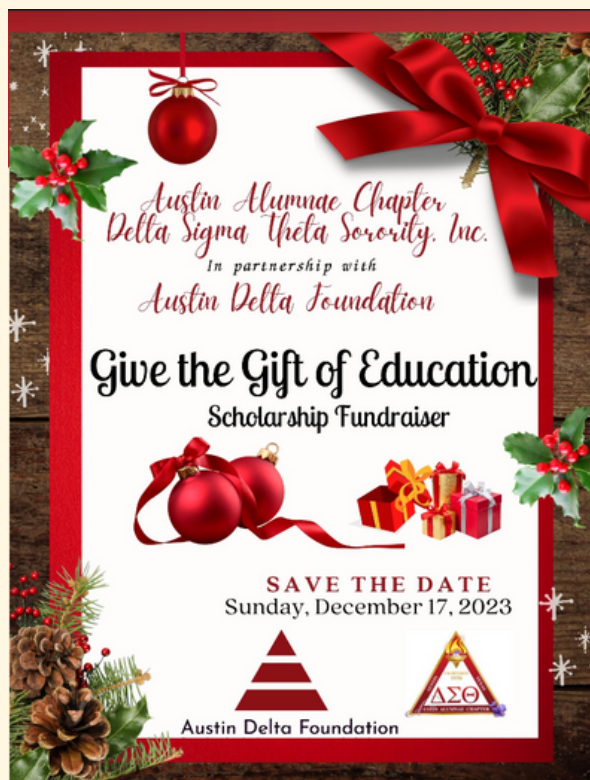
September's Social Justice Weekend was a phenomenal success! Here are a few photos showing AAC actively working in our community to register voters!



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

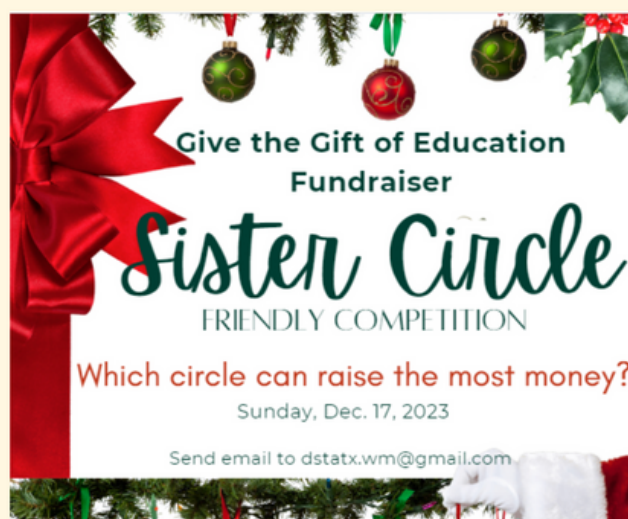


Austin Alumnae Chapter
DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

Ways & Means and Austin Delta Foundation



Eventbrite link active



This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Educational Development Committee News!



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

in collaboration with



GAMMA ETA LAMBDA CHAPTER LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTES

ALPHA PHI ALPHA FRATERNITY, INC.

HBCU COLLEGE TOUR

March 10 – March 15, 2024

Contact:

Latasha Robinson

dstEdDev@gmail.com

512.716.9065

\$395

ATLANTA, GA

- CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
- MOREHOUSE COLLEGE
- MORRIS BROWN COLLEGE
- SPELMAN COLLEGE

ALBANY, GA

- ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY



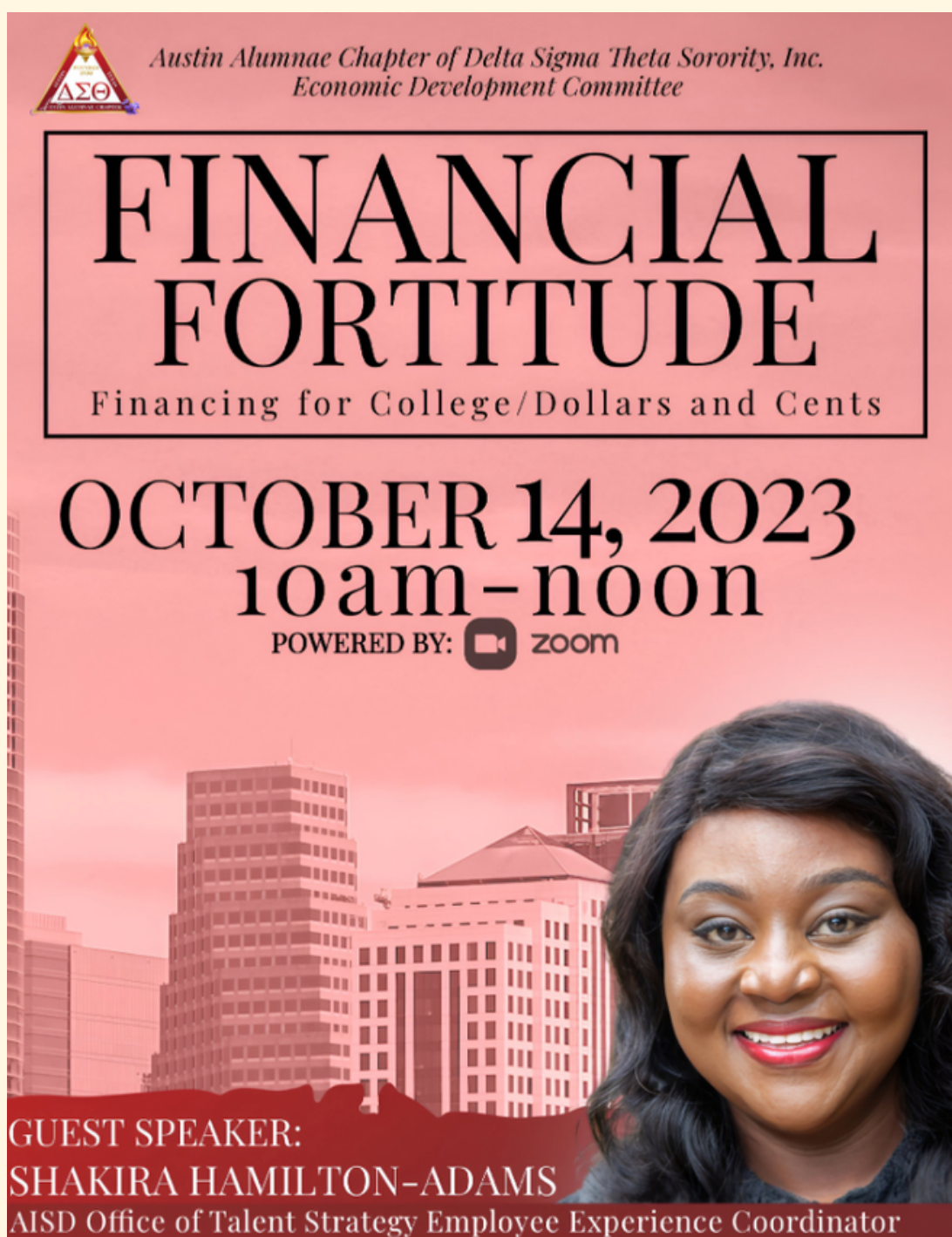
This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Economic Development Committee News!

Sorors, please register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_rKgKjMINTlqFfaBmJIHHPA




 *Austin Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.*
Economic Development Committee

FINANCIAL FORTITUDE

Financing for College/Dollars and Cents

OCTOBER 14, 2023 10am-noon

POWERED BY:  zoom

GUEST SPEAKER:
SHAKIRA HAMILTON-ADAMS
AISD Office of Talent Strategy Employee Experience Coordinator

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

Emergency Response Committee News!

October is Fire Safety Month!



Plan Ahead! If a fire breaks out in your home, you may have only a few minutes to get out safely once the smoke alarm sounds. Everyone needs to know what to do and where to go if there is a fire.

SAFETY TIPS

- » MAKE a home escape plan. Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your home.
- » KNOW at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- » HAVE an outside meeting place (like a tree, light pole or mailbox) a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet.
- » PRACTICE your home fire drill at night and during the day with everyone in your home, twice a year.
- » PRACTICE using different ways out.
- » TEACH children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them.
- » CLOSE doors behind you as you leave.

IF THE ALARM SOUNDS...

- » If the smoke alarm sounds, GET OUT AND STAY OUT. Never go back inside for people or pets.
- » If you have to escape through smoke, GET LOW AND GO under the smoke to your way out.
- » CALL the fire department from outside your home.

FACTS

- ! A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire. Install smoke alarms inside every sleeping room and outside each separate sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Smoke alarms should be interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- ! According to an NFPA survey, only **one of every three** American households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- ! While **71%** of Americans have an escape plan in case of a fire, only **47%** of those have practiced it.
- ! **One-third** of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The time available is often less. And only **8%** said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

This Month's Highlights

AUSTIN ALUMNAE CHAPTER NEWS

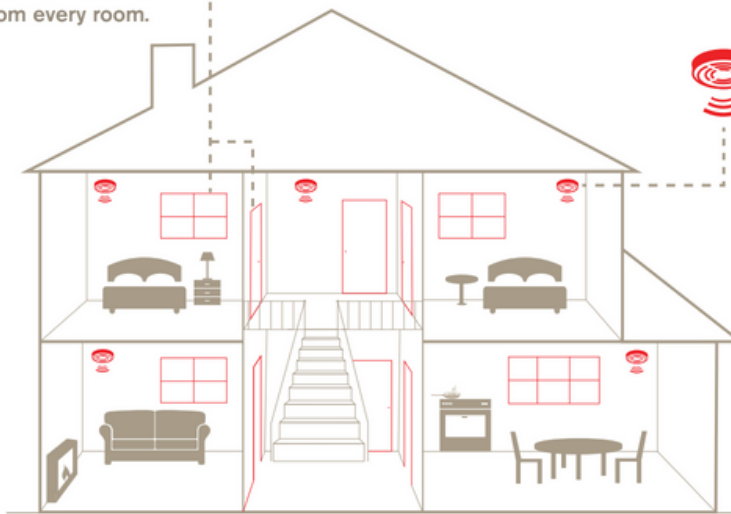
Emergency Response Committee News!

October is Fire Safety Month!

Mapping Out Your Escape Plan: Single Family Home



Identify two exits
from every room.



Install smoke alarms on every level
of the home, including inside and
outside each bedroom and in the
basement.



Pick a place outside
for everyone to meet.

Did you know that if a fire starts in your home, you'll have just two minutes to escape? That's why it's important to have working smoke alarms in your home, develop an escape plan and practice that plan. Practice your plan until everyone in the household can evacuate in less than two minutes. Test smoke alarms every month and replace the batteries as needed.

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.

This Month's Highlights

COMMUNITY NEWS



State Employee Charitable Campaign
TOGETHER WE CARE

Support DREF through Annual State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC)
Beginning September 1, 2023

The Annual State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) has started, and we are excited to announce an opportunity to donate to one of our charitable partners, Delta Research and Educational Foundation (DREF). The 2023 campaign will be held virtually from September 1–October 31.

The State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) provides an opportunity for state agency and higher education employees to donate money through payroll deduction to approved charities of their choosing. The SECC is the only statutorily authorized workplace campaign for state agency and higher education employees throughout Texas. Over the past 29 years, employees have contributed a total of more than \$197 million to a variety of community organizations.

To support DREF, login to your SECC account and select Organization Code 085366, when completing the annual SECC pledge.

Employees can donate through a monthly deduction or a one-time cash, check or credit card donation. The voluntary monthly payroll deductions are pre-tax and effective for pay periods from Dec. 1, 2023, to Nov. 30, 2024.

For more information about the charitable campaign visit the SECC website or contact the SECC local campaign coordinator at your agency.

SECC Website: <https://www.secctexasgiving.org/v2/capitalarea/content/main>

Additional Instructions to Sign Up: <https://www.secctexas.org/how-give>

Please contact Soror Melody Southall at 512-925-1544 or mlsouthall@gmail.com if you have questions.

This Month's Highlights

COMMUNITY NEWS



The poster features a large pink ribbon on the left side, with the Sigma Gamma Rho (SGR) crest integrated into it. The crest is a shield with a crown on top, containing the letters 'S', 'G', and 'R' and the year '1923'. The background is a warm orange with faint water droplets. At the top, there are four logos: a circular seal with a star, a crest with the letter 'P', the 'Sisters' logo with a pink ribbon, and the 'GOOD HEALTH WINS' logo with a heart. The text 'SIGMA BLUE' is in large blue letters, and 'Turns Pink' is in a pink script font. Below this, 'BREAST CANCER' is in small grey letters, and 'AWARENESS SATURDAY' is in large pink letters. A white banner contains the text 'FOR A FREE BREAST EXAM SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER' and 'SOME RESTRICTIONS APPLY'. The date and time 'SATURDAY, OCT. 14, 2023' and '10 AM-4 PM' are in large blue and script fonts. At the bottom, it says 'Speakers-Vendors-Entertainment' and 'GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER MUSEUM | 1165 ANGELINA ST. | AUSTIN, TEXAS 78702'. A QR code is in the bottom right corner, and the website 'WWW.SIGMAGAMMARHOAUSTIN.COM' is at the very bottom.

SIGMA BLUE
Turns Pink

BREAST CANCER
AWARENESS SATURDAY

FOR A FREE BREAST EXAM SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER
SOME RESTRICTIONS APPLY

SATURDAY, OCT. 14, 2023
10 AM-4 PM

Speakers-Vendors-Entertainment
GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER MUSEUM | 1165 ANGELINA ST. | AUSTIN, TEXAS 78702

WWW.SIGMAGAMMARHOAUSTIN.COM

This Month's Highlights

COMMUNITY NEWS

**REAL TALK**

VIRTUAL EVENTS FOR BLACK STUDENTS

HBCUs, PWIs, & You

Tuesday, October 3, 8 p.m. ET

You may be wondering, should I go to an HBCU (Historically Black College and University), a PWI (Predominately White Institution), or a two-year college? Join us for #RealTalkTuesday and hear from HBCU and PWI reps and get help selecting the best college home for you!

The Real Tea on HBCUs & PWIs

Tuesday, October 10, 8 p.m. ET

This week, we're pouring the real tea on HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and PWIs (Predominately White Institutions) from Black students who currently attend these institutions. Figure out what's the best move for you after high school.

What is Real Talk?

Real Talk is a career and college exploration initiative designed to connect Black students and families with Black professionals and representatives from colleges and access organizations across the country. We empower Black students to own their future their way.

Start Planning for Your Future

Real Talk is a safe space for you to learn and engage, while also getting answers to your most pressing questions about life after high school. No matter where you are on your journey, we're here for you. Family members and educators are also encouraged to participate!

Join us! Register here, bigfuture.org/RealTalk



© 2023 College Board. MAR-10346



Sorors, **Real Talk** is a career and college exploration initiative for Black students and families created by BigFuture and the College Board. Occurring the first and second Tuesday of the month, Real Talk is hosted by Soror Autumn Caviness. Please register and attend Tuesday's (**Oct. 10 at 7 p.m. CT**) segment, "**The Real Tea on HBCUs & PWIs**" here, bigfuture.org/RealTalk



Membership Spotlight

Happy Birthday, Sorors!

Happy Birthday to our October birthdays!

10/03: Tonya King
10/04: Gloria Frazier & Nina Newman
10/05: Ronnette Ballard & Bridgette Cotton
10/08: Faye Sigers
10/09: Marilyn Deen & Elizabeth Wilson
10/10: McKenna Sanders
10/17: Jeri Brooks
10/19: Elna Andrews
10/20: Terina Veasey-Conley
10/22: Nicole Simmons
10/23: Tamera Diggs-Tate
10/25: Tarsha Johnson
10/26: Kiska Jones
10/28: Carla Roberson & Shalane Sheppard
10/30: Texanna Turner



Soror Scrapbook!

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

Congratulations to the Educational Development Committee and the GEMS leads for receiving an award from the Gamma Eta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha for the partnership with the HBCU College Tour.

The Alphas also recognized Soror Joan Roberts-Scott for her longtime commitment to the college tour. President Blackmon attended the event on behalf of the chapter and received the award and provided remarks. Soror Blackmon's message was that we cannot do this work by ourselves and that we are all here to better our communities. Partnerships like the one with the Alphas will help us make a recognizable footprint in this community.



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
second general meeting of the new sorority year
is in-person at 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 7,
Highland Campus
Austin Community College
(Building 2000, Room 1550).

Parking is available in the South Parking Garage:
6018 Wilhemina Delco Drive,
Austin, Texas 78752

Budget and Finance Meeting

The next Budget and Finance Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 7pm.
Here is the registration link: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0pde-tqjwoE9LNDYwkj2kTKkKv2xK9QGQI>

Budget and Finance has a NEW Voucher Reimbursement Form

The new form will be uploaded to the member only portal under Tools/Forms. Please use this new form effectively immediately. You will note that the form includes information about when checks for reimbursement will be mailed or ready for pick up:

Vouchers received the Sunday before Chapter Meeting through the 15th of the month will be mailed by the 20th of the month. Vouchers received between the 16th of the month and the Saturday before the Chapter Meeting will be available at the Chapter Meeting unless you request it to be mailed.

Please let us know if you have any questions about this new process.

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 our Chapter Meeting.



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