February 2009, Volume 1, Number 2

The Jewel

Message from the Basileus

Life is a field of unlimited possibilities. January 20, 2009 marked a possibility which is now a reality for our first African American President, Barack Obama. Alpha Kappa Omega was well represented to witness this historical event in Washington D.C. and to participate in the “Martin Luther King Day Service,” at the request of our 44th President of the United States. We too, must move forward in this evolution of change. I, therefore, encourage each of you to get involved in the implementation of each chapter service project and committee meeting. Let us make it our goal to help each other and to be successful in service to all mankind. Provided in this edition of The Jewel is a calendar of upcoming events, service projects and committee meetings.

There were 318 sorors in attendance at January’s sorority meeting, 26 reactivated and 10 were visiting sorors. We wish to fulfill our attempt of providing official name tags for all active sorors by the March meeting. Please continue to RSVP for the purpose of lunch reservations and agenda packets needed. We participated in a 15-minute discussion of Encouraging Scholastic Performance which was lead by our Constitution and Membership committees. The summary will be given at this month’s sorority meeting. Other activities that will occur at this meeting are: voting for delegates to Regional Conference, Committee Fair (held prior to sorority meeting), and distribution of the chapter’s pictorial book.

The 77th South Central Regional Conference is rapidly approaching. This year the conference theme is: “The Journey Continues, Embarking upon a New Era of Sisterhood and Purpose.” The conference will be held in Little Rock, Arkansas on May 14-17, 2009 at the Peabody Hotel. Information about registration is on Alpha Kappa Omega’s web site, and will be available at this month’s sorority meeting.

All first-time silver stars, golden and diamond sorors are asked to please contact Soror Mae King at Kinmed1266@aol.com or (713) 635-8095. Sorors, we need volunteers to assist with our scrapbook for regional conference, please contact Soror Sheri Cole at Sheridcole50@aol.com or (713)340-2007. Finally, a bus survey will be available at sorority meeting for sorors who wish to ride the bus to regional conference. Thank you, Soror Melba Henry for making this information possible.

Thank you, sorors who have and will help us fulfill our goals by participating in making unlimited possibilities a reality for Alpha Kappa Omega Chapter. May God continue to richly bless each of you and our exceptional sisterhood. I look forward to seeing you on Saturday, February 21, 2009, at sorority meeting.

Sisterly yours,

[Signature]

Tamara J. Cubit

2009 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Basileus
Tamara J. Cubit

Anti-Basileus
LaDonna Harris

Grammateus
Staci Taylor Fullmigheter

Anti-Grammateus
Jo-Carolyn Goode

Epistoleus
Karen Y. Grays

Tamiouchs
Yayaunda White

Pecunious Grammateus
Mae King

Anti-Pecunious Grammateus
Connie Steward

Philacter
Marianne Walker

Hodegos
Rhonda Richardson

Reporter to the Ivy Leaf
Sheri D. Cole

Historian
Andrea Bonner

Graduate Advisors
Mary Smith Johnson
Gamma Psi
Glenniece Stewart
Epsilon Lambda
LaShonda Willis
Omicron Gamma

Parliamentarian
Rita Roberts

Members-at-Large
Regina H. Carrington
Helen Houston
Edwina Johnson

Charter Member & Chaplain
Hazel Hainsworth Young

In Memory of Soror Jewel McFarlin Thomas
The chapter will partner with The Men’s Wearhouse to support the National Suit Drive. Please bring to sorority meeting on Saturday donations of men’s suits, sport coats, slacks, ties and belts to help others in their journey toward self sufficiency. The Men’s Wearhouse will clean the items and provide a new shirt and tie; they will also provide a tax receipt form and will give a 15% discount at area stores with proof of a donation.

In addition we are asking all sorors to dress in African Attire for the February sorority meeting in honor of “Black History Month.” We are planning a brief “Fashion Show Contest” and will select three of the most unique African outfits. Yes, there will be fabulous prizes!!! Sorors with your support we can make this Black History month a huge success.

ROSSORS PROMOTE LITERACY
The ESP (Earn, Prosper & Save) Kid’s Club at Whidby Elementary invited sorors to participate in the Gift of Reading Day in honor or Black History month. Sorors read stories by African American authors and stories containing African-American characters to students in grades K-3. This event took place on Friday, February 6th. Soror Cheryl York is the principal. The event was coordinated by Diana Merrittie, Chair, African-American History Committee, and Sorors Idena Wade and Jackie Smith acted as site captain and coordinator. Nineteen (19) sorors read to the students.

MARCH HOSTESS SERVICE COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN: Soror Vickie Windham
CO-CHAIRMAN: Soror Claudia Walton
CO-CHAIRMAN: Soror Tasha Williams
COMMITTEE: Wade—Youngblood

SERVICE PROJECT
The program planning meeting was held at Cullen Oaks Residence Center on Saturday, January 24, 2009. Over 34 committee chairmen, co-chairmen as well as members of the executive committee attended. The discussions were lead by Soror LaDonna Harris, (program chair) about the Heart of ESP an Extraordinary Service Programs and our plans for the upcoming year. Thanks to the following chairs and co-chairs who attended the meeting: Merci Anderson, Jimia Baker, Autumn Bean, Nkenge Berry-Owens, Dorothy Booker, Lillian Bourgeois, Laci Broussard, Susan Byam, Eugenia Cain, Delores Clark, Sheri Cole, Jacqueline Columbus, Diedra Fontaine, Ardern Franshaw, Carolene Goffney-Sharpe, Jo- Carolyn Goode, Audreth Guyer, Karen Harvey, Evelyn Holloway, Clarinda Hopes, Camilla Jackson, Angel Johnson, Cheryl Johnson, Darlene Johnson, Edwina Johnson, Veronica Johnson, Mae King, Joyce Lister, Cheryl Mitchell, Chantay Morris, Faye Moseley, Bettye Narcisse, Anitra Provost, Taheera Shelton, Mary Shockley, Quiana Smith, Shelley Smith, Mary Smith-Johnson, Andrea Stamps, Glennis Stewart, Cheryl Taylor, Margie Taylor, Staci Taylor-Fulghighter, Una Toppis, Marianne Walker, Janice Warner, Yavaunda White, Demetria Williams, LaShonda Willis and Vickie Windam.

PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING
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ESP PLATFORM III: FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING
More than 62 sorors, students, faculty and parents participated in the First Responder training on January 10th at Ryan Middle School. The First Responder is one of the International Program Platforms. The main goal of the platform is to increase the awareness of safety training in a disaster.

The second session was lead by Sorors Beverly Marlin and Angela Wright who taught the participants CPR Adult/Child and the use of the AED automated external defibrillator. Each participant received a certificate of complete and the Red Cross certificate of completion card. The following sorors volunteered their time and participated in the service project: Nkenge Berry, Lillian Bourgeois, Renee Bourgeois, Regina Carrington, Melva Christian, Sheri Cole, Tamara Cubit, Deneen Ford, Jo-Carolyn Goode, LaDonna Harris, DeAnna Jackson, Charlene James, Darlene Johnson, Edwina Johnson, Beverly Marlin, Donna Miles, Yusheba Moses, Courtney Prewitt, Renee Rainey, Felicia Ransfer, Liz Richmond, Rita Roberts, Mary Smith-Johnson, Bayana Taylor, Margie Taylor, Staci Taylor, Kim Toppis, Una Toppis, Nedra Washington, Yavaunda White, LaShonda Willis and Angela Wright. This event was coordinated by Sorors Beverly Marlin, Angela Wright, Rita Roberts and Una Toppis.

MEET & GREET 2009 COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN!!
All sorors are invited to attend a short presentation on how committees work within our chapter. This event will take place at 9:45 a.m., at The Power Center, prior to sorority meeting on Saturday, February 21, 2009. Come out and meet the 2009 chapter coordinators, chairmen and co-chairmen of all committees so that we can continue to make a difference in the Houston and surrounding communities with our Extraordinary Service Programs.

FOUNDERS’ DAY 2009
This year the Houston Metropolitan Area Chapters (HMAC) celebrated Founder’s Day at the Power Center on Saturday, January 31, 2009 “Exceptional Service With Purpose and Power” was the theme. Two hundred sorors from our chapter were in attendance. The rededication ceremony was lead by Sorors Mattelia B. Grays, Faye B. Bryant, Gwendolyn J. Brinkley, Polly S. Turner, Berna Greer, Clarice Gattin and Ardener Franshaw. The ceremony reinvigorated the sorors’ sense of purpose, dedication and commitment.

Soror Gwendolyn Brinkley, South Central Regional Director; Soror ReShonda Billingsly Tate, author; and, Soror Mia Wright, Co-Pastor, Fountain of Praise; delivered challenging, captivating and sensational messages about service, purpose and power. Alpha Kappa Omega received a 3rd place award for reactivation and 2nd place award for the “Step Out for Diabetes” service project. The Founders’ Day steering committee members were: Sorors Thearodessia Williams, Chairman, Vickie Windham, Co-Chairman, Helen Houston, Mary Smith Johnson, Glennis Stewart and LaShonda Willis.
AKΩ

Nurturing Our Ivy

NOTE: Please inform Soror Rhonda Richardson or the Basileus as you become aware of those who are ill or otherwise challenged.

Condolences to the following sorors:

- Soror Helen Eagleton in the passing of her father, who is also the grandfather of Soror Paulette Eagleton;
- Soror Lucy Anderson in the passing of her mother;
- Soror LaTanya Lavine in the passing of her grandmother;
- Soror La'Quesha Grigsby in the passing of her grandmother;
- Soror Kim Harris in the passing of her uncle;
- The passing of Soror Gloria Dickinson, former International Regional Director and Supreme Grammateus

Keep the following sorors in your prayers:

- Soror Aleice Conley had surgery and is resting at home;
- Soror Gloria Melton had eye surgery and is resting at home;
- Soror Marva Adams is experiencing knee challenges and her granddaughter Marva Jean English had surgery and is recovering;
- Soror Brenda Roberts is at home from the hospital and is recovering;
- Soror Lillian Bourgeois is home from the hospital and is resting comfortably;
- Soror Pierre Mitchell is resting from surgery;
- Soror Shirley Gentry is resting home after eye surgery.

Also, continue to pray for Sorors Shirley Brewster, Mary Jefferson, and Mary Butler.

Sister 2 Sister:

Thank you notes from . . .

- Soror Barbara McKinnie, Supreme Basileus, for your generous gift card received during her recent visit to attend the 80th Anniversary Holiday Ball;
- Soror Clarice Lowe, for the lovely gift received at the 80th Anniversary celebration;
- Soror Elnora Flewellen, for the love shown in the passing of her mother;
- Soror Yvonne McCree, for the visit from the All Care and Family Outreach committee members;
- Soror Regina Carrington, for your love and support over the past four years;
- Soror Juanita Sims Doty, South Eastern Regional Director, for your warm hospitality at the 80th celebration.

FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART HEALTH MONTH

African American women are 35% more likely than non-Hispanic, white women to die from heart disease. Diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, lack of exercise, and smoking all put women at risk for heart disease. You have the power to fight heart disease!

- Don’t smoke. If you smoke, try to quit.
- Keep a healthy weight.
- Get moving and exercise.
- Eat heart-healthy foods.
- Know your numbers. Ask your doctor to check your blood pressure, cholesterol (total, LDL, HDL and triglycerides) and blood glucose (sugar).

Sorors in the Spotlight

- Congratulations Soror Hazel Hainsworth Young and Soror Zinetta Burney for being honored by the NAACP local branch!
- Congratulations Soror Dorothy Gabriel for being honored by the Houston-Harris County Retired Teachers Association for outstanding service to the community!
- Congratulations Soror Tanya Allen Easter and Soror Lottie Harrell-Perry for participating in the Chevron Marathon, Sunday, January 18, 2009!
- Congratulations Soror Billie Joe Johnson, who retired from HISD after 50 years of service; she began working for HISD in 1959; taught for more than 14 years and worked her way up to principal of Thompson Elementary where she served for more than 30 years!

January Hostess committee with Soror Ivy Ricketts serving as chair and Sorors Courtney Smith and Kae Shakir serving as co-chairmen. Sorors Renee Bourgeois, Nomeva Trini Charles, Shonthenia Edwards, Deneen Ford, Carolene Goffney-Sharpe, Darlene Johnson, Veronica Johnson, Donna Miles, Regina Provost, Andrea Stamps, Alice Walker and the membership and constitution committee members. Soror Karen Grays, graphic designer of the monthly newsletter, and the following proof reading team: Sorors Jackie Columbus, Margie Taylor, Jamie Watson and Bettye White. Last, but not least, all sorors for your participation in the January sorority meeting.

AKA-NOMICS QUESTION OF THE MONTH

The Recovery Rebate Credit is a special one-time benefit that most people received last year in the form of an Economic Stimulus Payment (ESP). But those who did not receive the maximum amount of the ESP, and whose circumstances have changed, may be eligible now. (A) True; (B) False

Answer: (A) True
## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### February 2009

| MONDAY 23 | • Platform I Committee Meeting; 6:30 pm; Power Center; Contact: Cheryl Taylor  
• Economic Development Committee Meeting; 7:30 pm; Power Center; Contact: Sandra Campbell  
• Technology Committee Meeting; 8:30 pm; Location: Power Center; Contact: Carolene Goffney-Sharpe |
| FRIDAY 27 | • Life Long Learning; 6:00 pm; Margie Taylor's Residence |
| SATURDAY 28 | • High School Leadership Development Committee; Bread of Life Community Center; 1703 Gray; 7:30 -9:30 am; Contact: Kim Topps |

### March 2009

| WEDNESDAY 4 | • Health Committee; 6:00 pm; Power Center; Contact: Camilla Jackson  
• Hostess Committee; 7:00 pm; Power Center; Contact: Cheryl Mitchell |
| THURSDAY 5 | • Movie preview: “A Powerful Noise,” 6:30 pm (Details will follow) |
| SATURDAY 7 | • Teen Summit Wheatley HS; 4900 Market Street; 8:00 am-1:00 pm; Event: Service Project; Contact: Beverly Marlin  
• HSLD Youth Business Plan; Lonnie Smith Library, 3624 Scott; 1:00-3:00 pm; Contact: Kim Topps  
• 80th Anniversary Wrap-Up Meeting; 3:00 pm; Contact: Karen Grays |
| MONDAY 9 | • Membership; 6:30 pm; Madison HS, Library; 13719 White Heather; Contact: Lillian Bourgeois  
• Family Outreach Meeting 7:15 pm; Madison HS, Library; 13719 White Heather; Contact: Delores Clark |
| THURSDAY 12 | • High School Leadership Development; Teleconference; 7:30 pm; Contact: Kim Topps |
| SUNDAY 15 | • AIDS Walk; 8:30 am; Sam Houston Park; 1000 Bagby; Contact: Camilla Jackson |
| WEDNESDAY 18 | • Executive Committee Meeting; 6:30pm; Power Center |
| SATURDAY 21 | • Sorority Meeting; 11:00 am; Power Center |
| MONDAY 23 | • Platform I Committee Meeting; 6:30 pm; Power Center; Contact: Cheryl Taylor  
• Economic Development Committee Meeting; 7:30 pm; Power Center; Contact: Sandra Campbell  
• Technology Committee Meeting; 8:30 pm; Power Center; Contact: Carolene Goffney-Sharpe |
| SATURDAY 28 | • HSLD Youth Business Plan Competition; TSU Business Center; 3201 Wheeler; Time TBA; Contact: Kim Topps |
2009 Executive Committee

**Front row** (l-r): Sorors Staci Taylor Fullmighter, LaDonna Harris, Tamara Cubit, Hazel Hainsworth Young, JoCarolyn Goode, Karen Grays, and Connie Steward
**Back row** (l-r): Sorors Helen Houston, LaShonda Willis, Glencie Stewart, Mary Smith Johnson, Rhonda Richardson, Marianne Walker, Sheri Cole, Andrea’ Bonner, Regina Carrington, Mae King, Edwina Johnson, and Rita Roberts; Yavaunda White (not shown).