The Sorority

To Alpha Sigma Alpha dear

We sing to thee this hymn sincere

We pledge our loyalty to strive alway

To seek, aspire, attain

Again we pledge our vows to be

The highest as inspired by thee

We bow our hearts in humble awe to thee

Our own sorority

— Helen Selvage Noblitt, XX

Shining Stars

Prepared by Sharon M. Sterner, ΓΙ, and Suzanne M. Zorichak, BB

Sidney Gremillion Allen, ΨΨ

NPC chairman, 1985-1987

Sidney Gremillion Allen Panhellenic award

In September 1938, Sidney Gremillion, ΨΨ, found Alpha Sigma Alpha. Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, presided over Sidney's initiation at Northwestern State College, Natchitoches, La., in fall 1939.



Sidney Gremillion Allen, ΨΨ

She served Psi Psi Chapter as its treasurer and two-term chapter president. While chapter president, Sidney was the campus Panhellenic vice president and president.

Her career path began as an elementary teacher in her home state of Louisiana. The world was at war. In July 1943, Sidney and her college sweetheart, John Allen, were married. After a short honeymoon and a tour of duty, her husband prepared as a combat P-38 pilot in Europe, and went overseas. Sidney returned to her teaching duties in Shreveport, her hometown. John returned in 1944, though he remained in Air Force circles until 1947.

By 1953, the Allens settled in Hattiesburg, Miss., where John served as a professor of sociology at the University of Southern Mississippi. Sidney became the adviser to Beta Delta Chapter, a role she would hold for 12 years. She was a member of the Hattiesburg Alumnae Chapter from 1954 to 1969 and served as vice president and president.

Sidney received a master's degree in education and child psychology. She retired from teaching in 1960 after the birth of her first of two children, turning her talents and education toward community and sorority work.

Sidney served on the national level as fellowship and philanthropic chairman, alumnae director, chairman of advisers and vice president of alumnae. She began 20 years of service on the sorority's National Panhellenic Conference delegation in 1978. The first Alpha Sigma Alpha to rotate through the NPC executive chairs, Sidney began serving two-year terms in 1981, fulfilling the duties of treasurer and secretary before becoming chairman in 1985. In 1998 she retired from the sorority's NPC delegation and joined the ΑΣΑ Foundation board of trustees in 2001.

Sidney has received numerous awards. Kappa Delta presented her with its Order of the Diamond in 1989 for outstanding service as a sorority woman. Sidney also received the Evelyn G. Bell award in 1990. For her many years of national service to Alpha Sigma Alpha and NPC, the collegiate Panhellenic award was renamed the Sidney G. Allen Panhellenic award during the 1994 national convention.

Sidney lives in Minden, La. She celebrated her 80th birthday Nov. 8, 2001.

Dr. Ethel Josephine Alpenfels, BB
Recognition of Eminence award, 1952

Dr. Ethel J. Alpenfels, BB, an internationally known authority on anthropology and social behavior, was the first member of Alpha Sigma Alpha to receive the Recognition of Eminence award. The recipient of numerous awards, her contributions to the field of anthropology have received worldwide recognition.



Dr. Ethel Josephine Alpenfels, BB

Born in Denver Aug. 21, 1907, Ethel received her bachelor's in science from the University of Washington and her doctorate in science from Colorado State Teachers College (now the University of Northern Colorado).

Before joining New York University's education faculty, she was a member of the faculty at the University of Chicago, the University of Wisconsin and Beloit College in Wisconsin. In 1934 she was granted a Rockefeller Foundation scholarship for research among the Modoc Indians of Oregon. Later she studied the life of the Haida Indians of Queen Charlotte Island, B.C.

Ethel received numerous awards throughout her distinguished career, including the American Women's Association Woman of the Year for Teaching in 1956 and being named one of five outstanding women in the United States in the field of human relations that year by the National Association of Negro Women.

The author of "Sense and Nonsense About Race," she also directed research at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, on the racial origins of Europeans, and directed NYU's graduate anthropology workshops around the world.

She spoke before thousands of religious, educational and civic groups. Her books and pamphlets on race relations were used as textbooks in church Sunday school programs throughout the country.

In 1965 Dr. Alpenfels received the third annual award for distinguished service to humanity given by the Women's Auxiliary of Philadelphia's Albert Einstein Medical Center. She received NYU's Alumni Great Teacher Award in 1970 and 25-year award in 1972. She died in November 1981.

Mary Goeke Backsman, AA
National president, 1964-1970

Mary Goeke Backsman, AA, a life-long Ohioan, served as an officer of her chapter, president of the Cincinnati Alumnae Chapter and president of the Alpha Alpha Housing Corporation. From 1961 to 1964 she served as editor of The Phoenix.



Mary Goeke Backsman, AA

During the Ashville, N.C., convention in 1964, Mary was elected national president. After two terms as president, she served as NPC delegate. The National Panhellenic Conference later appointed her as its six-year delegate to the Interfraternity and Research Advisory Council.

Professionally, Mary is a practicing attorney with her own law firm, Goeke & Goeke, started by her father. She received her bachelor's degree from Miami University of Ohio and her law degree from the University of Cincinnati.

Mary received the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award in 1983. It is the second Wilma Wilson Sharp tray presented to Mary: Amy Swisher gave her own tray to Mary as a wedding gift. "Miss Amy said she wanted to give me something that had special meaning," Mary explained.

Alpha Sigma Alpha also honored Mary in 1998 for her devotion to the sorority when she received the Evelyn G. Bell award.

Mary and her husband Joseph enjoy traveling and have taken many young relatives on trips overseas, a

practice begun by an aunt and now continued by the Backmans. After finishing with nieces and nephews, Mary says they will continue with their own grandchildren. The couple has one son, Joseph, and one grandson, also Joseph. In addition to sailing and traveling, Mary also enjoys golf, tennis and speaking engagements.

Evelyn Grace Bell, ΠΠ

National president, 1936-1941 and 1952-1958
Evelyn G. Bell award

Evelyn G. Bell, a Pi Pi Chapter charter member, was installed as chapter president in 1926. Ev, as she was known, graduated from the College of Buffalo in 1926 and went on to earn a master's degree from Teachers College of Columbia University in New York.



Evelyn Grace Bell, ΠΠ

In 1927, Ev was appointed to her first national office, social services chairman, and in 1930 was elected to the national council as registrar. Thus began 28 years of continuous service on the national council that did not end until the completion of her second term as national president in 1958.

Ev was an educator for 45 years with the Buffalo city schools system. She began as a seventh and eighth grade social studies teacher. She later served as an assistant principal, supervisor of elementary education and assistant coordinator of personnel before becoming director of personnel for the Buffalo Board of Education in 1965, a position she held until her retirement in 1972.

In 1963, Ev received the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award for her professional, civic and sorority involvement. In 1969, Buffalo State University College presented Ev with the Distinguished Alumnus award at the school's 98th commencement, where she was cited for "outstanding professional services."

At the suggestion of the Buffalo alumnae, the national council established the Evelyn G. Bell award in 1979. The award is given biennially to a member who has shown outstanding leadership and loyalty to Alpha Sigma Alpha by having served as an officer on the collegiate, alumnae and national levels. The first award was presented at the Niagara Falls convention in 1980.

In 1986, Ev served as honorary chairman of Pi Pi Chapter's 60th anniversary reunion. It was during this grand occasion that Ev was honored for achieving 60 years of active Alpha Sigma Alpha involvement.

Ev died Nov. 4, 1993, in Amherst, N.Y. She was 86.

Lois V. Beers, ΒΓ

Lois V. Beers scholarship

Lois V. Beers, a 1941 graduate of Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Okla., served her chapter as chaplain. With a B.S. degree in education and home economics, Lois taught school for one year and then began a 34-year career with Phillips Petroleum Co. in Bartlesville, Okla., and then in Washington, D.C.



Lois V. Beers, ΒΓ

Lois helped organize and was a member of the Muskogee, Okla., and Bartlesville alumnae chapters and was a member of the Washington, D.C., alumnae chapter. Lois served her church, Eldbrooke United Methodist, as a member of the staff parish relations committee, administrative council and the United Methodist Women's Society. She also was a church representative and volunteer for Iona House, a senior citizen service organization.

Lois was the first treasurer of the ΑΣΑ Foundation Board of Trustees, serving from 1986 to 1992. She established the Lois V. Beers scholarship in 2001 to honor her sister, Mary Beers Wiggins, BG. Lois, 82, lives in Huntsville, Ark.

Mary Emerson Blackstone, AΓ
National president, 1961-1964

Mary Emerson was a charter member of Alpha Gamma Chapter when it was reinstalled in 1928. She went on to serve as national president from 1961 to 1964. She also served as paraphernalia chairman, 1956-1958; vice president, 1957-1961; housing chairman, 1962-1964; and NPC second and third alternate delegate in 1958 and 1959, respectively.


Mary Emerson Blackstone, AΓ

Active in alumnae work in Chicago, Buffalo, Kansas City and Norfolk, Va., Mary helped organize several alumnae chapters in the Chicago suburbs. Professionally, she taught in public schools and private and church-affiliated nursery schools. A scholarship was established by her husband in her name at the 1984 Kansas City convention.

During her term as president, her husband worked for a national voluntary food organization headquartered in Chicago. With its member companies located nationwide, they planned their schedules so that they could often travel together (and share the expense).

Two major organizational changes in Alpha Sigma Alpha occurred about this time, one during her term as president and one shortly after. The first was the creation of the office of traveling secretary.

The second change involved moving the central office to Springfield, Mo., from Buffalo, N.Y. Coincidentally, while the Blackstones were living in Virginia Beach, they became close friends with the family whose home the national office had purchased for its new headquarters.

One of Mary's most gratifying sorority experiences took place in her home state of Pennsylvania and at her husband's alma mater: the installation of Gamma Eta Chapter at Penn State. The 53 members made up the largest group, up to that time, ever to be installed by the sorority.

Mary received the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award at the Diamond Jubilee convention in Williamsburg, Va., in 1976. She received her 50-year membership tray at the 1982 convention in Chicago. Mary died April 18, 1984, in Pinehurst, N.C

Marianne Busch Bullock, BΘ
National president, 2000-

Marianne Busch, BΘ, was born in Detroit June 19, 1956, to Dr. Frederick E. and Marie M. Busch. She joined Beta Theta Chapter at Central Michigan University in the spring of 1976 and held the chapter office of editor before completing her undergraduate degree in business administration.


Marianne Busch Bullock, BΘ

Marianne married Kenneth A. Bullock Sept. 9, 1978. The couple moved to Houston several days later. It wasn't long before Marianne joined the Houston Alumnae Chapter, for which she served as secretary, treasurer and president. In May 1983, she received her M.B.A. from the University of Houston. Kenneth and Marianne divorced in 1984.

Marianne credits Marilyn "Marti" Manion Stratton, BB, for sparking her interest in national sorority work. Marianne had gotten to know Marti when Marti lived in Houston. Marti spoke about her own volunteer work at the national level with passion, and paved the way for Marianne to begin her own sorority volunteer career.

Early in 1986, Marti contacted Marianne and asked her to serve on a panel at the Denver convention discussing alumnae-collegian relations, which she did. At the close of the Denver convention, Rosemary Carucci Goss, BΠ, president at the time, asked Marianne to serve on the national level as scholarship chairman.

Marianne was scholarship chairman from 1986 to

1990, when she was elected to her first national council office, vice president of alumnae. She held that position until 1996. She was vice president of communications from 1996 to 1998, vice president of programs from 1998 to 2000, and was installed as national president in 2000.

Marianne is a product manager/technical sales representative for H.M. Royal of California Inc., a national chemical distributor. She is a frequent speaker before professional, association and business groups and conducts workshops on various business topics. Marianne and her 18-year-old son Brian live in Houston.

Louise Burks Cox Carper, A
Founder


Louise Burks Cox Carper, A

Louise Burks Cox, A, was born in Lynchburg, Va., Sept. 11, 1886. She attended school at the old seminary in Lewisburg, W.Va., before entering the Normal School at Farmville in 1901. After leaving Farmville, she taught school for one year. In 1908, she married Wood B. Carper. The couple lived in South Charleston, W.Va., and became proud parents and grandparents.

In the dawn of Alpha Sigma Alpha's birth, Louise did not believe the fourth sorority on campus would be national in scope. The Farmville institution was very small. How could a national organization begin there? She was one of several who signed the charter of Alpha Sigma Alpha on Feb. 13, 1903.

Louise attended the first national convention, held on Thanksgiving Day 1905 in Richmond, Va., and observed the election of the first grand council of the sorority. National records suggest that Louise attended more commemorative dedications and landmark sorority celebrations than the other four founders. Upon her arrival at the 40th anniversary convention, Louise was ready to admit that the faith and effort of even 16-year-old girls can "remove mountains."

Louise died March 31, 1971, at age 84, in a Charleston, W.Va., nursing home. She is buried in Lynchburg, Va.

Helen Louise Corey, KK
Helen L. Corey Convention award


Helen Louise Corey, KK

Helen Louise Corey, KK, was born in Boston in 1904. She attended Temple University in Philadelphia and was initiated into Kappa Kappa Chapter on Feb. 10, 1923.

Helen graduated from Temple with a bachelor's degree in home economics and science. In 1947, she received a master's degree from Temple in guidance and counseling. At one point in her successful career she was the dean of girls and director of guidance at Drexel Junior High School in Upper Darby Township, Pa.

Helen had numerous professional affiliations and holds the distinction of being listed in the first and many subsequent editions of "Who's Who in America."

Helen's work with the sorority began in 1938, when she became adviser to Kappa Kappa Chapter. She held that post for 34 years. It was also during 1938 that Helen managed her first national convention at Yellowstone National Park. She served as convention chairman for the next 30 years, planning 10 national conventions in all.

In 1972 she received a charm bracelet from national council. The bracelet holds a charm for each convention she managed, and includes charms that highlight the history of her membership. After she died, her estate sent the bracelet to the national headquarters archives.

In 1944, Helen began 20 years of service as secretary. As secretary, she was the co-signer on Alpha Sigma Alpha's petition to the National Panhellenic Conference

for associate membership. Active in the Philadelphia City Panhellenic, she went through the chairs in that group and served as its president in 1967-1968.

Alpha Sigma Alpha has expressed its gratitude to Helen on several occasions. During the 1964 convention, the Mother-Patroness Crown Degree was bestowed on Helen in appreciation of her many years of service. She received the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award in 1974. In 1982, the national council established an award in Helen's honor, the Helen L. Corey Convention award. This award biennially recognizes the efforts of a member involved in planning the national conventions.

Helen died Dec. 30, 1998, at age 94.

Dr. Geraldine Anne Vang Cox, NN

Recognition of Eminence award, 1986



Dr. Geraldine Anne Vang Cox, NN

Geraldine Anne Vang, NN, began her undergraduate academic career at Drexel Institute of Technology, majoring in biology. She gave no thought to sorority life until the day she noticed a copy of the Creed of Alpha Sigma Alpha on the sorority's bulletin board. Gerry realized that the Creed embodied the philosophy of life she wanted to follow. Nu Nu Chapter was weak at the time, but that was immaterial. She rushed "suicide" unsuccessfully for the first two years of college. Nu Nu took no pledges in formal rush and was faced with only five returning members the following year.

The Panhellenic adviser, Dr. Irene Moore, knew of Gerry's interest in Alpha Sigma Alpha and informed the Nu Nu women that if they wanted their chapter to survive, they should offer a bid to Gerry during open rush with the stipulation that she become chapter president in her senior year. When bid day came in 1963, Gerry accepted her membership bid without hesitation. In her junior year, Gerry was chapter editor and campus Panhellenic secretary while serving as secretary of the student senate.

When she became chapter president in her senior year, Gerry had just married Walter Cox and was living on campus and working part time. She stayed on at Drexel to complete graduate work in environmental sciences. During the four years she dedicated to completing her doctorate, Gerry served as Nu Nu's chapter adviser.

A former White House Fellow, Gerry has appeared on numerous television and radio programs, given interviews for newspaper and magazine articles and testified before congressional committees. She has authored more than 50 technical publications and is the recipient of many professional and other distinguished awards.

Professionally, she was vice president and technical director of the Chemical Manufacturers Association from 1979 to 2000. She was chief operating officer of Eurotech Ltd., Fairfax, Va., from 1999 to 2000, and has been an independent consultant since 2000.

Gerry's first exposure to the national organization was when she attended the St. Louis convention as an adviser. Since that time, she has served as a province director, executive vice president, development committee chairman and chairman of advisers.

In 1986 Gerry accepted Alpha Sigma Alpha's Recognition of Eminence award. She has been named a mother patroness at Nu Nu, and while in college received her chapter's Elizabeth Bird Small award. Nu Nu Chapter has also started a scholarship in her name. She has been a member of the Washington, D.C./ Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston alumnae chapters, and is a charter member of the Northern Virginia Alumnae Chapter.

Gerry and her husband Walter live in Arlington, Va.

Martha K. Green Dimond, AA

Martha Green Dimond scholarship

Martha K. Green, AA, left her hometown of Zanesville, Ohio, during the Depression to attend Miami University in Ohio. She was initiated in 1931.



Martha K. Green Dimond, AA

Her first of many conventions was in Old Point Comfort, Va. After that convention, she visited a Zanesville school friend whose family was living in Washington, D.C. They invited her to stay with them while she looked for a teaching position. She finally found a temporary job with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. She also joined the Washington, D.C., Alumnae Chapter.

It was at the AAA that she met John J. Dimond, her future husband. She later worked at the Railroad Retirement Board in Washington before and after her son John Jr. was born. Meanwhile, her husband completed law school and passed the bar.

The Dimonds were later transferred to Chicago, at which point Martha joined the Chicago Alumnae Chapter (which, at the time, covered all of Chicago and the suburbs). She attended the installation of Beta Rho Chapter in DeKalb, Ill., and represented the alumnae group at a regional meeting in Detroit.

The next stop for the Dimond family was Fort Worth, Texas. Martha tried to establish an alumnae chapter there, but there weren't enough members in the area to sustain it. The Dimonds later returned to Washington, D.C.

Martha served as Alpha Sigma Alpha's NPC delegate from 1960 to 1961 and accepted her 50-year membership recognition certificate at the 1982 convention in Chicago.

While attending the Diamond Jubilee convention in 1976, Martha decided to sponsor a scholarship in her name. The Martha K. Green Dimond scholarship was established in 1977 and is presented annually to a member for graduate work in any field.

Martha died in May 1984.

Rose Marie Fellin, BΣ

Rose Marie Fellin Financial Excellence award

Rose Marie Fellin was a member of the first pledge class of Beta Sigma Chapter at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield. When the chapter was installed Nov. 1, 1947, she was elected treasurer. Three years later, she became chapter adviser, a position she held for 14 years. In 1958, Beta Sigma formed a nonprofit house corporation with Rosie as treasurer, and the chapter bought a house. She was elected president of the corporation in 1964.



Rose Marie Fellin, BΣ

In 1964, Beta Sigma established the Rose Marie Fellin Ideal Pledge award in recognition of her many years of service to the chapter.

When the central office was relocated in 1964 from Kenmore, N.Y., to Springfield, Juanita Roberts Rowe, BΣ, served as the central office executive and Rosie, as treasurer, was designated as the officer in charge. She held this office until 1967, when she began her 24 years of continuous service as headquarters executive. Rosie was instrumental in preparing national headquarters for its 1969 dedication. At the 1969 National Panhellenic Conference meeting in Miami, she was elected secretary/treasurer of the Central Office Executives for the 1969-1971 term.

Rosie began coordinating the sorority's biennial conventions in 1970, managing 10 consecutive national conventions. She was honored to assume these duties from Helen Corey, KK, and received the first Helen L. Corey Convention award in 1982 from Helen herself. Rosie retired as headquarters executive in August 1991.

She was honored at the 52nd biennial NPC meeting in Washington, D.C., Nov. 12-17, 1991, with a special retirement breakfast. Rosie served Alpha Sigma Alpha nationally for 27 consecutive years.

In 1987, as part of Beta Sigma's 40th anniversary celebration, a fund was established within the ΑΣΑ Foundation to award an annual scholarship to the chapter treasurer and president in honor of the three Beta Sigmas who served as both chapter and national treasurer: Rosie, Juanita Rowe and Marilyn Ramsey Garbee.

The first Rose Marie Fellin Financial Excellence award was presented in 1992 at the Baltimore convention. The award has since been presented at each convention to a collegiate chapter that meets its financial obligations in a timely manner, keeps accurate records and files national financial reports on time.

Professionally, Rosie was a banker for 42 years. She began as a bookkeeper and worked her way up to teller, secretary and, 15 years later, assistant vice president and the first female officer in operations. She also was a registered stockbroker.

Rosie still lives in Springfield. Her interests in organizations are wide and varied. Support of the American Cancer Society remains high on her priority list. The State of Missouri Cancer Organization has recognized Rosie for her leadership in organizing benefit golf tournaments. Rosie also enjoys yard work and gardening. In fact, many field representatives who lived at national headquarters fondly recall pulling thistles with Rosie on her farm in Marshfield, Mo.

Emma Coleman Frost, ΠΠ
Frost Fidelity award
Emma Coleman Frost Leadership Development Institute

Emma Coleman, ΠΠ, was president of the local Clionian Society when that group petitioned Alpha Sigma Alpha to become a chapter. Em became a charter member of Pi Pi Chapter in 1926. She graduated from Buffalo State Teachers College in 1926 and received a master's degree from Columbia University in New York City.


Emma Coleman Frost, ΠΠ

Professionally, Em served as head of the department of foods in schools in New York and Pennsylvania, and worked in hospitals, hotels and camps during summers as a dietetics manager. For three years she worked for the U.S. government as chief supervisor of all household training. Em also managed her own private cooking school for several years in New York City. For her contributions to her profession and community, Em was honored as the third recipient of the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award in 1945.

Em served as national alumnae secretary from 1947 to 1948 and as national alumnae organizer from 1948 to 1953. During these years, she was responsible for the organization of many new alumnae groups. Em herself belonged to many alumnae chapters: Buffalo; Tucson, Ariz.; Chicago; Kansas City; and Tampa Bay, Fla.

Em, along with her husband Donald, established the Frost Fidelity award in 1949. First presented in 1950, the award is given annually to a collegian who exhibits intangible fraternity values, including exceptional loyalty and unusual service to the sorority.

Em also made a generous gift to Alpha Sigma Alpha in the mid-1980s. At that time, the national council honored Em by naming the new leadership school the Emma Coleman Frost Leadership Development Institute. The first LDI was christened at Pennsylvania State University Oct. 13-15, 1989. Today, more than 800 undergraduates and volunteers participate in an LDI biennially.

Em died Feb. 9, 1999, shortly after her 97th birthday. She is buried in Buffalo, N.Y., with her husband.

Mary Turner Gallagher, XX

Mary Turner Gallagher scholarship



Mary Turner Gallagher, XX

In 1928, Mary Turner, XX, traveled to Denison University, Granville, Ohio, to be initiated into Alpha Sigma Alpha. On May 5, 1928, Mary was initiated as an ex-collegio member of Chi Chi Chapter during Upsilon Upsilon Chapter's installation service. Mary then assisted with Chi Chi Chapter's installation on June 2, 1928. She is recognized as a charter alumna and Chi Chi's first faculty adviser.

In 1943, Mary was the first recipient of the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award. In keeping with the times, the first award was a defense bond. A community leader in Green Bay, Wis., she was active in many community service and international relief organizations. An equally devoted artist, her work was displayed in several noteworthy exhibitions in the Greater Green Bay area.

During the 1967 convention in St. Louis, it was announced that Mary's husband had established a national scholarship in her name. The Mary Turner Gallagher scholarship is given annually to deserving Alpha Sigma Alpha undergraduate members in any field.

Mary died Aug. 8, 1974.

Susan Duane Galt, Γ

National president, 1912-1914

Susan Duane Galt, better know to family and friends as Susie, lived to be 102 and enjoyed life to the fullest. Susie was the third national president, serving from 1912 to 1914 — a period when much of the sorority's history is not clear.

Susie, born in 1893 in Williamsburg, Va., was the daughter of Navy Capt. W.W. Galt and Mary Carrington Galt. One of six children, Susie and her family resided in Norfolk, Va., while Capt. Galt did his three-year tours of duty at sea. Since tours of duty were all offshore in those days, Susie did not really know her father until she was 7 years old. Susie's childhood was spent between her family's home in Norfolk and a farm home near Charlotte Courthouse, Va.



Susan Duane Galt, Γ

Susie attended college for one term at New York University and returned home, telling her father that "it was too cold in New York" for her to remain there. She enrolled at the College for Women, Columbia, S.C., in 1910 and joined Gamma Chapter. She graduated in May 1912 and was elected national president of the sorority at the 1912 convention in Norfolk.

After Wakefield Mattison's presidency, no member was found to fill the role of national president. The search for a president went on for nearly a year before Susie stepped forward to accept the role. As a recent college graduate, Susie faced large issues such as anti-sorority legislation and low funds.

Shortly after Susie's leadership role — and when it exactly ended is unclear — the sorority's 1914 reorganization occurred under the leadership of Ida Shaw Martin. Only women who were initiated under the sorority's new 1914 ritual were kept on the chapter rolls, and it does not appear that Susie was reinitiated.

Susie and Alfred Zimermann were married on the eve of World War I. Susie and Alfred had two children, Alfred Jr. and Richard. Alfred Sr., a Navy captain, secured land-based assignments that allowed his family to travel with him and live abroad. After their return to the United States, the family suffered a loss when Alfred Jr. died at the age of 21.

Richard, also a Navy captain, describes his mother as vivacious, a natural organizer and full of life. Over the years, she was active in many groups. She enjoyed art, music and opera, and had hobbies of painting family

coats of arms and writing poetry.

By the 1970s both Susie and her son Richard were both widowers (Alfred died in the mid-1960s). When Richard decided to remarry, Susie decided to marry her old friend, Navy Capt. Stephen Boutell Robinson. Richard and his bride Virge and Susie and Stephen married in a double wedding ceremony in 1977.

Susie loved life and thoroughly enjoyed her roles as wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, community volunteer and life-long supporter of the U.S. Navy. Her second husband Stephen died in 1990 at age 101, and Susie died May 25, 1995, at age 102.

Juliette Jefferson Hundley Gilliam, A
Founder


Juliette Jefferson Hundley Gilliam, A

Juliette Jefferson Hundley, A, was born in Blue Rock, Nelson County, Va., Nov. 10, 1886. The Hundley family moved to Farmville, Va., in 1901. Juliette entered the State Normal School the same year as a day student. She lived with her parents Judge and Mrs. George Jefferson Hundley until she graduated in 1907.

Juliette served as vice president during the sorority's first year. She was a signer of the sorority's charter (also signed by her father) on Feb. 13, 1903.

After graduation, Juliette began a career in teaching. She spent the first two years in Rockingham, N.C., after which she taught in the Richmond public schools in Virginia. She also attended Columbia University in New York for several summers.

On June 22, 1921, she married Henry Eugene Gilliam of Richmond. She had one daughter, born Jan. 9, 1926. Juliette died July 10, 1970, in Stratford Hall Nursing Home in Richmond. She is buried at the Blue Rock Cemetery in Jonesboro, Va.

Hilda Anna Giraud, BZ
Hilda Anna Giraud Endowed Founders' Memorial scholarship


Hilda Anna Giraud, BZ

Hilda Anna Giraud was born July 29, 1922, in New Orleans. She raised three children: Suzanne, Andre and Yvette, and has four grandchildren.

Hilda's involvement with Alpha Sigma Alpha began in 1941. Before her graduation from the Southwestern Louisiana Institute in Lafayette in 1944, she served as Beta Zeta Chapter's secretary. Hilda earned a B.S. degree in home economics education.

In 1944 she organized the New Orleans Alumnae Chapter and served as its first president. Hilda helped organize the New Orleans Alumnae City Panhellenic in the early 1950s and served as Alpha Sigma Alpha's first representative.

Hilda's sorority contributions weren't limited to the New Orleans area. From 1956 to 1963 she served as national alumnae organizer, and in 1955 worked closely with Helen Corey, KK, as the local alumnae contact for the Biloxi, Miss., national convention. She volunteered to take movies during the Biloxi convention to send to chapters and also filmed the Galen, Pa., and Williamsburg, Va., conventions. In 1963, she served as chairman of the A-Miss-Lou (Alabama-Mississippi-Louisiana) State Day.

In 1996 Hilda's daughters and granddaughter endowed a Founders' Memorial scholarship in her name. Hilda still lives in New Orleans.

Dr. Rosemary Carucci Goss, ΒΠ
National president, 1984-1988


Dr. Rosemary Carucci Goss, ΒΠ

Dr. Rosemary Carucci Goss, ΒΠ, received her bachelor's degree from Concord College, Athens, W.Va., and holds a doctorate in housing from Florida State University. She has held numerous national offices for Alpha Sigma Alpha: Phoenix collegiate editor, feature editor, editor, president, vice president of development and ΑΣΑ Foundation chairman.

During Rosemary's term as president the sorority formed the Alpha Sigma Alpha Foundation and created the Crown of Excellence award. During her tenure as Foundation chairman (1994-1999), Rosemary and Kim Ramsey Meyer, BB, president from 1992 to 1996, signed the documents that transferred the sorority's philanthropic fund to the ΑΣΑ Foundation, thus moving the responsibility for all scholarships to the Foundation.

Rosemary is a full professor at Virginia Tech University, Blacksburg, Va. She is a member of the department of housing, interior design and resource management in the college of human resources and has been awarded the college's certificate of teaching excellence.

Her professional affiliations include the American Association of Housing Educators, for which she has served as president, associate editor of the AAHE journal and annual AAHE conference program chair; and the Virginia Home Economics Association, also serving as president. Rosemary has had articles published in many journals and has received the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences New Achievers award.

During the centennial convention in 2000, Rosemary became the 11th recipient of the Evelyn G. Bell award and became the first sorority member to hold a second term on the ΑΣΑ Foundation board of trustees. Rosemary lives in Blacksburg with her husband Robert.

Jean Raup Grady, BE
National president, 1958-1961


Jean Raup Grady, BE

Jean Raup received a business degree from Madison College and was initiated into Beta Epsilon Chapter. She was involved with many athletic organizations and student government.

When Jean married Robert C. Grady, every bridal attendant was an Alpha Sigma Alpha. Jean and Robert, an attorney and a judge, were married for 27 years before Robert's death from acute leukemia. The Gradys have a son, Charles Ashley, a daughter, Shannon Adaire, and a granddaughter, Jordan Nicole.

Professionally, Jean was employed as a clerk for the U.S. Justice Department and as a secretary for the U.S. Treasury Department. While with the Virginia State Corporation Commission, Jean worked as a secretary for the banking division and later as a judge. She also had an 18-year career as a Realtor.

Jean served on the national level as convention parliamentarian; registrar, 1949-1952; president, 1958-1961; constitution chairman, 1952-1958 and 1964-1965; and housing chairman, 1959-1961. Jean is a past president of the Richmond Alumnae Chapter and also was a member of the Washington, D.C., Alumnae Chapter.

Jean is listed in several "Who's Who" publications. She has been a member of numerous professional, civic and social organizations. She enjoys art, poetry, conservation and photography, and is an avid foreign and domestic traveler. Jean lives in Orange, Va.

Grace Fultz Haworth, ΔΔ

Grace Fultz Haworth Music scholarship


Grace Fultz Haworth, ΔΔ

One of 15 charter members of Delta Delta Chapter at Ohio University in Athens, Grace Fultz graduated in 1917 with a degree in public school music. She later served as national treasurer from 1922 to 1934, and played a crucial role in safeguarding the sorority's money during the 1930 convention (according to a letter from a convention attendee, Grace "pinned in 'her bosom' a draft for $4,000 to pay the [convention] expenses").

On Jan. 19, 1924, she installed Mu Mu Chapter at Michigan State Normal College in Ypsilanti, and assisted in the installation of Omicron Omicron Chapter at Kent State University two years later.

In 1966, Grace celebrated 50 years of membership in Alpha Sigma Alpha. That year, she was installed as president of the Toledo Panhellenic Council. She had also served as treasurer of the Toledo Alumnae Chapter for many years.

Grace was a past worthy high priestess in the Toledo White Shrine, a soloist from 1964 to 1966, a past worthy matron of Fort Chidustry Chapter of the Eastern Star, a Goodwill Industries Key Woman, a past president of the Vernon McCune unit in the Ohio Department of the American Legion Auxiliary, and a member of the Past Presidents Parley of the Department of Ohio, the national and Ohio Federation of Republican Women's Club, the Flower and Hospital Guild and the Lucas County Home Guild.

The Grace Fultz Haworth scholarship was established in 1981 by a bequest of Grace. It is awarded every two years for graduate or undergraduate work in the field of music. Grace died in March 1981.

Suzanne Lynn Hebert, BZ

Suzanne Hebert Endowed Founders' Memorial scholarship


Suzanne Lynn Hebert, BZ

Suzanne Lynn Hebert was born in New Orleans Jan. 25, 1948, to Hilda Anna Giraud, BZ, and Leonard B. Hebert Jr. She was initiated in 1967 by Beta Zeta Chapter at the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette and served as chapter editor and state day chairman. In 1969 she earned a B.S. degree in home economics with an emphasis in business. Today, Suzanne is an engineering technician in the oil and gas industry.

Suzanne's alumnae in-volvement continued throughout the 1970s and '80s. During this period, she served as Beta Zeta Chapter adviser, Lafayette Alumnae Chapter president, Panhellenic representative and nationally as region II director from 1978 to 1982. From 1995 to 1996, Suzanne served on the ΑΣΑ Foundation board of trustees and was Foundation vice president from 1996 to 1998.

In 1995, Suzanne endowed the first Founders' Memorial scholarship, which is presented annually to an outstanding undergraduate member who exemplifies the vision, academic pursuits and leadership skills of the founders. Suzanne co-endowed the Hilda Anna Giraud Founders' Memorial scholarship in 1996.

Says Suzanne: "Alpha Sigma Alpha was my home away from home. My sorority friends from many years ago are still my closest friends today. ΑΣΑ has also offered me opportunities that I would never have experienced without sorority membership."

Suzanne lives in Covington, La.

Mary Williamson Hundley, A
Founder

Mary Williamson Hundley, A, was born on a large plantation in Halifax County, Va., on Jan. 26, 1885. She was the youngest of eight living children. Her father died when Mary was 13, and the following year, at the age of 14, she entered the college at Farmville. She roomed with Virginia Boyd.


Mary Williamson Hundley, A

Past histories describe Mary, called May by her chums, as a large, fine-looking girl, with light hair and eyes and a keen sense of humor. One of five founding members of Alpha Sigma Alpha, Mary was serving as treasurer when she signed the sorority's charter in February 1903.

Despite the disapproval of her relatives and friends, Mary left Farmville early in her third year to accept the offer of a country public school. Her great desire to be self-supporting dominated her decision. After three years of teaching, she took a position as companion to an elderly woman. Meeting different people and seeing new cities made the work especially attractive.

In Philadelphia, Mary entered nurses training. She graduated from Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston in 1919. From 1919 to 1944, Mary held a variety of administrative and private nursing posts in cities spanning both coasts of the country. In 1944, she returned to Richmond to be near a sister who was ill.

Mary died Aug. 31, 1967, in Richmond. She is buried in Mount Laurel, Va.

Diane Yencic James, HH
National president, 1988-1992

Diane Yencic joined Eta Eta Chapter at Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kan., in the fall of 1970. She was initiated in the spring of 1971 and became chapter treasurer. She went on to serve the chapter as secretary, vice president and president.


Diane Yencic James, HH

Diane graduate in 1974 with a B.S.B.A. and began her national service that year as a field representative. After her year of travel she continued to work through the summer of 1975 at national headquarters in Springfield, Mo.

That summer Diane served at headquarters while historian Hiwana Cupp Crompton, BE, and Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, president emerita, were there working on "The Years Behind Us" history supplement (1951-1976). Diane still cherishes the bone china candy dish and handwritten note given to her at that time by Mrs. Sharp. Diane married Donald Lewis James on Aug. 23, 1975.

Diane has been a member of the Pittsburg Alumnae Chapter since 1975, and has served as its secretary, treasurer, vice president and president. In 1976 Rhetta Nesbitt Robinson, BΓ, newly elected executive vice president, asked Diane to serve as a province director, a position she held from 1976 to 1978.

She continued her national service as housing chairman, vice president of finance, president, NPC delegate, and second alternate NPC delegate.

Diane also served as an ex-officio member of the ΑΣΑ Foundation board of trustees during her years as vice president of finance and president. She joined the Foundation board as a trustee in 2000 and still serves in that position. As vice president of finance, Diane was instrumental in helping to establish the Foundation. During her term as president the sorority hired a full-time executive director, held the first Emma Coleman Frost Leadership Development Institute at Penn State and adopted the S. June Smith Center as its second national philanthropy.

On the local level, Diane served as adviser to Eta Eta Chapter from 1975 to 1995. In 1995 she stepped down

as adviser to plan the chapter's 75th anniversary celebration. At that event the chapter announced the Diane Yencic James Leadership Development Fund, in honor of her service to the chapter. The fund helps defray costs to send Eta Eta Chapter members to leadership opportunities. She also was colony development director for Zeta Alpha Chapter in 1992 and served as that chapter's adviser until 2001.

Diane credits Sidney Gremillion Allen, ΨΨ, and Betty Urban Wallick, ZZ, with encouraging her to run for national president.

Diane has worked for the state of Kansas since 1978 and now works at the Pittsburg State University Alumni Relations Office as an executive secretary. Don and Diane live in Pittsburg and enjoy yard work and travel.

Edna Venable Elcan Jones, A
National president, 1905-1908


Edna Venable Elcan Jones, A

Edna Venable Elcan, A, was initiated into Alpha Chapter Jan. 29, 1903, during the second initiation of the young sorority. A few weeks later, Edna, along with 11 other Alpha Chapter members (including the five founders), signed the articles of incorporation dated Feb. 13, 1903.

In 1905, at age 22, Edna was elected to serve as grand president of Alpha Sigma Alpha. Until the first national convention Nov. 29-20, 1905, Edna was the only elected national officer of the sorority. It was during the 1905 convention that the convention body elected the first grand council of the sorority, electing Edna by absentia.

Being unable to travel to most national meetings, Edna guided the sorority via correspondence during her term. During the 1909 convention, she requested that another grand president be elected.

After Edna's retirement from the presidency, she married Joseph L. Jones in 1910; they had four children. In subsequent years she attended many historical sorority events, including the re-instatement of Alpha Chapter in 1933, along with Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, national president; Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, registrar; founder Louise Cox Carper, A; and first initiate Hattie Kelly Thomas, A. In 1958 she was an honored guest at the dedication of the memorial garden at Longwood College. She died in 1967 at age 84.

Suzanne M. Kilgannon, BI
National president, 1996-2000


Suzanne M. Kilgannon, BI

Suzanne M. Kilgannon, BI, has served the sorority without interruption since earning her bachelor's degree from Radford University in 1985. Following a term as leadership consultant, Suzanne served five years as a province director and the succeeding six years as national vice president of collegians.

During the 1996 convention, Suzanne became the 16th woman in the sorority's history to serve as national president. She began serving in her present office, national vice president of programs,in 2000.

Suzanne is equally dedicated to collegiate student life by profession. Since earning her master's degree in education from James Madison University, Suzanne has held a variety of senior student affairs positions at a number of colleges. In 2001 she was director of student life at the Lincoln Park campus of DePaul University in Chicago.

"Just like the founders, each of us leaves our imprint on this sorority. We are a sorority of women with many talents, of many backgrounds, with many pursuits. Each of us is valued because of the skills and talents we possess," she says. Suzanne lives in Chicago.

Helen Beatrice Lortz, HH

Recognition of Eminence award, 1967



Helen Beatrice Lortz, HH

Helen B. Lortz, HH, was born into a farm family in Jasper County, Mo. All four children worked in the fields and helped their parents in every way possible. Helen recalls that the family lost the farm in the late 1920s. She pledged Eta Eta Chapter in 1930, was initiated in 1931 and graduated from Kansas State Teachers College in 1932.

A Food for Peace officer with the U.S. Department of State, Helen has since retired and lives in Washington, D.C. She was presented a Superior Honor award by Food for Peace Coordinator Irwin R. Hedges in 1973.

Helen lived in Indianapolis during World War II and vividly recalls where she was when the news came over the radio that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. "It was a rewarding period, even though it is somewhat painful to recall those years of smog-filled air from the many war plants, six-days a week at the office and Sundays at Union Station with the USO ministering to the hordes of young soldiers coming through on their way to camp, overseas or wherever."

Helen's first alumnae group was the Indianapolis chapter. When she was transferred to Washington, D.C., in 1945, the area alumnae welcomed her to the nation's capital. She has remained an active and loyal member of that chapter for 56 years. She accepted her 50-year membership recognition at the 1984 convention.

Helen's devotion to the sorority hasn't diminished. "Next to my family, faith and early friends — a few are still living — the sorority has been a key anchor in my life ever since I became an Eta Eta pledge."

Helen still lives in Washington, D.C.

Lina Wakefield Mattison Mahon, Γ

National president, 1908-1912



Lina Wakefield Mattison Mahon, Γ

Lina Wakefield Mattison, Γ, was born Jan. 13, 1887, to Rev. John Shakespeare and Lucile Spann Mattison. The only child of Methodist missionaries, Wakefield, as she preferred to be called, spent her early years in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Tragedy struck early in Wakefield's life when her father contracted yellow fever and died. Her mother was also stricken by the disease and suffered complications from it for many years.

The family returned to the United States and moved to Lewisburg, Tenn. As Wakefield's mother continued to suffer from her experience with yellow fever, the family relocated to Leesville, S.C., to live with Wakefield's grandparents. Wakefield spent the rest of her childhood there until her mother's death, which occurred when Wakefield was 14. Once orphaned, Wakefield's care was entrusted to two guardians.

In 1904 at age 17, Wakefield entered the College for Women, Columbia, S.C., to pursue a teaching career. On Oct. 9, 1904, she was initiated into the Gamma Chapter. Wakefield made lifetime friendships with her chapter sisters and emerged as a campus leader when she became Gamma's president.

At the time of her graduation in 1908, Alpha Sigma Alpha was searching for a new leader. On Jan. 2, 1909, Wakefield was elected national president at the age of 22. She balanced a teaching job, the national presidency and her own interests. Wakefield continued to serve as president until 1912. She also served as chairman of the examination board from 1910 to 1912.

Many modern practices had their beginnings during Wakefield's presidency. The "inspector program," an earlier version of the leadership consultant program used

today, was created during Wakefield's term. Membership cards were instituted and Wakefield personally signed the cards for all initiated members from 1901 to 1911. The bylaws and constitution were revised, as was the ritual. Wakefield also visited every chapter on Alpha Sigma Alpha's roll during her presidency.

By 1911, Wakefield believed that she had given all that she could to the sorority. She gave her time and frequently supplemented the sorority's treasury with her own funds. The 1911 convention body, however, refused to accept her resignation and urged her to serve for another year. Wakefield accepted with the condition that a new national president be found over the course of the year. She served as "president pro-tempore" for an unspecified period, but sorority history is clear that Wakefield completed the extension of her presidency sometime in 1912.

Shortly after her sorority leadership role, Wakefield married Dr. Douglas Gray Mahon on Nov. 15, 1912, and moved to Calhoun Falls, S.C. They opened a pharmacy and started their family. The couple had four children. The small cotton mill town on the banks of the Savannah River was Wakefield's home for the rest of her life.

Wakefield died May 4, 1966, at age 79.

Ida Shaw Martin

Founder, Delta Delta Delta national sorority
National president, 1914-1930

Ida Shaw Martin was born Sarah Ida Shaw Sept. 7, 1867. She graduated from Boston University. While at B.U. she founded Delta Delta Delta sorority on Thanksgiving 1888. She later served Delta Delta Delta as its first grand president, grand commissioner of education and grand historian.



Ida Shaw Martin, Delta Delta Delta

During 1904-1905, Ida sent her first communication to Alpha Chapter. She was well-known in the fraternity world as editor of The Sorority Handbook, first published in 1905. She would continue to counsel Alpha Sigma Alpha during the next nine years. It was near the end of this period, 1912-1914, that Ida charted a new course for Alpha Sigma Alpha when the sorority nearly fell into nonexistence. In 1913, she was elected to ΑΣΑ honorary membership.

During the reorganizational convention of 1914, Ida was elected national president. She served in this capacity until 1930. Her contributions to Alpha Sigma Alpha were many. She authored the ritual, the constitution and bylaws, and supported the bankrupt sorority with her own funds. She also created The Phoenix, and served as its editor from 1914 to 1919. During this period, Ida also served as the first chairman of the Association of Pedagogical Sororities during the 1915-1917 biennium.

Ida's services were not exclusive to Alpha Sigma Alpha. She held memberships in at least four organizations and had composed the ritual services for many more. In the 1920s she established the Sorority Service Bureau. Consequently, between 1921 and 1925, five new national organizations were founded through the bureau.

In 1929, the sorority began to question actions taken by Ida. The allegations were compounded by a petition, drawn up by 21 of the 23 presidents of colleges at which the sorority had chapters, to investigate the administration of Alpha Sigma Alpha. Failure to comply with the terms of the petition would result in the dismissal of all chapters at colleges backing the petition. The very future of the sorority was in jeopardy so long as it retained a relationship with Ida Shaw Martin.

Ironically, the 1930 national convention was the first convention Ida actually attended, and it ended up being her last. For more on the 1930 convention, see p. 52.

Ida died May 11, 1940. She was inducted into the Fraternity Hall of Fame in 1976.

Kim Ramsey Meyer, BB
National president, 1992-1996


Kim Ramsey Meyer, BB

Kim Ramsey's service to Alpha Sigma Alpha began as an undergraduate. She served her collegiate chapter at the University of Northern Colorado as editor and was active on many committees and in several campus organizations. She graduated magna cum laude in 1970 with a B.A. in elementary education and a minor in music. She received the national Elizabeth Bird Small award in 1973. Kim also has a M.A. in library media from the University of Colorado.

Kim has served the Denver Alumnae Chapter as secretary, vice president and president. On the national level, she was a province director from 1979 to 1980 and 1986 to 1988; on the Phoenix staff from 1980 to 1986; convention chairman in 1986; membership education chairman from 1986 to 1990; vice president of program from 1990 to 1992; president from 1992 to 1996; a trustee of the ΑΣΑ Foundation from 1996 to 1998; vice president of finance from 1996 to 1998; and chairman of the centennial celebration planning committee from 1996 to 2001.

She also served on the long-range planning committee and helped plan and present the first Emma Coleman Frost Leadership Development Institute in 1989.

Her volunteer activities don't end with the sorority. She has been active in the PTA, sings in her church choir and has managed her son's soccer team. She was a master gardener and wildlife consultant with the Colorado State University extension service, and enjoys all types of sewing, reading, writing, horseback riding, bicycling and gardening.

She is an elementary school librarian and is active in several professional organizations, most recently chairing the Colorado state conference for school librarians in 2001. She and her husband Mark, an airline instructor pilot, have three sons and live in Evergreen, Colo.

Helen Joan Bailey Morley, BB
Recognition of Eminence award, 1998


Helen Joan Bailey Morley, BB

Helen Joan Bailey, BB, was initiated into Beta Beta Chapter in 1949. She completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Northern Colorado in theater performance and speech communication. Joan, as she prefers to be called, went on to earn two master's degrees: the first in speech pathology and the second in linguistics.

Joan is a full professor in the linguistics program and English Language Institute at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in applied linguistics, second language acquisition theory, pedagogy, applied phonetics and phonology. At the English Language Institute, she teaches English as a second language to the university's foreign students and visiting scholars. Joan supervises research and chairs and serves on doctoral dissertation committees in linguistics, foreign languages and in the school of education.

In 1994, the University of Michigan honored her outstanding contributions to the university and the field of second language learning and teaching by establishing the endowed Morley Scholarships, for studies in second language and learning and teaching. Ever since, during each summer, three or four scholars from countries around the world have received funds to travel to the university to work on a research project with the faculty.

As an internationally recognized specialist in second language oral communication, theory and pedagogy,

Joan has lectured and conducted seminars and workshops in Puerto Rico, Brazil, Canada, England, Egypt, Germany, Japan and Mexico. She also has authored 17 books and more than 70 journal articles.

During the 1998 national convention in Irving, Texas, Joan became the sixth recipient of Alpha Sigma Alpha's Recognition of Eminence award. The winner of many awards, Joan says the Recognition of Eminence is one of the accolades she cherishes the most.

Helen Selvage Noblitt, XX

Composer, "Hymn to Alpha Sigma Alpha"



Helen Selvage Noblitt, XX

A graduate of Teachers College of Indianapolis (which later became Butler University), Helen Selvage Noblitt was a charter member of the early Chi Chi Chapter. She was initiated as an ex-collegio member of Chi Chi during the installation of Upsilon Upsilon Chapter on May 5, 1928. Chi Chi was later re-established at Ball State University, Muncie, Ind., in large part because of the efforts of the original chapter members, including Helen.

A teacher for 40 years, Helen was the composer of "Hymn to Alpha Sigma Alpha." Helen herself taught generations of Indiana collegians how to sing the hymn slowly, with quiet reverence. She wrote the music for several other ΑΣΑ songs, including the 1949 convention song "Hail to Alpha Sigma Alpha."

During the mid-1970s, the William Watson Woollen School of Indianapolis dedicated its media center in Helen's name. A lifelong member of the Indianapolis Alumnae Chapter, Helen celebrated her 50-year membership anniversary at the 1978 convention in Indianapolis.

Helen died Oct. 2, 1997, at age 92.

Virginia Lee Boyd Noell, A

Founder



Virginia Lee Boyd Noell, A

Virginia Lee Boyd, A, was born Oct. 10, 1884, near Roceland, Nelson County, Va. She was the daughter of two Virginians: Maj. Waller Massie Boyd of Nelson and Caroline Anthony Yancey of Lynchburg, and the youngest of a large family. Before entering Farmville in 1901, Virginia attended public and private schools.

Virginia roomed with Mary "May" Hundley at the State Normal School. Virginia, known as Jinks, was smaller, with pretty blue eyes, wavy hair and a lovely soprano voice. She was the first Alpha Sigma Alpha to serve as a chapter president and was president when the sorority was chartered Feb. 13, 1903. Virginia was also Alpha Chapter's first chaplain.

In 1910, Virginia married John W. Noell of Roanoke, Va. She remained in Roanoke after her husband's death in 1926. A member of the Episcopal Church, her chief interest was religious work.

Virginia died Nov. 19, 1954, in a Roanoke hospital. She is buried in Evergreen Burial Park in Roanoke.

Gertrude Stevens Nyce, KK

Recognition of Eminence award, 1961



Gertrude Stevens Nyce, KK

Early in her college career at Temple University, Gertrude S. Nyce, KK, set her sights on a life in the missionary field. She received a B.S. in home economics from Temple University in Philadelphia and entered Biblical seminary in New York. During her first year there, she

received an offer to go to the Woodstock School in India as a home economics teacher.

Her stay in India lasted only two years. Because of her mother's illness, she returned home to help her family. But the two years in the foothills of the Himalayas had convinced her that India would be the site of her future.

During her stay at home, she completed her studies at the seminary, receiving a master's degree in religious education. She was eager to return to India, but World War II was raging. Instead, she learned the difficult Urdu and Punjabi languages, the languages of the people she would be working with in India.

In 1944, civilian travel finally resumed to a limited extent, and Gertrude began a tedious journey to India. The voyage took four months, and the ship on which she was traveling made 10 stops around Africa. Upon her arrival, she immediately began teaching home economics.

Because of her work, Gertrude gained prominence in missionary circles throughout India and soon rose to membership on the executive committee of the Christian Home Movement. In that capacity, she and other leading Christian educators of India organized training programs for teachers and prepared an entirely new curriculum for all of India. In 1948, she was ordained by the United Church for Northern India, Jullundur Cantonment.

She retired as a missionary and left India April 30, 1958. Gertrude continued her work in the United States as candidate secretary for the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relation of the United Presbyterian Church Mission Board. In connection with her responsibilities for personnel selection, she spent three months during 1963 in the Middle East and Northeast Africa, and two months in 1967 in the Far East with a return visit to India.

In 1970 she became associate director of health affairs and in 1972 visited 11 countries in Africa and Asia, seeing clinics and hospitals related to the church. In 1974 she moved to California, where she was a church secretary in the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Clara and the Sunnydale Presbyterian Church.

Gertrude retired in 1978 and spent five months as acting executive director of the Vellore Christian Medical College Board in New York while the director took a sabbatical to India. After a trip to Vellore in India in early 1979, she represented Vellore on the West Coast and was a consultant on foundation relationships.

While she lived in the eastern United States she was a member of the Philadelphia, Bux-Mont Alumnae Chapter. Gertrude is 89 years old and lives in Lakeland, Fla.

Freida Joy Riley, ΒΠ

Teacher

Freida Riley award for teaching excellence

Freida Joy Riley, ΒΠ, grew up in McDowell County, W.Va. She graduated from Big Creek High School in War, W.V., and in 1959 earned a bachelor of science degree in education from Concord College, Concord, W.Va. She joined Beta Pi Chapter in 1956 and served as chapter treasurer in 1958. After graduating as class valedictorian, she returned to Big Creek High to teach mathematics from 1959 to 1969.



Freida Joy Riley, ΒΠ

Freida was a geometry and algebra teacher to another notable member, Rosemary Carucci Goss, ΒΠ, during the academic years 1967-1969.

Freida died from Hodgkin's disease in August 1969. The summer she died, she was getting out of her hospital bed to go to class. She was determined to finish her master's degree, even though she knew her illness was terminal.

In a memorial tribute in the 1970 Big Creek High School yearbook, Rosemary wrote, "Miss Riley did enrich the lives of many people. These people will long remember the influence of a devoted teacher and an inspiring

individual. ...” Freida's contributions to education were immortalized with the publication of the book “Rocket Boys,” the basis for the 1999 Universal Pictures film “October Sky.”

In spring 1999, Concord College announced the creation of the Freida Joy Riley Scholarship.“Her dedication to her students and to teaching, and her willingness to go beyond the norm to enhance the success of her students are among the qualities that made her a great teacher and an inspiration to those who might follow in her footsteps,” said Douglas Machesney, the college's vice president for development.

The national Freida J. Riley Teacher award, given to one U.S. teacher a year who excels despite a hardship, was established in 2000 by an Ohio nonprofit organization, Partnership for America's Future Inc., and the New York-based Christopher Columbus Fellowship, a federal agency. In 2000 the Alpha Sigma Alpha Foundation established the Freida Riley award for teaching excellence.

Rhetta Nesbitt Robinson, ΒΓ

National president, 1980-1984

Rhetta Nesbitt, ΒΓ, joined Alpha Sigma Alpha at Northwestern State University, Tahlequah, Okla., after transferring to the campus her junior year. She served on or chaired several Beta Gamma Chapter committees and held the office of Panhellenic representative.



Rhetta Nesbitt Robinson, ΒΓ

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and English, Rhetta began her teaching career in a first grade class and progressed to ninth grade English. She earned a master's degree in guidance and counseling from the University of Tulsa and continued in her career as a counselor and guidance dean. During those years Rhetta married Ron Robinson and had a son, Joey.

Rhetta's first national office was province director, a role she held from 1971 to 1976. Her next sorority office was on the national council; she served as executive vice president from 1976 to 1980. In 1980, Rhetta was elected president. Four years later, she held her last national office, chairman of colonies, until 1990.

Alpha Sigma Alpha recognized Rhetta's lifetime devotion to the sorority during the 1994 national convention in Milwaukee. She received the Evelyn G. Bell award for her contributions as a collegiate, alumnae and national officer. She has been a long-time member of the Tulsa Alumnae Chapter and held many of its offices.

The Robinson family has grown to include daughter-in-law Cheryl and three grandchildren: Cody, Laura and Joseph. The Robinsons live in Tulsa.

Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ

National president, 1930-1936 and 1947-1952
Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award
Wilma Wilson Sharp scholarship
President emerita

Wilma Wilson, ZZ, was born Sept. 23, 1899, in Marshall, Mo. She was initiated in 1919 as a charter member of Zeta Zeta Chapter at Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg. In 1925 she married Fred M. Sharp, and in 1937, began her relationship of more than 47 years with the Hamilton Sunday School class at First Christian Church in Independence. She was a teacher by profession.



Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ

In 1922 Mrs. Sharp began 35 years of service on the national council of Alpha Sigma Alpha, 17 of which were served as president. Her presidency spanned two terms, from 1930 to 1936 and again from 1941 to 1952. Mrs. Sharp also served as the sorority's first NPC delegate, from 1947 to 1957. She was known throughout

the sorority and Greek community for her skilled leadership and gentle nature.

To Mrs. Sharp goes credit for the beautiful and inspirational memorial service, which is still used to honor deceased members. But it was another piece of writing — The Creed — that was her most visual and perhaps most long-lasting contribution to Alpha Sigma Alpha.

Through Mrs. Sharp's vision and dedication, the ritual was bound into book form, a memorial was established to the founders at Longwood College, a new constitution was designed, the first published history of the sorority was released and Nov. 15 was proclaimed Founders' Day. She was also instrumental in achieving the admission of Alpha Sigma Alpha and five other Association of Education Sororities into the National Panhellenic Conference in 1947.

The Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award was created at the 1941 convention. After the liquidation of Lambda Lambda Chapter (see p. 398), the Columbus Alumnae Chapter had tried to give to Mrs. Sharp the $150 that remained in the chapter account in recognition of her outstanding service to Lambda Lambda during its final year. Mrs. Sharp asked instead that the money be used to establish an award, which since has served to recognize an alumna who has distinguished herself through service to her community or her profession.

In July 1959 the national council bestowed on Mrs. Sharp the title of president emerita. In 1968 the Greater Kansas City Alumnae Chapter initiated the Wilma Wilson Sharp scholarship; the first scholarship was awarded in 1971.

Mrs. Sharp died July 16, 1988, at age 88 in Overland Park, Kan.

Elizabeth Bird Small, ΠΠ

Elizabeth Bird Small award

Elizabeth Bird Small, from the inception of Pi Pi Chapter in 1926, became a vital part of Alpha Sigma Alpha as a friend, counselor, adored older sister and unselfish servant of the membership. She served on the national council as trustees chairman from 1932 to 1934 and as finance chairman from 1934 to 1936.



Elizabeth Bird Small, ΠΠ

A graduate of State Teachers College at Buffalo, N.Y., Elizabeth taught English, Latin, dramatics and speech for 35 years, 25 of them at Buffalo State. She advised the Clionian Sorority from 1910 to 1926, and then when it became Pi Pi Chapter, she served as chapter adviser until 1932. She retired from teaching in 1933.

As she was described in the Phoenix, "Her eyes were trained to see the good in everyone and everything, but she constantly reminded her girls that being good wasn't good enough when they were capable of living up to their best. The high standards of Alpha Sigma Alpha were a challenge to Miss Small, and in all of her sorority work she could not brook the slightest deviation from standards of such worth. The newest pledge soon learned that just to be in her presence was a rich experience.

"She was a delightful companion with an incomparable sense of humor. Her mind was as keen as her heart was kind, while she had that rare gift of wisdom that comes from understanding. Those who sought her advice never got it directly. Rather were they unconsciously guided to see clearly, think honestly and finally, act with confidence.

"It was impossible to forget Miss Small even after one left her presence — what she was, what she said, what she stood for was a constant source of inspiration."

In 1942, the national council created the Elizabeth Bird Small award to recognize leadership, scholarship and "graciousness in daily living as reflected in character and personality." The award remains the highest honor the sorority bestows on an undergraduate member.

She died in California on Jan. 29, 1942.

Dr. S. June Smith, KK

Recognition of Eminence award, 1988
S. June Smith Founders' Memorial scholarship

Born in New Kensington, Pa., Dr. S. June Smith, KK, was the product of a one-room school. She attended Temple University, where she earned a bachelor's of science degree in early childhood education. June later earned a master's degree from Columbia University and a doctorate from Pennsylvania State University.



Dr. S. June Smith, KK

Known to friends as "Dr. June," she generously contributed to Alpha Sigma Alpha over the years. She was president of Kappa Kappa Chapter and a founding member of the Central Pennsylvania Alumnae Chapter. Nationally, June served as examination chairman, 1932-1934; extension officer, 1936-1938; province XII director, 1974-1976; and ΑΣΑ Foundation vice chairman, 1986-1990. In 1996, June endowed the S. June Smith Founders' Memorial scholarship.

June received the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award in 1944. During the Clearwater convention in 1988, June became the fifth recipient of the Recognition of Eminence award.

June's professional experiences were many. Her career began as a kindergarten teacher and elementary assistant. She taught child development courses and was involved in the training of teachers for early childhood education at Millersville State University for 10 years. She served as the assistant to the superintendent and director of special pupil services for Lebanon County (Pa.) Schools, and as director of special education for Lancaster County (Pa.) Schools.

Her career priority was devoted to developing a wide range of special service programs for children. In 1965, with the mission "to find the gift in every child," June established the Retarded Children's Daycare Center in Lancaster, Pa. It was renamed the S. June Smith Center in her honor in 1974. The center aids infants and preschool children with mental handicaps.

Her volunteer activities included past president of American University Women, Lancaster Health and Welfare Board of Trustees, Hearing Center Association Board and Pennsylvania Association for the Education of the Gifted. When June retired to Florida, she continued volunteer work by serving on the board of directors of Citrus County Rape and Abuse Center, working with the United Way and volunteering for the Key Training School for the Retarded.

June died April 25, 2001, in Lecanto, Fla. A memorial service was held at Millersville State University. She was 95 years old.

Amy M. Swisher, AA

Amy M. Swisher scholarship

Amy M. Swisher, AA, became the adviser of Alpha Alpha Chapter and an initiated member soon after she arrived at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, in 1917. Fondly called "Miss Amy," Alpha Alpha bestowed on her the honorary title of adviser emerita.



Amy M. Swisher, AA

To Miss Amy can be credited alumnae parties during Alpha Alpha's inactivity between 1938 and 1939 that resulted in the formation of an Alpha Alpha alumnae organization. The alumnae association remained until the fall of 1949, when plans were underway to reinstate the chapter at Miami.

In 1952, she established a scholarship in her name during the Golden Anniversary convention in Roanoke, Va. The Amy M. Swisher scholarship became the sorority's first "name" scholarship. The scholarship is awarded for graduate or undergraduate work in any field.

Miss Amy, professor of art education emerita at Miami University of Ohio, received the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award in 1953. She died Oct 10, 1981, just two months after her 100th birthday.

Hattie Virginia Kelly Thomas, A

First initiate

The record of the sorority's first initiation states that on Jan. 3, 1903, Hattie Jake Virginia Kelly, A, was made a member of Alpha Sigma Alpha. Hattie's signature is among those on the original charter. Born in 1886 in Nansemond County, Va., she attended Longwood College from 1902 to 1906.



Hattie Virginia Kelly Thomas, A

After graduating from Longwood, Hattie stayed involved with the young sorority, serving as alumnae editor of The Aegis, Alpha Sigma Alpha's first magazine, from 1909 to 1912, president of the Central Alumnae Association from 1910 to 1912, and national vice president from 1910 to 1912. She served on the social life cabinet between 1914 and 1918.

In 1930, newly elected president Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, sought out information regarding the early history of the sorority. Hattie's own accounting of the early years and her relationship with the founders was the tie for which Mrs. Sharp was searching.

Mrs. Sharp appointed Hattie as historian, a role that entailed years of finding founders, early members, facts and photographs to preserve the early history of the sorority. Hattie served as historian from 1932 to 1938. Her recollections are what Alpha Sigma Alphas today regard as the history of the sorority between the years 1901 to 1914.

Hattie attended the reinstallation of Alpha Chapter at Longwood College in 1933. She and Margaret Patterson Martz, A, presented a certified copy of the original 1903 charter to Mrs. Sharp during the reinstatement. The charter is now a valued possession in the sorority's national archives.

In 1934 Hattie served as the official hostess of the national convention in Old Point Comfort, Va. During the initiation service at that convention, Hattie received a jeweled badge and commendation for her unusual services to the sorority throughout the years. Hattie died Nov. 18, 1980, at age 94.

Marjorie Belle Anderson Thomson, TT

Marjorie Anderson Thomson scholarship

Marjorie Belle Anderson, TT, was born Dec. 4, 1921, in Topeka, Kan., to John Roy and Bessie Margaret Knarr Anderson. In 1942, she was initiated by Tau Tau Chapter at Fort Hays State University in Kansas. Marjorie completed her bachelor's degree at Butler University and later earned a master's degree from Fort Hays. She continued with post-graduate work, studying at the University of California-Santa Barbara, Kansas State University and Kansas University.



Marjorie Belle Anderson Thomson, TT

Jan. 4, 1952, Marjorie married John Whitner Thompson. They had one son, John Coe, and divorced in 1963.

Marjorie was an airline hostess with TWA, a technical librarian, recreation director, county Head Start director and sociology teacher and educator in college, junior college, junior high school and elementary school. Now retired, she is an international peace walker.

When she began to lose her hearing in the 1960s after treatment for pneumonia, Marjorie became an advocate for the hard of hearing and deaf community. She is on the board of trustees of the International Self Help for Hard of Hearing People Inc.

Marjorie has been honored by the Colorado Federation of Business and Professional Women as "one who

dared to live a courageous life." She has also received numerous awards for her volunteer work, including Denver's "Marjorie Thompson Day" and the JC Penney Golden Rule award.

At the 2000 national convention, Marjorie established the first Alpha Sigma Alpha national scholarship for students with moderate to severe hearing loss. The Marjorie Belle Anderson Thomson scholarship is awarded annually to a deserving member or other student applicant who is hard of hearing.

Marjorie lives in Denver and enjoys photography, traveling, whitewater rafting, storytelling and writing.

Betty Urban Wallick, ZZ
National president, 1976-1980

Betty Urban, ZZ, entered the freshman class at Central Missouri State Teachers College in Warrensburg, Mo., in the fall of 1944 during World War II. The Navy had taken over most of the college dorms, so the women were in homes leased by the college. Alpha Sigma Alpha had one of these houses, but the chapter needed to fill it with a few freshmen.


Betty Urban Wallick, ZZ

Betty Urban was one of those women. While living in the Zeta Zeta Chapter facility did not promise Betty a bid, she was eventually offered one. She accepted, and the choice influenced Betty from that day forward. While in college, Betty served two years as president of Zeta Zeta. She also represented the chapter in the Popular Girl and Rhetor Queen activities.

Ten days after her graduation, Betty married Phillip Wallick Jr. and moved to York, Pa. The Wallicks have two children, Phillip III and Sarah Ruth. Sarah gave the couple two grandsons, John Krupa Jr. and Joshua Phillip. Betty and Phillip were married for 32 years until Phillip's death in 1980.

Professionally, Betty taught English and public speaking for 30 years at Central York High School. She was responsible for the speech program at the school and actively sought to establish a National Honor Society chapter there. Betty directed plays, prepared students for speech competitions and served as an adviser to several clubs. Betty was involved for many years with the Central Pennsylvania Alumnae Chapter, serving in various offices, including president.

In 1970 Betty began serving Alpha Sigma Alpha on the national level. Her first office was collegiate editor of The Phoenix. After serving in this position for four years, she was appointed Phoenix editor. At the time, she thought this role would give rise to many challenges. The greatest challenge, however, awaited her in 1976 when she was elected president.

When Betty's presidential term ended in 1980, she remained an active national volunteer. She has since served as historian, 1980-1982 and 1988-1990; a member of the NPC delegation, 1978-1980 and 1982-1990; vice chairman of the ΑΣΑ Foundation, 1990-1993 and 1994-1996; and Foundation chairman, 1993-1994.

During the 1988 convention, the sorority presented her with the Evelyn G. Bell award for her loyalty to Alpha Sigma Alpha.

Betty retired from her teaching career in 1985. Since December of that year she has lived in Yuma, Ariz. She travels, hunts and fishes with Bob Butcher, her Sedalia, Mo., high school friend.

MaryAnn Sidehamer Wenzel, ΓΗ
National president, 1970-1976

MaryAnn Sidehamer Wenzel is a charter member of Gamma Eta Chapter at Pennsylvania State University, where she was initiated in 1962. Upon graduation, MaryAnn moved to Pittsburgh to attend graduate school. She joined the Pittsburgh Alumnae Chapter and subsequently learned that her third grade teacher was a member of the same group.

MaryAnn earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy

and art history from Penn State and a master's in education from Duquesne University and the University of Pittsburgh.


MaryAnn Sidehamer Wenzel, ΓH

Alumnae chapter membership presented MaryAnn the opportunity to attend the St. Louis national convention in 1967 and the larger fortune of being asked to serve as ritual chairman. During the next convention in Virginia Beach, MaryAnn was installed as president, a position she held from 1970 to 1976. MaryAnn also served as NPC alternate delegate, 1970; NPC delegate, 1976-1978; and vice president of development, 1982-1988.

MaryAnn has attended every national convention since 1967. The mother of Brian and Natasha and grandson Tanner, she lives in Boulder, Colo., with her husband Michael.

Calva Hamlet Watson Wootton, A Founder

Calva Hamlet Watson, A, was born in Woodland in Nottaway County, Va., a daughter of Josephine and Meredith Watson. During her student days she claimed Jennings' Ordinary, Va., as her hometown. Calva was the efficient member of the five founders.


Calva Hamlet Watson Wootton, A

She led Alpha Chapter in scholastic achievement and served as historian and secretary. She looked younger than her classmates and, despite her quiet demeanor, participated in the campus literary societies and language clubs. Calva was among those signing the charter for incorporation on Feb. 13, 1903. She graduated from Longwood in 1904.

In 1917 she married Percy W. Wootton and spent the remainder of her life in Petersburg, Va. She died Aug. 3, 1961, at age 75. She is buried in Blandford Cemetery, Petersburg.