



APRIL 2023

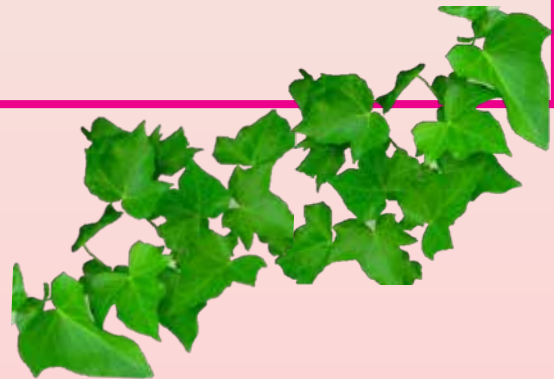
ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INCORPORATED®
BETA DELTA OMEGA CHAPTER - JACKSON, MS

THE **IVY**
Chronicle

Service & Sisterhood

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MESSAGE FROM THE BASILEUS

Greetings!

The temperature is rising and so are the activities of Beta Delta Omega Chapter. April's activities are bringing some exciting times. This month, the ladies of Gamma Omicron successfully led our chapter meeting. It was a real treat to see our undergraduates working hard alongside the graduate members and mentors. We offer an early congratulations to the graduating seniors of Gamma Omicron and Gamma Rho who will be graduating in the next few weeks.

March was Women's History Month; however, it may need to be extended to April. Four trailblazers of Jackson State University were honored by the Women's Council for Philanthropy. Beta Delta Omega Chapter's own Dr. Gwendolyn Prater and Dr. Dora Washington were recognized for their unconditional support and commitment to JSU with over 50 collective years served. Beta Delta Omega Chapter applauds you, simply for who you are.

Service and Sisterhood are at the forefront of our current International Programs. Beta Delta Omega Chapter is doing just that. We have been celebrating birthdays, line dancing, and praying. We want all sorors to join us as we connect in this sisterhood as "We are One." Reach out to sorors whom you have not talked to in a while or you don't know. The AKA Soror Squads are in action, from participation in community walks, events at stage plays, and/or donations to community organizations. The AKA Squad's purpose is to connect sorors with each other to bond and serve. I hope everyone is on a squad.

For the service of Beta Delta Omega Chapter, we have been busy participating in the African American Male Wellness Walk, Financial Literacy Seminar, Tree Planting and the Youth Leadership Initiative.

Sorors, thank you again for a month full of sisterhood and service. Beta Delta Omega Chapter continues to lead in the South Eastern Region. Let's continue to SOAR to GREATER HEIGHTS of SERVICE AND SISTERHOOD.



In Sisterly Service,
Soror Sharron U. Williams, Basileus
2023-2024



SOROR SPOTLIGHT

April Spotlight Soror Tonya Parker



Soror Tonya Parker

**Title/Role: Leadership Development
Committee, Co-Chairman**

Soror Tonya Parker is a native of Camden, Mississippi, where she graduated from Velma Jackson High School. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Mississippi State University and a Master of Business Administration from Belhaven College (now Belhaven University). She is currently employed as a System Administration Team Lead with the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration.

Soror Tonya was initiated into Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® Beta Delta Omega Chapter in April 2002. Having held multiple offices including Anti-Grammateus, Grammateus, Epistoleus, Anti-Basileus, and Basileus (39th), serving in the sorority has afforded her many great opportunities. She remains grateful for the relationships formed while serving on many committees at the local level as a member and as a chairman. From 2018-2022, Soror Tonya served as the South Eastern Representative to the International Membership Intake Process (MIP) Committee while also serving as the Regional Undergraduate MIP Affairs Liaison. She is thankful to the 30th Supreme Basileus, Soror Glenda Glover, and to the 26th South Eastern Regional Director, Soror Mitzi Dease Paige, respectively, for the appointments. A great deal of knowledge was gained while serving in both

positions, and she appreciates the confidence placed in her to be successful in the roles. Soror Tonya expresses that it has always been a pleasure to serve in this great sisterhood. Simply stated, she loves being a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha.

Soror Tonya is a lifelong member of the Greater Murphy African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church where she also serves wholeheartedly on multiple church ministries. Living a life that is reflective of God and his many blessings is most important to her. She believes that when we serve others, we also serve God. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends.

What inspired you to participate in this initiative?

The “Let Go and Grow” program is the brainchild of Soror Juanita Sims Doty, the 23rd South Eastern Regional Director and the 30th Basileus of Beta Delta Omega. While serving as the Chairman of the Basilei Council from 2021-2022, the council was tasked with planning the chapter retreat. Dr. Doty presented a mini workshop entitled “Let Go and Grow” during the 2021 virtual chapter retreat, and the workshop was well-received. As a result, the council asked Dr. Doty to present a similar workshop during the Leadership AKAdemy in 2022. Once again, sorors were excited about the workshop. Thus, it was decided to make the program a six-month journey for sorors to become more authentic sorors and more authentic leaders. Soror Doty and Soror Tonya, serve as the Chairman and the Co-Chairman of the Leadership Development Committee, which is now responsible for “Let Go and Grow.” The program has grown and now sorors are invited to join the second cohort under the leadership of Sorors Christie Levy, Erma Robinson-Cook, Deedra Hughes, and Regan Jackson.

Soror Tonya says she loves “Let Go and Grow” because it’s all about encouraging personal growth and self-empowerment. The program is about establishing a support system to help each other grow. It is about taking small steps and supporting each other along the way and sharing experiences of personal growth. According to Soror Tonya, many times in the sorority, the focus is on leadership development from the stance of learning the duties of office and/or committees and what is expected in terms of holding an office or serving on a committee. While this is important and this development must happen in order to truly thrive in the sorority, Soror Tonya notes it is incumbent on sorors to also focus on a person’s total being – mind, body, spirit and soul.

The Let Go and Grow sessions create a safe space for sorors to share information about dealing with personal and professional disappointments, losses as well as successes and achievements and more. She loves that the Cultured Pearls and other seasoned sorors have shared their experiences during the sessions with the participants. It has been wonderful to hear their transparent assessment of the situations they have experienced and how they have managed them. They have shared their insight concerning personal situations and leadership positions. Their advice has been helpful as she personally navigates through the difficulties of her life both in the sorority and in other areas.

Soror Tonya shared that while she is not perfect, she does strive to be the best she can be daily. She is grateful for Let Go and Grow and excited to participate once more with the second cohort.



Let go and GROW

During the pandemic, my family - the Sims family, held several zoom fitness, nutrition and self-development sessions. At the end of sessions, we all agreed that “To GROW physically, mentally and spiritually” would be our main outcome. So, Let Go and Grow started with my family during the pandemic. As Beta Delta Omega held its “Zoom Pandemic Meetings” in 2020, I was asked to provide a meditation. It was entitled “Let Go and Grow.” I was then asked to ‘expand’ on the meditation and provide a ‘mini-15-minute session’ regarding Let Go and Grow. Two other chapters in the South Eastern Region asked me to participate in their Leadership Development Workshops. The topic was.... “Let Go and Grow.” Then the Basilei Council requested an ‘expanded’ 45-minute Leadership Development Session on this topic.



It appeared that sorors were listening and learning from “Let Go and Grow.” I wanted to be sure I gave them the very best. And that included “COLLABORATION” with one of the best minds and graphic designers I know... Soror Tonya Parker, who I feel is an “Authentic Soror!” Together, Soror Tonya and I developed a hard-bound journal and curriculum, and the Let Go and Grow Journey began. I can’t begin to tell you how much Soror Tonya added to the development of Let Go and Grow. So, the lesson learned and to be shared with Beta Delta Omega and its leadership is...to collaborate with other talented sorors to make your programs and activities much better.

In October of 2022, a total of 42 sorors signed up to participate in Let Go and Grow, making up the first



cohort. These sorors took a 6-month journey to become a more Authentic Soror and Leader. We lived the motto: “LET GO AND GROW.” So, what is Let Go and Grow all about?

It’s about encouraging personal growth and self-empowerment; it’s about establishing a support system to help each other grow together. It’s about taking small steps and supporting each other along the way and sharing experiences of personal growth.

We have to let go of something in order to GROW.

The G - Let’s grow in generosity; being more GRATEFUL and GIVING More GRACE. Yes, grace means showing kindness to those who have hurt us. We must let go in order to GROW.

The R - Let’s Grow by building more positive relationships. That may mean letting go of negative friends... in order to GROW.

The O - Let’s Grow by looking for opportunities to make positive adjustments in our lives.

The W- Let’s Grow in wisdom and how we use our words because words matter.

It’s about being more intentional about becoming an authentic soror. No, sorors, we are NOT perfect, and we don’t expect to be, but it’s about striving to be a better and more authentic each day. After the 6-month journey and our culminating activity during our April, 2023 chapter meeting, several other sorors wanted to participate.

It was, indeed, a moving presentation and we received so much positive feedback. Soror Tonya and I decided that there were so many talented sorors who had taken the journey and could lead the next cohort. We were thrilled that Soror Christie Levy agreed to Chair the second cohort of sorors. We could tell that Soror Christie (as did other sorors) took her Let Go and Grow Journey very seriously and did, indeed, grow from it. We were equally excited that the following sorors agreed to serve as Co-Chairmen: Sorors Erma Cook; Deedra Hughes and Regan Jackson. WHAT AN OUTSTANDING TEAM!! They have already taken the Let Go and Grow program to another level. We still have room if other sorors want to be a part of the second cohort of Let Go and Grow. It will be PHENOMENAL!!

We also want to express our gratitude to Soror Vickie Terrell-Miller, who designed the beautiful Let Go and Grow logo. We also express our gratitude to Madam Basileus Sharron Williams, Former Basileus Candie Simmons and the Basilei Council for their support and encouragement.

Now...drum roll please...let’s LET GO AND GROW...Beta Delta Omega.

Soror Juanita Sims-Doty

Soror Juanita Sims-Doty





Let go and GROW

THE JOURNEY TO
BECOMING A MORE
AUTHENTIC YOU

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®
BETA DELTA OMEGA CHAPTER

(Access your Let Go and GROW Journal on WildApricot)



Empower Our Families

Alpha Kappa Alpha has a strong history of supporting and serving families, for we understand a healthy family is the foundation of a healthy community. Empower Our Families is anchored in the belief that it is necessary to provide solution-building services that help address the most pressing needs for each family unit at key life stages beginning with childhood to senior life.

Childhood Hunger Initiative Power Packs (CHIPP™)

Beta Delta Omega has delivered weekly “Power Pack” meals over the weekend and holidays to 63 students at Lester Elementary School in the Jackson Public School District. The chapter has packed and delivered 1,085 Power Packs.



Youth Leadership Institute (YLI)

Enhance Our Environment Committee and Youth Leadership Initiative help students learn about protecting the environment

The Enhance Our Environment Committee of Beta Delta Omega (BDO) Chapter collaborated with the Youth Leadership Initiative on April 30, 2023, for a fun event at the BDO Center to enrich the students' knowledge regarding planting trees, general planting, and the importance of recycling and proper disposal of waste.

The committees divided the students into two groups and gave each group 30 minutes to read a provided book. One group received *The Lorax* by Dr. Suess, and the other group received *Discovering the Pearl*, which is a book written about the Pearl River, native to Mississippi. The students were to provide insight about the books' content.

The books were highly informative and helped the students understand the importance of protecting the environment to ensure that we do not deplete our natural resources and how littering and throwing trash in the Pearl River contributes to pollution and can be harmful to the Earth, humans and animals that live in and dwell near the river.

The students completed *The Lorax* worksheet and learned about recycling, conservation and planting. Students planted a flower to take home and learned how to take care of their plants as they watch them grow. Many of the students enjoyed learning and planting flowers and planned to give their moms the flowers for Mother's Day.



Walk to Save Black Men's Lives

Beta Delta Omega Chapter participated in the Walk to Save Black Men's Lives held on April 22, at the Russell C. Davis Planetarium in Jackson, Mississippi. During the event, the men were educated on wellness, and they were able to get free screenings. This effort was led by Soror Ruby Denson.



Market Day for Young Entrepreneurs

The Ambassadors of the Evers Academy for African American Male (A-TEAAM) and Empowering Scholars through Tutoring Education Engagement and Mentoring for girls (E-STEEM) hosted a Market Day for young entrepreneurs from across the state on April 22. The scholars had a session on entrepreneurship where they had to come up with a product or service that they will create and sell to the entire community during Market Day. In this session, the Ambassadors/GEMs gained an understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur. Before Market Day, the Ambassadors and GEMs participated in a Shark Tank experience where they made a sales pitch to a panel of judges of their product. The GEM (mentee) for Beta Delta Omega Chapter made and sold assorted colored aprons for ladies and men for Market Day. The GEM (mentee) was very successful with the sale of aprons and lunch was provided. Thanks to sorors Lilly Adams, Edna Smith and Murlene Taylor for their work on this project.





Enhance Our Environment

Beta Delta Omega marks Arbor Day at Foot Print Farms

The Beta Delta Omega (BDO) Chapter celebrated the outdoors during the Wine Down and Get Rooted for Arbor Day event held April 28, 2023, at Foot Print Farms, located at 4945 South Dr. in Jackson, Mississippi. Three BDO committees – Enhance Our Environment, Membership, and Strengthen Our Sisterhood – collaborated to host the event.

Foot Print Farms, a 68-acre specialty crops, vegetables, and livestock farm, is owned by Soror Dr. Cindy Ayers- Elliott. The farm is a great tool that educates people about agriculture and new ways of farming with a focus on agri-tourism for community development in Jackson.

The purpose of the Wine Down and Get Rooted event was to wind down through sisterly bonding and get rooted by gaining knowledge of how important it is to plant trees, which is an Area of Focus of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's program initiative Enhance Our Environment. Trees protect the environment. There is a goal for the sorority to plant 3,000 trees.

Some 26 sorors attended the event and planted 110 tree seedlings of Northern Red Oak, Southern Red Oak, Red Maple, and Dogwood. The seedlings were planted in pots and will be replanted into the ground in October. Some of the trees will remain on the farm, and others will be adopted and given new homes throughout communities. Dr. Bill Evans, an agriculture and forestry researcher, provided the instructions and guidance for planting the seedlings.

During the event, attendees purchased fresh vegetables and also participated in a wine tasting of wines from Hot Springs, Arkansas and Natchez, Mississippi. The Enhance Our Environment Committee provided a brief description of Arbor Day's rich history. Sorors described the event as fun and stated they were looking forward to returning to Foot Print Farms and planting more trees.





Celebrating 25 Years



It's a Celebration!

25 Years
Silver Status



Soror Tonya Adams

Soror Anitra Blake

Soror Demetrica "Dee" Bookert-Nixon

Soror Kimberly Campbell

Soror Patricia Daniels

Soror Deedra Hughes

Soror LaTonya Moore

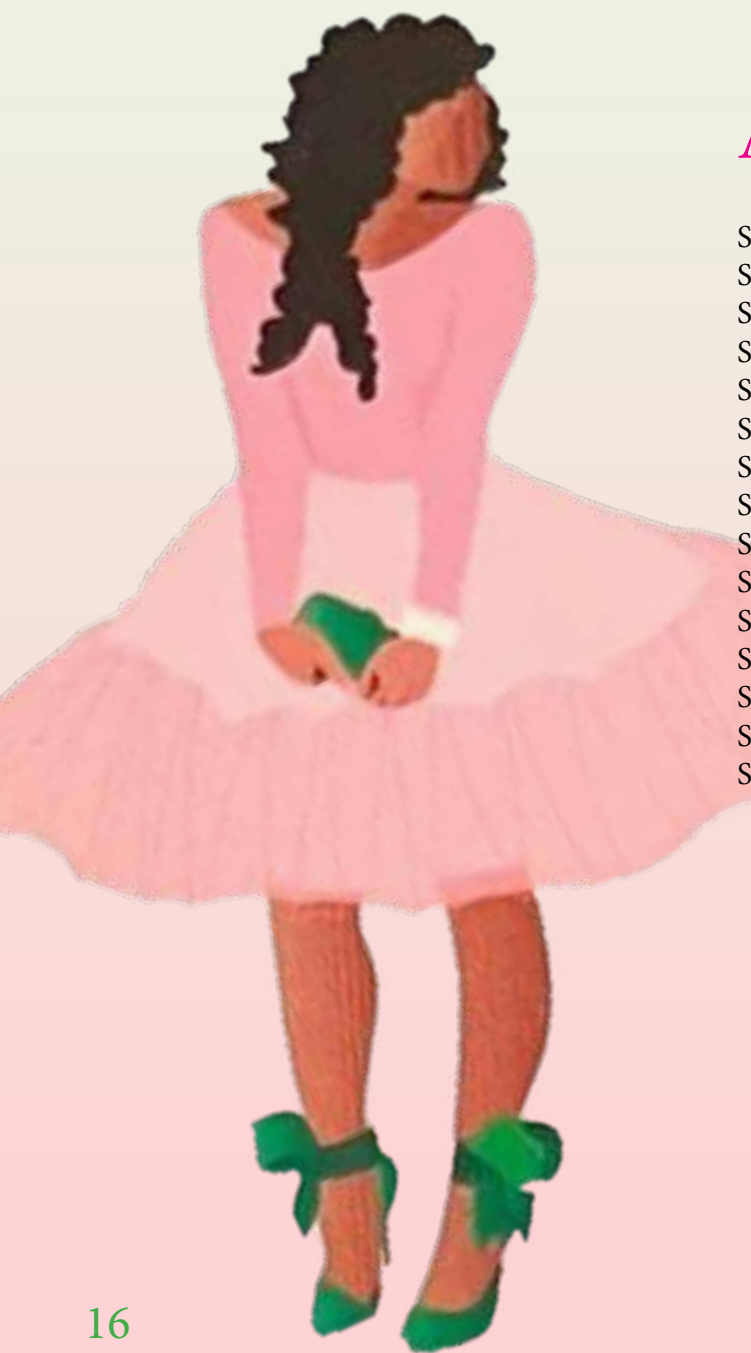
Soror Nia Robinson

Soror Pamela Simon

Soror Tekita Thomas

Congratulations Sorors!

Happy Birthday Sorors!



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Soror Edna Aretta Smith	1-Apr
Soror Lennie Little	4-Apr
Soror Angela Cooper	6-Apr
Soror Winnie Berry	9-Apr
Soror Jenice Strong Tate	10-Apr
Soror Adrienne Walls	12-Apr
Soror Azande W. Williams	16-Apr
Soror Janet Wallace	20-Apr
Soror Angela Wright	20-Apr
Soror Iely Mohamed	22-Apr
Soror Benetra Johnson	23-Apr
Soror Tosha Taylor	24-Apr
Soror Annie Belle "Ann" Calhoun	27-Apr
Soror Leslee Harvey	27-Apr
Soror Stephanie Booker-Wynn	28-Apr

Soror Shamira Ervin-Parker, Ivy Leaf Reporter

Publicity Committee Members

Soror Vickie Terrell Miller, Publicity Committee Member

Soror Shanderia Minor, Publicity Committee Member

Soror Aliyah Atkins, Publicity Committee Member

Soror Denise Drake, Publicity Committee Member

Soror Iely B. Mohamed, Publicity Committee Member

