

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY ALUMNAE CHAPTER of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

On June 20, 1992, six members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.—Carol Bradley, Darlene Faltz, Robbin Flannagan, Linda Jones Kemp, Arlene Donnelly, and Sue Briggs—met to discuss the formation of a sorority chapter after seeing a need in the southwestern part of Fairfax County, Virginia. With much deliberation they decided to call themselves the “Charter Chapter Interest Group.” The mission of the group was to identify members of Delta Sigma Theta in Fairfax County who would be interested in chartering a new chapter. The group rapidly grew and successfully increased to 36 members, the number needed to charter the 859th chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



On **Saturday, May 22, 1993**, the Fairfax County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., was chartered. The chartering ceremony was held at the Fair Oaks Holiday Inn and was conducted by Soror Sharon Reed, South Atlantic Regional Director with the assistance of Soror Roberta Duff. At the conclusion of the chartering ceremony, the first meeting of the Fairfax County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. was called to order at 1:40 PM by Soror Reed. The first order of business was the election of the first officers of the 859th chapter for the 1993 – 1995 term. The following sorors were the first elected officers of the new chapter:

Darlene Faltz – President

Peggy Smith – Vice President

Sharon Jordan Bundy – Recording Secretary

Susan Brown Wallace – Assistant Recording Secretary

Linda Jones Kemp – Corresponding Secretary

Lorene Warthon – Treasurer

Princess Powell-McEvilly – Financial Secretary

Shirley Nelson – Leader of the Minerva Circle

On October 23, 1993, the chapter’s first fundraiser was held which was a Personal Touch Seminar at Nordstrom Department Store, Tysons Corner Mall. In its first year, the

chapter sponsored two representatives in the Northern Virginia (NOVA) Pan Hellenic Council’s “Our Heritage” program, and the chapter’s first public service program was the Delta Preschool Reading Enrichment Program (PREP) for children ages two through five years old. The program was in partnership with the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development and the Greens Apartment Complex in Reston. On May 22, 1994, FCAC sponsored a sold-out performance of Cole Porter’s musical comedy *Anything Goes* at the Lazy Susan Dinner Theater in Woodbridge, VA after raising \$3,884.23 for scholarships and community service projects. As a part of the May Week observance, chapter members worshiped at Antioch Baptist Church as a group and donated \$100 for the church to purchase African American children’s books. The chapter’s first retreat was held on August 27, 1994, at Wakefield Park with 16 members in attendance. An art auction sponsored by Heisman Fine Arts Gallery, Inc. was held on March 26, 1995, where the chapter earned approximately \$4,500 from 160 pieces of auctioned art. The chapter continued to grow in membership and service activities with each administration.

Under the leadership of second chapter president Peggy (Smith) Ridley (1995 – 1998), the chapter began adopting families to support at Christmas with recommendations by the Fairfax County Department of Social Services. The chapter began supporting the Reading is Fundamental Program by having reading activities in schools and at local malls, and provided backpacks with school supplies for students who were identified by their school administrators as having need.

During the 1998 – 2003 leadership of third president S. Yvonne McCall, the chapter website was launched and first *Violet Voice* chapter newsletter was published. Through Project Cherish, African American landmarks in Fairfax County were researched and published in a brochure that was distributed to the public. The chapter also began supporting Change II to provide business

clothing for women living in shelters who work or who are seeking employment, and FCAC received the Fairfax County Human Rights Commission Award.

Angela Wilson Wade served as the fourth chapter president from 2003 – 2007. Financial Fortitude seminars and workshops were provided to the public, and this program continues today. FCAC began co-sponsoring Diva Central with the Reston Community Center to provide prom dresses and accessories to young ladies throughout the Northern Virginia community who have financial challenges and more than 700 dresses were donated over time. In 2005 and 2007, the chapter won the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. South Atlantic Region Best Website award.

During the 2007 – 2011 leadership of the fifth chapter president, Princess Powell-McEvelley, the chapter hosted the Ebony Fashion Fair as its fundraiser. The Social Action Committee sponsored voter registration drives in both Fairfax and Loudoun counties, and chapter members assisted with the chartering of Upsilon Theta City-Wide Chapter for students at Marymount University and the Art Institute. The chapter hosted the 2010 South Atlantic Region Virginia State Meeting, and the first EMBODI (Empowering Males to Build Opportunities for Developing Independence) program was developed. The first *College Bound: Road to Success Program* to assist high school junior and senior female students make the transition academically, socially, and financially from high school to college also began. The chapter was recognized as the 2008 Delta Sigma Theta Sorority South Atlantic Region Chapter of the Year. In 2010, FCAC received the 2010 Artemis Community Partner Award which was acknowledged in the United States Congressional Record of the 111th Congress, second session. The chapter also hosted its first Spring Tee with FCAC golf tournament as its annual fundraiser.

During the leadership of Regina Milteer-Rock, M.D., the sixth chapter president (2011 – 2015), the chapter instituted the Delta LEAD (Leadership, Excellence, Achievement, and Development) Mentoring Program, Emergency Preparedness, and Risk Management training for the

chapter. FCAC was selected as one of 20 chapters in the U.S. to participate in the AARP Decide. Create. Share. Campaign. The College Bound: Road to Success program received national recognition and was awarded Education Community Empowerment Grants from the Delta Foundation in 2011, 2012, and 2013. The grants enabled the chapter to expand the program to include both male and female students, grades 9 – 12. At the 2012 Virginia State Meeting, the chapter received a 2nd place for the state community service project award. FCAC was also the 2012 National Sisterhood Award, South Atlantic Region winner. At the 2013 National Convention, Soror Milteer-Rock was named the Alumnae Soror of the Year for the South Atlantic Region and the chapter received awards for Educational Development and International Awareness. In 2014, the chapter was named Chapter of the Year for the South Atlantic Region after receiving multiple program awards including International Awareness, EMBODI, and Project 13. At the 2013 State Meeting in Charlottesville, the chapter won first place for the community service project award, and community partnerships were created with Project GiveBack, Fire Fighters and Friends, and Lions Club International.

Under the 2015 – 2017 leadership of the seventh chapter president, Vicki H. West, FCAC hosted the Northern Virginia Area-Wide Founders Day. The chapter won first place at the South Atlantic Regional Conference for its Emergency Preparedness Program in 2015 and Financial Fortitude in 2016. At the 53rd National Convention, the chapter won the first place National Award for Emergency Preparedness Program. Members of the chapter began volunteering with the Heritage Fellowship SOL Program. The Arts and Letters Committee initiated a new creative writing contest for middle school and high school female students. The chapter fostered and continued to solidify partnerships with other community organizations.

The eighth chapter president, Lenior Simmons (2017 – 2021), began her term with the desire to implement 25 projects to celebrate 25 years for the chapter (29 were completed). The Educator Advisory Committee was developed which adopted Bryant Alternative School

and Woodley Hills Elementary. Backpacks were donated to students at Bryant as well as winter holiday groceries, and elementary school book donation drives were implemented. Teacher Appreciation Day activities were planned for both schools, and remain a cornerstone of the program. The chapter sponsored its first gospel concert for the public to celebrate May Week 2018. A visit to the Kenyan Embassy by chapter members as a part of the International Awareness thrust occurred in 2018. A new Leadership Development Committee to engage sorors in developing leadership skills was created, and on May 10, 2018, FCAC was recognized by the Fairfax County School Board for 25 years of service to Fairfax County Public Schools. It was under also Soror Simmons leadership that the chapter successfully navigated a virtual space at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since its inception, FCAC has been active in the Fairfax County community. The following are some of the chapter's more recent accomplishments:

- ▲ National President's Vision Award for Exemplary Program Implementation that Amplifies "Service in Our Hearts" (one of three National President Vision awards representing "Joy in the Sisterhood, Power in our Voice, and Service in Our Hearts" — 55th National Convention (2021)
- ▲ "On Fire to Inspire" Alumnae Chapter Award – National Arts & Letters Commission — 55th National Convention (2021)
- ▲ Delta Ready Award Medium Chapter – Delta Emergency Response Team — 55th National Convention (2021)
- ▲ 2021 – 2022 Delta Research and Educational Foundation (DREF) \$1,000 Community Empowerment Grant (one of nine grants awarded)
- ▲ 2022 Scholarships Awarded: \$16,000
- ▲ 2022 Chapter Community Points of Light Award
- ▲ 2022 EMBODI Award
- ▲ 2022 Economic Development Award
- ▲ Chapter Seed Grant Award for \$1,000 (Son-Shine Program)

FCAC's current membership is actively involved in its numerous projects throughout Fairfax County.

FCAC CHARTER MEMBERS

DORIS BENTIL
MARY ANN BOSLEY
BARBARA BOWMAN
CAROL BRADLEY
SHARON BUNDY*
ELIZABETH BUTLER
JOYCE CAREY
THOMASINA CASON
OPAL COTTON*
ARLENE DONNELLY
SHELIA EDWARDS
DARLENE FALTZ
ROBIN FLANNAGAN
JOYCE GREEN
ROBYNETTA HOOKER
MAXINE JEFFERSON*
MARGARET JONES
LINDA JONES KEMP
JONESETTA LASSITER
S. YVONNE MCCALL*
SHIRLEY MCCOY
PRINCESS MCEVILLEY
REGINA MILTEER-ROCK
ADRIENNE MOORE
SHIRLEY NELSON*
GWENDOLYN PATTON*
JUAN PETERSON
SUZANNE RANDOLPH
JANICE SCOTT
PEGGY SMITH
BARBARA SPEED
BENITA TOLER
JUANITA TRAPP
SUSAN WALLACE
LORENE WARTHON
DENISE YOUNG

*Deceased

