Because of Them, We Are
My dearest Southern Region sorors,

It is with the spirit of our Founders and the countless other strong, powerful and intelligent women in our past (Deltas and Non-Deltas) that we greet you and Welcome you to the pages of the 2019 Winter Edition of the Southern Gazette.

This publication pays homage and respect to women like Harriett Tubman, who freed thousands of slaves using the Underground Railroad and during the journey to freedom she encouraged and motivated them to “keep going”.

Other women like Soror Barbara Jordan who was the first African-American elected to the Texas State Senate and the first Southern African-American women elected to the US House of Representatives who testified and delivered one of the most powerful speeches in the 20th century.

These powerful women and many others whose blood, sweat, and tears run through our veins are the women we honor with this edition. It is Because of them, that We are - Dynamic, Strong, Compassionate, Dedicated and Resilient!

Therefore, it is with pleasure that we say, Welcome to the Winter Edition of the Southern Gazette sorors. Happy Reading and Happy New Year!

Violets and Pearls,

Sandy and Jasmine
Our objective is to compel and engage black voters in every aspect of the communities that we serve which encompasses members across 10 counties in Southwest Georgia. We are leading a non-partisan effort with deliberate and intentional strategies. Sisters in Service was birth from a national tour led by renowned comedian/talk show host Sheryl Underwood, previous National President for Zeta Phi Beta Sorority. During her visit to Sumter County, Georgia on July 15, 2017, she challenged the AKA’s, Deltas, Zetas, and Sigmas to come together to significantly move the needle in the African American community in the areas of economic empowerment, education achievement, political involvement, and social justice. Ms. Underwood moved our souls and we were compelled. The four sororities based in Americus, Georgia but serving ten (10) Southwest Georgia counties as service areas accepted the challenge then launched “Sisters In Service” in April 2018. Under collaborative leadership from the Sisters, a Call To Action was sounded across Southwest Georgia to mobilize during the Mid-Term Primary Elections in May followed by the Run-off elections in July and full engagement for the Mid-Term General Elections in November 2018.

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On Saturday, October 27th, Sorors of the Brevard County Alumnae Chapter and Melbourne-Palm Bay Alumnae participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk in Viera, Florida at the Avenues. This is an annual 5K race event to raise money for breast cancer awareness and education. There were over twenty-five hundred participants involved in this walk. Sorors sported shirts that proudly acknowledged, “Delta’s Wear Pink with a Purpose”. Our Team, “Deltas of Brevard, Family and Friends” is currently standing at number 25 out of 218 and have raised to date over $2100.00 (the goal was $1,000). The Youth Initiatives from the Brevard County Alumnae Chapter also participated in the walk; EMBODI, GEMS and Academy. As we looked around at some of our Sorors proudly wearing their survivor ribbons, we saw walking testimonies and we truly acknowledge “their victory.” That is why we walk, to raise funds to help the American Cancer Society find solutions through new treatments and support services to be able to one day live in a world free of cancer.

The Augusta Alumnae Chapter holds a special place of Delta Love for our Delta Dears. This year’s Sips with a Twist gave our Delta Dears time for food, fun and fellowship while designing their own Christmas hanging ornament. As Christmas carols played, we were pleased to entertain 21 Delta Dears and several Sorors dropped in for the festivities.
The Broward County Alumnae Chapter (BCAC) of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. in partnership with Delta Education and Life Development Foundation, Inc. (DELF) presented Swingin’ with Style 2018 Golf Tournament and Youth Golf Clinic.

This epic fundraising event provided the thrill and excitement of friendly competition at its peak for men, women and young adults. The tournament was held on September 29, 2018 at Jacaranda Country Club in Plantation, Florida.

Swingin’ with Style 2018 Golf Tournament and Youth Golf Clinic was a monumental success. It was the perfect marriage of the Sorority, the Foundation and the community. The tournament generated over $50,000.00 in revenue. There were 116 golfers registered, numerous sorority members and community volunteers, and over 45 sponsors and donors. All of which contributed to the huge success of this fundraising event. The event culminated with an awards luncheon attended by over 160 individuals. The luncheon included a partnership with the Broward County Supervisor of Elections office that provided staff for a Voter’s Registration table. There were also presentations to our 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place tournament winners, along with, the longest drive and closest to the pin awards for both men and women and other golf course contests.

A very special component of the tournament was the two-hour Youth Golf Clinic. Twenty (20) young children between the ages of 6-13 were introduced to the game of golf. They received instructions from the Country Club’s golf professionals and were provided lunch for their enjoyment.

Proceeds from the tournament will benefit scholarships and our public service program initiatives in the Broward County community. A summary of past initiatives includes:

* Scholarships - Last year over $40,000.00 was awarded in scholarships to deserving high school seniors to pursue their secondary education at the institution of their choice.

* May Week - Over 300 high school students were recognized for their Pursuit of Excellence in academics. We also, provided a college fair with over 12 college representatives attending.

* Read America - Promoted literacy to hundreds of preschoolers through fifth grade students. Offering a day of fun featuring local authors, storytelling, book giveaways and other fun-filled activities.

* Political Forums - Sponsored political forums that allowed local candidates the exposure and an opportunity to present their platforms to the community.

* Teen Lift- Provided an educational tour that exposed our high school students to college campuses and colleges life.

The amazing success of this event allows BCAC and DELF the opportunity to continue its quest to improve the quality of life in the Broward County community. Heartfelt gratitude is again extended to our many sponsors, donors, participants and volunteers whose partnership made all the difference!
Partnering with the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (MDMH) and the Clinton Community Christian Corporation (4Cs), the Physical and Mental Health Committee of the Clinton (MS) Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. hosted a screening of the film, “The Ripple Effect,” the first full length feature documentary of Kevin Hines, who, at 19, miraculously survived a suicide attempt. The film also includes interviews of other individuals who have been directly and/or indirectly impacted by suicide. Following the screening, a discussion forum for students in the service area and beyond was held on Saturday, September 29, 2018, and Tuesday, October 2, 2018 for parents and other members of the surrounding communities.

Days for Girls began as a small, volunteer-run organization committed to advocating for menstrual health management in underdeveloped countries. They now serve more than 100 countries. In November 2008, Days for Girls began their journey to improve the quality of life of young girls and women around the globe!

On November 3, 2018, the Covington Area Alumnae Chapter (CAAC), in collaboration with Days for Girls, prepared sustainable menstrual health kits. We sponsored a Days for Girls Kit Assembly Workshop and Menstrual Health Awareness Seminar at Liberty Middle School in Covington, Georgia.

The event was organized by the chapter’s International Awareness and Involvement committee and was well attended by several chapter members, the local community and a Girl Scout troop from the local service area. A member of the national Days for Girls staff led the seminar; sharing information about the organization’s mission, history and challenges facing developing countries regarding sanitation systems and menstrual health awareness.

Providing the Day for Girls kits to women and girls in countries where they would otherwise miss school during their monthly periods is critical to improving not only the overall quality of life for these women, but also for their families. The kits enable girls to carry their clean and used pads discreetly and take care of their personal hygiene needs. Because of these kits, girls can continue their education, improve their self-esteem and live with dignity. When girls are mobilized, their communities and our world grows stronger.

Each Day of Girls kit is designed to last up to three years and comes in a drawstring bag. Each kit contains: two Days for Girls shields, eight Days for Girls liners, two pairs of colorful panties, one small bar of soap, one washcloth, one menstrual chart and pictorial instruction guide and two gallon-size freezer bags.

Because of the generous contributions from chapter members, workshop participants were able to assemble more than 50 kits during the event. The kits will be mailed to girls attending school in Africa. Distribution of these kits will also allow women and girls to receive health education to break stigmas and cultural taboos associated with menstruation. These young ladies will surely be able to say “We are because you were ... committed to serving others.”
During summer 2018, the Political Awareness and Involvement (PA&I) Committee of the East Point/College Park (EP/CP) Alumnae Chapter began strategic planning on engagement opportunities with local citizens. With the midterm election just a few months away, a plan was set in motion to make history with a different type of day party. The TAU Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and V-103, The People’s Station, partnered with EP/CP to organize and to promote the 2018 Voting Day Party.

On October 27, 2018, the 2018 Voting Day Party transformed from an inspiring idea to an exceptional experience with almost 300 participants! The day party was conveniently located on the lawn of the historic courthouse of Clayton County in Jonesboro, Georgia. Soror Sonna Gregory, Clayton County Commissioner—District 1, and Soror Rhonda Burnough, State Representative—District 77, who were both recently re-elected to their respective positions, were among the nine local officials in attendance. The Sounds of Royalty band of KIPP Atlanta, and the drumline of Forest Park High School were nothing short of outstanding. The skills of the DJ kept everyone dancing, and the barbeque chicken sliders kept everyone warm.

For convenience, the PA&I Committee offered pre-registration as well as onsite registration. Due to the excellent location, people could easily attend the party on the lawn after casting their early vote inside the courthouse. Furthermore, the party was so vibrant that even spectators decided to join the celebration. A social media station with life-size picture frames was setup for participants to capture selfies with hashtags. As another highlight, special recognition was given to first-time voters with Soror Sonna Gregory as the facilitator.

Soror Jessie Goree, Clayton County Board of Education—District 3, remarked, “The Voting Day Party was an innovative, nonpartisan, and a fun way to encourage our citizens to exercise their powerful right to vote. I can attest to the fact that every vote counts because I won my first election by only 11 votes. This very important civic duty allows each citizen the opportunity to place the right people in positions that will impact their lives and their livelihood.”

Soror Sonna Gregory, commented, “The Voting Day Party provided a phenomenal opportunity for our citizens to become more engaged in Georgia’s midterm elections. The festive, fun and purposeful event attracted local citizens and even other Divine Nine organizations to join in the activities to help encourage all to take part in the voting process. Also, I believe the efforts of the PA&I Committee of EP/CP helped to increase voter turnout.”

Based on all of the participants’ feedback, the 2018 Voting Day Party will serve as a model for how to host a purpose-centered party with voter empowerment as the focus. The political climate of today demands that we all take responsibility and ensure direct engagement within our communities. The heart of the PA&I Committee of EP/CP seeks to educate, engage, and empower local citizens about the importance of voting in all elections. Since the onset of the 2018 sororal year, the PA&I Committee of EP/CP has partnered with 16 community-focused organizations and engaged with a total of over 1,800 men and women to exercise their voting power. Sorors, there is still much work to be done so we must keep the party going because we know, It All Happens at the Polls!
GREENE COUNTY ALUMNAE’S “RED ARMY” ON THE FRONT LINES FOR VOTING

Greene County Alumnae Chapter took charge and conducted voter registration as part of the local high school’s homecoming festivities on Friday, September 21. As part of our voter registration drive, we were able to engage almost 200 people during the homecoming parade. In partnership with Michelle Obama’s “When We All Vote” campaign, we were able to pass out additional flyers and posters.

The chapter will continue to be on the front line to engage and encourage our community to let their voices be heard with their votes. Chapter President, Isaac N. Atkins, stated, “The Greene County Alumnae Chapter will continue to serve our communities because we care.”

GREENWOOD-ITTA BENA ALUMNAE HOSTS MEET & GREET WITH THE CANDIDATES

Greenwood-Itta Bena Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Political Awareness and Involvement Committee sponsored a public forum to meet and greet the candidates that were on the November 6, 2018 ballot. The forum was held on Saturday, October 27, 2018 at the Leflore County Justice Court Center in Greenwood, Mississippi.

It was our objective for the community to not only meet and greet the candidates, but to educate each voter present on the candidates running for office by allowing them an opportunity to introduce themselves and share their platform.

Out of 16 candidates invited, we were proud to have 10 candidates or their representative present. We had 43 individuals from our community and 22 sorors adorned in red present.

It was our joy and honor to have fulfilled our objective.
HENRY COUNTY’S GET OUT THE VOTE INITIATIVE

Henry County Alumnae Chapter (HCAC) began their sororal year with an innovative Get Out The Vote (GOTV) Initiative. The chapter designed an effective plan to register, educate and mobilize new voters. Their GOTV endeavors began September 2018 at the Third Annual Ex-Offender Job Fair in partnership with Clayton State University and the local chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. A total of 81 ex-offenders were registered to vote and 175 were either placed on a job or referred to job training.

The chapter went on to partner with The New Georgia Project to train 57 Henry County residents on voter registration, so they can best educate and register their community. With over 50 trained chapter members on the new voter registration policy, HCAC quickly organized and carried out 21 voter registration drives to register 456 new voters in the county, many of which were young and ex-offenders.

In an effort to apprise the Henry County community, HCAC partnered with the Greater Atlanta Home Builder Association and the Henry Herald newspaper to host a Candidates Forum for more than 100 citizens; with five candidates seeking State senate, state representative and county commissioner. The forum was well received as attendees expressed that they are now better equipped to make informed decisions on their ballots prior to early voting in the 2018 midterm election.

With no signs of stopping, the southern crescent chapter effectively carried out “Souls to the Polls” with Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Stockbridge, Georgia. The chapter provided early voting information, sample ballots, explanations of the Five State Constitutional Amendments and maps displaying the de-annexation of Stockbridge to establish the new city of Eagles Landing. The chapter also sent letters to 64 other churches in Henry County to request their membership participate in “Souls to the Polls.” As a result of HCAC’s mobilization, nearly 2,200 votes were cast on Sunday, October 28, 2018 between 1 and 4 p.m.

And finally, to wrap up the chapter’s GOTV’s programs, seven individual members of HCAC served as poll workers on Election Day throughout the county. In summation, the chapter was delighted to have laid the ground work 12 months earlier with The Advocates for Change Institute that inform Stockbridge residents of the ramifications of their city’s de-annexation. To the chapter’s credit, the new city was voted down on November 6, 2018 by the emboldened and informed citizenry.

Under President Gloria Lee Hawkins’ leadership, HCAC has inspired the county with their exemplary GOTV programs and looks forward to continuous partnerships with key stakeholders in Henry County.
THE IMPORTANCE OF DIGITIZING
by Martha Ward Plowden, Ph.D.
Chair, Southern Regional Heritage and Archives Committee

Digitization is the conversion of documents and art works into digital images, which is a process of converting hard copies to electronic copies. The major purposes of digitization are to enhance access and improve preservation of resources. Also it creates space and increases access to everything from books to microfilm, photographs, videos, audio tapes and many other different mediums. A number of challenges maybe encountered in the process of digitizing resources and these challenges may include human and technical problems, which requires a need for planning and the review of policy. But once digitized, resources can be researched digitally and stored in the most ideal archival storage environment, thereby protecting them for future generations.

Digital conversion can be both a timely and an expensive process but it can help improve quality and promote consistency. Some advantages of changing from analog to digital is the elimination of geographical boundaries and make available resources that may have been forgotten and/or unavailable until conversion. Another advantage is that many may have access to all the information they need all the time, from anywhere, and from any chosen device. The first step in the process of digitizing resources is to review the following considerations: what is the purpose of the digitizing project; who will be the users of the digital replacement; how will the digital replacement be presented; what will be the effect on the original collection item of making the digital replacement; and how will the digital files be accessed and stored?

Digitizing should be understood not just as a process of scanning an analog document into digital form, but as a series of activities that result in a digital copy being made available to users via the Internet or other means for a sustained length of time. The activities include: document identification and selection; document preparation including: preservation, access review and screening, locating, pulling, and refiling; basic descriptive and technical metadata collection sufficient to allow retrieval and management of the digital copies and to provide basic contextual information for the user; safety of the material being digitized; digital conversion; quality control of digital copies and metadata; providing public access to the material via online delivery; providing online ordering for reproduction services at quality or quantities beyond the capacity of an end user to create themselves; reviewing the existing information technology (IT) infrastructure to ensure that it can sustain long term growth, storage, and preservation of digital copies and metadata; and utilizing a management system that ensures the authenticity, reliability, usability and integrity of the digital copies. Some materials may be excluded from the digitization process, because they may require more involved and expensive repair, or are so fragile that they cannot be easily stabilized. For these items, preservation specialists should discuss treatment. Some examples of materials that may be excluded from digitization are: paper that is acidic, fragile, brittle, torn, missing pieces, sticky, glued or stuck to something; paper documents with three-dimensional objects such as medals, seals, and ribbons that are attached; paper with iron gall ink that has eaten into the page; loose, flaking or friable media such as crayon, charcoal, chalk, or soft pencil; books with severe leather deterioration, such as red rot or missing pages; letter copy books with very thin and acidic paper, such as carbon copy correspondence and some tracing paper drawings and plans; photographs that are separating from the mount or support; photographs that are curled, bent, creased, folded, wrinkled, cockled or cracked, photographs and their mounts which are acidic, fragile, brittle, torn, missing pieces, sticky or stuck to one another; deteriorated cellulose nitrate or acetate film negatives and positives; and scrolls or other non-traditional textual or image formats.

The most common and universal format for electronic records is Portable Document Format (PDF). It is widely used and easy to share and protect and will last a lifetime. Even if it does not, there are pdf reader programs available to store on the disk. Some other options are Tagged Image File Format (TIFF) and Raw Image File (RAW). Documents can be stored digitally as images or as text files. Images require more space, but retain the character and essence of the original document. Converting a scanned image to a text or word processing file involves the optical character recognition (OCR). Either choice will need a scanner to digitize them. Some documents can be processed with a multifunction printer or a flatbed scanner but automatic document feeders are needed to handle multipage documents.

The most significant advancement in the world of scanning in recent years has been the integration of the cloud with scanning software and hardware. Now, instead of having to find and manage local storage for all scanned documents and then deal with online archives, you can send scans to your online storage system of choice directly from the scanner. For example, Fujitsu ScanSnap can send documents to SugarSync, Evernote, and Google Drive, while Epson’s “Scan to Cloud” can save directly to Box, Dropbox, Evernote, and Google Drive for backup. SimpleScan and Finovera are designed to eliminate reliance on local storage by putting everything online.

When files are scanned, they should be tagged appropriately and archived in the proper place. Scanned files should have an appropriate name and be filed in an appropriately tagged folder. Apps like Evernote are designed to make this kind of organization easy. Also, OCR can be used whenever possible to ensure the contents of each file are archived and searchable. Photographing historical documents and records is a good way to get a digital copy. However, proper lighting and care is needed to prevent damage to the original document or photo. It is important that scans be completed regularly in order to ensure the scanning system retains its value. Once the documents are scanned they need proper storage. It is common to keep them on disks but that dramatically reduces their usefulness. At a minimum, they should be backed up to a remote location. A better solution to storing them is a Document Management System. This makes the documents easy to find and manages who has access to particular information. The system can be managed in house or via a cloud-computing service. A smart phone, scanner and computer, are all the tools needed to eliminate paper clutter.

Finally, when considering digitization, it is very important to research the different ways to scan your documents, how to store historical records as well as how to archive them on a website so researchers will be able to access them. There are a need to make sure that the system used makes organizing resources appropriate, simple and secure as possible. The best way to make sure digitized materials are done correctly is to familiarize yourself with all of the different ways to digitize certain documents and if there is a special scanner you need to use for each record. Digitizing your documents renders them exquisitely portable and the entire collection can be stored on your e-book reader with ease. And paper documents can be turned into editable computer documents that are searchable. The digitalization or digital document is an advantage to researchers the world over.
The Rolling Hills Parent Café is a collaborative partnership between the District 1 Advisory Committee, established by the Huntsville City Schools’ District 1, representative, Mrs. Michelle Watkins and Rev. Dr. Terrence Vickerstaff, Chair and Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. under the leadership of Mrs. Jackie Perry, President. The event was organized and executed by the committee for community engagement, B.A.S.I.C.S. The goal of The Parent Café concept was to encourage parental engagement in a stress free, fun environment, while also providing an opportunity for parents to gain valuable information.

The parents were encouraged to attend through, call outs from the school, via the school’s social media pages, posters and personal invitations. Sorors entertained the children in the “Cougar Cinema” with story time, a movie and table top activities. Parents assembled in the cafeteria for different activities facilitated by sorority members. While this was to be a fun experience for the parents, it was also a learning opportunity. The school’s technology center was available for the parents to learn how to access their student’s grades and attendance. Door prizes which had been solicited from the community were awarded to every parent present.

Mrs. Latoya Baker’s first grade class was the recipient of the pizza party for having the most parent participation. “I learned about the Delta Sigma Theta Chapter and its service to community and the schools,” a parent commented. The B.A.S.I.C.S. Committee in partnership with Rolling Hills Elementary School is looking forward with great anticipation to the next Parent Café in April!

The Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., chartered in 1954 has a rich legacy of providing service throughout the entire county of Madison. The chapter strives to provide quality programs to educate our youth, steer economic development within our community and be at the forefront of social action. Jackie Perry currently serves as President.
Members of Jackson (MS) Alumnae Chapter recently spent an evening cutting pillowcases to make dresses for girls in Africa. The motto of the “Little Dresses for Africa” project is “We’re not just sending dresses, we’re sending HOPE.”

Coordinated by the chapter’s International Awareness and Involvement committee, sorors used pillowcases made of 100% cotton, and patterns were cut for more than 50 dresses. The dresses will be shipped to Africa and given freely to those in need.

AN EVENING WITH SOROR NIKKI GIOVANNI

There May Be a Reason Why….we are definitely Ego Tripping! On Thursday, October 18th on the campus of Edward Waters College our award-winning and globally celebrated literary icon soror, Dr. Nikki Giovanni, gave a rousing lecture to a full house. We asked for 22 sorors to attend and in usual Jacksonville Alumnae form, we exceeded that expectation. All members of the Omicron Beta Chapter were also present and seated with the alumnae chapter showcasing our continued unity between the chapters.

Soror Giovanni was an inspiration across the generations as illustrated by the laughter and pointed, engaging discourse. We were honored to present her with tokens of love from both the alumnae and collegiate chapters, share a moment of comradery with her, and a commemorative group photo. The literary legend has pledged to remain a partner of the students of Edward Waters College and made us all beam when she recognized her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., as the best sorority and also shared memory of an encounter with Civil Rights icon Rosa Parks (paraphrased): you only made one mistake sis, you went the wrong way!
Is There A Doctor in The House?

PROGRAMMATIC THRUST: EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There is an urgent call for African American physicians especially male physicians. African Americans comprise 13 percent of America but only four percent of American physicians. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, there are fewer African American males applying to and attending medical school than in 1978. As a result, the Macon Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., sought Dr. Stephen D. Summerow, an African American optometrist, to provide a STEM hands-on activity with EMBODI students.

During the three-hour interactive workshop, Dr. Summerow provided cow eyes and lectured step-by-step on how to dissect the eye balls. As the students dissected the eye balls, they learned about the similarities and differences of the human and cow eyes. The students gained knowledge about the importance of vision and the function of each part of the eye. Also, Dr. Summerow discussed the academic journey to become a physician and encouraged the students to consider a career in medicine especially optometry. “It is important to inspire and engage our youth to see beyond their present circumstances,” stated Dr. Summerow.

The Macon Alumnae Chapter annually partners with Dr. Stephen Summerow to exposure Macon’s young African American males to the medical field and to African American male role models. Such STEM activities might encourage our youth to contemplate medicine or other health care professions. “I am dedicated to volunteering my time and resources to the youth in the Macon community,” claimed the Southwest High School graduate. The US Census reports 60.1 percent of students entering medical school between the 2013-14 academic year and the 2015-16 academic year have been white, 22 percent Asian, 9.8 percent Hispanic, and 7.5 percent black. As we encourage our youth to be college and career ready, one day, we will have more doctors in our house!

A New Delta Author!

Rome (GA) Alumnae Chapter proudly introduces our first Delta Author. Dr. Barbara Searcy Cothran, is a native of Talbotton, GA and the eldest of five. She completed her primary education in that city. She has received a Bachelor's Degree from Savannah State College, a Master of Education Degree from Berry College, an Education Specialist Degree from Lincoln Memorial University and a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Jacksonville Theological Seminary. She has retired from the Rome City School system and Shorter University.

Soror Cothran has two children, Dion Knox and Soror Kiara Loud. She was initiated into the Rome Alumnae Chapter June 3, 1978 and has served faithfully since that time as a Past President and currently as the Sergeant at Arms. She works tirelessly and despite recent health issues is always available for whatever is needed. She gives all Glory to God, because “Thank God I don’t look like what I’ve been through”.

Soror Cothran has published her journey in her first book, “From the Peach Fields to Becoming A University Professor”. This book is currently available on Amazon and at Barnes and Noble locations.

The attached photos are of Soror Knox and her children and Soror Knox with her children, sisters, niece and nephew, all of whom are members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
On November 10, 2018, the Educational Development Committee of the Madison County (MS) Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. hosted a Literacy Lunch and Learn in collaboration with Pilgrim Rest M.B. Church, located in Madison, MS. Students in grades PreK-5 were able participate in activities while rotating learning centers focused on the Five Components of Reading Instruction: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary Development, Reading Fluency and Reading Comprehension. Parents left with tips to improve literacy and received information from Mrs. Kristen Wells, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Assistant State Literacy Coordinator, K-3. She informed parents that reading proficiently by the end of the third grade is considered a “make it or break it” benchmark. 83% of children who are not reading on grade level by the beginning of the fourth grade are at a risk of not graduating from high school on time. The Deltas of Madison County (MS) know the importance of literacy development and hosted this event for their service area: Camden, Canton, Farmhaven, Flora, Gluckstadt, Madison, Ridgeland and Sharon. The community response and participation was outstanding. There were over 170 people in attendance and each student received lunch and a book to take home.

There is no stopping the Okaloosa County Alumnae Chapter’s Physical and Mental Health Initiatives for 2018-2019, participation in the following community-wide events have already been successfully achieved: the Annual American Heart Association Heart Walk at Northwest Florida College generated $415.00, sponsorship of a display table and door prizes for participants at the Annual Health Fair and Blood Drive at Beulah First Baptist Church, and outstanding support of the American Cancer Society Making Strides for Breast Cancer Walk at the Santa Rosa Mall yielded $701.00 from the chapter and a team of 11 walkers. There is no stopping or slowing down for the members of Physical and Mental Health!
It was a wonderful star-studded November evening on the historic campus of Morehouse College where a sold-out crowd of beautifully dressed women and men gathered to witness the Pride in our Heritage tour sponsored by the National Arts and Letters Commission of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Former Atlanta Mayor and Ambassador, Andrew Younq and the Guest speaker for the evening Soror Susan L. Taylor greeted the National President, Regional Director and countless other sorors and guests in the magnificent Ginger Sullivan Auditorium. National Arts and Letters Commission Chair and recently elected President of the National Council of Negro Women, Soror Johnnetta B. Cole served as moderator for the evening.

An evening that was so majestic that once the audience was seated, they were immediately taken on a journey through sound as the evening opened to the rhythm of drums and songs. Drums and songs which had the ability to catapult you to a land where resources are plentiful, and the people, culture and art are beautiful!

Art so beautiful that it was only befitting that the Essence of the Evening be captured by a local artist. The artist painted a photo on the spot to truly depict the mood and atmosphere of the room. This painting which would be auditioned at the end of the evening would serve as a constant reminder to have Pride in our Heritage and to reflect on the inspiring words provided by the guest speaker.

The guest speaker, who is no stranger to large audiences served as Editor in Chief for the nation’s only black owned magazine, Essence Magazine, for years. Members of the audience including myself, grew up reading her column “In the Spirt” which provided a source of motivation and encouragement to African-American women. That same motivation and encouragement was given over the course of the evening as Soror Susan Taylor provided some extremely thought-provoking words.

Her comments centered around Self-Care and Gratitude. She stressed that “we can continue to be powerful if we care for our health and our bodies”. So, she encouraged us to eat less, walk more and drink more water. She also reminded us to have gratitude in everything that we do for “Gratitude makes everything you have more than enough.”

All in all, the evening was remarkable and everyone who left the auditorium felt an extreme sense of Pride and Hope in our Heritage; A heritage that as we witnessed during the evening is rich in tradition and culture; a Heritage that is worth preserving and celebrating!
The Montgomery (AL) Alumnae Chapter presented a three-day speaking tour featuring Kemba Smith-Pradia, a National Speaker, author and Criminal Justice Advocate. The three-day tour was sponsored by the Fortitude Foundation. Collaborators for the tour included the Beta Eta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and Alabama State University.

Soror Smith-Pradia shared her journey from college student to drug dealer’s girlfriend, domestic violence victim to federal prisoner. She told her riveting story on the consequences of making life-altering mistakes, getting a second chance and examining why in the criminal justice system the punishment doesn’t always equal the crime is one that was awesome to hear.

Her story has been shared on Nightline, BET, MTV, and The View. The three-day tour began with a public event, MAC Speaks, a chapter signature program to discuss issues that disproportionately impact African Americans. “The Trials & Tribulations of the Wrongly Convicted”, a discussion on unfair sentencing laws, allowed the community to hear her experience of being incarcerated. The audience viewed a video presentation documenting her journey as well as her parents’ fight to secure her freedom as they were left behind to raise her son. The evening was filled with every emotion from shock, sadness, anger, relief to joy. The basis of much discussion was focused on unfair sentencing laws. The public had the opportunity to speak with Soror Pradia as she autographed their books, posed for photos and shared some of their personal experiences.

The second day of the tour began on the campus of Alabama State University with a discussion on domestic violence and relationships was presented as a lecture series titled, “ASU Lecture Series: And Still I Rise.” Soror Pradia-Smith discussed the consequences of the decisions we make and what happens when we give our “Power of Choice” away to others. The lecture was attended by area high school students as well as students of ASU.

The Arts & Letters Committee in collaboration with the Membership Services Committee, hosted a “Chat and Chew” with Soror Kemba Smith-Pradia. Over 60 sorors had the opportunity to fellowship, as well as engage in a friendly conversation with Soror Pradia. Sorors asked questions and shared comments about her riveting book titled, “Poster Child.”

Soror Pradia-Smith openly spoke on her experiences which included some details not offered in her book or during previous presentations. Sorors followed up with numerous questions that clearly demonstrated their interest in Soror Pradia-Smith’s life before, during and after her incarceration. Following the question and answer period, she was present a red sorority blazer by the chapter. Soror Pradia-Smith was overwhelmed and thankful to the chapter for the gift, acts of kindness and sisterly spirit shown to her during her time in Montgomery. Finally, sorors were able to interact with Soror Pradia-Smith while she signed books and took pictures.

The culminating event of the three-day speaking tour was held in the Buskey Health Sciences Center on the campus of Alabama State University during the Creating Leaders Aspiring in Scholarship and Service (C.L.A.S.S.) 2018 Leadership Summit. The summit’s theme “The Power of Choice: Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders”, aligned perfectly with the tour. Soror Pradia-Smith delivered the keynote address, The Power of Choice. A P.E.A.C.E. Workshop - Saving Our Children was held for the parents of the Signature Programs participants. Panelist included the mother of a child that committed suicide, a local minister, a mental health counselor and Soror Pradia-Smith. This session involved an emotional dialogue between panelists and parents concerning topics such as; bullying, suicide, mental health concerns and parenting advice. Resource information and strategic methods were provided to the parents to assist in “saving our children”. Students representing Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Signature Programs as well as students participating in programs sponsored by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity had the opportunity to attend three sessions led by dynamic presenters discussing real-life issues. All sessions were focused on the power of making sound choices. Local professionals and dynamic role models presented session on topics such as leadership, the consequences associated with choices and making sound financial choices.

At the conclusion of the three-day tour more than 400 members of the River Region engaged in the impactful sessions on the “Power of Choice”
The Dr. Betty Shabazz Delta Academy of Nashville Alumnae Chapter is in full swing and has some extraordinary young ladies in the program who are in “Training to Reign.” These young ladies are on track to lead with the style, grace and humility like a poised and polished Queen would. An exciting experience is planned for the 29 participants enrolled in this year’s program. Crash courses in marketing and branding, entrepreneurship and leadership will be conducted with a focus on personal development.

September 16, 2018, the Orientation and Informational Session took place as the kick off event for the program. The day served as an opportunity for the participants and family members to meet the dedicated mentors who will be working with them, to learn of the program offerings, to learn of expectations and to allow for general questions to be addressed. Unlike in previous years, the mentors took a backseat and allowed prior, current and new program participants to “run the show.” This was the best decision the steering committee could have ever made. The impact of the testimonials and impromptu presentations by the girls resulted in the most successful orientation session ever according to the surveys!

From beginning to end, the Academy participants were in charge and what a phenomenal job they did. Normally, specific details of the event would be shared but since things are being “shaken up” that will not be the case. Instead you will learn of the influence that the Delta Academy has made in the life of a high school student who was recently inducted into the National Honor Society. This young lady is on track to becoming the doctor that touched this child’s life? That moment solidified the fact that every minute spent with Lauren’s words left the audience in awe. A lot of what she shared, the mentors never knew. Can you imagine the sense of pride gained by those who heard from day one. I saw powerful women, amazing leaders, and learned of great inventors. All of them black. It amazed me. I wanted to be like them. Delta Academy gave me exposure to have an opportunity to learn more about an area where both my race and gender are under represented and that is in the area of STEM. This organization finds ways for you to have exposure, you just have to take advantage of it. I was able to attend an all girls engineering camp at Tennessee Tech University two years in a row. The application was forwarded to me through Delta Academy after I completed the program. You see, the mentors don’t stop caring about you once you finish the program. With one essay and a selection panel later off I went to an experience of a lifetime. This new program participants to “run the show.” This was the best decision the steering committee could have ever made. The impact of the testimonials and impromptu presentations by the girls resulted in the most successful orientation session ever according to the surveys!

Let the commemoration begin:
“I hear the arguments you all have. Some I can relate and some a little ludicrous. Let me introduce myself and tell you a little of my own story, then you can decide if your opinion still stands. I am Lauren, a high school junior and like you I once pondered “Why Delta Academy?” We all know that being a part of a mentoring group young shy girls can be granted the chance to open up and find their wings so I will not speak on that. What I will share is what the Delta Academy can do for you that you can’t find in any other place. When I joined Delta Academy, I struggled a lot with my own self identity. The biggest part being my skin color. Going to public school in Gallatin limited my exposure to others that looked like me. Often I was the only black in most of my honors classes. There were some that did look like me that acted in a manner that left me feeling like I didn’t belong. Unsure of where I fitted in, I knew that I didn’t want to be associated with the wrong crowd. I strayed further and further from my own culture. Can you blame me? People had jokes and said “oh yeah that black girl” or “said your name doesn’t fit you because you are too black.” That really hurt.

Going into Delta Academy, I was scared and had very little knowledge of my own self. Delta Academy opened a racial door I never looked through before. They made me proud to rock my skin color. They made me understand how strong and brilliant my race was. They made me truly thankful for what God blessed me with from day one. I saw powerful women, amazing leaders, and learned of great inventors. All of them black. It amazed me. I wanted to be like them. Delta Academy gave me exposure to have an opportunity to learn more about an area where both my race and gender are under represented and that is in the area of STEM. This organization finds ways for you to have exposure, you just have to take advantage of it. I was able to attend an all girls engineering camp at Tennessee Tech University two years in a row. The application was forwarded to me through Delta Academy after I completed the program. You see, the mentors don’t stop caring about you once you finish the program. With one essay and a selection panel later off I went to an experience of a lifetime. This made me see beyond the limitations placed upon my community in the minds of the misinformed.

Through community services opportunities, I was given a chance to realize that my friends and I are not the only people in this world. There are people everywhere that might need more help then I do. Not just people but places to help that I didn’t know existed. We went out and helped we showed general kindness. Things that are so easy, yet we often don’t do them. The Delta Academy put us out into the world and showed us how easy making a true change in it could be.

These aren’t the only things for me to speak about. You must understand there are so many things I could talk about, but these are just a few that I have decided to share today. Without a doubt, I would advise each and every young lady in this building to join Delta Academy. The community that is brought together during the years you’ll spend here is something you’ll treasure forever. Every person will become your sister and your mentor. You’ll learn a little from everyone. The opportunity is sitting in front of you, but it is up to you to take it. So you ask Why Delta Academy? The reason for Delta Academy - for exposure, for experience, for opportunity, for love, for support, for self growth, and for an experience that will last a lifetime. Now does opinion still stand?”

Lauren’s words left the audience in awe. A lot of what she shared, the mentors never knew. Can you imagine the sense of pride gained by those who touched this child’s life? That moment solidified the fact that every minute spent with the young ladies of the Academy is worth it! You may never know the difference that Lauren’s words left the audience in awe. A lot of what she shared, the mentors never knew. Can you imagine the sense of pride gained by those who touched this child’s life? That moment solidified the fact that every minute spent with the young ladies of the Academy is worth it! You may never know the difference that you are making but know that your presence matters. Just showing up can change a life!

The day culminated with the Presidential address by Dr. Gloria C. Johnson. Photographs, food and fellowship made for a perfect day. The little princesses are anxious and ready to earn their crowns. The Steering Committee is ready to do whatever it takes to impact the lives of the 29 Diamonds in the Rough. The two together will produce beautiful crowning jewels for all the world to see.
Through effective partnership and collaboration between Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, and Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority (Americus, Georgia Chapters), a multi-county Rides to the Poll program was launched for 2018 Midterm Elections.

**HOW**
A Single Call Number for Rides to the Poll was in place for every county in Southwest Georgia Black Voters Matter Fund printed 5,000 Push Cards that were distributed via text, email, beauty salons, barber shops, doctor offices, & other businesses.

**WHO**
Assigned Dispatchers were in place beginning Early Voting, October 15th thru Election Day, November 6th. Rides Providers were established with Local Funeral Directors, Church Vans, American Legion, and other Businesses across multiple counties. Dispatchers maintained the Ride Providers List by Counties.

**WHEN**
Rides To The Poll signage, radio ads, and social media was in place prior to Early Voting Oct. 15th Thru Nov. 2nd. Including Saturday Voting, Oct. 27th and Election Day, Nov. 6th.

**WHAT**
Live Remote broadcasting on Election Day to call number for “Rides to the Poll” (229) 349-4995

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Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority & Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority

“Black Voters Matter in Southwest GA”

Sumter, Crisp, Marion, Dougherty, Stewart, Webster, Macon, Randolph, Terrell, & Lee Counties

**SISTERS IN SERVICE**

Sisters In Service
MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD:
EQUIPPING YOUNG MEN WITH THE TOOLS TO SUCCEED

The Statesboro Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. presented E.M.B.O.D.I: Your Future Starts Now aiming to engage young men ages 13-17 on the importance of college readiness, first impressions and proper decision-making. The event was held at Williams James Middle School in collaboration with guest speakers Soror Rosanne Ferrell, Dr. Torian White and Mr. Tony Foy. This was the chapter’s goal of equipping young men with the proper tools to succeed personally and professionally within our surrounding communities and becoming active leaders navigating the futures of the upcoming generation. There were over 32 young men in attendance from three of our service areas.

This event was a collaborative effort to aid young men to develop skills, clarify values, recognize leadership potential and gain knowledge essential to lifelong development. It is our belief as we continue to address the needs of our community; we will provide attention to the physical, social, emotional and spiritual aspects of growth, as well as the intellectual aspect. Statesboro Alumnae Chapter (SAC) continues to provide experiences that will facilitate formal, informal and collaborative learning for young men to genuinely maximize their potential to empower others daily.

Members of SAC in attendance participated in assisting our guest speakers with their interactive presentations and providing them with giveaways to actively engage the young men throughout intentional conversations. One major point addressed by our guest speaker Soror Rosanne Ferrell was “obtaining a college education is key to realizing the American dream and the sacrifice will open doors to a world of opportunity.”

The sorority hopes to make this a bi-monthly event by bringing more awareness to the young men of our local communities and sharing knowledge that will cultivate their minds to contribute to today’s society.

MONTGOMERY: A TRIP OF A LIFETIME

The Stone Mountain-Lithonia Alumnae Chapter’s (SM-LAC) Political Awareness and Involvement Committee hosted, “a trip of a lifetime” – the third experience of its kind that the chapter has facilitated over the past several years.

This year’s civil rights tour began with a bus trip from Atlanta to Montgomery, when more than 50 people gathered together for a daylong journey that included a guided bus tour of historic landmarks throughout the city with stops at Dexter Street Baptist Church and Rectory, along with the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

Soror Patricia Lowery described the experience as powerful and moving, and said it left a lasting impact on her 10-year-old granddaughter.

“She was totally involved, taking notes and everything,” Lowery said of her granddaughter. “I think her takeaway was, ‘I want to learn more.’”

Lowery also said that for her, witnessing the 800 steel monuments suspended in the air brought her to tears. Each of the monuments represents a county in the United States where a racial terror lynching took place. Names of the lynching victims are also engraved on the columns.

According to its website, “The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, which opened to the public on April 26, 2018, is the nation’s first memorial dedicated to the legacy of enslaved black people, people terrorized by lynching, African Americans humiliated by racial segregation and Jim Crow, and people of color burdened with contemporary presumptions of guilt and police violence.”

Other SM-LAC tour participants described the memorial visit as jaw dropping and soul stirring. “Growing up, you hear and read about the ‘ugly’ parts of our rich heritage in America,” explained Soror Jan Stevenson. “To actually see names of recorded ancestors who were lynched, burned, killed and imprisoned was tough to see, but necessary to revisit.”

Another special highlight of the experience was having 10 foster children participate. A number of SM-LAC sorors made personal contributions to cover the transportation and food expenses of the foster children and their chaperones, in addition to several souvenirs: sweatshirts, journals, and sunglasses.

In previous years, SM-LAC has conducted civil rights “trips of a lifetime” to Selma and Birmingham, Alabama.
The Talladega County Alumnae Chapter hosted a Phone-A-Thon for chapter members for the entire month of September 2018. The Social Action chairs Theresa Smoot & Sonja George obtained listings of persons who had committed a felony crime, but were still eligible to register to vote. There were over 400 eligible felons in the service area of the chapter. The committee's main objective was to make contact with everyone on the list by phone or postcard. Chapter members provided specific locations to register to vote and important state mandated deadlines to register. The initiative was a major success, we contacted over 275 eligible felons by phone and an additional 100 received a postcard in the US Mail. Our goal was to educate everyone about the history of voting, emphasize the importance of our civic duty and encourage everyone to exercise the right so many of our ancestors fought to obtain.

TROOP-COWETA ALUMNAE CHAPTER DONATES TO ANNUAL FEED THE HUNGRY

The members of Troup-Coweta Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. recently partnered with Feed the Hungry and donated vegetables and other items to assist in the annual feeding sponsored by Mr. Jimmy Edwards and Associates. This annual event prepares and delivers 700 to 800 meals on Thanksgiving Day to citizens of Troup County and surrounding areas. Several of the members of Troup-Coweta Alumnae Chapter volunteer their time and effort on Thanksgiving morning to assist in the preparation and delivery of meals as well.

The founder, Mr. Jake Sessions, started the program over 17 years ago. Due to health issues, he is no longer able to assist in the endeavor. The program is now under the direction of Mr. Jimmy Edwards, who has assisted Mr. Sessions, for those 17-plus years.

November is National Family Caregivers Month and on November 10th, Tuskegee Alumnae Chapter hosted a Caregivers Summit: The Heart of the Matter, Caring for Them and You. Attendees were able to meet one on one with a nurse and a social worker and visit exhibitors who offer services that benefit caregivers as well as their loved ones. Attendees were also elated to receive complimentary massages from instructors of the Better Bodies Massage Institute. A workshop conducted by Dr. Dorothy Brandon an extension specialist with the Alabama Cooperative, was offered to caution participants about Caregiver Stress. A second workshop titled, “The 411 for Caregivers” offered participants information about wills, estates, and protecting your assets. Mr. Sayge Grubbs of the Sage Legacy Counsel conducted this workshop and also offered free consultations to everyone who attended his session.

The attendees enjoyed a pre-Thanksgiving meal sponsored by Leave the Light on Foundation. As attendees finished up their meals, they listened as four panelists shared their personal experiences and professional expertise. Panelists included Judge Deborah H. Biggers of the Macon County District Court; Edrice Leftwich, Retired Registrar, Tuskegee University; Minister Ruth Perkins, Certified Nurse Practitioner; and Mary Wedgeworth, MSW, Alabama Cares Program Coordinator with the South Central Alabama Development Commission. The panel was followed by a dramedy titled, : Caregiving: the Good, the Bad, the Funny” performed by Dr. Jacquetta Y. Parhams.

TAC ended the event by honoring seven caregivers with the Preserving Your Legacy Award. The caregivers were nominated from members of the chapter and recognized for their unwavering dedication to their loved ones.
Voters recently elected Soror Toni Walker Terrett (Gamma Psi, Fall ’03) as the first woman to serve as judge for the Ninth District Circuit Court of Mississippi. Prior to her election, she served nearly 10 years as Community Court judge and senior Municipal Court judge. She also worked in private practice as a solo practitioner. In addition to representing clients in a variety of legal matters, her background includes experience as a Drug Court Public Defender, law clerk to Ninth District Chancellor Vicki Barnes, and contract attorney for the Mississippi Center for Legal Services.

Judge Terrett has served as project director for the Vicksburg Domestic Violence Victims’ Empowerment program since 2013. As director, she has helped to expand the program to provide more services to victims while holding defendants accountable and educating the community. In 2016, the Mississippi Coalition Against Domestic Violence recognized her work in domestic violence awareness by awarding her the Community Awareness Award.

As municipal court judge, Judge Terrett oversaw the implementation of the house arrest program and the use of a collection agency for past-due fines. In addition to supervising the Court Services staff, she oversaw the City of Vicksburg’s community service program and developed the Community Impact Panel – an initiative that provides mentoring by community leaders to younger, first-time nonviolent offenders.

Judge Terrett is active in the community as former vice president and current president of the board of directors for Mountain of Faith Ministries and an avid volunteer for organizations such as the United Way of West Central Mississippi and Salvation Army, among others. She is a member of the Vicksburg Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Blacks In Government, Believers of Faith Cancer Organization and Mt. Alban M.B. Church where she serves as pianist for the Women of Faith Choir. She has served as a host for the Annual Restoration Day, a program that provides free legal counsel to individuals seeking to expunge their criminal records, sponsored by the Magnolia Bar Association.

Judge Terrett is also the recipient of numerous awards and honors. In 2018, the Mississippi Social Action Team of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority awarded Judge Terrett the Social Action Trailblazer Award at the annual Delta Days at the State Capitol. Terrett has also been recognized by The Vicksburg Post as a Community Hero and The Mississippi Business Journal as a 2016 Leader in Law and one of the 50 Leading Business Women in 2010.

Terrett is a magna cum laude graduate of Vicksburg High School. She earned a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Tougaloo College and master’s in journalism from the University of Memphis. She graduated from the Mississippi College School of Law and is a member of the American Bar, Mississippi Bar, Warren County and Magnolia Bar Associations. She currently serves on the faculty of Alcorn State University where she teaches mass communications law and social media.

Terrett and her husband, Andre, are the proud parents of five teenagers.

INeUGURAL ADOPTE-A-HIGHWAY PROJECT

The Warner Robins Alumnae Chapter (WRAC) of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. held its Inaugural Adopt-A-Highway service project on Saturday, October 28, 2018. Adopt-A-Highway is a partnership between Warner Robins Alumnae Chapter and Keep Warner Robins Beautiful to assist in keeping Russell Parkway, Warner Robins, GA pristine green so residents and visitors can enjoy the space. Equipped with bright orange safety vests, gloves, trash bags, and grabbers, approximately 20 participants including WRAC members and volunteers expressed passion for service by arriving early on a misty, Saturday morning. In the process of creating memories and building relationships, trash and debris was collected alongside a one-mile stretch on both sides of Russell Parkway. Spearheaded by the Economic Development Committee, the chapter will conduct quarterly maintenance of this area.

Georgia’s Adopt-A-Highway Program enlists the help of citizens, as volunteers, to remove litter from state roadsides. While saving taxpayer dollars, the program provides recognition for participating companies and organizations, facilitates public awareness of the environmental and monetary costs of littering, and promotes civic responsibility and pride. The volunteers of the Adopt-A-Highway program serve as visible reminders to the public that we are all stewards of the land.
COLLIER COUNTY ALUMNAE PROVIDING BIRTHING KITS TO HAITI

Most pregnant women in Haiti have limited access to childbirth services and rely on midwives to deliver their babies. It is critical that they have clean materials to reduce maternal and neonatal infections. To assist in this effort, the Collier County Alumnae Chapter (CCAC) is partnering with Hope for Haiti, a Naples, Florida non-profit, to provide much-needed birthing kits to pregnant mothers in Haiti.

This year, CCAC members donated items for the kits and helped to assemble them in May at Hope for Haiti’s Naples’ warehouse. The birthing kits include gauze pads, receiving blankets, umbilical tape, sanitary pads, latex gloves, alcohol and antiseptic wipes. The next shipment leaving the Naples warehouse is scheduled for early June and will be delivered to a midwife clinic in Baraderes, Haiti.

CCAC has been a Hope for Haiti partner since 2013 and also has provided items for hygiene and cholera prevention kits. The mission of Hope for Haiti, founded in Naples in 1990, is to improve the quality of life for the Haitian people, particularly children, through education, health care, water, infrastructure and economy. “CCAC understands that investing our time and efforts in health care to improve the quality of life for the people of Haiti is vital,” said Karly Campbell Solomon, chair of the chapter’s International Awareness and Involvement Committee. “With Haiti having such close ties to Southwest Florida, it has been a very rewarding experience to work for a cause that embraces our global community to help make births safer, cleaner and healthier for the women of Haiti,” Solomon added.

LAUREL ALUMNAE CHAPTER HOSTS FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOP

The Laurel (MS) Alumnae Chapter hosted a Community Based Financial Literacy Workshop designed to help students and parents prepare for college and to learn tips on saving and budgeting. All participants received handouts about available financial assistance.

The workshop consisted of two speakers who provided valuable information from both financial and educational points of view. Soror Contina Graves, Chair of Economic Development and Assistant Vice President of Loan Operations, delivered the purpose of the event and conducted an ice breaker to get everyone engaged in the workshop. Later, she explained the importance of money management. She encouraged the students to save, prioritize, and budget their money. Soror Graves also informed parents and students of the different types of checking accounts and the amenities that are available.

Dr. Anika Floyd, Director of Student Services at a local community college, spoke to the participants and their parents on her own behalf as a parent and an educational advocate. She provided generous information about financial aid, grants, loans, work study, resumes and scholarships. Dr. Floyd gave insight on skills to become a well-rounded student. She instructed students to get involved in community service, to take challenging courses in high school, and not to cheat, rather to do their own work. She urged them to continue their volunteerism in college by getting involved in campus activities. Lastly, Dr. Floyd encouraged the students to have a positive attitude, prioritize, pray and seek God’s direction.

A question and answer period were held to clarify any misconceptions about college preparation. Afterwards, the parents and students were served with lunch and door prizes were given out. Upon leaving the event, both parents and students left with knowledgeable information, a better understanding of what financial assistance is available for college, and how to start saving and budgeting their money.
THERE’S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

“When I think of home, I think of a place where sisterly love is overflowing; sure feels good to be right here at home where membership is constantly growing.” This is where it all began for Jackson (MS) Alumnae Chapter’s reclamation and retention activity, “There’s No Place Like JMAC.” The activity was designed to motivate inactive Sorors to come back into the fold, while encouraging financial members to be more actively involved in the chapter’s programs and service projects.

Each member of the chapter was asked to invite non-financial sorors to the event. To ensure that information was available about the purpose and goals of the chapter’s committees, all committee chairs set up display boards with pertinent information and photos of previous events. Sorors “followed the Red Brick Road” with greetings and the charge given by the Chapter President Denise Griffin-Whittington and First Vice President Gwen Handy. Attendees then Eased on Down the Road with a grand entrance of the characters Dorothy, Tin Man, Lion, Scarecrow and the Wicked Witch (all members of the Membership Services Committee. The program included Reflections from a Delta Doll, Diva and a Dear, during which they shared their experiences in Delta in general, and JMAC in particular.

Breakout sessions were held to address the following topics: Heart, Brain, Courage, and Sisterly Love (demonstrating love through service in JMAC); We’re not in Kansas Anymore (leadership qualities and how to effectively lead in Delta); and There’s a Storm Coming: It’s A New Day (reclamation session geared toward the invited guests).

All visiting Sorors received a postcard with chapter meeting dates and times. Each soror who paid dues and joined the chapter was entered into a Buddy System to help acclimate them to JMAC and updates of Delta protocol and policies.

SOROR ARTHENIA L. JOYNER
(MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY)

It was a full circle moment for Soror Arthenia Joyner when Hillsborough County unveiled the Arthenia L. Joyner University Area Community Library during Women’s History Month. Thronges of community members, Deltas and elected officials gave Joyner a glowing ovation when she received the honor of having a local library as her namesake. The new library at 13619 22nd St. in Tampa also features a display of the Hillsborough County Women’s Hall of Fame, with names and bios of the 30 women enshrined, including Joyner.

Joyner, who is no stranger to breaking racial and gender barriers, was the first African-American woman to practice law in Hillsborough and Polk counties, and the first African-American board member of the Hillsborough County Aviation Authority. She served in the Florida House of Representatives from 2000 to 2006, and the Florida Senate from 2006 to 2016. She has held local, state, and national posts and appointments, and is the longest practicing female African-American lawyer in Florida. And she has no plans of slowing down as she currently serves as a commissioner of the Florida Constitution Review Commission.

Although Joyner is a lifelong Democrat, she has always had bipartisan support and respect. Republican county commissioner and former house and senate member Victor Crist, led the motion to make this momentous occasion a reality. As Joyner approached the podium to share remarks, she thanked county commissioners for their unanimous vote in support of this esteemed recognition that will memorialize her impact on her community for decades to come.

She recalled always having a love of books as a child and how her mother encouraged her to balance books on her head to ensure she had good posture — the posture to always stand up for what is fair and just. “As a child, I would read a book, then I’d walk,” Joyner said.

Joyner further explained how her walk in life has always been about the struggle for human rights for all. “Knowledge is the great equalizer and books unlock the truth, and freedom cannot flourish without the freedom of thought,” Joyner said.

The program concluded with the profound words Joyner left the crowd of onlookers to consider. “Everyone that walks these walls can affirm their unique potential every time they read a book.”
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