

EMBRACING THE STANDARDS, RAISING THE BAR

the NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.
KRINON

SPRING 2017

94TH ANNIVERSARY



NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.

The Sorority was founded in 1923 in Jersey City, New Jersey. Its purpose is:

- To stimulate professional growth among teachers;
- To foster a true spirit of sisterhood;
- To promote the highest ideals of the teaching profession; and
- To encourage the development of the potential of our youth.

There are over one hundred chapters across the United States.

Our Philosophy

The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. is a professional organization of teachers dedicated to the task of educating youth of America. We believe education to be a potent factor in maintaining and perpetuating democracy as the most ideal form of life. To remain in this position, modern education must provide youth with abilities for developing an integrated personality, assuming a successful place in a group and adjusting to the ever changing problems of society.

Through day by day instruction in the classroom and multiple contacts in the community, the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. seeks to inform all citizenry of the ever changing problems of our society and to equip them with the necessary social and academic skills to solve these problems according to a true democratic process. In addition, we are committed to celebrating success of individuals and groups and to honoring the legacy of those who have gone on before us. The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. shall continue to take its rightful place among those who point the way in establishing, maintaining and sustaining avenues of communication between and among all people and in fostering the pursuit of excellence in education.

Purpose

The Krinon is the official journal of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. It is published for the purposes of:

- Providing current, relevant facts regarding emerging initiatives, trends and issues which impact education, family, school, and community; and
- Promoting and advancing the interests of the members.

Publication Date

The magazine is published annually.

How to reach The Krinon Staff

Correspondence, which includes your name, title, email or home address, and telephone number may be sent to the current Chief Editor at bburrellpdk@gmail.com.

Subscription

Members who are financial before December 1st of the current sororal year will receive a free subscription. Non-member subscription cost \$10.00.

Publication Policy

Information submitted must adhere to the established guidelines of the magazine. All submissions are subject to editing for clarity and length. Photographs must be original. Full color, high quality photographs are acceptable.

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National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.

the
KRINON

“ Embracing the Standards,
Raising the Bar: Narratives of
Bravery and Hope: Perspectives
from African American Teachers ”

Spring 2017

94th Anniversary

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OUR FOUNDERS



Front Row L-R: Gladys Cannon Nunery, Julia Asbury Barnes, Gladys Merritt Ross (Mother founder), Florence Steel Hunt;
Second Row L-R: Ella Wells Butler, Marguerite Gross, Mildred Morris Williams
Not Pictured -
Edna McConnell



Our Founders attending the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. in New York City, New York.

L-R: Florence Steel Hunt, Ella Wells Butler, Gladys Merritt Ross, Gladys Cannon Nunery, Julia Asbury Barnes

SUPREME BASILEUS' GREETING



The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated, an organization of professional women in the field of education, celebrates 94 years of continuous service. Our mission continues to be The Pursuit of Excellence, a Challenge to Fulfill.

This edition, “Embracing the Standards, Raising the Bar: Narratives of Bravery and Hope: Perspectives from African American Teachers”, focuses on the history of education for African Americans; our history as a people; and the educational and teaching experiences, challenges and successes of the members of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. I ask that you reflect on the history of education for African Americans in this country and the milestones that have provided additional opportunities for us as a people, as well as the struggles, sacrifices, bravery and hope demonstrated by those who came before us.

The Krinon provides an opportunity for the members and affiliates of this organization to express their views, share research and to investigate and highlight the intent of our purpose—The Pursuit of Excellence, a Challenge to Fulfill—as we strive to promote the highest ideals of the teaching profession. Thank you to the members of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and supporters for providing this opportunity for organization members and our affiliates to share their professional and experiential knowledge through personal narratives.

I extend thanks to the supporters of this organization and the readers of this publication who will continue to learn and benefit from the information shared. It is our desire to enhance our knowledge and grow with you as well as attempt to enlighten ourselves and community members as we continue to pursue and achieve excellence in education.

Each reader of this journal is encouraged to reflect on your own experiences and historical perspectives, and to utilize the information, strategies, and techniques shared, as appropriate, in your educational and community settings. Share the information in your professional learning communities through professional development and

collaborative interactions and planning. I also encourage every reader to acknowledge and communicate the importance of ensuring that The Reauthorization of the 1965 ESEA Act – “Every Child Succeeds Act”, which is designed to ensure that every child achieves, is fully funded and implemented. Making your voice count, where it matters, will help ensure that reducing the achievement gap becomes a reality for children of color in this nation. When this occurs, we will be able to celebrate another milestone in education for African Americans; their “civil right to an excellent education”.

This Krinon edition holds special significance to me, as I will complete my four-year term as the national president during our upcoming national conference in Little Rock, Arkansas, the 94th Anniversary Conclave. This year, we will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Little Rock Nine and the desegregation of Central High School, which was led by nine courageous young people whose historic actions ended desegregation in that high school and set a precedent across the nation. The milestones of additional agencies, groups and people who made a difference in education, the arts, social reform and politics will also be highlighted.

I encourage you to continue to (1) seek information, knowledge and strategies that will improve decision making around educational issues; (2) increase the desire and capacity of community and educational leaders to design pathways to success and excellence for all students; and (3) promote the teaching profession by demonstrating our value, providing appropriate resources and including educators in decision making around educational funding and policy.

In closing, I extend a heartfelt thank you to Dr. Brenda Burrell, Chief Editor, and the Editorial Committee for their hard work and diligent efforts in the completion of this issue of The Krinon, the professional journal of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., and the three past issues. This work has certainly been a source of pride for our membership as well as served as an informational and educational tool for pre- and in-service educators in the communities we serve.

Your Servant Leader,
Charlotte M. Williams

NATIONAL YES Program

Youth

Y O U T H
G U I D A N C E
**XINOS (HIGH
SCHOOL GIRLS)**
KUDOS (HIGH
SCHOOL BOYS)
**C O L L E G E
G U I D A N C E**
K A P P A
OMICRON TAU
(KOT)

Education

SCHOLARSHIP **READING
POWER** AFRICAN
AMERICAN HISTORY
COMPUTER LITERACY
MATHEMATICS **TEACH-
A-RAMA** LEADERSHIP
TRAINING **PUBLIC
RELATIONS** ACADEMIC
ISSUES **CURRENT
TRENDS** COMMISSION
ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Service

I N T E R N A T I O N A L
P R O J E C T S **NATIONAL
P R O J E C T S**
LOCAL PROJECTS
**NUTRITION, HEALTH
& HYPERTENSION**
ASSAULT ON
I L L I T E R A C Y
**CHILDREN & ADULT
BENEFITS** EARLY
CHILDHOOD **TOUCH-
A-CHILD** SECOND
CAREERS **RETIRED
SORORS** VOLUNTEERS
FOUNDERS DAY
EDUCATION **HUMAN
RIGHTS**

CHIEF EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Greetings,

Under the umbrella of our overarching theme “**Embracing the Standards, Raising the Bar**”, established by our illustrious Supreme Basileus Charlotte M. Williams, this edition of The Krinon comes with a special twist. The focus of the 2017 edition is “**Narratives of Bravery and Hope: Perspectives from African American Teachers.**” This edition is in recognition of two milestone events. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the desegregating of Central High School by the Little Rock Nine. NSPDK will be in Little Rock,



Arkansas to commemorate that historic event during our 94th Anniversary Conclave. The second milestone event is the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. The museum tells our story as a people on a national level.

Narratives of Bravery and Hope: Perspectives from African American Teachers tells our story as African American teachers. Our stories include trials, tribulations, and turmoil. Our stories are about overcoming obstacles. Our stories are about “get an education cause they can’t take that from you.” Our stories are about being a voice for children who had no voice. Our stories are about being the first... the first to go to college, the first to graduate with a Masters or Doctorate degree, the first Black teacher in a building, the first Black teacher to win the Teacher of the Year, the first... the list goes on and on. Our stories are about victory! Finally, I want to say “thank you.” I am so grateful to my beloved sorors of NSPDK, Inc. for allowing me to serve as your Chief Editor of The Krinon for these past four years. I must express my deepest and genuine appreciation to the two Associate Editors of this journal. Soror Mary Ennon, Alpha Chapter, and Soror Dr. Lenora Waters, Delta Beta Chapter, who have put in countless hours of editing and rewriting to ensure that The Krinon was and is a top professional journal. There are no words to truly express how I feel about each of you; but please know that you are much loved!

Sisterly,
Brenda J. Burrell, Ed.D.
Chief Editor



NATIONAL DIRECTORATE



Charlotte M. Williams
Supreme Basileus



Margarett Galloway
First Supreme Anti-Basileus



Dr. Sherelene A. Harris
Second Supreme Anti-Basileus



Cynthia Rosignon
Supreme Grammateus



Janice L. Mason
Supreme Epistoleus



Debra Wade
Supreme Tamiouchos



Myrna Robinson
Supreme Tamias



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Gwendolyn B. Watts
Conclave Coordinator

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PERPETUAL SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Perpetual Scholarship Foundation, Inc. was founded in 1988 to help fund the scholarships which are awarded by the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. The ongoing mission of Perpetual is to raise at least \$1 million to establish an endowment, and once that goal has been reached, to fully fund scholarships from the investment income of the endowment. Perpetual raises money from the generous gifts of the Sorors and the Chapters. Sorors are asked to donate \$25.00 annually to be considered members of the Perpetual Scholarship Foundation, Inc.



Seated (L-R): Harriett Crouch, Mary Jane McCoy, Mattie Woolen-Clay, Florence King, Dr. Jessie Muldrew, Opal Hampton, Kathleen Thomas.
Standing (L-R): June Day, Huberdean Lowe, Margaret Hope, Jessie Hopkins, Barbara Williams*, Ernestine Moore, Joycelyn Hentley, Lisa Freison.

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Gertrude Robertson*

* Deceased

NATIONAL ANTHROPOS

The National Anthropos, an affiliate of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., was founded in 1979. It was the successor to the Sorority's "Men In Our Lives" which was formed in 1949. The intent of the National Anthropos is to take part in, assist, and support the activities of the Sorority in the areas of education, youth development, social interaction, and other similar areas. Their allegiance is first and foremost to the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. resulting from the very special relationship of its men to the women of the Sorority. Anthropos membership is open to any male friend of Sorors in good standing, including spouse, relative, or friend. In particular, the Anthropos welcome young men who have been Kudos who have shown interest in continued affiliation and who are sponsored by a Soror. The primary focus of the National Anthropos is Recruitment, Retention, and Communication. The National Anthropos are dependent on the Sorors for new Anthropos. We are committed to developing compelling programs to keep Anthropos engaged throughout the year. We are committed to improving the communication amongst our membership by improving our National Anthropos web site (nationalanthropos.com), and exploiting social media. The National Anthropos look forward with excitement to expanding our ranks and continuing our support to the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.



L-R: Derwin Sawyer-Boyd (East Region President); Joseph S. Daniels (National Treasurer & Far West Region President); Alexander Smith, Jr. (Southeast Region President); Fulton Nolen, Jr. (Midwest Region President, National Recording Secretary); Gary M. King (National President); Timothy Bennett*; Charles W. Watts (National Parliamentarian); Delmar E. Nelson, Sr. (National Financial Secretary); and Rudolph S. Brown (National Executive Advisor).

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National President: Gary M. King
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 National Treasurer: Joseph S. Daniels
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 National Parliamentarian: Charles W. Watts
 National Executive Advisor: Rudolph S. Brown

Appointed

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 National Scholarship Liaison: Edgar A. McCoy (Acting)
 National Historian: Garfield Johnson, Jr.

Regional Presidents

East: Derwin Sawyer-Boyd
 Southeast: Alexander Smith, Jr.
 Midwest: Fulton Nolen, Jr.
 Southwest: Leslie Alaman
 Far West: Joseph S. Daniels

* Deceased

ASSOCIATE EDITORS



Mary E. Ennon
Associate Editor
Alpha Chapter
Jersey City, NJ

Soror Mary Ennon is a Diamond Life Member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and an active member of Alpha Chapter for more than 40 years. She is a graduate of New Jersey City University receiving both her Bachelors and Masters Degrees. Mary is a retired educator of the Newark, NJ School System, where she worked in several capacities ranging from classroom teacher to Reading Recovery Teacher. Soror Ennon was Supervisor and Curriculum Specialist in the Department of Teaching and Learning Office of Early Childhood, Literacy Staff Developer, and a Success for All Literacy Program Facilitator. She was a recipient of the New Jersey Governor's Teacher Recognition Award, and a Fellowship to the Institute for Educational Leadership at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ and Washington, DC. After retirement, Soror Ennon was Literacy Consultant in the Englewood, NJ School District and for the Catholic Arch Diocese of Newark. As a member of Alpha Chapter, Soror Ennon has functioned in numerous capacities including Basileus, First and Third Anti-Basileus, Tamiouchos, Tamias, Epistoleus and Executive Advisor. She was a sponsor for the chartering of Delta Nu Chapter in Bergen County, NJ. Soror Mary has served in several capacities in the Eastern Region: Eastern Region Retreat Chairperson, Epistoleus, Elections Chairperson, Tamiouchos and Chairperson of the Officers' Workshops. As Eastern Region Member-at-Large, Mary was National Chairperson of The Constitution and Bylaws Committee. She served as Second Supreme Anti-Basileus, National Membership Chairperson 2009-2013, and National Anthropolos Chairperson in 2013. She is an active member of Christ Episcopal Church, Teaneck, New Jersey.



Dr. Lenora D. Waters
Associate Editor
Delta Beta Chapter
Austin, TX

Soror Dr. Lenora D. Waters is a Life Member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and a thirty-five year member of Delta Beta Chapter in Austin, Texas. She holds the following degrees: Doctor of Education from Baylor University, Waco, Texas; Master of Science from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; and Bachelor of Science from Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma. She has 45 professional years in education, including eleven in the Ponca City, Oklahoma public school system and 34 years at two Texas colleges. Soror Waters retired from Huston-Tillotson College, Austin Texas as Senior Vice President/Dean of the College in 2000. During her tenure at Huston-Tillotson College she also served as Counselor, Director of Basic Studies, Chairperson – Division of Education and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Soror Waters served two terms as Delta Beta Chapter's Basileus, 1987-1991 and 1995-1999. She also served as First-Anti Basileus and on numerous chapter committees. She served as Supreme Parliamentarian and Member of the Headquarters Committee, 1991-1993; National Chairman of International/National Projects, 1991-1992 and National Chair, Every Member Forum 1996-1997. She presently serves as Delta Beta Chapter's Editor to The Krinon. Soror Waters is an active Life Member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and Langston University Alumni Association. She is also President of the Sanctuary Choir of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Austin, Texas.

CHIEF EDITOR AND KRINON COMMITTEES

Soror Dr. Brenda J. Burrell is a Life Member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and a thirty year member of Delta Beta Chapter in Austin, Texas. Her Bachelor of Science degree in Education, Masters of Education degree and Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy were received from the University of Texas in Austin. She has taught in the Austin Independent School District, Austin, Texas and the Normandy School District, St. Louis, Missouri. After seventeen years in the classroom, she became an administrator and served as Assistant Principal, Principal of Casey Elementary and Principal of Lyndon Baines Johnson High School, Austin, Texas. While principal of LBJ, her school moved from low-performing to the ranking of 41st of the Top 100 High Schools in the nation.



Dr. Brenda J. Burrell
Chief Editor, The Krinon
Delta Beta Chapter
Austin, TX

Very active in the National Education Association, she has served as President of the Austin Association of Teachers, District XII President of Texas State Teachers Association, and a member of the National Resolutions Committee. Currently, she is an educational consultant in the areas of diversity, multiculturalism and culturally responsive pedagogy. Some of her publications include Not Yet, The Krinon 2011; Raising the Academic Achievement Levels of Ethnic Minority Students (2009); and Teaching in Segregated and Desegregated Schools: African American Female Teachers' Voices, National Journal of Urban Education and Practice 2008. Soror Burrell is a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, and the American Association of University Women. A dedicated worker in the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., she has served on numerous committees at all levels. She served as Parliamentarian and Basileus of Delta Beta Chapter, Southwest Regional Chaplain, Regional Parliamentarian, National Chair of the International Project and Supreme Parliamentarian.

National Krinon Committee

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Jeannette Webb, Mu Chapter, Midwest Region
Janice McDowell, Gamma Upsilon Chapter, Southwest Region
Jill Reed, Beta Phi Chapter, Far West Region

GREETINGS FROM THE EASTERN REGION



Dear Sorors,

The 21st Century has brought many changes to education. We began with the “No Child Left Behind Act” that has evolved into the “Every Child Succeeds Act.” The names are different but the intent is for all children to benefit from a free, equal, and quality education. To this end teachers and administrators are being held accountable. Teacher evaluations have changed to include student success.

Before “No Child Left Behind,” teachers were empowered to address the needs of students, resulting in teaching methodologies that were creative, yet broad in breadth and depth in order to address the myriad of needs observed in their diverse learners. Many teachers faced criticism from their colleagues but their children thrived. In this issue of *The Krinon*, “Narratives of Bravery and Hope: Perspectives from African American Teachers,” we will learn from the experiences our teachers endured in order to achieve success. They persevered through many challenges for the sake of their children. To this type of educator, teaching is a calling not a job. They go out of their way to offer the children unfamiliar experiences; an assortment of adventures, vicarious, simulated, or actual, that for some, quite possibly would not otherwise be exposed. Today, that exposure is even more far-reaching, not merely global but celestial in nature. Through the expanding growth of technology, media, and communications, educators can now travel through an educational frontier unlike any ever traveled before. Imagine the impact of group virtual reality experiences with the potential for transporting whole classes to places seen only in one dimensional aspects with the ability to even communicate and interact with classes in other parts of the globe.

We owe our success to the educators that paved the way for us. We must not fail the young people of today. We must arm ourselves with the knowledge, tools, skills, and abilities that will launch their success for the future ahead. In doing so, we become the role models that encourage and project an image that inspire our students to eagerly pursue our challenging profession, that of education.

When they look at you, they should see an individual, proud, energetic, aspirational, one who loves learning, sharing, interacting with others, especially young people – an EDUCATOR!

We must leave a legacy of success for our future educators.

Sisterly,
Noreen Little
Eastern Regional Director

GREETINGS FROM THE SOUTHEAST REGION

Greetings from the Southeast Region,

A seed was planted in 1923 in New Jersey by our founders; and from that seed sprouted many trees which became an immense organization, the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. As Regional Director of the dynamic Southeast Region, I am honored to extend greetings to all of you, from all of us.



The Southeast Region's theme, "Education: A Tool for Economic Prosperity," is a reminder that the vision of our founders still exists. The legacy continues in 2017 as the struggle for fair and equitable education in our educational institutions continues. Our Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), offering studies rich in legacy, history, investments and achievements of the African American community, are still being under funded. We know because the Southeast Region is the home of 42 HBCU schools.

The Southeast Region and the National Leadership welcomed its newest chapter, Zeta Delta. The chartering was held in Selma, Alabama on October 7-9, 2016 on the beautiful campus of Concordia College. The historic event brought 22 ladies into our sisterhood. Afterwards, a walk across the historic Edmund Pettis Bridge brought tears to the eyes of all in attendance.

Remember people cannot change truth, but truth can change people.

Delores Davis Hills,
Southeast Regional Director

GREETINGS FROM THE MIDWEST REGION



Greetings to you My Beloved Sisters,

Along with the twenty Magnificent and Mighty Midwest Chapters, I am pleased beyond measure to have the opportunity to extend sisterly greetings to each of you as we enter into another calendar year.

As one year ends and a new one begins, I reflect back on the time when I played jacks, jump rope, played with my dolls, and yes, marbles in the back yard or at the neighbors — just an ear-shot away from hearing my mother calling me home for dinner or just to come home. I remember being home before the street lights came on or at least in the yard, or on the porch. Now communication between parents and children is via phone or text. The conversations our youth have during present day is conversing with teachers in the classroom through social interaction, eye contact, and without the phone. This form of communication helps to develop and nurture their basic communication and social skills. As time goes on, I see the importance and need for teachers and leaders to “fill the gap” and to “Make A Difference.”

As we continue to “Raise the Bar,” and raise the expectations of our youth, the Midwest Youth Conference will be held this year on April 6-9, 2017. This year is hosted by our Akron, Beta Iota Chapter. Our Xinos and Kudos conference theme, “Be the Force Behind the Change,” embraces the importance of our youth stepping up, speaking out, sometimes standing alone for what is right and being the driving force behind the changes that impact our communities and our future. Get involved, don’t just stand by and watch. As it says in James 2:26, “Faith without action is dead.”

Our Midwest Regional Conference will be in Dearborn, Michigan, hosted by our Chi Chapter, May 4-7, 2017. Again, we are looking for increased numbers to attend. Our sisters have been working tirelessly to ensure that this year is like none other. Continuing our theme “MAD LOVE for PDK,” along with our youth, Phi Delta Kappa Sorors will continue to strive for the improvement of our community as we celebrate the sacrifices of service that members have provided.

We, the Women of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., stand today as willing workers and are more convicted than ever to do our part. The Apostle Paul reminds us that “we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.”

Francine E. Blake
Regional Director, Midwest Region

GREETINGS FROM THE SOUTHWEST REGION

Dear Sorors,

On behalf of the Southwest Region, I bring you greetings. This year the Southwest Region will celebrate 51 years of educational service. As a Region, our sorors have grown and blossomed in the field of education. Even though individually, we have endured hiring hardships, inequality, racial harassment, job discrimination and other demeaning practices at the hands of others, we have continued our mission to raise the bar of African American teachers.



The Krinon's theme "Embracing the Standards, Raising the Bar" is such an appropriate theme for African American teachers and children of color. We have endeavored to raise the bar and standards for children of color as well as our own educational growth. We acknowledged that knowledge, education and wisdom are the keys to overcoming obstacles. We have made great strides, but we have not finished the course.

We must create in children of color a thirst for knowledge and education. They must understand that education is the key to their future. They must understand that while some doors have been opened, there are others that they must work to open themselves. Children of color must be encouraged to think critically and express themselves through written prose. It is the African American teacher's charge to set the example, direct the path of the students they serve, and motivate/challenge them to set and reach higher goals.

The educators of the Southwest Region have set their standards high and raised the bar. Our Region is proud of the sorors that have sacrificed and returned to school to receive doctoral degrees. They have raised the bar for themselves so they could "Embrace the Standards and Raise the Bar" for the children they serve in their respective communities. The Southwest Region SOARS with dignity and pride. The sorors are constantly embracing opportunities, taking action and getting positive results.

In conclusion, we will continue to meet the challenges set in our respective communities. We will continue to work with children in order to inspire and create a thirst for knowledge and education. We will continue to "Embrace the Standards and Raise the Bar".

Dr. Sylvia M. Williams
Southwest Regional Director

GREETINGS FROM THE FAR WEST REGION



Greetings from the Far West Regional Director,

It is my pleasure to extend sincere greetings from the Far West Region to the Executive Council, all members of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., our affiliates and friends.

As we focus on our organizational theme of The Krinon, “Embracing the Standards, Raising the Bar,” we must continue to launch programs to enhance the educational enterprise in the communities in which we live and work. We must continue to promote the highest ideals of our profession, perpetuate the spirit of sisterhood and preserve the honor of our founders. We must also continue to raise the components of our Y.E.S. Program in our quest for excellence in the field of education, as we carry the torch of enlightenment everywhere. Lastly, we must continue to shape the future of our youth, by encouraging them to: develop a positive self-image; achieve academic excellence; take pride in themselves and their community; exhibit outstanding conduct; and use their God-given talents for the betterment of themselves and the society in which they live. If we do these things we will fulfill our challenge.

To all my sorors, “Try to live an authentic life that feels true to yourself—which means living as yourself, not an imitation of anyone else, and not the reflection of yourself in anyone else’s eyes.”
(Maria Shriver)

Sisterly,
Velma Brown
Far West Regional Director

CONFERENCE EVENTS

NSPDK Regional Conferences 2017

EASTERN

April 20-23, 2017
The Westin Princeton at Forrestal Village
201 Village Blvd
Princeton, NJ 08540
Host Chapter: Pi

SOUTHEAST

April 13-16, 2017
Embassy Suites by Hilton
300 Tallapoosa Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
Host Chapter: Upsilon

MIDWEST

May 4-7, 2017
Edward Village Hotel & Conference Center
600 Towne Center Drive
Dearborn, MI 48126
Host Chapter: Chi

SOUTHWEST

April 6-9, 2017
MCM Elegante' Hotel
2355 I-10 S
Beaumont, TX 77705
Host Chapter: Epsilon Theta

FAR WEST

March 17-19, 2017
Plaza Hotel & Casino
One Main Street
Las Vegas, NV 89101
Host Chapter: Gamma Sigma

NSPDK Youth Conferences

EASTERN

March 17-19, 2017
Holiday Inn and Conference Center
5655 Greenwich Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23452
Host Chapter: Alpha Lambda

SOUTHEAST

June 8-11, 2017
Ramada Lakeland Hotel & Conference Center
3260 US 98 North
Lakeland, FL 33805
Host Chapter: Beta Sigma

MIDWEST

April 6-9, 2017
Clarion Inn and Conference Center
6625 Dean Memorial Parkway
Hudson, OH 44236
Host Chapter: Beta Iota

SOUTHWEST

February 24-26, 2017
Hilton Waco (for Xinos)
113 S. University Parks Dr., Waco, TX
Courtyard by Marriott Waco (for Kudos)
101 Washington Avenue, Waco, TX
Host Chapter: Gamma Upsilon

FAR WEST

April 7-9, 2017
Embassy Suites by Hilton Ontario Airport
3663 East Guasti Road
Ontario, CA 91761
Host Chapter: Delta Rho

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NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.

94TH CONCLAVE 2017

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS **JULY 16 - 20**

NARRATIVES OF BRAVERY AND HOPE

NATIONAL SOCIETY
PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.

**CELEBRATING
THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LITTLE ROCK NINE
AND DESEGREGATION OF CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**

**CHARLOTTE M. WILLIAMS, SUPREME BASILEUS
DR. BONITA DURRAH, CONCLAVE COORDINATOR
GWENDOLYN B. WATTS, CONCLAVE COORDINATOR
DEBORAH BLEDSOE, BASILEUS GAMMA NU CHAPTER**





94th Conclave Highlights — July 16 -20, 2017

SUNDAY, JULY 16

9:00 am – 11:00 am	Worship Service
11:30 am – 5:00 pm	Registration
11:30 am – 5:00 pm	Visit Little Rock
4:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Vendors' Marketplace
5:00 pm – 6:30 pm	Dinner On Your Own
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Evening with the Anthropos
10:00 pm – 12:00 am	The Teachers' Lounge

MONDAY, JULY 17

8:30 am – 5:30 pm	Registration and Credentials
9:00 am – 6:00 pm	Vendors' Marketplace
9:00 am – 10:30 am	General Educational Session
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	Educational Workshops
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch on Your Own
1:15 pm – 2:45 pm	Educational Workshops
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Committee Meetings
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Dinner On Your Own
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm	Public Meeting
8:30 pm – 10:00 pm	President's Reception
10:00 pm – 12:00 am	The Teachers' Lounge

TUESDAY, JULY 18

8:00 am – 9:00 am	Registration and Credentials
8:30 am – 10:30 am	Sororal Leadership Institute
9:00 am – 10:00 pm	Vendors' Marketplace
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	Sororal Workshops
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Membership Luncheon
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Sororal Workshops
3:30 pm – 5:15 pm	Committee Meetings
5:15 pm – 6:45 pm	Dinner On Your Own
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	1st Plenary Session
10:00 pm – 12:00 am	Candidates' Forum/Receptions

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19

6:30 am – 7:30 am	Credentials
6:30 am – 7:45 am	Elections
8:30 am – 11:30 am	Vital Issues Breakfast
9:00 am – 10:00 pm	Vendors' Marketplace
12:30 pm – 3:30 pm	2nd Plenary Session
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Every Member Forum
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Dinner On Your Own
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Gala Night
10:00 pm – 1:00 am	The Teachers' Lounge

THURSDAY, JULY 20

9:00 am – 12:00 pm	3rd Plenary Session
9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Vendors' Marketplace
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Candle Lighting Service
1:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Vendors' Marketplace
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Visit Little Rock
6:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Calla Lily Gala
10:00 pm – 12:00 am	Entertainment

NOTE: AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

REGISTRATION & VENDOR INFO
Available from Headquarters

Please contact HQ Office Manager

(773) 783-7379

nspdkhdq@aol.com

CHAPTERS

Eastern Region

Alpha	Jersey City, NJ
Beta	Washington, DC
Gamma	Baltimore, MD
Epsilon	Charleston, WV
Zeta	Philadelphia, PA
Eta	Camden, NJ
Theta	Brooklyn, NY
Iota	Atlantic City, NJ
Xi	Chester, PA
Pi	Trenton, NJ
Rho	Wilmington, DE
Alpha Zeta	Richmond, VA
Alpha Lambda	Norfolk, VA
Alpha Mu	Annapolis, MD
Alpha Pi	Dover, DE
Alpha Tau	Roanoke, VA
Alpha Chi	Portsmouth, VA
Beta Epsilon	New York, NY
Beta Zeta	Durham, NC
Beta Lambda	Winston-Salem, NC
Beta Omicron	Jamaica, NY
Beta Tau	Salisbury, MD
Gamma Mu	Virginia Beach, VA
Delta Gamma	Virginia Beach, VA
Delta Lambda	Egg Harbor Twsp., NJ
Delta Nu	Bergen County, NJ
Delta Pi	Hillside, NJ
Delta Phi	North Haven, CT
Epsilon Alpha	Somerset, NJ
Epsilon Eta	New Bern, NC
Epsilon Sigma	Gastonia, NC
Epsilon Upsilon	Greensboro, NC
Epsilon Chi	Spring Valley, NY

Southeast Region

Nu	Birmingham, AL
Upsilon	Tuskegee, AL
Psi	Mobile, AL
Alpha Beta	Nashville, TN
Alpha Gamma	Jacksonville, FL
Alpha Delta	Miami, FL
Alpha Epsilon	Atlanta, GA

Alpha Theta	New Orleans, LA
Alpha Omicron	Tampa, FL
Alpha Phi	Pensacola, FL
Beta Beta	Montgomery, AL
Beta Eta	Memphis, TN
Beta Kappa	West Palm Beach, FL
Beta Xi	Orlando, FL
Beta Sigma	Lakeland, FL
Beta Pi	Chattanooga, TN
Gamma Gamma	Panama City, FL
Gamma Eta	St. Augustine, FL
Gamma Theta	Brewton, AL
Gamma Omicron	Miami, FL
Gamma Psi	Jackson, TN
Delta Delta	Jacksonville, FL
Delta Zeta	Waycross, GA
Delta Iota	OluStee, FL
Delta Mu	Memphis, TN
Epsilon Mu	Bainbridge, GA
Epsilon Tau	Stone Mountain, GA
Epsilon Psi	Jackson, MS
Zeta Delta	Selma, AL

Midwest Region

Mu	Chicago, IL
Sigma	Cincinnati, OH
Tau	Indianapolis, IN
Chi	Detroit, MI
Alpha Alpha	Kansas City, MO
Alpha Eta	Evansville, IN
Alpha Nu	St. Louis, MO
Alpha Xi	Cleveland, OH
Beta Gamma	Toledo, OH
Beta Delta	Dayton, OH
Beta Iota	Akron, OH
Beta Mu	Gary, IN
Beta Chi	Milwaukee, WI
Gamma Alpha	Columbus, OH
Gamma Beta	Kansas City, KS
Gamma Delta	Flint, MI
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Gamma Rho	Shaker Heights, OH
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Zeta Gamma	Maywood, IL

Southwest Region

Alpha Kappa	Tulsa, OK
Alpha Rho	Dallas, TX
Alpha Sigma	Fort Worth, TX
Beta Alpha	Shreveport, LA
Beta Rho	Texarkana, TX
Gamma Epsilon	Oklahoma City, OK
Gamma Nu	Little Rock, AR
Gamma Tau	San Antonio, TX
Gamma Upsilon	Waco, TX
Delta Beta	Austin, TX
Delta Epsilon	Dallas, TX
Delta Omicron	Muskogee, OK
Delta Chi	Houston, TX
Epsilon Beta	Tyler, TX
Epsilon Gamma	Plano, TX
Epsilon Delta	Lawton, OK
Epsilon Epsilon	Edmond, OK
Epsilon Theta	Beaumont, TX
Epsilon Zeta	Ennis, TX
Epsilon Iota	Galveston, TX
Epsilon Lambda	Orange, TX
Epsilon Pi	Arlington, TX
Epsilon Rho	Minden, LA
Zeta Alpha	Mesquite, TX
Zeta Beta	Port Arthur, TX

Far West Region

Beta Theta	Los Angeles, CA
Beta Nu	San Francisco, CA
Beta Phi	Compton, CA
Gamma Lambda	Pasadena, CA
Gamma Xi	El Cerrito, CA
Gamma Sigma	Las Vegas, NV
Delta Kappa	Inglewood, CA
Delta Xi	Long Beach/Carson, CA
Delta Rho	San Bernardino, CA
Delta Upsilon	San Diego, CA
Epsilon Nu	Moreno Valley, CA
Epsilon Omicron	Spokane, WA

REGIONAL LOCATIONS



REGIONAL DIRECTORS

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When Education *Trumps* Discrimination

It's March 1992, and I walk nervously into the District Office Board Room and make a panoramic 360-degree span. My knees start to shake so hard that I think the room is shaking. Forcing my body to stand upright and brushing my clothes gently, I start to silently pray only to imagine the nine people in the room can hear every word. I finally hear the District Superintendent say: "Mrs. Carter, Welcome, Please take your seat." I walk to the only unoccupied chair at the long conference table and manage to respond: "Thank you, Ms. Michael." I look around and realize that this is not the first time I've sat before the same nine members, including a different school parent representative, to interview for a school principal's position. But this is, by far, going to be the most important. The three previous interviews spanned over a period of two years from 1990-1992 for Principal of Public School 175Q, 206Q, and 121Q. The principals of these schools were all Caucasian men with 10-15 years of longevity in schools located in multiracial communities in Queens, New York. PS 175 and PS 206 were in predominately Jewish communities, and PS 121 was located in a predominately Hispanic community.

I never thought to ask myself, "Etta, what made you think you were capable of, or would be selected as principal of these non-African American schools?" I only told myself "why not me?" I had been told that I had what it takes by the same nine members and the superintendent who were poised to conduct this current interview. I had been given the "opportunity" of being Interim Acting Principal on three separate periods at three separate district schools when the schools had principal vacancies. From three to six months I led each assigned school "admirably" through the interim periods, with no questionable concerns. I was even asked to mentor new aspiring principals; that was a strange decision because I was not even an appointed principal. I was given high praise and accolades during school board meetings for school leadership performance by parents, school board members, and the superintendent. Petitions were signed requesting the district to change its policy and grant my appointment to the school. Additionally, I had been taught that education, especially the right education, coupled with the right experiences and the desire to succeed would always win. In fact, as a message

of encouragement through the years my mother would tell me “Remember, cream rises to the top.” However, after the three previous interviews did not result in an appointment, it became obvious that the determining factor was race. I was good enough to lead schools as Interim Acting Principal until a permanent principal was selected; but not good enough to be selected as the appointed principal.

However, this interview tonight felt different! It was for Principal of Public School 50Q, Queens, New York City. I came into the interview room “very well, if not overly prepared.” I had studied the demographics of the neighborhood, the academic analyses and data for the past three years in Literacy, Mathematics, Science, English as a Second Language, Special Education, the attendance data, the transition of the student population, the stability of school personnel, the neighboring private and parochial school statistics, involvement of parents, the cultural diversity of the student population, and other categories. All of the areas that could affect the rating of the school were studied and found to range between average and above. Whew, the school was not under academic distress, not on the State Education Department’s watch list and, best of all, only ten minutes away from home....great!

Public School 50Q was a Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade elementary school with a population of 1,100 students in an African American and Hispanic neighborhood, a staff of

ninety plus and had maintained this ethnic balance for over twenty years. There was a small Brazilian population with families that spoke Portuguese. The main concern of the school was that the Principal, Mr. Lovaddo, suddenly announced his retirement, after a successful school leadership career of which he spent the last eighteen years as Principal.

The interview questions commenced, and I became more and more relaxed and comfortable, even enjoying a little humor. After about twenty



minutes into the interview I was hit with the bombshell question: "Mrs. Carter, in September, P.S.50 is scheduled to undergo a \$10,000,000 massive renovation project inside and outside the building, that would continue throughout the school year. This work has to be done during the school year, during the school day, evenings, nights, and weekends, because there is no other place in the district to house 1,100 students. Are you equipped to handle this project?"

This question made an explosion in my ears so loud that I wanted to lay my head on the conference table. It appeared as if it took at least ten minutes for me to re-gain my composure. As I took a long sip of water, I knew for sure that I was not only prepared for the interview, but I was prepared for *that* specific question. I began to recall the specific personal experience that would be the foundation for my answer, as well as provide the fundamentals for execution of the year-long plan for this project.

Flashback fifteen years. While living in Chicago, by default, I entered a master's degree program at a newly developed Illinois state university approximately thirty miles south of Chicago. The school, Governor's State University, did not have a campus, only temporary modular buildings in a former corn field, which is where "by default" I studied and earned a Master's Degree in Environmental Science. I say "by default" because as I stood in line to register for the Urban Teacher Education Program, the registrar kindly stated "that program is closed due to the unexpected number of Chicago teachers who registered for teacher education". Realizing that the only reason for desiring the Masters was to qualify for a pay raise, I asked "What Master's Program is open?" The only program open was Environmental Science. After deliberating with a friend while walking toward the

exit door, we made an about face went back and registered for Environmental Science. One year later we each graduated from Governor's State University with a Master's Degree in Environmental Science, having successfully completed a never-imagined opportunity for the only two African American students in the program.

During the course work for Environmental Science, we were challenged to identify hazardous conditions by observing smokestacks at the top of buildings; detect, measure and remedy noise pollutants; design rooms with ADA specifications; meet with contractors to create budgets for proposals of new buildings; assess the feasibility of model homes; organize large group activities according to safety regulations; develop evacuation plans for various populations based on age and need, including pre-school, school age, older adults, persons with disabilities, any many more.

Flash-forward: I am now seated in front of nine board members and the Superintendent who would determine my fate just as in the three previous interviews. But this time, something is different. I am more prepared and more confident than I dreamed, or they knew. When I opened my mouth, all my studying fifteen years prior flowed out as a stream of information retrieved for just THIS time. The interview committee members are so intrigued that the interview becomes a conversational exchange. Some of the questions include: What would be your first steps? How would you communicate with the community, staff, and students? And many other questions were asked. In addition, I asked the team of interviewers several questions, identified safety and health concerns for teachers, staff, students and parents, and identified the resources needed from the district to insure that everyone knew that the first priority during this project was student and

personnel safety. I started to explain to them that I would need to meet with the lead contractor and all sub-contractors weekly and needed to receive in advance a weekly schedule of planned work. My second concern is that the students do not lose major academic time, therefore I would request support from district staff, along with funds, to create a grade by grade curriculum using the city of New York as the basis of teaching and learning. There was a two-fold purpose for this approach, mainly to provide an opportunity for students and teachers to be out of the building as much as possible, along with being motivated and focused by different and exciting experiences. Students would have learning experiences and opportunities they would never forget through writing and planning field trips to museums, theatres, and notable sites, such as the Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building, World Trade Center, Time Square, the Brooklyn Bridge, etc., yet learning valuable information and life skills for survival. At that very moment, the lightbulb went off and I knew clearly why the Principal suddenly retired....too much hard work ahead!

At the end of my interview, I thanked the committee for the interview opportunity and left. I silently thanked God for the preparation and the educational experience I received long before; for fluid recalled, and for giving me the opportunity to interview for THIS position.

Before I left the building, the Superintendent calls for me to wait. She met me at the bottom of the stairs and said "You have the job!" I am elated, but I knew the truly hard work really is yet to come.

The next year was truly a demanding twenty-four-hour a day challenge and was not without fallout. The longtime Assistant Principal retired two weeks into the renovation process and several staff members transferred due to health concerns.

However, there were no student or adult accidents, and best of all, student scores remained stable. Students were involved in several projects that beautified the building and remain to this day, a part of the new welcoming atmosphere. The next two years were a time to enjoy the new building and buckle down to true academic rigor of which P.S. 50Q became a Blue Ribbon Title I school.

Three years later, in 1995, I received unprecedented recognition from the district; the award of Early Tenure as principal, instead of the usual five years required for tenure and job security. This recognition was followed by my appointment as Deputy Superintendent and subsequent retirement in 2003.

Truly, education is the most significant equalizer and more often than not, trumps discrimination.

This article has been generously contributed by Etta F. Carter, Ph.D. She serves as the Supreme Parliamentarian of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. She is a member of Gamma Nu Chapter, Little Rock, AR.



OVER REPRESENTATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The over representation of African American boys in special education continues to be an alarming frequency in many school districts. This disparity promotes the inequality of Black boys obtaining the same quality of education as their peers in regular education classes. There is constantly a larger percentage of Black boys in the special education system. They have been identified as having a learning disability, intellectual disability or emotional disorder. The school system has failed to sufficiently relate to students of various ethnic backgrounds or cultures. The process of identifying Black boys is biased and not equitable when identifying the educational deficiencies of African American boys. The educational process in the classroom does not

meet the needs of Black boys. An additional reoccurring factor is that some teachers are poorly equipped to instruct Black boys who require more creative teaching techniques. In addition, the

United States teaching force, which is predominately White, middle-class female, is in contrast to the African American students they are instructing. Also, psychological and educational literature portray African American young men as unintelligent, drug addicted, violent, sexual predators who are incarcerated and unemployed (C. Adkison-Bradley, 2006).

Black boys are unique in that they experience learning phases at different stages of growth. African American boys in general face and experience negative attitudes, beliefs, and impressions that are formed in advance about their present potential to acquire information.

The behavior of African American boys in the classroom setting causes them to experience various degrees of frustration during instruction. They are subject to more classroom referrals for misbehavior. Over-representation appears to occur in low income areas and single parent homes. Some educational systems have lower expectations of Black boys and believe their futures will result in incarceration, dropout rate increase, addiction to drugs, unemployment, and/or death. The effects of placing African American boys in special education:





Bridging the Gap Between Home & School: Reading Fluency Strategies for African American Families

“Settling for average is not an option; always strive to learn all you can and be the best you can, attaining knowledge with maximum determination.” (Warren 2015) Such is the piece of advice that all parents should give to their children. In addition to that portion of advice, parents should also persistently assist their children with refusing to settle for anything average. Parent involvement is essential to improving children’s reading competence. This can be achieved by turning off the TV, game boards, computers etc. and establishing a daily family reading routine. During my tenure as an educator, I shared various ways through which parents could use family reading strategies and programs to help their children develop fluent reading skills.

One strategy is to set aside family “read aloud” time, about 15 minutes for younger children and 20 to 30 minutes for older siblings. During the family reading time, first start by encouraging the children to spell and develop phonological awareness. These

children should be encouraged to identify letters associated with specific sounds and practicing daily until they can point to the letter saying the letter sound(s) without hesitation. Another strategy, I shared with parents was to have the children “pair read”. This is simply allowing one child to read aloud while the other child listens for missed words. The listener is not to interrupt the reader, but softly say the missed word correctly. The reader will automatically repeat the correct word(s) and continue reading.

There is a close relationship between spelling and reading. Reading is decoding written language while writing is encoding or generating a written language. (O’Sullivan and Ann, 14) From these definitions, it is clear that when children are learning to spell, they acquire sound-letter relationships. When children learn words, their reading ability consequently improves, and fluency is progressively achieved.

African American parents can help bridge the gap between home and school by understanding the benefits of allowing children to spend time reading outside of the classroom. This promotes strong fluent readers and spellers while encouraging critical thinking skills and mind movies as they read the words on the pages. I discovered yet another strategy while researching this article that cultivates reading fluency. In this strategy, parents would use the cover-compare method as researched by (Johnson, 11-13). In this technique, children are encouraged to point to the word and then repeat the word while pointing. Later, at home, those words must be practiced several times, then written, and compared with the correct spelling of the word. To augment the child's vocabulary, it helps when the child corrects the mistake in written form.



As an experienced educator, I agree with researcher O'Sullivan, that developing phonological awareness is the ability to register, practice, and categorize the sounds of a language at a pre-conscious level (O'Sullivan & Thomas, 14). Phonological awareness and reading are closely related in that a child or any learner can only pronounce words

when he or she becomes knowledgeable of the letter sounds. Therefore, it is vital that African American parents teach their children to develop phonological awareness at an early age and learn to spell phonetically. African American parents, as well as all parents, should encourage their children to spell phonetically.

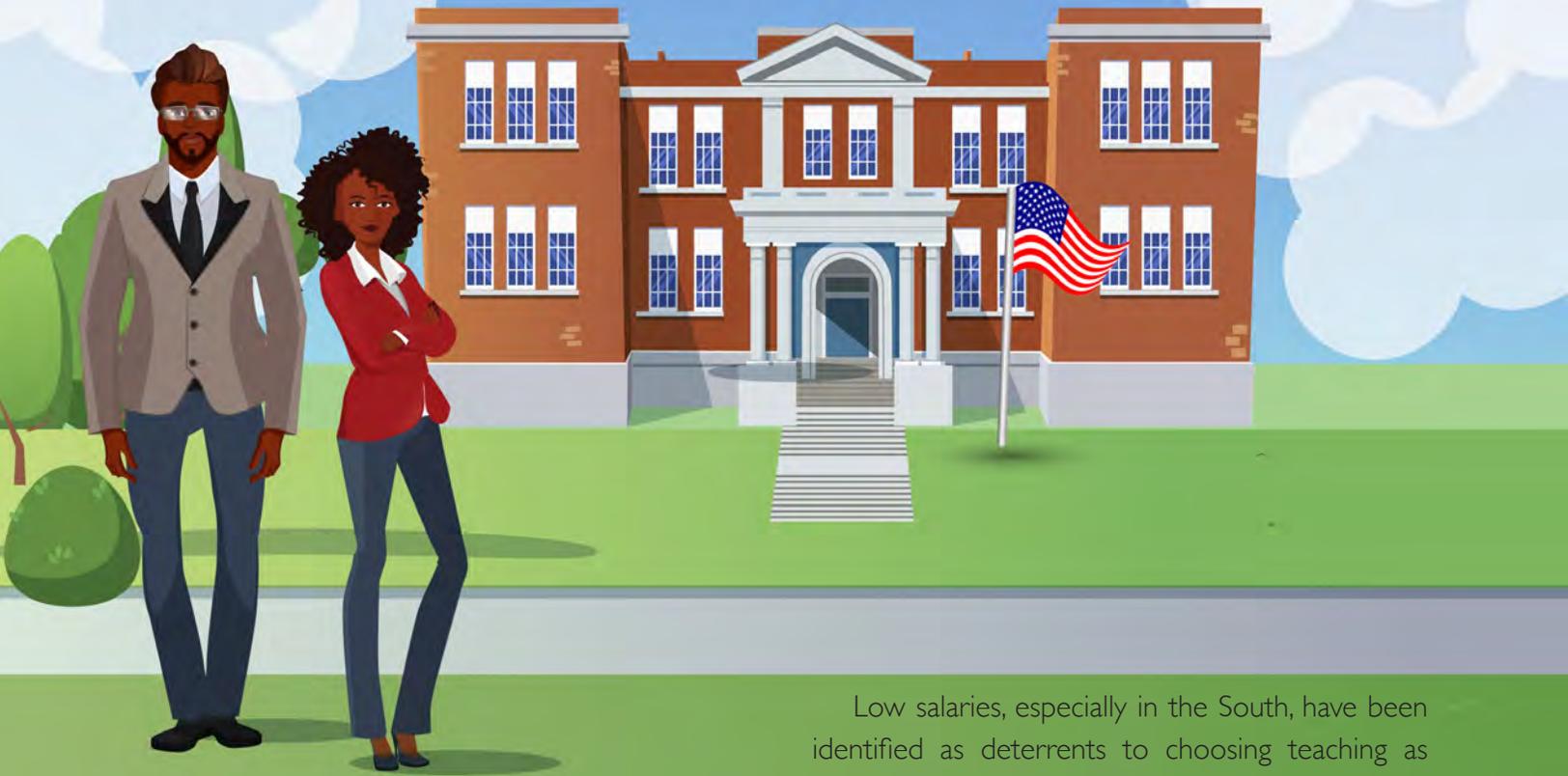
Encouraging children to spell and develop phonological awareness is commendable; however, parents can boost their children's progress even more in reading by acquiring fluency through listening. As the child reads aloud, provide guidance with detecting oral mistakes. A word of caution, parents should not correct the children's reading mistakes if they become tired or frustrated. A parent's voice tone can transmit a message of frustration towards the child's lack of fluent reading causing the child to lose confidence. Thus, those identified errors can be corrected by offering a gentle reminder of the letter sounds or simply encouraging the child to pronounce the word again. I strongly feel, that with repeated practice and assistance, children's oral mistakes will be corrected, leading to a more fluent reader.

In conclusion, I feel strongly that African American parents can greatly influence their children's reading fluency through a daily family reading routine and reading aloud to them for at least 20 minutes. Those good old bedtime stories: what an imagination I developed as I listened to those stories. My mom would ask brief questions about what was read which enabled me to think critically and dream big. As an African American parent and educator, my educational philosophy is stated at the beginning of this article, "Do not ever settle for average..."

This article has been generously contributed by Soror/ Dr. Cynthia D. Warren. She is a member of Alpha Nu Chapter, St. Louis, MO.



HOW TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF AFRICAN AMERICAN TEACHERS IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS



The decreasing number of Black teachers in America's schools has recently received national concern among those who truly understand the important roles Black teachers have played in the past and continue to play in the lives and education of all students, especially Black students. As a matter of fact, the numbers had reached a crisis state before we realized the extent of the problem. To illustrate the extent of the problem, it is quite possible in my local school district, the largest in the state, a Black student may not be exposed to a Black teacher during the entire twelve years of his/her elementary and secondary public school experience. There is some research but we can draw some conclusions based on observable trends and routine occurrences in the profession.

Low salaries, especially in the South, have been identified as deterrents to choosing teaching as a profession. Other professions requiring similar years of training and having superior salaries are becoming more attractive. Teacher training institutions nationally, public and private, are not attracting students to their teacher education training programs as readily as they did in the past. This is particularly true of our historical Black colleges which traditionally trained large numbers of African American teachers. One must recognize, also, the academic requirements for entering the teaching profession have become more rigorous than in past years. Many individuals desiring to enter the profession are experiencing difficulties meeting these more rigorous academic standards.

Because the National SorORITY of Phi Delta, Inc. recognizes the importance of the role Black teachers can play in the lives and education of Black

students, one of its goals for local affiliates is to plan and implement programs to promote, encourage and assist promising individuals to enter the teaching field. Our chapter, Gamma Nu, is strongly committed to this goal. To demonstrate that commitment during 2016, Gamma Nu's Teach-A-Rama Committee was challenged to development and implement an extensive Praxis I Coaching Program geared directly toward helping participants acquire the skills necessary to be successful.

Overview. The revised Praxis I, now the Praxis I Core, is a basic skills assessment having three categories — reading, writing/English usage and math. Working collaboratively with the AR Director of Licensure, the Teach-A-Rama Committee was provided testing resource materials that enabled it to analyze specific skills in each of the three core skill categories. Realizing the extensive nature of these skills, the committee decided to group the skills in each of the core areas in three sub-sections. These sub-sections would inform the coaching approach to instruction during the presentations. The coaching sessions consisted of three Saturday sessions three hours in length. Since the coaching sessions were designed to rotate on the hour, each participant was afforded one hour of coaching in each of the sub-categories tested.

Having identified the skill nature of the test and a possible organizational instructional approach, the committee had to address the challenge of identifying individuals capable and competent who would be willing to serve as presenters and work within the frameworks established by the group. Working collaboratively with the chairperson of the committee, these coaches were asked to develop teaching strategies and to design experiences that would lead to direct mastery of the skills on the test.

Demographics and Recruitment. Who are the individuals in our immediate community having an interest in becoming teachers? Where are they

likely to be located? What recruitment tools can we use to reach them? We knew there were a small pool of students attending the local colleges who might have interests. Based on the past work of the committee, we knew there would be support personnel in the local schools. There would also be individuals with degrees coming into the teaching field via the alternative certification method.

The entire membership of the sorority was encouraged to be proactive in the recruitment process. Specifically, the committee sent email announcements to the three local colleges which encouraged participation from freshmen and sophomores. Social media, recruitment visits and telephone calls were used as registration tools.

Evaluation. Evaluation was a critical component of our work. We needed feedback from our participants relative to effectiveness of the sessions as well as how our work might be improved moving forward. Participants were asked to rate each session using eight criteria with a numerical range from four to one with four representing Strongly Agree and one Strongly Disagree. The criteria included:

1. Training was relevant to my needs
2. Materials provided were helpful
3. Length of training was sufficient
4. Content was well organized
5. Questions were encouraged
6. Instructions were clear and understandable
7. Coaching met my expectations
8. The presenter/presentation was effective

There were also two open response items on the evaluation document which allowed participants additional latitude providing feedback. The evaluation results were very positive with most items receiving a "four" rating. The one exception was the rating given item 3 related to the length of the training. All attendees requested more time and training in the math area.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Lou Ethel Nauden. She is a member of Gamma Nu Chapter, Little Rock, AR.





The
DISCIPLINARY ACTION
of African American
School Age Males

“Recent research finds that of 72,000 schools in 7,000 districts, serving about 85 percent of the nation’s students, more than one in ten African American male students received an out-of-school suspension.”

There are nearly 60 million students in the United States public school system although not all are at equal risk of facing harsh disciplinary measures. Sadly African American males are greater than four times more likely than Caucasian students to be suspended (in or out) or expelled from school. Recent research finds that of 72,000 schools in 7,000 districts, serving about 85 percent of the nation’s students, more than one in ten African American male students received an out-of-school suspension

(U.S. Department of Justice, 2014). And in districts that reported expulsions under zero-tolerance policies, African Americans represent 45 percent of the student body, but 55 percent of those expelled under such policies. Is this alarming? It should be because the blatant and indisputable actuality is that, without enough advocates on their side, far too many African American students are given such disciplinary actions.



For more than fifteen years I have taught in the public school setting and have seen many inconsistencies in disciplinary actions between Caucasian and African American students. It would seem as though the disciplinary action was harsher depending on the students' background or economic status. There are students who are so frequently suspended that their academics are negatively affected. Realistically one suspension doubles the student's risk of dropping out of school. Do school districts not understand that disciplinary actions such as suspension and expulsion reduce the chances of closing achievement gap? Moreover, inconsistencies in disciplinary actions can trigger bigger issues that may lead to violence. The last thing an administrator wants is an unruly environment where other students and teachers feel threatened and unsafe. Finally disproportional discipline can result in repetitive contact with the juvenile court system.

There has to be a solution to reduce such inconsistencies with African American students and help to rebuild a more positive outlook for them.

Remember as educators we aspire to inspire and help all of our students thrive no matter their color, ethnicity, or gender. Teachers walking into their classrooms know there are no two students the same. From morning to morning we never know the adversities our students faced prior to coming to school, therefore our classrooms should always be warm and nurturing where students are not desirous of conflict with their teachers resulting in office referrals and possible suspension or expulsion. Stereotyping our students is never the right thing to do although many teachers are guilty of it particularly, toward African American males. Stereotypical behaviors of African American males produce the expectancy of negative behavior which then leads to feelings of rejection in the classroom and finally creating misbehaviors that may result in exclusionary discipline.

The problem of inconsistencies for African American males has existed for years. There is hope for this issue; educators are receiving appropriate training to improve teacher-student relationships, and social-emotional learning approaches which can reduce the use of exclusionary discipline, particularly with African Americans. While teachers are being trained to reduce conflict in the classroom another important component of the inconsistencies in disciplinary actions that should be refined is the disciplinary policies. If there is a shift in disciplinary policies perhaps there can be reduction in the dropout rate and an incline in academic success.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror LaToshia S. Chism, Ed.D. She is a member of Gamma Psi Chapter, Jackson, TN.



Establishing Environments

The institution of education in America today is like two sides of a coin. Two students can have polarizing experiences and outcomes solely dependent on geographic location. The inequity in education is so corrosive that students in the same town or city may be separated by less than five miles physically and five years educationally.

In one school we can move through bright, clean, wide hallways that lead us to sunlight filled rooms. We find engaged students who sit in front of their own 27 inch computer screen and who are able to use technology for research or distance learning, connecting to the other side of the world. We can travel to a different neighborhood and find a room where students are sitting together in a dilapidated mold infested classroom sharing a book that is currently 13 years old, a single computer sits on a teacher's desk and two other broken ones sitting under a desk in the back corner of the room. Despite it being winter, the window is open to get some fresh air because the heater is blowing out dust. Which students do you truly believe are able to focus on the instruction being presented and getting the most from the educational experience?

We need to recognize the condition of the school building itself has a role in determining academic success that goes beyond just being able to support the instructional technology and increased electrical demand. In Crampton, Thompson and Vessley's article, *The Forgotten Side of School Finance Equity: The Role of Infrastructure Funding and Student Success*, they review five studies on

the effects of physical environment as it relates to academic achievement. All five studies showed the same positive correlation between the district's per-pupil spending devoted to maintenance and test scores. In a study of 2,860 Texas elementary schools, final calculations show that the higher achieving schools spent an average of 36.4% more on maintenance than lower achieving schools Harter, 1999 (as cited in Crampton et .al 2004).

The condition and health of the building plays a major role because it affects the health and condition of its inhabitants.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC, asthma is one of the leading causes of school absenteeism. (EPA, 2010) Both staff and students can be absent due to asthma. Even when they are both present in class, there are still damaging effects that poor indoor air quality (IAQ) can have on the learning process. "Statistics demonstrate that poor IAQ can reduce a person's ability to perform specific mental



for

Educational Excellence

tasks requiring concentration, calculation, or memory.” (EPA, 2013)

Over short time scales measured in terms of hours, poor IAQ (e.g. odors, temperature, moisture) caused discomfort problems such as perception, loss of attention and learning ability of pupils as well as health effects (e.g. headaches).

During classroom occupation, indoor concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and nitrogen oxide (NO₂) can rapidly reach recommended limit values because of the deficit of ventilation (European Healthy Air Project, 2008).

As an adult who understands the causes of bronchitis, constant coughing and headaches of sinus pressure, I know how that pain affects my ability to focus. I can only imagine how chal-

lenging it would be for students to focus when they do not understand the cause of the constant discomfort. Children are inherently more vulnerable to environmental hazards because their bodies are

still developing. Substandard environmental conditions in older schools, such as insufficient cleaning or inadequate ventilation can cause serious health problems for children. (EPA, 2010)

Chicago School District made a concerted effort to determine the causes and correct the conditions that were leading to poor health and academic performance of the majority of its students. African American and Latino children, who comprise more than 85 percent of the Chicago Public Schools' student population, suffer disproportionate rates of childhood asthma. Poor air quality or exposure to asthma triggers, such as harsh cleaning chemicals, polluted vents, mold in ceiling tiles, CO₂ and NO₂, can cause asthma attacks that require children to miss out on instruction. In the mildest case, breathing difficulties associated with asthma and other respiratory ailments make it difficult for children to fully focus or concentrate in school. But this problem is not limited to Chicago. On June 11, 2013, students of Trenton's Central High School, walked out to protest what was considered by the NJDOE's own standards the need for "emergent repairs". This classification by code definition meant that "if not corrected on an expedited basis, would render a building or facility so potentially injurious or hazardous that it causes an imminent peril to the health and safety of students and staff." Yet, students and staff were subjected to that risk daily.

Old buildings generally house old pipes, furnaces, boilers and plenty of dust which when in use



emit unhealthy levels of CO₂ and when not in use emit NO₂. We need to also be reminded that standards on the safety of construction and construction materials were not nearly as high as they are now. The industry itself did not take into account any possible effects some materials would have on health until recently. Sometimes removal and clean up creates another set of health hazards.

We should also be aware that there is a direct correlation between funding and student attendance. As a result, a cycle of catch 22 is created. Students get sick because of building conditions and miss school; the school has its funding cut because of low attendance and cannot budget for the repairs and renovations that need to take place. This negative correlation only serves to widen the academic achievement gap between those neighborhoods that are able to fund participation in equalization grants to get projects funded and those neighborhoods without a strong tax base that cannot. Wealthy schools continue to get healthy and schools in poorer neighbors continue to fall into disrepair. Cash concluded in his study, that the condition of our schools is more than a static condition. It represents a message to the public about the value of education (Crampton et al., 2004). What message do we send to the students in those poor communities when we continually allow them to attend schools that are unsafe and unhealthy?

I do not propose that improving building conditions will ensure increased graduation rates in our problematic urban and rural schools; however, it is a tangible place to start. Abraham Maslow in 1943, developed the hierarchy of needs showing before any higher order thinking can be developed we must have our basic physiological needs for safety and security met. To be blunt, sick and hungry children do not listen in literature. A child who is concerned

about what is living in the hole in the wall does not have his mind on math. Healthy indoor air quality, on the other hand, has been proven to reduce absences and support children's ability to concentrate in the classroom (Healthy Schools Campaign, 2008) as verified by the EPA case studies. Can we truly expect students sitting in an antiquated building with no water, except for the rain that leaks in over their heads, feel a sense of belonging and purpose? How can we convince them that their self-esteem will improve as they embrace an education system that is so clearly not embracing them?

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Aaryenne S. White. She is a member of Eta Chapter, Camden, NJ.



Herstories: Lived Experiences of African American Female School Leaders

Current research regarding women's school leadership often overlooks the unique experiences of African American female school leaders. I recently conducted a multiple case study to examine the ways African American female secondary principals envision their identities and leadership styles within the social context of urban secondary schools. The study sought to understand how gender and culture impact their work and life path. Three female African American secondary school principals in central Texas were selected for the study. Participants are named Beverly, Angela and Simone for confidential purposes. This study presents the participants' stories in their own words to describe their experiences as Black female secondary school leaders. In these interviews, I elicited stories and narratives with particular attention to how the participants position themselves as principals

of secondary schools. I also sought to understand how their various personal and professional identities have shaped or been shaped by their current leadership roles. Findings from the participants were organized into five themes: Fearless Game Changer, Othermother/Student Centered, Survivor, Spiritually Guided and Grounded, and Transformational Leader.

Fearless Game Changer

Once the principals took over their new campuses, they quickly developed a plan of action and identified community resources to support their visions. Two of the principals indicated the need to establish a presence on campus and initiate change quickly. One high school principal shared how she approached early challenges at her campus:

"I'm a leader who is not afraid to address the issues and to be proactive about what it is we need to get done. I believed that we should not wait for something to happen but must make it happen."

In addition, she described how she initiated meetings with all of her stakeholders to gather their opinions and feedback. While doing so, she clearly expressed her desire to transform the campus and provided new systems and procedures to move the high school forward. She expressed positive feedback from the new initiatives:

"More parents are feeling a bit more relaxed about coming into the building and being part of it. We have seen a lot of success and a lot of gains this year more so than any other year and we celebrate that with our kids."





All participants were honest with faculty members who were not meeting the new instructional expectations and motivated them to seek work elsewhere.

Principals in this study were able to assess the needs of their campuses early and put strategies and action plans in place to create whole school change within the first year. Their changes resulted in a positive campus environment, caring relationships and an increased academic focus. Regardless of the naysayers and negative feedback, the participants pushed forward with a vision to produce a thriving campus within a caring and supportive learning environment. The principals exhibited characteristics of a fearless game changer by being highly motivated, committed to their schools, energetic and strong in their work ethic. They also possessed effective communication skills and the capacity to turn a challenge into a victory.

Othermother/Student Centered

Effective leadership in urban secondary schools depends on concern, care and advocacy for the unique needs of students. The participants exhibited caring and nurturing “othermothering” ways towards their students. Their willingness to interact with and build relationships with students, discipline and support their growth and meet their psychosocial needs demonstrated how these principals took on a motherly role. In this othermothering role, the principals showed how they were unlike traditional secondary principals. These principals knew that they needed to build and sustain trusting relationships with students before addressing their academic deficiencies. Each principal provided various examples of how they demonstrate othermothering to their students. Simone also demonstrated othermothering to members of her staff. She shared how she works hard to employ African American males on her campus to serve as role models to her male students. Although a few of her African American male employees have had difficult pasts, she did not hold that against them. She explained:

“I’m a big proponent of second chances, that is what has happened a lot for our males when they come out of the penal system, people don’t believe in giving them second chances, so that’s where that othermothering comes in, I’m a big believer and I’m an advocate for second chances.”

The principals’ sense of commitment to compassion for and understanding of urban students of color is indicative of their affinity for othermothering. In addition, the principals “mothered” their staff members by showing concern and compassion during difficult times, and exposing new teachers to

instructional styles that work best for students of color.

Survivor

The road to the principalship was not easy for the women in this study. They experienced challenges but persevered to become effective campus leaders. When Simone was selected to become the new principal of the Alternative School, the announcement was not well received. Her supervisor called a staff meeting to share the news. Simone recalled:

“They announced that I was the new principal in front of these two ‘cats’ and their staff was right there. Don’t you know I had hell to pay for the next two years. That set the tone and the climate for my campus and I was met with resistance, undermining and backstabbing. Oh, it was horrible.”

African American female principals often feel inadequate, frustrated and burned out. Beverly and Angela spoke of support systems inside and outside of the school setting that helped them survive.

Spiritually Grounded and Guided

While the daily leadership in secondary schools is often focused on academic rigor, data analysis, professional development and student development; for these women their responsibilities could not exist without the framework of values, positive beliefs and character. Spirituality was visible in the personal iden-

ties and leadership styles of each of these principals. Two of the participants acknowledged being guided by God in their daily work and expressed their beliefs visually through decorations, wall hangings and books in each office. All three of the principals are demonstrations of a leader’s spirituality at work. One expressed:

“I think I always had a calling to work with kids. I always felt that I was a leader.”

Daily issues and decisions of secondary principals often require them to question their values and principles. By being in touch with their spiritual selves, the women are better able to make decisions that are best for their students, teachers and communities. The women in this study see their work as a “mission” or a “calling” and believe that they are needed to create equitable educational opportunities so that their students can be empowered to make positive life choices. Beverly worked to address social justice issues in her community, by collaborating with the district and local community college to provide an Early College program at her high school. Simone created partnerships with the Boys and Girls Club, which resulted in the establishment of a mentoring program for boys on her campus. Angela established a wellness component to her school’s curriculum to ensure that the girls were not only excelling academically but focused on developing healthy lifestyles.

Transformational Leader

With marginalization of many urban students and families of color in schools, transformative leadership supports the ideal of equal access to education for all students. Beverly, Angela and Simone worked to change broken systems on their cam-



pushes on behalf of the students and communities they serve. Angela is proud of the retention rate at Jordan High School. She stated:

“It’s getting to be that we don’t lose kids, that first couple of classes we did lose girls, those seniors were the trailblazers, we didn’t know ourselves what the next year would hold and they didn’t know.”

The principals gained independence and autonomy in their roles by designing effective campus improvements to meet the academic social and emotional needs of students. For example, Simone described how she became an “instructional leader” instead of just a disciplinarian. She now has coordinators, teachers and instructional specialists from other campuses visiting her campus to learn from their academic success.

The five themes - Fearless Game Changer, Survivor, Othermother/Student Centered, Spiritually Grounded and Guided and Transformational Leader represent the common set of experiences that each of the secondary principals lived. All three women were confident and determined to institute necessary changes to increase the academic success of their students and to improve teacher effectiveness by creating a shared vision. Through trials and circumstances, the principals were able to overcome difficult challenges and setbacks. While doing so, they never turned their focus away from their main objective, the achievement and success of their students.



This article has been generously contributed by Soror/Dr. Pamela Gray. She is a member of Delta Beta Chapter, Austin, TX.

If You Want to Go Far

If you want to go far,
try Reading and Writing,
they will make you a star,

It makes no difference
what color you are,
Reading and Writing
will take you far.

All kinds of words dancing
around in your head,
Collecting great imaginations,
while tucked warmly in bed,

All those words exploding
from the pages you read,
You’ll soon find out,
it’s brain food for the head.

Light brown, dark brown,
Mahoney skin,
It makes no difference
what challenges that rest within,

With reading and writing,
you will win, win, win.
Parents, guardians, educators
and friends

Reading and Writing
will make you a star,
And make life better than
where you are.



This poem has been generously contributed by Soror Dr. Cynthia D. Warren. She is a member of Alpha Nu Chapter, St. Louis, MO.

My Educational Experiences — A Personal Memoir

This personal story is about the highs and lows of educating a Black baby-boomer in the South. Let's begin with my parents.

My father, who died when I was nineteen months old, dropped out of school in the second grade. My mother, who never attended any of my school-related meetings and activities, dropped out of school in the eighth grade. I lived in the same house with a large multi-generational extended family, and I was taught things at an early age by a cousin who liked "playing school". Since the school system did not add kindergarten until the year after I left first grade, I was the only child in first grade who could recite by rote the 1's and 2's time tables.

Back-in-the-day, teachers were able to play "god". It was common practice for teachers to force their students to switch their hand dominance. In second grade, I was forced to switch from writing with my left hand to writing with my right hand – at the same time I was being taught to write in cursive. Well, this curricular decision to teach the mechanics of cursive handwriting ONLY in the second grade was so unsuccessful that my penmanship was illegible. Sometimes, I couldn't read the "chicken-scratch" I had just written. I never learned to write legibly in manuscript until I took a required undergrad art class and in cursive when a principal purchased books for her staff during the second job in my forty-two year teaching career.

Reading was also a challenge. Surviving the whole language "See Dick ... See Jane" method of teaching reading put me at a severe disadvantage. Because I was not exposed to phonics during the elementary grades, I struggled with spelling and my Methods of Teaching Reading class. In fact, I learned basic phonics (especially, distinguishing between the short "i" and the short "e" vowel sounds) along with my students.

Although my grade-point average in elementary school was high enough to be class valedictorian, I was denied both top honors because I wasn't "ladylike" enough. My high school, which began with the ninth grade, used a "tracking system" to place students into their appropriate courses. Unbeknownst to me at the time, it was customary for College Preparatory Tracks "A" and "B" to merge into a single track class for our sophomore year. Because my Track "C" outperformed Track "B", the administrators (thank goodness) decided to merge Tracks "A" and "C" into one class. For this reason, I was taught by the most knowledgeable and dedicated teachers. Our new books were really hand-me-downs from the White high school. Why did it take me so long to learn this fact? I found out at a class reunion that only the books given to students in the College Preparatory Track had new "name" labels in them. Despite this overtly racist practice, the majority of my fellow students and I not only survived, but thrived as adults.

Because of my outstanding Black high school teachers, I was able, despite several barriers, to turn my salutatorian honor in high school into Summa Cum Laude honor at a Louisiana college for my undergraduate degree and Magna Cum Laude honor at The American University in Washington, D.C. for my Master's Degree.

Early in my teaching career in Washington, DC, I benefitted from the guidance I received from the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Now, I am able to mentor to teachers and students on both local and national levels.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Dianna Mayo Neal. She is a member of Beta Chapter, Washington, D.C.



NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.

Do Black Teachers



Really Matter?

Influence on Discipline and Academic Achievement

Data collection and tallies leave no doubt that there are differences in the discipline levied on Black students as compared to punishment imposed on White students for similar or the same infractions. Further, social and behavioral scientists have found a correlation between Black versus White teacher expectations and Black student performance/outcomes.

While researchers, pundits, educators and the like, have much to offer on the causes and effects of the above mentioned phenomena, there is still no one clear path to a solution for either. Finding the correct path would first entail a clear understanding as to how we arrived at this juncture. This article will posit what many Black educators have long identified as one of the main sources of the problem — a shortage of Black teachers in the classroom (as advocates and role models). Thus, “Do Black Teachers Really Matter?” Drawing from statistical data, the answer to be demonstrated here should be a resounding, YES! Finally, by citing recent and past research on discipline and effects of teacher expectation, alongside personal experiences, it is hoped that my colleagues will feel the urgency of both the recruitment and the retention of qualified, dedicated Black educators.

Historical Background. Long before the Civil Rights era, Black students attended historically segregated schools (including myself) where education was focused on countering racial

stereotypes and instilling pride. According to Theresa Perry, a professor of African Studies at Simmons College, the focus has changed dramatically after the Civil Rights era. (Perry, 2012) Researchers estimate that nearly 40,000 Black teachers and principals lost their jobs even though they had more credentials and teaching experience than White educators. This was particularly true in the South.

Professor Perry states, “In all, that means 26,000 African American teachers have disappeared from the nation's public schools—even as the overall teaching workforce has increased by 134,000. Countless Black principals, coaches, cafeteria workers, nurses, and counselors have also been displaced—all in the name of raising achievement among Black students. While White Americans are slowly waking up to the issue of police harassment and violence in Black communities, many are unaware of the quiet, but broad damage the loss of African American educators inflicts on the same communities.” (Perry, 2012)

The Black Student and Discipline. It is well documented that Black students are disciplined in school disproportionately to their White, and/or “Other” counterparts. (Office of Civil Rights, 2014) According to the U.S. Department of Education, of the 49 million students enrolled in public schools during the 2011-2012 school year, 3.5 million students received in-school suspension; 3.45 million students received out-of-school suspension; while,

another 130,000 students were expelled. (U.S. Department of Education, 2014) Further, through the disaggregation of demographic data, in its March 2014 Data Snapshot on School Discipline, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, reported that Black students were suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than White students. (Civil Rights Data Collection, 2014)

It must be noted that the majority of teachers in the public schools throughout the United States are White. (Education Week, 2016) According to the National Center for Education Statistics, during the 2011-2012 school year, 82 percent of the 3.4 million public school teachers were non-Hispanic White, while 7 percent were non-Hispanic Black, and 8 percent were Hispanic. (Education Week, 2016) How do these numbers impact discipline? In a 2015 study, Adam Wright concluded that White teachers are much more likely, than Black teachers, to find behavior problems with Black students. Wright estimated that if schools doubled the number of Black teachers, the Black-White suspension disparity would be cut in half. (Wright, 2015) This outcome could be huge in boosting the success of students who miss out on the teaching/re-teaching, assignments, group work which support mastery of the material.

The Black Student and Academic Achievement.

Research conducted by the London School of Economics in 2008 found that White teachers graded Black and Latino students more harshly for the same performance, accounting for as much as 22% of the achievement gap between White students and students of color. (London School of Economics, 2008) More recently, researchers at the Johns Hopkins Krieger School of Arts and Sciences found that, "When evaluating the same Black student, White teachers expect significantly less academic success than do Black teachers. This

is especially true for Black boys." (Rosen, 2016) The findings continue, "When a Black teacher and White teacher evaluate the same Black student, the White teacher is about 30 percent less likely to predict the student will complete a four-year college degree. . . . White teachers are almost 40 percent less likely to expect their Black students will graduate high school." (Rosen, 2016)

A Vanderbilt study showed that Black students were about half as likely as White students to be put in accelerated classes, even when they had comparable test scores; however, the disparity was erased when Black students were evaluated by Black teachers. (Brasher, 2016) As a High School Counselor for over 25 years, I have been a witness to some of those disparities.

I worked for 10 years in a predominantly White high school where the percentage of Black students was 5%, Hispanics 36%, and Whites 85%. I was the only Black counselor out of six counselors. I noticed that each year, I would have more Black students enrolled in higher level classes than my White colleagues. I also had more Black students graduating on time. I would counsel with Black students who were not assigned to me; giving them information regarding colleges and scholarships. Many of them were unable to communicate with their White counselor and they were very seldom called in to discuss college or scholarship options.

On one occasion, at this same high school, a White English teacher recommended a Black student for an Advanced Placement (AP) English class. The teacher was told by the student's White counselor that the student couldn't handle the work even though the teacher was his English teacher, and had knowledge of how capable this student was. I intervened for the student and went to the principal on behalf of the teacher. The student was granted permission to take the class. He ended the

year with straight A's in AP English.

I remember going into a math class to make a general announcement; and to my surprise, there was a group of Black boys in the back of the room playing dominoes! I asked the teacher (White female) about it and she told me that in order to teach her class without the constant disturbance by these boys she allowed them to play dominoes as long as they were quiet and didn't disturb her or any of the students! She said she didn't know any other strategies to get them involved. I was shocked. I conferred with Black counselors from other schools. They confirmed that it happened on their campuses as well.

As an educator, I found the domino classroom management technic (reserved for disengaged Black male students) totally unacceptable. I mentioned it to the principal (White male); and, I'm not sure whether it was addressed. I also brought it up for discussion at one of our faculty meetings where my concern was met with disdain. My predominately White colleagues felt it was an isolated issue.

Conclusion. Finally, Black teachers really do matter! Black teachers matter in both the discipline and academic achievement arenas. Research cited here fully supports that racial interactions between teacher and student do influence student performance (behaviorally and academically). Pupils may trust and respect someone with whom they share salient characteristics, making learning come more easily. (Carter, 2007) Likewise, a teacher of the same race may serve as a more effective role model for students, helping build confidence, while encouraging an enthusiasm and love of learning. (Brasher, 2016; Carter, 2007; Papageorge, 2016; Tatum, 1997; Wright, 2015)



This article has been generously contributed by Soror Christella Cain, M.A., LPC. She is a member of Delta Beta Chapter, Austin, TX.

Teacher Day to Day

You are faced with the daunting task of motivating, oftentimes, unwilling students to take responsibility of completing assignments. Even after countless lectures, many fail to comply.

Teacher, day to day...

You make desperate commands,
Still your students refuse to comply.
You resort to inevitable drastic measures,
But to no avail, the outcome is still the same.
You cry!

Teacher, day to day...

You are left in dismay.
Little or no work means little or no learning.
You are determined to be effective.
Teaching and learning go hand in hand
So, you strategize to ignite and engage.

Teacher, day to day...

You plant the seeds that enable
facilitation of independent practice,
interpretation of information,
encouraging the charting of progress, and
researching new methods, to pass on.

Teacher, day to day...

You move students to accept more accountability.
Piece by piece, your students build
a higher basis for learning intrinsically.
Their learning becomes a continuous process.
They apply the skills on their own.

Teacher, day to day...

Your students are invincible, and so are you!



This poem has been generously contributed by Soror Onitta Parker. She is a member of Beta Mu Chapter, Gary, IN.

Overcoming Obstacles



We are here to applaud your accomplishments. Your presence at graduation is a personal testimony of your commitment to achieve your goals, earning awards, certificates, diplomas and degrees. Further, many have distinguished yourselves as recipients of class honors, rankings, titles, and other recognitions. Congratulations!

Your achievement is not just by happenstance. Growing up in a very small town in Chatham County, North Carolina, I was blessed to be reared by both loving parents. My mother was a high school graduate who held jobs in a poultry plant and a furniture manufacturing plant. My father completed his 8th year of school and was self-employed in the pulpwood business. These circumstances did not create limitations for me, but instead, was a source of motivation. Our lifestyle was comfortable, yet I knew that my parents wanted so much more for me, which is what all parents want for their children.

G. B. Shaw says, "People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in cir-

cumstances. The people who get on in the world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them." No matter the structure or the circumstances, let alone the sacrifices made along the way, there was a solid foundation of love and care, powerful values, beliefs, ideals and philosophies that shaped who we are. Your foundation matters!

With each generation the bar of expectations was raised, norms were established and somehow, we instinctively knew what our parents expected. My son said his classmates would often ask him about college, to which he would respond, "Do you really think I have a choice?" (He is an Alabama A & M Graduate.) While living at home, you would frequently hear old age adages repeated, such as: "Hard work pays off," "Don't do as I do, do as I say do," "Your attitude determines your altitude," and "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again." Most of you would likely agree that our strength as a family is undergirded by the Holy Word. Because our

basic needs were met and the foundation was laid, we were equipped for the journey and whatever it would bring. The Journey Matters: Deuteronomy 2:24 says, "Rise up, take your journey." All of your journeys have been as uniquely different as you are, considering your varied experiences. There are challenges and obstacles, but when you pause for a calm, quiet moment to reflect, you know that it's all worthwhile.

While working on my dissertation, during a time when I was really pressed to submit chapters to my advisor, someone sent me an email that read, "If God brings you to it, He will bring you through it." I was encouraged and realized that I could, with His strength, manage stress and survive setbacks. Some of you may know what I'm talking about. Oddly enough, I received my doctorate after I retired from the school system. It just goes to show you that, you are never too old to learn. It's all about personal goals; it's what you want out of life. Once you enter the race, you want to finish it. You want to hang on while others around you are letting go. Even with an abundance of love, understanding and support, in the final analysis, you discover that you are the driver at the wheel, the driving force — that it's really up to you! Emerson says, "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

Ultimately, it's about you, your heart, and your internal compass. God has willed a purpose and plan for your life. I can personally identify with the following that will help you while on any journey: 1) Look for opportunities to grow and never be discouraged in your efforts to do so, 2) Replace your weaknesses with positives; take life's broken pieces and recreate your dreams, 3) Never measure the future by the past; let yesterday become a memory and tomorrow a promise, 4) Begin each day by focusing on all that is good, and you'll be in a position to handle whatever comes along, 5) Take responsibility for your actions; never make excuses, 6) If you should slip, be comforted by the thought that we all do at times and 7) Determine your tomorrow by the choices you make today, and you'll find yourself living in joy and triumph.

Next Steps Matter: Take time now to embrace, celebrate and rejoice in this special moment, but know that

the Lord has more for you. Luke 12:48 reads, "For everyone to whom much is given, of him shall much be required." Growing up, my mother always talked with me about going to college and becoming a teacher. We really didn't know about much else. So a relative who was a teacher convinced me that it was the right choice for me, and while I don't regret it for a moment, I now realize that there were a few other options. Nowadays, we find a versatile, tech savvy, multi-tasking generation of young people, such as yourselves with a vast repertoire of careers awaiting you. There are opportunities to compete for internships even before your first real day of employment, which affords you practical on-the-job experience with pay. My daughter had a wonderful experience in this area. While at Florida A & M University, she interned with a pharmaceutical company for two summers until graduation, and then they hired her. Since then, they've paid for her tuition costs for her MBA. Choices can be made because you are amply prepared, full of energy and zest for the better things in life. Plan your work and work your plan. Enrich your quality of life with all kinds of wholesome and worthwhile activities that incorporate home, school, church and community. As a well-rounded individual with unlimited potential your assets will enable you to join the ranks of the "highly qualified", positioning you for a lifestyle comparable to your level of expertise. You've been running to get to this place, graduation. Continue to run on and discover that you've got a second wind. Boldly, with confidence, press your way until your dreams unfold before your eyes. Philippians 4:13 reads, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Be encouraged to enlarge your territory, ever seeking to be the best you can be, setting new goals and reaching new heights, but I admonish you to be patient, for as you advance, it must be step by step. As life stretches before you to the next stage, look with favor upon bold new beginnings." Just remember to take God with you. Congratulations – Graduates. May God bless each of you to have a Bright Future.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Hilder P. Wilson, Ed.D. She is a member of Psi Chapter, Mobile, AL.



I am a teacher

Being a teacher can be hard. If I am a woman, I am scarred. If I am Black, there is no reward. If I am strong, my strength must be barred. If I am opinionated, my thoughts I must guard. And if I am a liberal, these ideas many will discard. "Jim Crow laws," "Separate but Equal," and "Brown v. Board of Education," are phrases of the past, but are real enough to be confronted today.

Don't try to change me, I was "born this way!" This is who I am! I have rearranged many of my beliefs due to "embracing the standards," because I strive to keep my mind open to the ideas of others as well as the guidelines of the job. It is a fact that an achievement gap exists between poor and minority students and other students. Diverse student learners from racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse families and communities of lower socio-economic status face this achievement gap. In order to achieve success in the classroom with minority students, the educator should understand the population, as well as consistently analyze teaching practices and determine their effectiveness. If a teacher does not

understand the population of students being taught, success in the classroom can be greatly minimized.

We must continue to survive the robbing of basic rights of all American children, the slashing of federal funding of educational programs, and the gut-

ting of federal funding of programs that aide children with developmental and physical needs. We must pressure lawmakers to do the right thing in the fight to give all children a strong start in life.

There is a resolvable problem of recruiting, preparing, and retaining African American teachers in urban schools. The primary place to seek minority candidates could be in the expanding pool of mature adults with college degrees who already reside in the particular metropolitan area. The conventional wisdom in teacher education is that it is not possible to increase the number of African American teachers. The problem could be that teacher educators / recruiters are looking in the wrong places. Rather than assuming that recruitment of African American teachers must be done in universities, urban school districts can now look in their own metropolitan areas for African Americans with college degrees. Using the opportunities offered by alternative certification, adults can be trained on the job in the same urban districts where they reside and are very likely to remain. There are untapped pools of highly qualified African Americans who can, and will, effectively teach urban children. Many African American teachers know how to educate poor and minority children to high levels. Some do it everyday with outstanding results.

There is no complaining here, no regrets, just pointing out the facts as I see them, or as the children would express it, "Just saying!"

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Phyllis Freeman-Stewart. She is a member of Epsilon Theta Chapter, Beaumont, TX.



The Great Eight



Referred to as "The Great Eight," they are: Demetrees Hutchins, Tiffany Kyser, Shannon McCullough, Jada Phelps-Moultrie, Nadrea Njoku, Juhanna Rogers, Johari Shuck and Jasmine Haywood. (photo credit – Indiana University)

The graduation dust has begun to settle, but there are specific accomplishments that have reached national heights: a group of eight Black women who earned their Ph.D from the IU School of Education, a unique and phenomenal occurrence. Jada Phelps-Moultrie, Shannon McCullough, Johari Shuck, Nadrea Njoku, Tiffany Kyser, Jasmine Haywood, Demetrees Hutchins, and Juhanna Rogers are all different ages with different backgrounds, but had a common goal driven by education.

Leading up to receiving their degrees, the "Great Eight" joined efforts to support each other academically and emotionally throughout the process. What we have here are non-traditional women, some of them are mothers and wives, who have lived with the absence of Black women as role models in education or who have personally witnessed the impact marginalization has had on African Americans in education. Their outcome was an important mark in history for the IU School of Education and African Americans obtaining doctorate degrees, since usually there are only a few PhD students that graduate from the school and even fewer minorities in any area of graduate studies, according to interim executive associate dean Robin Hughes.

While the bond between these ladies didn't occur right away, the "Great Eight" found each other over the course of the curriculum studies and

vowed to remain supportive of one another in an environment that was not always nurturing. It is their hope that the sisterhood circle doesn't end now that they've graduated. Nadrea Njoku served as the self-appointed managing individual for the "Great Eight's" communication and bonding, but she later passed it on to Jasmine Haywood, who will then possibly pass it on to someone else. These women plan to stay connected through this bond they have nurtured and hopefully see this sisterhood persevere and transcend to future students.

These eight women have made national headlines and the path they've created will continue to be of importance for them and future African American women to follow. I think it's safe to say that this is just the beginning of their newfound legacy as the Great Eight. They were recently honored with a "Standard Bearer Award" by the Neal-Marshall Alumni Club, Indiana University's African American alumni association, at a signature summer jazz brunch in Indianapolis.

Soror Jada Phelps-Moultrie became a member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., Tau Chapter, Indianapolis, Indiana. Soror Moultrie pledged along with her mother, Soror Dilynn Phelps and currently resides in Seattle, Washington with her husband and three children.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Evelyn Hicks. She is a member of Tau Chapter, Indianapolis, IN.

Education *in* Black & White



My teaching career began in a predominately White school district in the south where I was one of three Black high school educators. I realized this would be a different experience since I was born and reared in Jersey City, New Jersey and attended public school in that urban setting. I accepted this position and was excited to begin a career of making a difference in the life of a child. How different could it be to teach in this school versus the school I attended? I had no idea that this experience would result in a roller coaster ride of emotions.

In this district, teachers began the school year five days prior to student arrival with one of those days designated as "meet the teacher day" for parents and students. During this time, teachers introduced themselves to the students and parents, shared the course expectations and curriculum that would be taught, and identified the materials needed for class. This 10 - 15 minute session always ended with a question-answer period. This was my second year at this school and as I had done in the previous year, I shared my expectations with genuine excitement because I was sincerely looking forward to a great school year.

The following day, my principal came to my classroom and shared that a parent had called him and demanded that her son be taken out of my class. She said that her son could not possibly learn anything in my class. I was mortified! I prided myself on being exceptional at establishing relationships with my students and making their learning experiences fun despite the rigorous nature of my classes. My principal said, "You know what this is really about, don't you?" I stood puzzled for a minute, and then it clicked. Then he said, "I am NOT taking the student out of your class. You are a great teacher; however, I do want you to call the parent and have a conversation with her." I made the call in the pres-

ence of the guidance chairperson. I said, "Hello, I'm giving you a call because I understand that you have some concerns and want your son removed from my class." The mom said, "Yes, you are arrogant and my son will not be able to learn anything from you." I responded respectfully but firmly, "Oh, I am so sorry that in our 10-15 minutes together you identified me as being arrogant. I assure you that this is far from my personality. Students in my classes have fun and learn a great deal. Many of them do very well under my instruction. However, if you picked up arrogance in the way I exuded confidence in the subject matter I teach having obtained a BA in English from the University of Maryland at College Park in 3 ½ years and completing a Master's degree from Emory University in one year while fulfilling the role of an adjunct professor in English at the local junior college, then I offer NO apology." The student remained in my class and obtained a B average as a final grade. He told me that he had a blast in my class.

While in this same school district, I had another student in my freshman English class with a similar issue. However, he did not do his work, would not read the literature, or complete assignments in or out of class. In my attempt to uncover how I could reach this youngster, I requested a parent conference. The father agreed to come. On that day, I greeted the parent with a smile and welcomed him to my classroom. The father looked at his son and asked, "Son, is this your teacher?" The son replied, "Yes, sir." The father said, "No wonder you are failing. They can't teach you nothing," and they walked out. And yes, the student failed the class.

Many ponder why I would teach in a predominately White school district in the south. I believe everyone needs to see that people of color can become more than what has been portrayed nega-

tively on television or in the movies. For the Black students in the school, I provided that safe place they could come to when life's events became a challenge. I was their voice when they felt no one was listening. I took on the mantle of making sure they were exposed to opportunities that would help them achieve success in life.

Now, 28 years later, I find myself in a similar school district only now I am an administrator at a high school in New Jersey. Within the district, there are three female Black administrators. Within my building, there are two Black female teachers and me. Interestingly, there are no Black male administrators in the district. This leaves me with the awesome responsibility of trying to ensure that the students of color have role models.

As an administrator, I come into contact with many students in the hallways and in my office. I am readily available to provide that safe haven for students of color. Some of the same insults from the prior 28 years still exist, only this time I'm asked, "Why do they call you Dr. Ross anyway?" I smile as I have a flashback to my first experience and I respond, "I am Dr. Ross because I earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership, Management, and Policy from Seton Hall University."

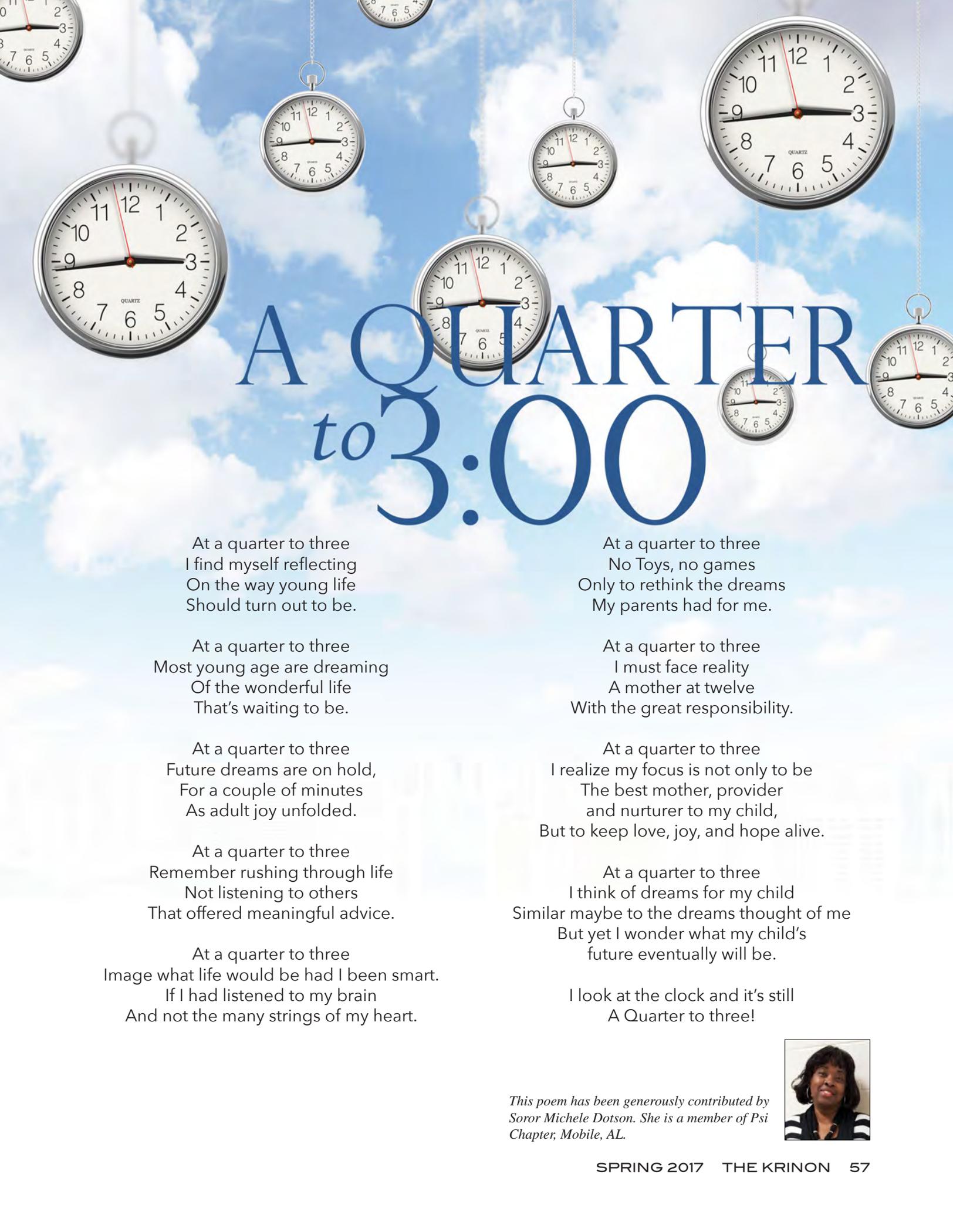
On many occasions I question why I am still here? Am I making a difference? But the answer to these questions was revealed following an assembly program during the "Week of Respect." The presenter shared some graphic images of racial incidents that have happened in the past and present. I noticed that one of my Black male students was quite upset and proceeded to walk out of the assembly. I met him in the hallway and escorted him to the nearest conference room. We talked and talked. He shared that these incidents made him think about all that his grandma had gone through

and I shared stories of what I experienced as a child. I stressed that his feelings are why I am so tough on him when I talk to him about his grades. I found myself sharing what my father had always said to me. I told him that he MUST get his education because it's the one thing no one could take from him. This six foot Black male student said with tears streaming down his face, "Thank you Dr. Ross for being here for us."

Many question Black educators as to why they are in predominately White districts. They make comments such as the Black students in the urban areas need you; they need to see role models like you. All students, no matter their race or origin, need to be exposed to successful Black educators. In addition, what we must remember is that there are Black students in the predominately White school districts that need someone with whom they can relate as well. They need someone who will listen to and understand them and to be their voice.



This article has been generously contributed by Soror / Dr. Lavetta S. Ross. She is a member of Alpha Chapter, Jersey City, NJ.



A QUARTER to 3:00

At a quarter to three
I find myself reflecting
On the way young life
Should turn out to be.

At a quarter to three
Most young age are dreaming
Of the wonderful life
That's waiting to be.

At a quarter to three
Future dreams are on hold,
For a couple of minutes
As adult joy unfolded.

At a quarter to three
Remember rushing through life
Not listening to others
That offered meaningful advice.

At a quarter to three
Image what life would be had I been smart.
If I had listened to my brain
And not the many strings of my heart.

At a quarter to three
No Toys, no games
Only to rethink the dreams
My parents had for me.

At a quarter to three
I must face reality
A mother at twelve
With the great responsibility.

At a quarter to three
I realize my focus is not only to be
The best mother, provider
and nurturer to my child,
But to keep love, joy, and hope alive.

At a quarter to three
I think of dreams for my child
Similar maybe to the dreams thought of me
But yet I wonder what my child's
future eventually will be.

I look at the clock and it's still
A Quarter to three!

*This poem has been generously contributed by
Soror Michele Dotson. She is a member of Psi
Chapter, Mobile, AL.*



A LEGACY to

TREASURE



Susan Browne has been a member of Alpha Pi Chapter of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa Sorority, Inc. for fifty-eight years. She is a staunch supporter of the educational process in the state of Delaware. Since Susan graduated from Delaware State College in 1945 with a B.S. degree in Education, she has seen many changes in the educational system and the plight of African Americans in our state and country. She experienced education from the one room school house to our present diversified classrooms.

Her first teaching position came before she had even graduated from Delaware State College. After only 3 weeks of student teaching she was sent to the one room school in Ellendale, DE. The preceding teacher only left her with a roll book that included students' names. She had to ask each student what their grades were, in order to prepare lessons for each one. The classroom was comprised of students from grades one through eight.

After spending 3 months at Ellendale School she began her full time teaching career at Lockwood School

in Maryland, also a one room school. The students ranged from grades one through six. She spent the next 10 years at Lockwood. On leaving Lockwood School, Susan was offered a position at Booker T. Washington School in Dover, Delaware. This was her first experience of teaching a single grade class.

Prior to 1945 teachers' salaries were not equal between African American and White teachers. In 1945 the Delaware State News published salaries of every teacher in the state; thus disparities were revealed. The Delaware State Legislature passed a law equalizing starting salaries for all teachers regardless of color. They also made it mandatory that all teachers must have a degree from a 4-year institution. This requirement benefitted the African American teachers in the state.

While salaries had been somewhat equalized, supplies and books were not. Many times, Susan recalls buying paper and pencils as well as other school supplies for her students to use in the classroom. Facilities were not equal either. On one occasion at Lockwood School, a very heavy rain overnight caused the roof to leak so badly that the students' desks had to be moved outside to the yard for several days until the roof could be repaired. Another time the heat for the building failed and the students worked in their coats and gloves that day.

From Booker T. Washington School Susan transferred to Fairview Elementary School, where she finished her teaching career after 30 years of service to the children of Delaware.

Nine decades have come and gone since Susan's birth on April 24, 1918. So many changes have occurred in the world since then. During her long life she has been witness to momentous and important changes in the world. She has seen the election of 17 presidents from Woodrow Wilson to Barack Obama, lived through 6 wars from WWII to Afghanistan, saw the end of segregation and Jim Crow, and watched as man walked on the moon for the first time. She has seen natural disasters hit both at home and abroad, lost loved ones and friends.

And yet at the age of 98 Susan is still participating in the educational process through her work with The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., Alpha Pi Chapter. She is still a strong woman of God, and a positive influence on her children and every student with whom she has come in contact. Susan is truly the greatest treasure of Alpha Pi Chapter.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Patricia Randolph. She is a member of Alpha Pi Chapter, Dover, DE.



THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH THE COLOR OF MY SKIN

"I am beautiful, I am wonderful, I am special and I am unique!" These are the words that my mother, Mrs. Marynette Reid Bolden, would have me chant as I stood in front of the mirror and combed my hair every day.

A positive self-esteem is needed in order to achieve what God has created and designed for us while we are on Earth. My mom addressed the issues of teasing and taunting very early in my life.

Children told me I looked different than them.

Back then, children would try and guess the ethnicity of other children. Many times, they mispronounced the name. One day, I told my mom what my peers were calling me. She

corrected me and share the correct pronunciation of the word. She shared that the other children were just upset because they envied my appearance. This scenario encouraged me to discover why

people say negative things

about other people's outer appearance.

I quickly realized

it was easier to

focus on posi-

tive words and

expressions rather

than dwell on the cause

of people's negative ac-

tions. I soon realized that chil-

dren and adults need to be re-

directed to God's Word and what

it says about them. I realized that in

my life's journey throughout school and

my career, a significant difference can be made if I

remain positive when interacting with others. This

is not always possible and when it is not, you have

the freedom to remove yourself from the situation.

When you read the Bible and begin to mediate

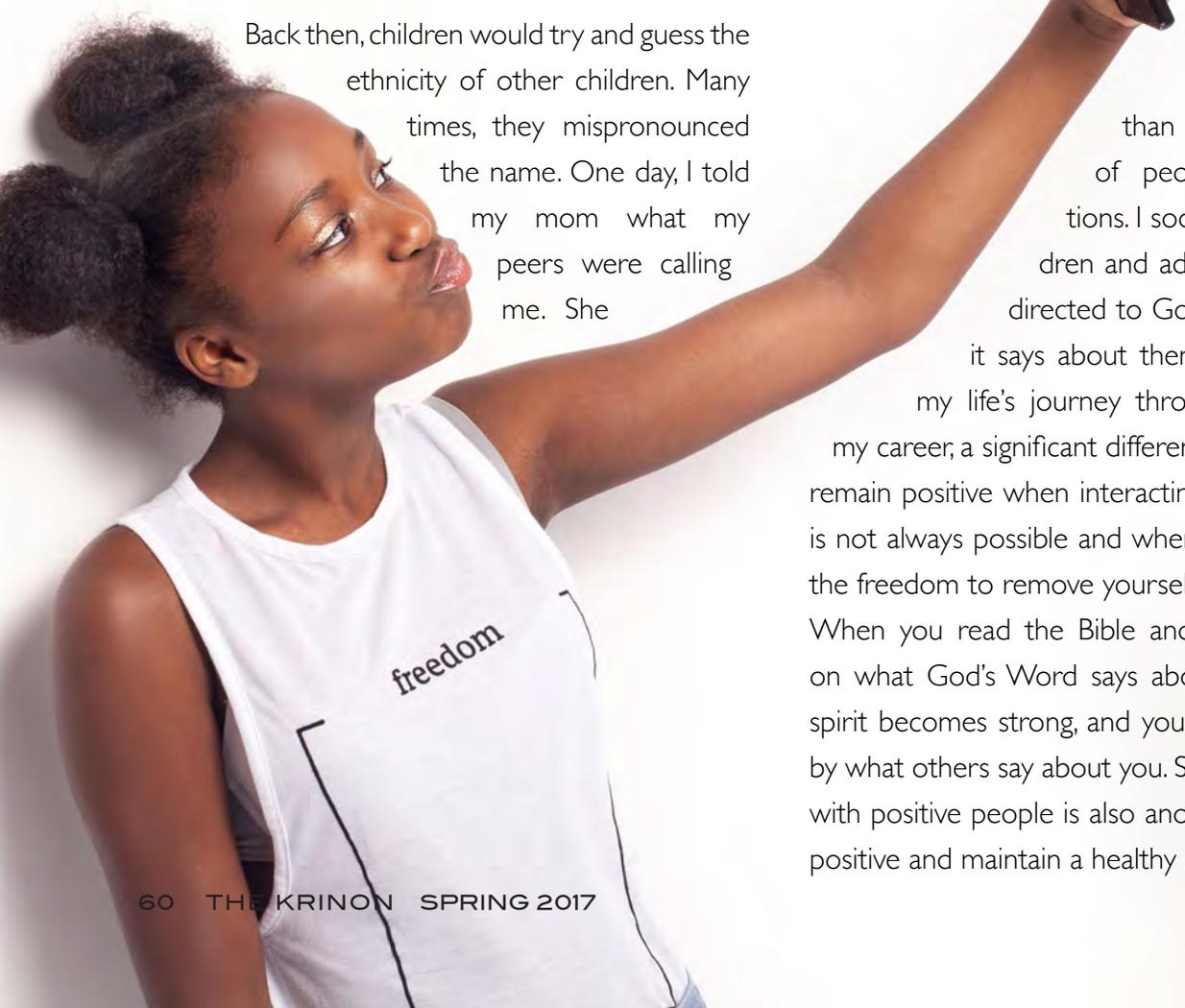
on what God's Word says about you, your inner

spirit becomes strong, and you will not be moved

by what others say about you. Surrounding yourself

with positive people is also another way to remain

positive and maintain a healthy self-esteem.



The world today is much different from the world I grew up in. Bullying and name calling are now crimes and people can be jailed for threatening others. I am currently an educator with over 20 years of experience. Name calling is still prevalent today in the school environment. On social media, students identify themselves with hashtag handles such as #TeamLightSkin and #TeamDarkSkin. Because of this I wrote a children's book entitled, "There's Nothing Wrong with the Color of My Skin." Skin is the largest organ in the human body. It is important to understand the purpose and function of skin. The color of skin varies from person to person, but it does not interfere with its purpose.

Beloved, God's Word says in Psalm 139:14, "For I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Matthew 5:14 says, "You are the light of the world." I John 3:2 says, "We are children of God and we will resemble Christ when He returns." These are God's Words to us. You see, this is the only identification you need: God's Word! You are beautiful, you are wonderful, you are special and you are unique!

When God says it that settles it! Go forth beloved, and do God's will for your life on earth because there's nothing wrong with the color of your skin!

You are all fair, my love and there is no spot in you. Song of Solomon 4:7



This article has been generously contributed by Soror Beth P. Bolden. She is a member of Alpha Epsilon Chapter, Atlanta, GA.

Rain Fugue

*SLANTING, driving, Summer rain
How you wash my heart of pain!
How you make me think of trees,
Ships and gulls and flashing seas!
In your furious, tearing wind,
Swells a chant that heals my mind;
And your passion high and proud,
Makes me shout and laugh aloud!*

*Autumn rains that start at dawn,
'Dropping veils of thinnest lawn';
Soaking sod between dank grasses,
Sweeping golden leaves in masses,-
Blotting, blurring out the Past,
In a dream you hold me fast;
Calling, coaxing to forget
Thing that are, for things not yet.*

*Winter tempest, winter rain,
Hurling down with might and main,
You but make me bug my heart,
Laughing, sheltered from your wrath.
Now I woo my dancing fire,
Piling, piling drift-wood higher.
Books and friends and pictures old,
Hearten while you pound and scold!*

*Pattering wistful showers of Spring
Set me to remembering
Far-off times and lovers too,
Gentle joys and heart-break rue,-
Memories I'd as lief forget,
Were not oblivion sadder yet.
Ah! you twist my mind with pain,
Wistful whispering April rain!*

*Summer, Autumn, Winter rain,
How you ease my heart of pain!
Whispering, wistful showers of Spring,
How I love the hurt you bring!*

Jessie Redmon Fauset (1882-1961)

Victory over *Obstacles*



Our family sat around the dinner table on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. This was unusual because ours was the “house by the side of the road”, that meant the house was typically crammed with any and every one needing a meal. Usually it was the minister, folks from church and college students who lived on campus. That day, Dad looked at me and calmly said, “In the fall you will transfer to Texas Christian University.” Those words couldn’t have come from my father. I was in quite a bit of shock! What a baffling and bewildering change of tune!!! All my life I’d heard him say, “You are going to JARVIS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE”. As I sat there, trying to take in his words, I was thinking...I’m at Jarvis, on the Dean’s list, excelling in gymnastics and dance, even enjoying singing in the choir... Finally, I spoke, “Dad, I am happy where I am, doing what I love, and on track for completing my educational degree. I am at the historical Black college that you INSISTED I attend!” “Times are changing,” he

said, “and you have an opportunity to take part in the Jarvis - TCU sister schools exchange program. The way has been cleared for you to be part of the integration that’s taking place at that campus. I’ve heard the talk of the exchange of students to come from Jarvis ... and as one of the Bluebonnet Area church youth group members, your name has been put forward - you are expected, and will attend.” After numerous discussions and pleading on my part, I was only to remain at Jarvis one more semester, the fall semester of my junior year.

Scared and miserable from the changes taking place in my life, the spring semester found me enrolled and installed at Foster Hall on the Campus of Texas Christian University. Black girl number six was I. Grace, who became my roommate, would finally have person to share her suite. A sole anglo student occupied the room next door to our corner suite that spring. The following fall semester of my senior year no one was assigned to that

space. We, the six Black girls, never questioned why we were all on one hall way, on one floor, in one wing. Being one of the “firsts” was fraught with substantial palpable, as well as intangible emotional and mental adversity. My ‘dutiful daughter’ reward was sweet and meaningful. Dad’s gift, for my reaching my educational goal and honoring his wisdom in changing schools, was a station wagon that he purchased for me to get to and from student teaching.

Eager to begin this new phase, I met my educational advisor, Mrs. Doolittle. Instantly she disliked my ideas. According to her, I had zero organization of files, materials, bulletin boards, and the like; every assignment was wrong; and my lesson plans had no depth. Here was yet another heart wrenching situation to endure and have to figure a means to persevere and work out. When I requested assistance and asked questions in an attempt to improve my work to create better classroom materials, she would simply shake her head and say, “work harder”, but provide no guidance as to how to improve. My patience and willingness to continue to be the best I knew how and to withstand this difficult situation was surprisingly modified.

A few days before my student teaching experience, I was assigned a new educational advisor, Mrs. Right. A much kinder person, she took the time to make suggestions and show me examples of what a lesson plan should be. Mrs. Right introduced me to my principal and my supervising teacher. Mrs. Daniels, my supervising teacher, was warm and charming, her students greeted me with smiles. She showed me my work space, then handed me the seating chart so that I might begin learning the students’ names. Four hours into my observation day I was working with students - listening to them read and commenting on their assignments. Mrs. Daniels wasn’t one to have you sit around for a

month observing or just running off papers. She put you to work encouraging and supporting you in every way. We were a pair, her suggestions about how students learn, and all of our after school talks on lessons and themes were insightful. The time passed quickly as I proudly earned a grade of A in the class. The week before graduation, Mrs. Doolittle approached me to let me know that she had heard of my successful student teacher experience. Then, she shared that her husband was the hiring manager for the school district. She instructed me to make sure I applied for a teaching position... after all I, was the kind of young Black woman the district was looking to hire. What sweet victory it was to hear those words come out of her mouth.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Those are inspiring words from Nelson Mandela. We should work for someone else’s good, rather than our own pleasure”, is something my Great Aunt Hattie used to say to me all the time. I come from a long line of basket weavers, broom makers, preachers, and teachers. My destiny was to teach and serve others. The obstacles in my life have indeed made me stronger, and I’ve never let them hold me back. I have enjoyed the forty-three years in the field of education. It has been and continues to be my aim to encourage and uplift those who have crossed my path, be they student, parent, or friend.

This article has been contributed by Esther “Pixi” Phillips. She is a member of Delta Beta Chapter, Austin, TX.



SOCIAL WORK MADE A TEACHER OUT OF ME

Ten years of social work and I was fried to a crisp. I worked in a Crisis Intervention Unit with adolescents and their families. I put runaway children in shelters because their parents wouldn't take them back. I took 16 year old 8th graders to court so their parents could sign them out of school. I met with families in every police department in Bergen County. When I moved to municipal welfare, the recidivism rate was so high that I should have put a revolving door at the office entrance. I didn't feel like I was helping anyone and was not the least bit fulfilled.

One frustration-filled Friday, I took out a legal pad, drew a line down the middle of the page and titled the columns Assets and Liabilities. I listed the things I liked to do and was good at on one side, and what I didn't like and was not so good at on the other. When I finished, I looked at the Assets side; it included reading, writing, museums, theater and music, among other things. I actually said out loud, "Good Lord, I'm a teacher!"

It took phone calls and research (okay, it was before the Internet Age) to find that there was a way for someone like me, who didn't have a degree in education, to obtain a teaching license. Now, I have never been described as traditional, so it seemed as though the Alternate Route was made for me! I took the National Teachers Exam twice. Once, I took it cold and once I bought workbooks, studied and took practice tests. I got the exact same passing score both times...ok, I get it. I'm a teacher.

As a teacher, I have found that my social work experience has been invaluable in the classroom. Public schools in the 21st century are full of technology, standardized tests and wounded, damaged children. Social work enabled me to take a holistic approach to each child. Having worked for so many years with children in crisis gave me the ability to make quick and accurate assessments based on a variety of visible and invisible behaviors. Although all children are not eligible for special services, it seems to me that there should be something similar to the IEP for every child.

Yes, I know that we are already overworked, overwhelmed and are working on our second plate being full. However, with so many challenges facing

our students today, ranging from bullying, cultural differences, racism, physical/emotional abuse in and out of the home, sexual identities that are relatively new to our society, individualized educational plans have never been more critical.

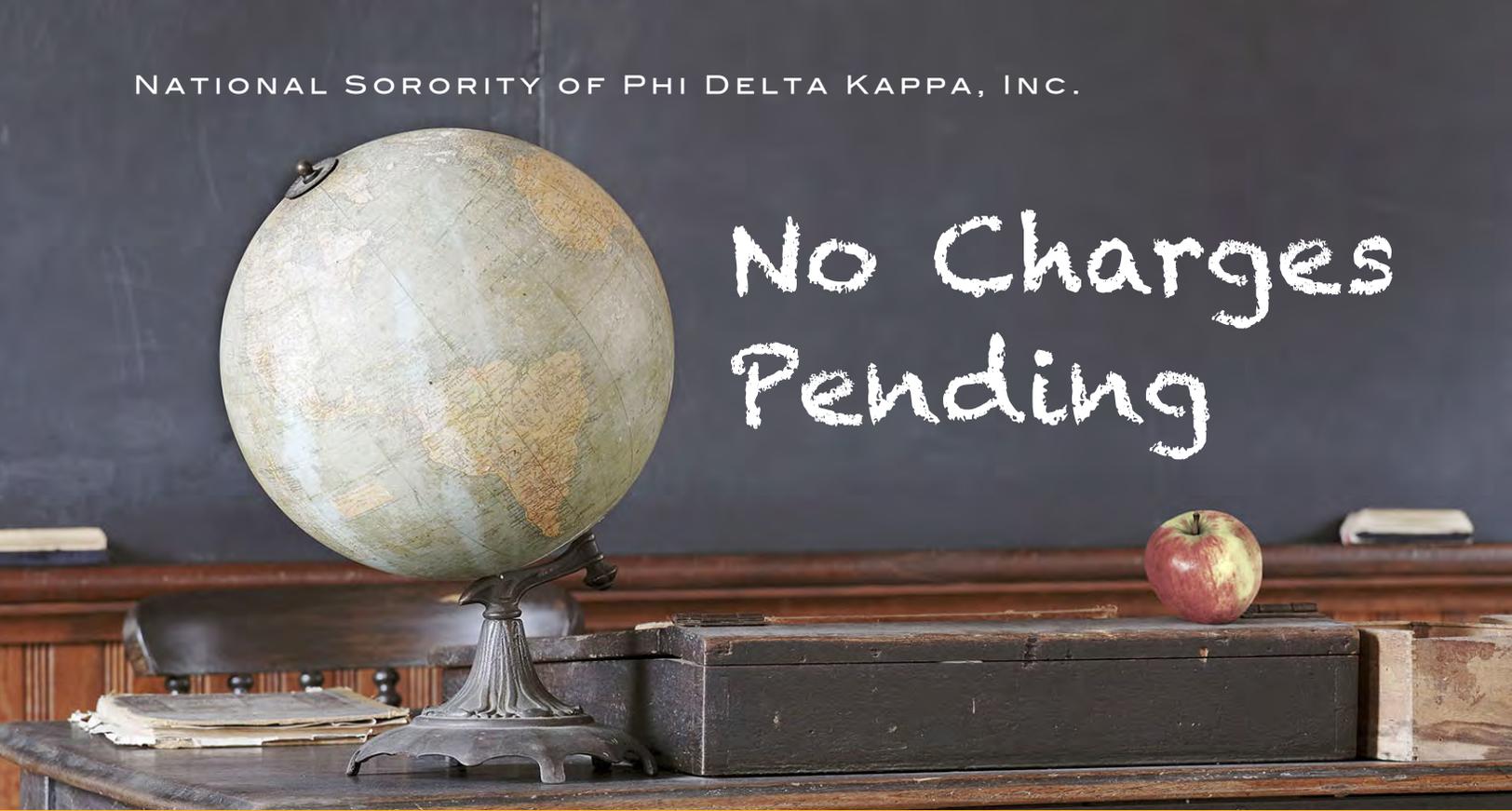
There are additional burdens on educational professionals such as union/contract issues, standardized testing, and constant curriculum changes. Coursework and training in social work-type assessment and referral might actually make our work easier. Getting each child what they need, as much as we are able to do so, could provide some of the changes so desperately needed in public education.

There is much more to the work in a classroom than merely dissemination of facts and information. For many of our students, it is all they can do to get to school fully and appropriately dressed; there is the added pressure of homework, tests and assessments, which I have learned are not necessarily the same thing. All of this in addition to the myriad of things that so many children have to face when they return home each day cries out for social work interventions.

I have often referred to the role of classroom teacher as social work with a teacher's edition. I thought I was leaving social work. It seems that social work hasn't left me and I am grateful for it. I believe that my students are better served because of it.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Valerie J. Johnson, MSET. She is a member of Delta Nu Chapter, Bergen/Passaic Counties, NJ.





No Charges Pending

It was 1967. The year of mandatory integration of Nashville-Davidson County Public Schools. Tensions were high and the anticipation of uncertainty spread throughout this metropolitan city because bussing became the norm. Not surprising was the sudden need for creative ways to circumvent the law – housing developments outside the county line, home schools, church schools and private schools by any name with selective enrollments.

It was common knowledge among teachers that the school system was working to select teachers who would be able to bridge relationships within certain schools. Well, as fate would have it, I received a letter from the Human Relations Department of the Board of Education requesting that I attend a meeting after school on a Friday afternoon to discuss a special assignment. Friday was the end of a school week and I was ready to get home. In the back of my mind I was wondering if I were being asked to change schools or would I have the opportunity to become the Director of a federal program that I had assisted in developing. The latter was my wish; but that was not the case. I was asked to go to Ewing Park Junior High School to teach science. This was a newly built school, with a White student body, slated to open in the fall. Somewhat disappointed on one hand, I left the meeting feeling proud that I had exhibited the

professionalism and gained the confidence of that staff that they selected me for what would be a challenging year in human relationships.

A little more than a month passed and I finally met with the newly assigned principal. The secretary led me to his office and he sat leaning back in his leather desk chair as I entered. I spoke and he began by saying, “Well, Miss Black, (I was Mrs.), you are the first Nee-grow hired for this school. Do you think you can handle this assignment?” It was all I could do to refrain from showing anger. I remember moving to the edge of my chair and said, “Mr. B., I accepted this assignment because I sincerely feel that I will be an asset to this school. My credentials indicate that I am qualified to meet the challenges. Now, with all do respect to you, the word is pronounced “knee-grow” and I am married.” After the red left his face and he sat up straight in his chair, he thanked me for my comments and assured me that we were going to have a great school year. We did! He was very impressed with my forth rightfulness and I always received very high evaluations and commendations. But let me hasten to say, that school year was quite challenging.

School started. White citizens with signs lined the street across from the school protesting bussing and integration. Yes, I was the token at a school of majority White seventh and eighth graders. There might have

been eight Black students bussed from the rural area.

I settled in for what I anticipated was going to be a fantastic year; after all, I had a new science laboratory furnished with all new equipment. I was excited. I thought the students were accepting me but then little subtle behaviors began to surface.

Here we go ... W.C. tried out for the football team; got roughed up in practice and told his mother that I had pinched him and that is why he had the big bruise on his arm. Of course his mother showed up before school the next morning and demanded that she see that teacher. As soon as I walked into the principal's office she began to rant and rave. I am puzzled because I have not a clue as to what she is talking about. W.C. is sitting there with his head bowed and finally confessed that he lied because he didn't like me. WOW!

Here we go again ... J.J. was not happy about his test grade so he came to my desk, stood close to me and loudly said, "Bitch, why did you take off for spelling? I was shocked and I said, "You know, had you called me a Black bitch, I would have (I caught myself) and quickly wrote the office referral. He was suspended 3 days pending a parent conference. WOW!

Here we go again ... You would think that teenagers could find their way to the cafeteria but our job was to escort them to and from there for lunch. Walking in front of my class down the first set of stairs, B.P. decided that he would clap both of my ears with his hands as hard as he could. It surprised me and I turned to him and told him to never do that again. Walking down the second set of stairs from the landing, he did it again. I guess he couldn't resist or just didn't care. To the principal's office once more. B.P.'s mother comes, paddles him and takes him home on suspension. Come to think of it, I really could have pressed assault charges. WOW!

Here we go again ... I heard after the fact that there was a Christmas get-together at a local restaurant. My team-teacher asked after we returned from the holidays why I didn't come. I told her that I was not invited to be a part of the faculty off-campus activities. Must you guess why? Remember, integration was not just a challenge for students but I think often times it was more difficult for some teachers.

More Black faculty members and Black students were assigned to Ewing Park the second year and I was happy to have some of my friends join me. The culture of the school changed; an integrated student body and faculty.

Here we go again ... Of course I knew that everyone was not accepting change. I was astounded when I overheard John, an older White male teacher, tell F.O., another White male teacher that he didn't go to Vanderbilt University to teach niggers. WOW! When he realized that I heard him, he began to apologize over and over and avoided me as much as he could from then on. I tried not to think that he said it for my benefit. He was granted a transfer at the end of the school year.

Here we go again ... Why would you tell a student that if he behaves for four days that he can play on Fridays and the rest of the class is working and learning on Friday? When the mother of this Black male student told me what V.T., the White teacher said to him, I was furious. My goal was to have a professional discussion with her about her expectations for Greg. After all, he was there to learn English and V.T. had no right to deny him an education five days a week. She admitted that she could not keep his attention so that was the deal she had made with him. She became very defensive and angry that I said Greg would not play on Fridays but would be treated as the other students were. The next morning I was called to the principal's office along with V.T. to defend my comments. It was obvious that she and the principal had discussed my actions sometime before that morning, plotting their course of action. WOW! I stuck to my comments and said that I would share my concerns with the parents and the area superintendent if he were treated differently. She was granted a transfer at the end of the school year.

Ewing Park Junior High School was a great school. It closed around 2000 and became a private for profit school. Through it all, I had many wonderful experiences at Ewing Park that helped to enhance my career as a teacher. I left that school with no charges pending against me or my students! Occasionally, I see some of the students from my first year at the school. While I might not remember their names; they remember mine. Many times they tell me that I was the best teacher they ever had. I remained at Ewing Park for fifteen years before transferring to Hillwood High School to teach in my college majors, Biology and Chemistry for the next twenty years.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Ann D. Black. She is a Past Supreme Basileus and currently serves as Supreme Executive Advisor. She is a member of Alpha Beta Chapter, Nashville, TN.



I WAS THE ONLY **BLACK** *Teacher*

In December 1979, I had moved from Beaumont, Texas (my hometown and my old high school that I had graduated from, taught at and loved dearly (Hebert High) to Moore, Oklahoma. My husband had already been there setting up so everything would be in place by the time I arrived. Summer passed, and was it a hot one! It was beginning to turn cold as the fall began its season. I had never experienced that type of cold weather that was about to set in.

It was snowing fiercely that fall of 1980; but I knew that I wanted and needed to work. But where would I find a job in this White neighborhood? Being an "Educator", I thought I would ride around and scout out the area to see if there were any schools near or close-by in the area. I saw several in the area, middle and high schools. I was encouraged since I was certified in both areas.

I found the main school board office and decided to walk in and put in an application. As I walked the hallway and saw many people, there was no one who looked like me (teasing tan). Boy was it scary! Growing up in Beaumont, my father, Mr. Louis Brown, had lots of White people that he socialized with and worked for. He and my mother would attend functions with them but the kids never went.

I graduated from "Prairie View A&M University

in May 1977. I wanted to go to a multicultural college or the military. My father told me I had to go to Prairie View because he went there and all of his kids would attend this college. What choice did I have? Back in the day, "Whatever" your parents said was the bottom line, no questions asked.

I started substitute teaching January 1980, until the end of May. The students (all White) were nice and the adults (teachers and any other adult in that building,) were very cordial.

About the second week in May the Superintendent of Moore Schools (White) called and asked me to come to his office that afternoon, after I got off. I went over to his office and he kindly invited me in. He proceeded to tell me that he had heard a lot of good things about me and the teachers liked the way I spoke to the kids. He also said he had a vacancy at a middle school in vocational home-economics.

"It is yours, if you would like it." Go home, think about it, and call me on Monday." Then he handed me a card with his number and he said "Call and only talk to me." I called him as he requested and accepted the position. To my surprise, the principal (White female) of Brink Middle School was very unhappy about it.

In September 1980, I began the job. The principal introduced me to the faculty. They were all cordial and accepting of me. That school year there were 5 Black students at the school but no adults at all.



AT AN ALL WHITE SCHOOL

The next year there were 10 Black students at the school and neither year were any of the students in my class. One of the White students asked me, "Miss, how do you get to be "Black?". I was floored! I took my time answering because I had to marinate over the question. I had never been asked that before. My answer to the young lady was "That was the way God planned it."

As the school year was about to begin, the principal came to the Home-Economics lab. She walked into the room, closed the door and proceeded to tell me that she had left the position open for her friend who would be hired that year. She also said that she was upset because I was given the job. She went on to say to my face that she did not want me there and in a whining voice that the job was supposed to be for her friend. I just looked at her, smirked under my exterior and she walked out of the room and tried to slam the door.

Every evaluation that I received from her was negative and less than below expectation. That was not me; that had to be someone else's evaluation! She picked at me non-stop, in somewhat of a sneaky cunning way for 2 years. I decided if I were to be there another year, she would hear from my lawyer. My husband had secured a lawyer for me and asked me if I wanted to proceed with this situation. In the meantime, since I was near to Oklahoma City, I had met people who taught or worked in Oklahoma City Public School. They encouraged me to put in an application.

If I were going to return to Brink Middle School, I was ready to file a racial discrimination lawsuit against the principal. It was lucky for her that I was hired somewhere else. One day before I left Brink

Middle School, I was standing on my duty post outside when this little White boy screamed across campus one day and called me the "N" word. He had better be glad I could not catch him that day. I was upset and could not calm down that entire afternoon at work. I thought the nerve of him. I had documentation on everything the principal said and did. I learned that it is quite important to document.

I put in my application for employment at Oklahoma City Public Schools and was accepted. I substituted for a teacher who was injured trying to stop a fight. The next year I was able to teach in my minor (science). I eventually became head of my department at Webster Middle School in Oklahoma City and served as the Science Fair Chairperson for almost 20 years. I also taught Social Studies.

My first teaching position in Oklahoma makes me think about the youth of today, the words they speak, and their actions in life. They sometimes carry their emotions on their sleeves, as I have sometimes done. I had to learn control, hard as it may be. My dad was always talking to me because he thought I was a little hot head. I told him one day that he and I must be a lot alike, and he admitted that was the truth. I remind my 2 children, grandkids, and the students at school on a regular basis to be careful out here in the world because "Many Actions will truly cause a Reaction. So do not be hasty, slow down and put your thought process to work."

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Etta Roseborough. She is a member of Alpha Rho Chapter, Dallas, TX.



HOW I Dealt with Racism, Segregation and Integration

I am Emily T. Spicer, an only child and a 90-year old retired African American educator. Allow me to share and relate a summary of many obstacles that I encountered which made me a strong, well-educated, caring woman who strode ready to go the length needed to accomplish my goals.

I experienced only one African American teacher throughout my entire educational journey and that one was in kindergarten. During my high school years at Withrow in the 40's, many teachers did not call on Blacks. Some of us went to the principal – but little changed and the atmosphere was not welcoming. I was involved in hockey after school and was the only “Black” student. However, my efforts were in vain! My mother told me not to let that experience turn me against school.

Further, the guidance counselor never called me to her office to give me any direction until I was a senior. She told me about a sorority; Delta Sigma Theta, that was offering me a scholarship to the University of Cincinnati, which I accepted.

I graduated high school in 1944 and entered the University of Cincinnati, where I registered for the Teacher College. Imagine, the counselor told me and other Black students that we couldn't qualify as teachers and should pursue some type of “service”

field. I responded that I didn't feel the same way and that I was going to be a teacher! Again, many teachers refused to call on us and again, some of us reported what was happening and a few changes occurred. Some students withdrew. I was studying Physical and Health Education and I was the one and only Black. I allowed no one to make me feel inferior or unqualified. I was an excellent student and well-liked by the teachers in my field; however, I kept my antenna up.

I graduated in 1948 on the Dean's List but there were no openings when I applied for a position with Cincinnati Public Schools. Time passed, and I still was not working in teaching. I obtained my Master's Degree, and applied to Cincinnati Public Schools again. An opening was available and I was given an interview where I was asked how I felt about teaching “White” children. Short answer, I told them I believed all children are capable of learning, and I would give my best to help all children to help themselves be successful. I was hired for Heinold Junior High School, which was a mixture of Black and White students; predominately Black.

Racism existed and was demonstrated by the ways teachers spoke and treated Black students. I voiced my concerns to the principal and he did talk to the teachers I identified. I also felt that more

Black teachers should be employed as educators. He said he expected me to play a model prominent role and he would be making some future changes. This school was housed in Encounter Teach while a new Heinold School was being built. I had a personal confrontation with the Assistant Principal. I had completed an after school activity involving students of both races. He saw us coming off the soccer field and specifically walked by the Black students and asked the White students if they had a way to get home. I asked for an appointment with him the next day and he apologized.

The principal moved to Aiken High School and asked me to follow as a teacher. I did and for a year was the only African American teacher there. He asked me how I would feel about working with a White group of community people that he would like to become engaged in the activities of the school. I welcomed the opportunity; it was my cup of tea because it was an opportunity to develop positive race relations, and we would get to know each other. Additionally, I was asked to integrate the all White drill team, and work with some formations for the band. I prayed a lot and my vision was accomplished, but not as easily as it should have been.

Another interesting incident occurred, when I moved from being a teacher to guidance counselor at Aiken. A student came into my office, and said the teacher had told the class that African Americans don't have blue eyes. Some of the students said I did and he sent a young lady to verify, which she did. I told the principal about this and he had us in for a conference, which had a satisfactory ending, but I could tell the teacher wasn't too pleased that I had asked for a conference. I prayed a lot and said to myself, "What else! What else!" Well, the what else came when I became Assistant Principal at Woodward High School, the first female adminis-

trator on the staff with four men.

At the first administrators' meeting, I was asked to take minutes. I said I would if we took turns. No minutes were ever taken; a true case of rejection. The Principal was African American and the other assistants were equally Caucasian and African American. On another occasion, the Principal left me in charge of the school when he had to go out of town. After midnight, I received a call from a custodian informing me that a water pipe had burst, and that I needed to come to the school to determine if we would have to close school the next day. One of the Caucasian administrators called me and said because he lived closer I could stay at home and he would take care of it. I immediately informed him to stay at home and that I was left in charge and that I did not need any help carrying out my responsibility. He said, "I should have known that you'd say that." His tone told me more. The journey continued to be challenging as I became more driven to succeed wherever I was assigned.

Next, I was appointed Principal of Merry Junior High School by the Board of Education. There were one thousand 7th and 8th graders in attendance. A large percentage of White children were integrated from across town and their parents did not want them there and consequently, the children did not want to be there either. Sometimes the White girls would come to me and say some Black boys pushed them down in the dirt or mud. After I talked to them, they would confess to what they had done. Parents also called with negative news. One man called and said he didn't want his children there with any "n-----". I invited him to visit our school. He did and hung onto me at every move. So much for that, I thought. I was not defeated. I was still giving my all to every student. I was always professional, direct and respectful in all my encounters with staff,

parents and the community. I became more and more challenged and hopeful that I could make a difference in time. I was promoted to Taft High School as Principal, the first female of a secondary high school in the Cincinnati Public School District. I mention this because I later learned that some men did not want to be under the leadership of a Black woman. Too bad!

The White assistant principal was assigned to Queen City Vocational, which was also a part of my assignment. He was telling people that I wasn't "his" Principal. I had a very severe conference with him and stood my ground with dignity stating that I was appointed by the Board of Education and that I was committed to letting no one disrespect or usurp my role. This occurred in the late 70's and early 80's and Taft High School was the major concern. A lawsuit had been filed challenging segregation in the system. The lawsuit filed in 1974 by the NAACP resulted in a desegregation plan for Cincinnati Schools. We were in the middle of these plans when a lawyer called me and the Assistant Principal, who was also African American, to his downtown office and questioned us over our ability and credentials to work with White students. I found his questioning to be insulting, degrading, deplorable, hurtful, and disrespectful.

Students were being bussed from the western side of town. Again, parents and students did not want to be at Taft High School. To cite a fair example, a White male student became ill, and I called his parent. She said, "I can't come down there!" I told her that I could escort him out to the car. When she arrived, the car doors were locked, the windows were up, and it was a hot day! I escorted him to her car. She said nothing, opened the door quickly, told him to hurry and get in, and was gone. I did a follow-up call later. Some of the students put

profanities on the walls and I had to discipline them.

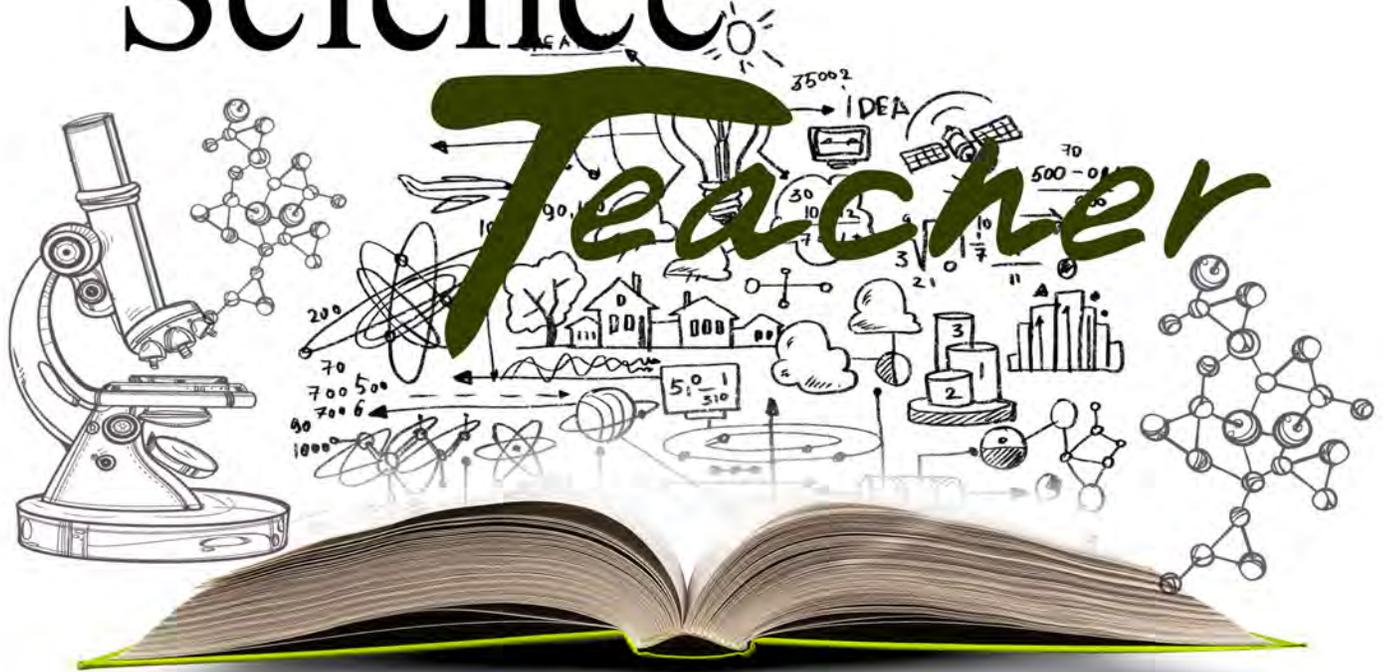
I retired, campaigned and became Vice President of the Winton Woods Board of Education. I was the first African American woman to serve on the Board of Education, I became the target for king-size racism. We were in the process of consolidating two high schools; one predominantly White with a scattering of Blacks due to the course offerings, and it was to be consolidated with a Black school which would make it a predominately Black school. Our Board had done its homework and found that we could not financially maintain two schools. During the interim, my house was picketed and I received nasty phone calls, which included "go back to picking cotton." We prevailed even though the police had to escort us home on occasion, after large community meetings. There was more, but despite it all, the High School still exists.

I am thankful, proud and I feel privileged that I had so many meaningful and worthwhile appointments and experiences to help students to help themselves. I have worked with wonderful and supportive staff of both races and many wonderful and caring parents of all kinds over the years. I retired with no regrets, no real dis-infatuations, gripes or negative feelings. We grew together and I sincerely believe that I made a difference. I am at peace with my journey.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Emily T. Spicer. She is a member of Sigma Chapter, Cincinnati, OH.



Becoming a Science



As a child, I struggled in the classroom and had a strong dislike for school, teachers and academia in general. It was not until I first came to STEM (Science, Technology, and Engineering & Math) Academy at John F. Kennedy High School that I truly developed a love and passion for education, and science in particular. Various experiments and hands-on activities captivated my attention. In addition to the substantive aspects of science I found so fascinating, I have a personal experience that helped lead me to choose a career in science teaching.

While in high school, I was introduced to my first and only African American science teacher. Mrs. B was my General Science teacher and later became my mentor and friend. She inspired me to explore different areas in the sciences. Though it took me until my sophomore year of college to fully embrace it, it was then that I realized that, like Mrs. B, I wanted to be a science teacher, and one

day give back to my community by teaching in an inner-city school.

Ms. B encouraged me to realize the importance of science and helped me to recognize that African American females are underrepresented as science teachers. Female students, especially those of color, go without strong mentors to look up to and nourish their interest in science education. Realizing this issue motivated me to become a teacher who would inspire and encourage my students to explore how they can reach their highest level of productivity while pursuing a love for science.

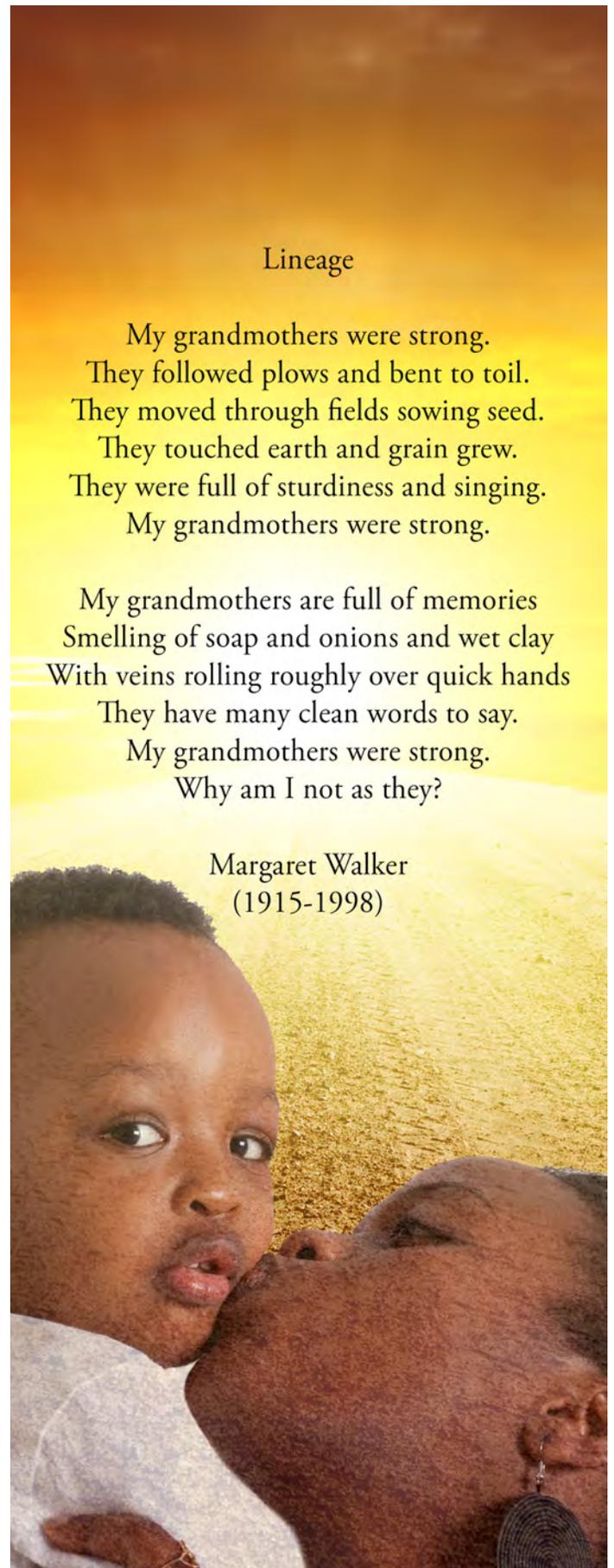
Although I have a love for the sciences, I have struggled at times with the lack of diversity in this field. While in college, I would sometimes look around my classroom and realize that I was the only African American female in the class. There is without a doubt, a lack of minority representation, and in particular female minority representation, in

higher education and science in particular. I believe that this is due in great part to the lack of expectations that many students of color have when thinking about prospects for success in higher education and science specifically. There is a culturally anticipated expectation of failure for minority students in the sciences. Realizing this issue has motivated me to work towards changing this and inspired me to help young people learn how to strive to be all they can be in life.

I teach in a high-needs inner city school in the city of Paterson, NJ. The students I teach come from socially, economically, and culturally diverse backgrounds. I teach 7th and 8th grade science in the Gifted & Talented Program. These students are considered to be high achievers who are passionate about their education. I am there because while growing up in an urban community, I realized there was a need for teachers who can relate to students who come from similar backgrounds. I believe teachers who have a diverse group of students in their classroom should practice culturally relevant teaching.

Culturally relevant teaching is pedagogy that fosters intellectual, social and emotional growth in the classroom by using cultural references to foster knowledge and skills within the curriculum and classroom. Becoming a science teacher has enabled me to help increase representation among African American women educators in the sciences, while enabling me to impact the lives of young people who need strong figures to look up to. As a teacher, I will continue to encourage my students to believe in themselves and never stop pursuing their dreams, no matter how difficult their paths may be.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Jessica L. Hinds. She is a member of Delta Nu Chapter, Bergen/Passaic Counties, NJ.



Teaching Tips: Working With BOYS

wait/processing time and adjust expectations to their developmental differences especially during the crucial K-2 years.

Remember: Boys do better when given more time to develop reading and writing skills

Boys prefer logic and problem solving rather than long narratives

Boys learn better when given multi-sensory opportunities

- In the classroom:
- Use Manipulatives
- Let them work in pairs
- Use timers
- All boy reading groups

It doesn't matter if boys are big or small, they are hardwired differently, cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically. In educational settings, male students account for two-thirds of Special Education students. There are 4 million boys on Ritalin and other similar stimulants. More 8th grade boys are retained than girls. Additionally, boys commit suicide at higher rates, they are subjected to more verbal abuse at home and school, and are more likely to be labeled. These facts suggest that we need to approach boys differently in the classroom setting.

In the classroom setting remember, boys process information differently from girls and process emotional information more slowly, give boys more

Allow boys to read, "How To..." books, use foam balls or other squeeze balls while reading. Allow them more physical space and limit visual distractions in the classroom.

Don't forget: Boys are hardwired to MOVE, they are slower to transition to another activity when engaged, and boys are overwhelmed by TOO MANY WORDS!

Develop a sincere relationship with the boys in your classroom, learn their story, get to know them. Find out about their families, siblings, interests, skills, and let them tell you their story from their perspective.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror C. Grace Roberson. She is a member of Delta Beta Chapter, Austin, TX.





Exemplary Educator, Civil Rights Champion

The bravery and hope of my mother as a teacher inspired me to become the best educator I could be. Here are some reflections of the obstacles she encountered during her career. Remembering Rosa V: Exemplary Educator, Civil Rights Champion. This is Rosa V.

The baby of eight girls and three boys, Rosa V and her sisters were privileged to attend and graduate college while the three males worked on the family's homestead to help support the girls. Their parents strongly believed that the males were physically strapped to be successful farmers, but believed that the girls needed a higher education to be successful.

With a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education from Jarvis Christian College, Rosa V packed up her two kids and migrated to Sulphur Springs, Texas and started her teaching career. She was hired as an eighth grade teacher at Douglas High School (an all-Black school) along with several other new teachers who became her friend and aunties to her children.

Rosa V was quite ambitious and became the teacher in charge when the principal left the building. In other words, she served as the Vice Principal without the pay. After several years of teaching, Rosa V and her friends decided to get their Masters degrees in hope for better pay.

I can remember how proud I was to see my Mom and her buddies draped in their Mastia stroll down the aisle during the Douglas High School's Baccalaureate ceremony.

During the time of segregated schools, the Black school didn't open in September like "the other" schools. Most students would've been absent because September was the cotton picking season; so the Black schools started in October. To make a few extra dollars and to teach her children work ethics, Rosa V grabbed a six foot cotton sack and took her children to the fields to pull cotton. We were paid two cents per pound of cotton. Together, we would make about six dollars (or less) on a good day.

After the civil rights movement, in 1965, the Sulphur Spring schools started their process of integration by pulling the Black teachers with Masters Degrees to work in "the other" schools. Those teachers of course, were Rosa V and her buddies. It would take four years before the integration of students was completed.

After thirty-nine years of great teaching and receiving outstanding evaluations EVERY YEAR, Rosa V decided to retire. She'd accumulated years and years of perfect attendance and had built up a quite sizable bank of unused sick days. She would only be compensated for a fraction of her sick days so she decided to start using her sick days during her last year of teaching. This resulted in her very first unsatisfactory evaluation. She was devastated!!! I encouraged her not to accept the low evaluation and to join TFT (Texas Federation of Teachers) and stand up for what she believed and deserved. The school district had never encountered anything like this before. The case was held in Austin, Texas since there was not a local teachers' union in her city. The entire membership of the Board of Education,

along with several attorneys traveled to Austin to fight Rosa V. After observing a poor representation from TFT, a case I could have won with my Perry Mason skills, Rosa V lost her case and retired with just a SATISFACTORY evaluation.

The School Board celebrated their victory and thought they had established a fear in other teachers not to go against them. BUT, Rosa V remembered that she was a trailblazer assigned to integrate the all-White schools in the city and that her desegregation journey must not end with that. With nothing to lose, she decided to become the voice for the teachers. Rosa V continued her journey in 1982 and won a seat on the school board with an overwhelming and historical outcome of votes in the city. Rosa V made it her platform to make sure teachers were treated fairly. During her tenure, the first Black principal was assigned to an integrated school. Rosa V earned and gained so much respect from the "all White" school board that she served on for two terms (eight years).

I can remember what she said as she was introduced as a new board member. "I am here for equality for all teachers in our system. Consider me as the one drop of chocolate that will change the tone of your pitcher of all white milk".

During the month of February, Rosa V's picture had been featured in the window of historical buildings commemorating her contribution to the desegregation of the Sulphur Springs Independent School District and being the first Black school-board member.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Margarette Galloway. She serves as First Supreme Anti-Basileus of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. She is a member of Alpha Rho Chapter, Dallas, TX.





Helping a Student in Need

Preparing for a new school year and a new class has always given me a feeling of euphoria. I feel good, innovative and invigorated with anticipation of great learning experiences for my students. I was busy setting up the room when I heard a soft tap on my door. Opening the door, I found a young African American girl politely standing at the door waiting to be asked in. She asked, "Are you the teacher for this room?" I replied "Yes," and she proceeded to introduce herself. She said, "I am Nicole, your new student, and I want you to please not call on me to read out loud in your class." This struck me as odd and needless to say she had interrupted my feeling of happiness.

I asked for more details. She said, "I cannot read." I was shocked to hear her response but pleased she had come to me. I thought seriously

before answering and then I said to her, "I am sure you can read or you would not be entering fifth grade." She repeated, "I can't read." I promised to help her learn to read. After school started, I discovered that this student was the only African American girl with one African American boy in her previous class, with the remainder of the students and the teacher being Hispanics. I found that the student lacked self-esteem, confidence and spoke in an almost inaudible voice.

Once the class was off to a good start, I approached the student with a plan. If she was willing to come and visit with me during her lunch periods or remain after school for 20 or 30 minutes to receive tutoring in reading, we could begin our work. All of the planning and arrangements were contingent on the approval of her mother. Her

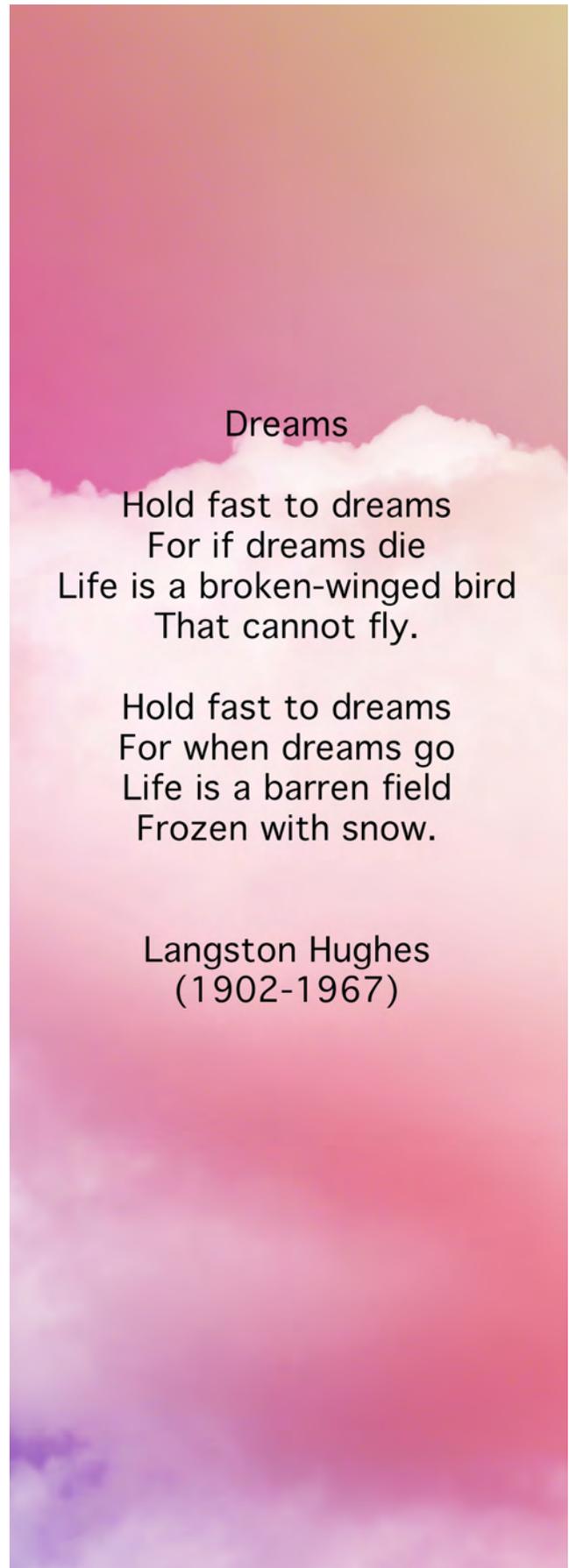
mother was pleased with the arrangement and stated that she did not know her daughter could not read. She said her daughter read to her at home, completed her homework and she never knew of any existing problems. The student responded that she memorized the book she read to her mother.

I found that Nicole knew most of her alphabets with the exception of two or three letters. She could do some blending, had some knowledge of phonics and the Dolch Word Lists. She was very hesitant in reading and stammered over most of the words. Her favorite phrase was, "I can't." We worked tirelessly on changing her phrase from "I can't" to "I will try." With continuous encouragement and praises we both began to notice small but increasing progress in her reading. I could tell she felt much better about herself. She began to hold up her head and feel more confident with her reading. She still made mistakes, but I explained that it is ok to make mistakes and that is how one learns.

In my classroom, students were taught to encourage their classmates. When someone makes a mistake, encourage that person. Eventually, I began to call on Nicole to read first one, two and then three sentences. She became so confident in herself and with her classmates cheering her on that I was totally surprised when she raised her hand one day to read out loud to the class. That was truly an "aha" and "stellar" moment for me and I know that it was for her. It showed all over her face. I knew that Nicole was on a successful path for learning.



This article has been generously contributed by Soror Delorace Daniels. She is a member of Beta Theta Chapter, Los Angeles, CA.



Dreams

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

Langston Hughes
(1902-1967)

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