

HALL COUNTY ALUMNAE CHAPTER
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Meeting via Zoom
Minutes of the March Executive Board Meeting
Held on Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Attendance: Denise Arnold, Vallorie Coley, Melanie Floyd, Natasha Iszard, Sheriah Johnson, Whitney McDowell-Robinson, Alisha Moore, Francia Tolbert, Deborah Washington, and Lisa Williams (**A quorum was present for the transaction of business.**)

Call to Order: Soror Sheriah Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Meditation: Soror Deborah Washington gave the meditation.

Adoption of Agenda: MOTION: Soror Alisha Moore moved to add May Week under International Awareness and Involvement on the agenda. **SECOND:** Soror Francia Tolbert **ACTION:** Motion carried with no opposition.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: MOTION: Soror Alisha Moore moved to strike the statement, “The committee did not receive any reports from the financial secretary during the current audit period” from the February 13, 2024, Internal Audit report. **SECOND:** Soror Deborah Washington **ACTION:** Motion carried with no opposition.

Guest Speaker: Mr. Brandon Evans, Gainesville City Schools System Mentorship Program Lead, joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m. to share that he is in the process of restructuring and rebranding the GCSS Mentorship Program. He is looking for mentors from professional organizations or college students who are willing to volunteer twice a month with students of all levels. Training will take place in June at the HUB, which is located at Gainesville High School. Training will be given the second Thursday of every month and will last about an hour and thirty minutes. The goal of the program is to have mentors that will remain with the same students until they graduate from high school or even beyond. Interested persons must complete an application and have a background check. Mr. Brandon Evans can be contacted at brandon.evans@gcssk12.net.

Officers Reports

President’s Message: Soror Sheriah Johnson greeted sorors with “Happy Sisterhood Month.” Soror Sheriah Johnson gave a compliance update that the **Annual Financial Report** and the **Internal Audit Report** were completed and submitted in the Red Zone. Both reports were completed by February 24, 2024, four days ahead of the deadline. She gave a thank you to Soror Alisha Moore and Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson for their hard work in getting the reports submitted on time with no issues. Soror Sheriah Johnson relayed the following from the **Executive Committee Call with the Regional Director** that was held on February 20, 2024:

- Collegiate Update (Soror Jaily Martin): Information for collegiate sorors were noted.
- Regional Update (Soror Amaris Johnson): Soror Amaris Johnson is getting a lot of concerns regarding the **National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)**. Soror Amaris Johnson is looking into doing a series about NPHC. The council does not serve as a governing body for its member groups. NPHC requires dues and requires policies and procedures. NPHC chapters must be financial. Dues

are \$150 per council and not per member. Soror Amaris Johnson asked everyone that is a part of NPHC check and see if their chapter is financial with NPHC, and if not, reach out to NPHC leadership to get chapter in good standing. **Fighting** has become a problem in collegiate chapters. A lot of sanctions have been issued over fights. The number one driver is strolls. If this continues to be a problem, a need to re-evaluate strolling will occur. She is in contact with NPHC counterparts to address the issue collectively. **Southern Regional Conference committee sign ups** will not occur until after registration has closed because sorors' plans may change. This will include sign ups for the choir, praise dancers, sergeants-at-arms, or any onsite conference committees. Soror Amaris Johnson asked sorors to go back and listen to the **Membership Townhall** and share it. It will give insight into the process. Soror Amaris Johnson also spoke on fraudulent letters. She has discovered fraudulent community service letters. If this is discovered, the regional director will proceed with barring the candidate for life.

- National Finance Committee Update (Soror Toni Johnson): Soror Toni Johnson relayed that there are still known Red Zone issues. Headquarters is fixing the issues. If you have an issue, submit your email needs to National Headquarters. If there is no response in two weeks, resend the email and add Soror Toni Johnson to see if she can help to expedite the concern. Soror Toni Johnson discussed known issues of member management in the Red Zone and showed how to access member management reports. The 2023 Annual Financial Report (AFR) is due on February 28, 2024, for short year July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023. The template is available for download. As of February 20, 2024, 140 chapters have not posted submissions. Seventy-seven chapters had completed, and 72 of the 77 were in balance. If a green zero does not appear, the report is out of balance and the information must be corrected in the report. You do not have to wait for the IAR to complete the AFR.
- National Scholarship and Standards Committee (Soror Sabrina Polote): Soror Sabrina Polote shared that the Scholarship and Seed Grant is open for applicants. See the email from February 9, 2024. Over \$200K was awarded last year, and the Southern Region awarded over \$88K. A webinar is scheduled for March 6, 2024, to go over questions and have testimonials from winners. The deadline to apply is March 22, 2024. Be reminded that the appointment of Elections Chair and Committee Members should have already taken place. Refer PP Article IV, Section 2A, and Article IX, Section 7A.
- Grow with Google Initiative (Soror Nyree Washington): Soror Nyree Washington shared that the plan initially was to train 20,000 sorors. The Southern Region had the most trained sorors. Because of the success of the initial roll out, there is a want to continue Grow with Google. The goal is to train 5,000 – 7,500 women by June 1, 2024. Each chapter is asked to host at least two trainings for 60-75 women and at least one training for seniors. Conduct a regional training in April for collegiate on resumes. The link to report numbers is <https://forms.gle/EGx2iLznydbyBZ9d9>.
- GWG Partner Community: To acquire information, the chapter must establish a Gmail account and register with Google Partner Community site. Only the chapter Google Partner Gmail account may receive the Google tools. New tools have been added.
- Social Action (Soror Alfreda Coward): Soror Alfreda Coward gave a shout out to all the states that sold out registrations for Delta Days. Alabama has a few registrations left. Delta Days at the Nation's Capital (March 8 – 12, 2024) sold out for in-person registrations. Delta Days at United Nations is scheduled for March 18 – 19, 2024. The region is seeking American Sign Language interpreters. An email will go out to find sorors with this talent.
- Collegiate Presentation by Beta Eta: The chapter had challenges related to strolling and social media. An update was given on their challenges and what they are doing to protect the brand of Delta Sigma Theta.

- **Member Portal Updates:** Sorors need to make sure their information in the member portal is up to date. Pay attention to your initiation details in the portal. This report is used to request service anniversaries. If your information is not accurate or up to date the chapter is unable obtain service gifts for you.
- **Regional Conference Update:** A special registration period has been allocated just for voting and alternate delegates for the 2024 Regional Conference Cycle. Voting and alternate delegates cannot be virtual.
- **Registration Timeline:**
 - The special registration period begins on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 12 noon EDT and will end on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. EDT. Each chapter will have three registration slots and the ability to reserve one room per registration.
 - All registrations for the 2024 Regional Conference Cycle will be online. Financial members will be able to register “anywhere and anytime” on any web connection through a fully secured online system.
 - Registration will open for the Farwest Region, Southwest Region, South Atlantic Region, and Southern Region on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at 12 noon EDT, and will close on Thursday, April 18, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. EDT, or until capacity is reached.
 - Virtual registration will open on Wednesday, May 1, 2024, 12 noon EDT and will close on Monday, May 13, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. EDT.
- **Georgia GOTV Grant:** Soror Sheriah Johnson has applied for the Georgia GOTV microgrant. The deadline was Sunday, March 10, 2024.

Soror Sheriah Johnson submitted a detailed report that is on file.

First Vice President/Membership Services (Hospitality and Courtesies): Soror Denise Arnold reported that there are 35 financial members. Soror Denise Arnold is waiting to receive information from the DID trainer. The name of the church for the sisterhood worship service is not known at this time.

Second Vice President/Program Planning and Development: In the absence of the committee chair, Soror Sheriah Johnson shared that Soror Erica Glenn is an election poll worker at the Fair Street Community Center and is working there this evening. Soror Erica Glenn will give her report at the March chapter meeting.

Corresponding Secretary: Soror Vallorie Coley stated that the post office box one year’s \$182 rental fee was paid on February 29, 2024. The following correspondence was received from the chapter’s post office box: SouthState Bank correspondence, a \$50 donation check from Shirley Williamson with a note addressed to Soror Patricia Lee, and a \$30 reimbursement check for the wire fee associate with the “good faith” startup funds provided for the 2024 Georgia State Cluster. All regional and national correspondence is sent to each member via email. Soror Vallorie Coley submitted a report that is on file.

Financial Reports

Financial Secretary: In the absence of the financial secretary, Soror Sheriah Johnson relayed the treasurer’s report covering the period February 1, 2024 – February 29, 2024. Soror Jasmine Mays submitted a report that is on file and will be posted on the chapter’s website under financial documents.

Treasurer: Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson gave an update concerning PayPal. Funds were requested from the account by an unknown person. The PayPal account was not set up as a business. The person who set up the original account is no longer able to give information for that account, so a new PayPal account has been created. Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson informed members that original receipts are required

for reimbursement. Do not mix other items/purchases on a receipt for chapter reimbursements. Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson gave the operating account beginning balance, expenses, and ending balance that covered the period February 1, 2024 – February 19, 2024. Once received, the report will be posted on the chapter's website under financial documents.

Committee Reports

Arts and Letters: Soror Melanie Floyd relayed that a special invitation for sorors to meet author Victoria Christopher Murray was held in Lawrenceville, GA on February 22, 2024, at 7 p.m. Hall County Alumnae Chapter was represented by Soror Patricia Lee who was able to get an autographed book. The Delta Red Carpet/DStv Spotlight highlighted the movie "Kemba" that is based on a true story of a young woman in love with a drug kingpin premiered on February 22, 2024, on BET+. Soror Melanie Floyd suggested for sorors to watch the premiere of the movie "Shirley" starring Regina King on March 22, 2024. The movie depicts the 1972 presidential run of Soror Shirley Chisholm who was already the first Black woman to be elected to the United States Congress. The Arts and Letters Committee will highlight things to do in the upcoming issue of *Down the Hall*. Soror Sheriah Johnson recommended that the Arts and Letters Committee consider hosting a virtual movie night. Soror Melanie Floyd submitted a report that is on file.

Budget and Finance: Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson reported that a new checking account has been opened for fundraisers and special projects.

Communication and Public Relations: Soror Melanie Floyd reported that *Down the Hall* is ready for preview. Soror Deborah Washington would like to start a Chaplain's Corner in the newsletter.

Economic Development: A report was not presented.

Educational Development: Soror Francia Tolbert reported that the committee met on March 6, 2024. The Read Across America initiative that took place on Monday, March 4, 2024, from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. at Fair Street International Academy and Creative Learners Child Development Center was a success. Both schools were very pleased with the participants' efforts and dedication to serving the children by reading to them. The kids listened and were tuned into the books that were read to them. A "BIG THANK YOU" to all the sorors who participated in the Read Across America initiative, and they are as follows: Soror Francia Tolbert, Soror Sheriah Johnson, Soror Erica Glenn, Soror Alicia Moore, Soror Lisa Williams, Soror Natasha Iszard, Soror Neisee McArthur-Williams, Soror Melanie Floyd, and Soror Georgette Riggans. The committee discussed other options for the Educational Development Committee's interest. The committee reviewed the calendar and contacted various organizations and schools in Gainesville City, Hall County and Forsyth County. For more information, please contact Soror Francia Tolbert. The next scheduled committee meeting will be on April 10, 2024, at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Soror Francia Tolbert submitted a report that is on file.

Emergency Response: Soror Melanie Floyd shared the following thunderstorm and lightning preparedness tips:

- Avoid water. Immediately move away from ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water.
- Do not bathe, shower, wash dishes, or have any contact with water during a thunderstorm. Lightning can travel through a building's plumbing.
- Do not touch electronic equipment.
- Invest in a battery-operated weather radio.
- Equip your home with whole-house surge protectors to protect your appliances.

- Avoid windows, doors, porches, and concrete.
- Do not use corded phones; use cordless/cellular phones.
- Seek shelter immediately, even if caught out in the open.
- If you are caught in an open area, act quickly to find shelter.
- Do not shelter under an isolated tree, in open vehicles, open spaces, or open structures like porches, baseball dugouts, sports arenas, or gazebos.

Soror Melanie Floyd submitted a report that is on file.

Fundraising: Soror Sheriah Johnson relayed that the chapter is still receiving donations for the Ladies and Gents fundraiser. A final report will be given later.

Heritage and Archives: A report was not presented.

Internal Audit: Soror Alisha Moore reported that the Annual Internal Audit report for the short year is due in the Red Zone by February 28, 2024. The report was completed and submitted prior to the deadline. According to the Red Zone, Hall County Alumnae Chapter is in compliance. The Q1 Audit (January 1, 2024 – March 31, 2024) for FY 2024 is due in the Red Zone by June 1, 2024. Documents from the financial secretary and treasurer are due to the audit chair by April 9, 2024. Documents can be scanned and sent to audithallcountydst@gmail.com. The committee can accept legible copies of documents. Soror Alisha Moore submitted a report that is on file.

International Awareness and Involvement: A report was not presented.

May Week: Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson reported that May Week is scheduled for Sunday, May 5, 2024, through Saturday, May 11, 2024. The agenda is noted as follows:

- Sunday, May 5, 2024: Sunday Fellowship – Service and Lunch (Soror Neisee Williams)
- Tuesday, May 7, 2024: Economic Development/International Awareness & Involvement – Gainesville Black Wall Street and virtual panel on Financial Literacy (Soror Denise Livingston)
- Thursday, May 9, 2024: Educational Development/Social Action/Political Awareness & Involvement – Prepare summer learning packets for Gainesville reading tutorial program and HUB Community Service event (Soror Natasha Iszard)
- Saturday, May 11, 2024: Community Event – Physical & Mental Health/Membership Services – Yoga/Laughter Yoga, Mental Health First Aid, Medication Disposal, etc. – Spring Fling event in conjunction with Membership Services and Tau Eta at a \$400 - \$500 budget for food (Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson)

Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson submitted a report that is on file.

Nominating: In the absence of the committee chair, Soror Vallorie Coley relayed that copies of the 2024 Slate of Candidates with running from the floor instructions as well as and copies of the nomination form will be available at the March 2024 chapter meeting.

Physical and Mental Health: A report was not presented.

Policies and Procedures: Soror Vallorie Coley stated that the approved motions and recommendations that pertain to the Chapter Policies and Procedures have been noted and presented at the February 2024 Executive Board (EB) meeting and the February 2024 chapter meeting. They are posted on the website. The new Alumnae Policies and Procedures Template will not be available until after the 2024 conference

cycle. Soror Alisha Moore has relayed that Internal Audit has been renamed Audit and Corporate Compliance. Scholarship and Standards (S&S) is in the process of making more edits. Because of this, the committee recommends that the chapter delay submission of any proposed amendments to S&S at the end of this sorority year.

RECOMMENDATION: On behalf of the Policies and Procedures Committee, I recommend that the Chapter Policies and Procedures document be submitted to Scholarship and Standards in its current publication by June 30, 2024, and for the chapter to continue to conform to current and future approved motions and recommendations. **SECOND:** N/A **ACTION:** There were no oppositions.

Soror Vallorie Coley submitted a report that is on file.

Protocol and Traditions: Soror Alisha Moore plans to review the Code of Ethics (p. 22) of the Protocol and Traditions Manual as a teachable moment at the March 2024 chapter meeting. It was originally scheduled for the February 2024 chapter meeting. Soror Alisha Moore submitted a report with an attachment of the Code of Ethics.

Ritual and Ceremonies: A report was not presented.

Risk Management: Soror Audrey Simmons reported the National Program Planning and Development Committee's March 2024 Updates. The Risk Management "Risk Bits" are as follows:

Did you Know?

- In Delta Sigma Theta, any individual participating in Delta's youth initiatives is defined as a volunteer. This applies to members and non-members (i.e., Deltas and non-Deltas).
- Successful completion of background screening must be documented before any candidate is accepted as a volunteer and allowed to participate in any youth initiative. The only exception is for one-time volunteers. This includes speakers, vendors, or presenters who are NOT Sorors of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and who participate in a single activity inclusive of all youth initiatives during the program year.
- If you are volunteering for a single event in the program year, you must complete background screening and training before you will be allowed to participate in the single event.

Requirements for Becoming a Volunteer:

- Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older.
- Volunteers must complete the full background screening process every three (3) years, including a criminal background check using Delta's approved background check vendor.
- Volunteers must complete risk management training on an annual basis.
- Volunteers must sign and abide by the youth initiative code of ethics.
- Volunteers must learn to recognize some signs and symptoms of child abuse/neglect.
- Volunteers must abide by Delta's mandatory reporting policy. Volunteers must meet the time requirements and job duties as directed by the local chapter.

Ready Resources:

- ERT forms, templates, and webinars are listed on the national website under PP&D.
- Activity modules for youth programs are included in the Educational Development's Youth/Parent Curriculum Manual. This collaborative effort is with PP&D Risk Management, Educational Development, and ERT.

Soror Audrey Simmons submitted a report that is on file.

Scholarship: Soror Audrey Simmons reported that as of February 27, 2024, only one applicant has applied for the scholarship. The National Program Planning and Development Committee's February 2024 update

noted the following: Chapters shall not post, share, or otherwise publish the monetary value associated with a scholarship or programming award. General references to scholarship award levels are appropriate, but not specific monetary values. Soror Audrey Simmons stated that the scholarship monetary amount posted on the chapter’s website for the previous recipients has been removed. Soror Audrey Simmons submitted a report that is on file.

Social Action/Political Awareness and Involvement: In the absence of the committee chair, Soror Sheriah Johnson plans to share information for upcoming elections at the chapter meeting. Soror Sheriah Johnson applied for the Voter Education & Mobilization Microgrant. The Fair Street Precinct will be a focus for the chapter during the elections. The chapter will partner with the North Georgia Project Fund. The May Week Committee and the Social Action Committee will plan a Stroll to the Polls activity. Soror Vallorie Coley shared that she checked the event community roster for Delta Days at the Nation’s Capital. Soror Audrey Simmons, Soror Jennifer Simmons, and herself were listed as the only attendees from Hall County Alumnae. They were virtual participants.

Technology: Soror Melanie Floyd relayed that she plans to discuss in April the good and the bad of artificial intelligence (AI) as a teachable moment in relation to the news of the British Royal Family.

Unfinished Business

- There was no unfinished business.

New Business

- There was no new business.

Announcements

- Tau Eta of Brenau University will reenact the Women’s March on March 13, 2024.
- Information concerning a virtual webinar on how to build money and career success is posted on the chapter’s social media platforms. Viola Davis will be a guest speaker.
- The Southern Regional Conference will be held in Nashville, TN, on July 4 – 7, 2024.
- Soror Sheila Tabron was in the hospital. Her correct contact information is needed for courtesies to be extended.

Adjournment

- **MOTION:** Soror Alicia Moore moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. **SECOND:** Soror Deborah Washington **ACTION:** Motion carried with no opposition.

Respectfully submitted,

Vallorie Coley, Recording Secretary

APPROVED: _____
Sheriah Johnson, President

DATE: _____