

Pearls of Wisdom

PEΩ

A publication of Rho Xi Omega Chapter
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated

January 2009

1498 Reisterstown Road # 369 Pikesville, Maryland 21208-3842

Volume 21; Issue 1

Twenty Pearls for 20 years of Service.....An anniversary celebration

On Sunday, December 7, 2008, friends, family and well-wishers joined the Sorors of Rho Xi Omega chapter in celebrating 20 years of providing services and resources to the Greater Baltimore Community. A wonderful achievement, made more joyous in that the occasion coincided with the Sorority's 100th anniversary.

Charter members, Golden Sorors, Silver Stars and many Sorors from throughout the state gathered for a luncheon and recognition ceremony at the Ivy Center in Baltimore, home to Epsilon Omega Chapter. Putting into practice our Supreme Basileus' initiative of *E.S.P. – Economics, Sisterhood and Partnerships*.

The program began with greetings brought forth by the 20th anniversary committee chairman, Soror Lydia McCargo-Redd, and continued with the welcome and recognition of guests by our 2007-2008 Basileus, Dr. Alison Riddle-Fletcher. The Cluster I Coordinator, Soror Alicia Tibbs-Tolson from Omicron Gamma Omega Chapter in Glen Burnie, Maryland also brought greetings to those in attendance.

First Anti-Basileus, Soror Tracey Barbour, recognized our 88 esteemed charter members, many of whom were on hand to celebrate. We were very privileged that all former Basilei of Rho Xi Omega Chapter: C. Yvonne Holt-Stone, Vivian V. Braxton, Karen Barland, JoAnn C. Jolivet and Helen G. Anderson participated in the festivities

Sorors Lakeisha Coleman and Shawn Millin produced a lovely DVD of Rho Xi Omega through the years, which was given to attendees as a gift and live entertainment was provided by Saleem Waters.



Excerpts from the Poem: "Throughout These 20 Years..."

The date was December 3, 1988, on a beautiful winter Sunday
When Soror Idell Pugh, the Regional Director, had this to say:
"My Sorors of the *Cultured Pearls*, you have met every requirement
And from our National office, your charter & name have been sent!"
Our *After School Reading Program* and our AKA *AKAdemy*
Gave many students the courage to achieve educational victory!
At *Camp Font-tastic*, the campers learned about *ROMs* and *RAMs*
And many graduates have benefited from our Scholarship Program!
Our *ESP* International programs are informative and quite a feat
And *Project H.O.P.E.* helps others excel and makes us very meek!
So we, in Rho Xi Omega, will tirelessly work on,
Forever keeping in mind the mandate from our Founders:
"to render service to all mankind!"
~~~Soror Juanita (Niz) Tynes Tillery

## Rho Xi Omega 2008 – Year in Review

2008 was an **Exciting, Surprising and Purposeful** year for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Rho Xi Omega Sorors. Our Centennial year was full of emotion, fun and plenty of *Service to all Mankind*. Throughout this year, we will highlight Rho Xi Omega's Centennial year in words & photographs.

### We begin our reflection with January & February 2008

**January 15, 2008** marked our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Many Sorors journeyed to where it all began – Howard University in Washington, D.C. for a "once in a lifetime" Pilgrimage to mark the occasion. While the MLK Holiday is a reprieve from work obligations for some, for the women of Alpha Kappa Alpha, it's a "Day On, Not a Day Off". Rho Xi Omega Sorors spent time volunteering at Our Daily Bread, a soup kitchen in Baltimore. Towards the end of January, Rho Xi Omega served as a co-sponsor of the Annual Women's Legislative Briefing, hosted by the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women and held at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Attendees participated in workshops and enjoyed a reception with legislators.

Continued on page 6

### Inside this Issue

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Basileus' Message.....       | 2 |
| Programs .....               | 3 |
| Events & Activities.....     | 4 |
| Anti-Basileus' Message ..... | 5 |
| Year in Review Cont.....     | 6 |
| Hodegos Report.....          | 7 |
| Notes .....                  | 8 |

## Message from the Basileus

Happy New Year Sorors!

Last year was full of memorable events. During the Centennial Boule, sorors worked, celebrated, walked, caucused, networked, reminisced, and worshipped in the spirit of our great sisterhood. Washington, DC will certainly remember the pink and green. Hopefully, sorors were rejuvenated and poised to carry out the chapter's innovative *ESP* programs. Fortunately, we were able to weather tough economic times and high gas prices. Thank goodness for sound fiscal practices and prayers.

I am extremely grateful to the multitude of sorors who stepped up and accepted leadership roles within the chapter. Your support and collaborative spirit will generate the needed momentum for a successful year of sisterhood and service. Your actions are a testament of your commitment to Rho Xi Omega. Leaders can not serve without followers. *Every Soror should Plan* to be actively involved in at least one Platform Program this year. The Platform Committees are hard at work planning award winning programs of service. You are encouraged to review the charge of each ESP Platform and select one to exhibit your time and talents.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming North Atlantic Regional Conference scheduled for April 1-5, 2009 in New York City. Don't miss the February 1<sup>st</sup> early registration deadline. Several chapter sorors and our Regional Director will be celebrating their Silver Star status in the Big Apple. Make sure to contact Soror Juanita Tillery to reserve a seat on the NARC bus. I am counting on significant representation from Rho Xi Omega.

Please read the excerpt from the North Atlantic Regional Newsletter pertaining to "stepping" and discontinuance of other unofficial traditions. As planned, we will hold our Annual Step Show in May.

Kudos to sorors who participated in the Meals on Wheels Program or any service project during the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. Your activity should be documented and a brief summary submitted to Soror Tracey Barbour.

As we begin the new year, pray for President Barack Obama and his family, the country's new leadership, and of course Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. I look forward to celebrating our Founders at the Annual Prayer Breakfast on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Sisterly,

*Soror Sheryl*

*"Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



### Chapter Officers

#### Sheryl Nelson Basileus

Tracey Barbour, 1<sup>st</sup> Anti-Basileus  
Juanita Tynes Tillery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Anti-Basileus  
Rose Monroe, Ph.D., Grammateus  
Nina McFadden, Anti-Grammateus  
Deanna McCray-James, Epistoleus  
Marjorie Edmonds, Tamiouchos  
Shanika Solomon, Pecunious Grammateus  
Joanna Langston, Philacter  
L'oreal Edmondson, Hodegos  
Cecile Matthews, Historian  
Vanessa Ray, Ivy Leaf Reporter  
Helen G. Anderson, Parliamentarian  
Jan Desper, Chaplain

#### Members At Large:

Autumn Anderson Chandra D. Campbell  
Martina Washington LaShawn Williams

#### Rho Xi Omega Charities' Officers

#### Alison Riddle-Fletcher, DDS President

Donna Price, Vice President  
Gina McKnight Smith, Pharm. D, Secretary  
Pam-King Smith, Treasurer  
Edith Aydtlett-Whitmore, Financial Secretary

#### Board Members:

Elizabeth A. Williams Avonne Brown  
Sheryl Nelson Tracey Barbour  
Marjorie Edmonds

## North Atlantic Regional News

### News Flash !!!.... Excerpt from the NAR Newsletter "The Legacy"

Effective immediately, Graduate sorors will be asked to participate in Talent Shows as opposed to Step Shows. All stepping will be done by Undergraduate sorors only. There is so much hidden talent among our Graduate sorors that we thought it was time to unveil your gifts. Additionally, all sorors are asked to cease with "skee-weeing", holding pinkies in the air and using any kind of animals, i.e. rabbits or mice, as means of representing Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. These symbols and callings have no meaning and no place within our esteemed sisterhood.

---

# **Economics, Service and Partnerships - Year 3;** **Keeping Our Programmatic Promise**

**Soror Tracey Barbour, 1<sup>st</sup> Anti-Basileus, ([traceybarbour@yahoo.com](mailto:traceybarbour@yahoo.com))**

As we start the third year of our international service program, I challenge you to consider this Yoruba proverb: *What you give you get ten times over.* What are you giving back to the Baltimore community through your participation in our Extraordinary Service Program? What do you get from being a part of the heartbeat of Alpha Kappa Alpha?

The feeling I get from watching and supporting our hardworking program committees as they plan, organize, coordinate, and think creatively and collaboratively is immeasurable. Join me in 2009 in experiencing the pride I have in Rho Xi Omega's programs. When was the last time you: went to or called in to a program meeting; participated in a service project; made a donation to a program activity; facilitated a new partnership for Rho Xi Omega? How did you feel after giving of your time and talent? I know, it felt great!

Start the 101<sup>st</sup> year of Alpha Kappa Alpha with a programmatic purpose! Join a program committee. Come to or call in to a committee meeting. Volunteer for a service project. Donate to programs. Initiate and facilitate partnerships. And do it all with a smile!

I look forward to working with you in 2009 and I know that our program committees are anticipating your support! Let's support our new and continuing program committee chairs and their hard working community members. We can share the burden and increase our impact in the community.

**Save the date for the following service opportunities:**

**Franciscan Center – February 17<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** This is the first step in our ongoing partnership with The Franciscan Center. Tasks vary but may include serving meals, working in the dining room, or the kitchen, working in the food pantry (inventory, bagging food for the needy), clothes sorting for men's clothes closet, or clerical duties. Email me at [traceybarbour@yahoo.com](mailto:traceybarbour@yahoo.com) to volunteer for this activity.

**Money Power Day – March 21<sup>st</sup> at Poly.** This is Baltimore CASH Campaign's annual financial services fair, and an ongoing Rho Xi Omega partner. There are sign-up sheets in the back of the room at tonight's chapter meeting. An online registration link will be sent out by Soror Sheryl in future updates. Young people can volunteer – and earn community service hours, or come to youth-oriented workshops on entrepreneurship and financial literacy.

---

## **New 2009 Appointments**

- **Soror Mary Mason**  
*NAR-AKA Logo License Tag Coordinator*
- **Soror Cynthia Bruce**  
*EAF Chapter Captain*
- **Sorors Letitia Green-Royal & Joanna Langston**  
*Scholarship Co-Chairs*
- **Soror Katherine Carter**  
*Connection Chair*
- **Soror Michelle Davis-Adams**  
*Leadership Development Co-Chair*
- **Soror Sheila Rolack**  
*Platform I Chair*
- **Sorors Linda Jones & Dana Davison**  
*Platform III Co-Chairs*
- **Sorors Debra Shannon & Tanisha Dixon-Adams**  
*Platform V Committee Co-Chairs*

Sign-up sheets for program committees will be available at the January Chapter meeting.

You may also contact Soror Tracey Barbour, Program Committee Chairman, for additional information.

Please send any committee meetings/conference calls to the newsletter committee ([rxoakanews@gmail.com](mailto:rxoakanews@gmail.com)) for inclusion.

# Calendar of Events

## January 2009

1<sup>st</sup> - Happy New Year

13<sup>th</sup> - Executive Committee Meeting &  
Transition Meeting  
BCCC Reisterstown Campus  
6:30 p.m.



15<sup>th</sup> - HAPPY FOUNDERS' DAY

19<sup>th</sup> - Martin Luther King Day of Service



20<sup>th</sup> - 44<sup>th</sup> Presidential Inauguration



25<sup>th</sup> - Women's Legislative Briefing

26<sup>th</sup> - Chapter Meeting\*

## February 2009

1<sup>st</sup> - NARC Early Registration Deadline

6<sup>th</sup> - National Wear Red Day 

7<sup>th</sup> - Annual Prayer Breakfast

10<sup>th</sup> - Executive Committee Meeting

14<sup>th</sup> - Happy Valentine's Day 

16<sup>th</sup> - Presidents' Day 

17<sup>th</sup> - Franciscan Center Service Project

23<sup>rd</sup> - Chapter Meeting\*

\* Chapter Meetings are held at Epworth United Methodist Church - 3317 St. Luke's Lane Baltimore, MD 21207 and begin @ 7:00 pm

## *History in the Making.....Our History*

On Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, millions around the world witnessed the historic inauguration of the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America, Mr. Barack Hussein Obama, Jr. Many believed this was an occasion they would never witness in their lifetime. Coming on the heels of the only holiday in this country where we honor an African-American, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., citizens from all over made their way to the Nation's Capitol. Although some possessed seated tickets to view the swearing in, many just wanted to say they "were there to witness history". Where were you?

Please forward to the newsletter committee ([rxoakanews@gmail.com](mailto:rxoakanews@gmail.com)) your thoughts on this historic occasion, any photos from your participation and your wishes for our country as we move forward with this new administration. Photos and correspondence will be shared in the February edition of *Pearls of Wisdom* as we celebrate African-American History Month.



*Yes we can, Yes we did, Yes we will!!!*

## *Upcoming Event.....Annual Prayer Breakfast*

The *2009 Annual Founders' Day Prayer Breakfast* will be held on Saturday, February 7, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. at New Shiloh Baptist Church. The theme is "*Every Soror is a Precious Pearl: The Legacy Continues*" and the scripture is Matthew 13:45-46.

Minister Regina Gail Malloy, an Associate Minister at New Psalmist Baptist Church, will be the guest speaker. The young ladies from the After School AKAdemy will dance as a tribute to the Founders. Sorors interested in sponsoring a dancer by paying for their prayer breakfast ticket, should contact Soror Sherry Armstead at 410-356-1201.

Tickets can be picked up at the January 26<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting. Sorors are asked to distribute the tickets to your guests prior to February 7<sup>th</sup>. This will expedite check-in at the prayer breakfast. Contact Sorors Sherry Armstead or Yvonne-Davis Robinson for additional information.

*Submitted by: Soror Sherry Armstead, Co-Chair – 2009 Annual Prayer Breakfast*

*From the Desk of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anti-Basileus.....*

As your 2<sup>nd</sup> Anti-Basileus, I oversee the OPERATIONS of our Chapter and to do this, I coordinate all Operations Committees. It is so very important for you to serve on one of the Operations Committees because your input is paramount to the successful operation of our “outstanding” chapter! Therefore, I ask that you will carefully peruse the responsibilities of these committees as stated in our Bylaws and sign up for a committee today!

The 2009 Operations Committees, their Chairmen and Co-Chairmen are as follows:

**STANDARDS**

*Soror Juanita Tynes Tillery, Chair*  
*Soror Bettye Fitzgerald, Co-Chair*  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 12

**TECHNOLOGY**

*Soror LaKeisha Coleman, Chair*  
*Soror Shawn Millin, Co-Chair*  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 11

**NOMINATING**

*Soror Cassandra Burnett, Chair*  
This committee is elected by the Chapter.  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 13

**COURTESY**

*Soror L'oreal Edmondson, Chair*  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 16

**UNDERGRADUATE ACTIVITIES:**

*Soror Angela Burnett, Chair*  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 17  
To serve on this committee, you must have completed the Undergraduate Advisory Council Training and you must be appointed by the Basileus.

**MEMBERSHIP**

*Soror Michelle Davis-Adams, Co-Chair*  
*Soror Elizabeth Williams, Co-Chair*  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 7

**FINANCE**

*Soror Marjorie Edmonds, Chair*  
*Soror Shanika Solomon, Co-Chair*  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 9

**BYLAWS**

*Soror Helen Anderson, Chair*  
This committee will meet at least once a year  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 10

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

*Soror Vanessa Ray, Chair*  
PEΩ Bylaws: Article VIII – Section 15

**Rho Xi Omega AWARDS**

*Soror Robin Ott, Co-Chair*  
*Soror Janet Cooper, Co-Chair*  
This committee is *ad hoc* and functions for the chapter awards that are presented at our Annual Founders' Day Prayer Breakfast.

I hope that you will join one of the aforementioned and I look forward to working with you on your chosen “Operations Committee(s)!! Please email me at [VP.Operations@rhoxiomega1988.org](mailto:VP.Operations@rhoxiomega1988.org) to sign up for a committee. I will compile the list and forward it to your chairman so she can inform you of meeting dates and times. Remember Soror: “...we help each...”

***Extending Sisterly Pride.....Soror Juanita (~~Nita~~) Tynes Tillery***

**North Atlantic Regional Conference Regular / Early Registration Deadline –  
Sunday, February 1, 2009. Registrations submitted after this date  
must include the \$75 late fee**

**Please contact Soror Juanita Tynes Tillery regarding charter bus  
Transportation to New York City for the Conference.**

**Congratulations to those Sorors elected to represent  
Rho Xi Omega Chapter as 2009 NARC Delegates.**

# Year in Review Continued.....

Sorors gathered in February to honor our Founders, enjoy the Rho Xi Omega Chorale and celebrate our 2008 Award Recipients at the Annual Prayer Breakfast.



Left: Founders' display; Below: Rho Xi Omega Chorale



Far Left: Soror Michelle Howard, 2008 Prayer Breakfast Co-Chair, with our Guest Speaker, Ms. Dorothy Bailey



Left: 2008 Awardees: (clockwise from top left) – Sorors Gina McKnight-Smith, Tracey Barbour, JoAnn C. Jolivet, Vivian Braxton, Cynthia Bruce, Angela Burnett, Donna Stevenson-Robinson & Deanna McCray-James

In conjunction with the Sorors of Cluster I, we participated in the AKA Night in Annapolis on February 7, 2008

Below: Rho Xi Omega Sorors in Annapolis



Below: Cluster I Baselei and Connection Chairmen with MD State Senator, Soror Verna Jones



Money Power Day, an annual event in Baltimore, Maryland which allows Sorors to use their various skills to give back to the community.

Below: Soror Damiane Cain working with MPD volunteers

Below: 1st Anti-Basileus, Soror Tracey Barbour & Platform II Chairs, - Sorors Nona Carroll and Romney Smith with a MPD organizer



# Hodegos Report

Soror L'oreal Edmonson - ([lorealgsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:lorealgsmith@yahoo.com))

## January Birthdays

4<sup>th</sup> - Michele Leak  
7<sup>th</sup> - Adrienne Scott  
8<sup>th</sup> - Terri Richards  
10<sup>th</sup> - Letitia Royal  
11<sup>th</sup> - Jeri Bentley  
13<sup>th</sup> - Pamela Wright-Gray  
17<sup>th</sup> - Tina Dixon



17<sup>th</sup> - Romney Smith  
20<sup>th</sup> - Denise Curbean  
20<sup>th</sup> - Karen Heyward-West  
21<sup>st</sup> - Bonita Dancy  
21<sup>st</sup> - Gina McKnight-Smith  
30<sup>th</sup> - Phyllis Purnell

## February Birthdays

4<sup>th</sup> - Nina McFadden  
5<sup>th</sup> - L'Oreal Edmondson  
10<sup>th</sup> - Virginia Dean  
10<sup>th</sup> - Sandra Edmonds  
13<sup>th</sup> - Vivian Braxton  
18<sup>th</sup> - Janet Cooper



19<sup>th</sup> - Katharine Carter  
26<sup>th</sup> - C. Yvonne Holt-Stone  
26<sup>th</sup> - Cecile Matthews  
26<sup>th</sup> - Sandra Skinner  
27<sup>th</sup> - Lydia McCargo-Redd



## Condolences



**Michelle Howard** lost her father-in-law, Jacob D. Howard, Jr.

**Brenda Baker** lost her husband, Glascoe A. Baker, Jr.

**Marion Callaway** lost her brother Robert Lloyd Callaway, Sr. Ph.D.

**Friends & family of Ivy Beyond the Wall, Soror Gloria Harper Dickinson**  
**Former Supreme Grammateus & International Regional Director**

## Congratulations to.....

**Soror Michele Leak** for marching with the Howard University Band in the 56<sup>th</sup> Inaugural Parade for President Barack H. Obama on Tuesday, January 20th.

**Soror Deanna McCray-James** on graduating from University of Maryland University College with a Masters of Science degree in Management with a major in Public Relations.

**Soror Kimberly S. Williams** on her recent wedding engagement

**Soror Tracey Barbour** for serving as a panelist at the American Society for Public Administration Maryland Chapter's 2009 Annual Dinner and Forum at the University of Baltimore. The topic was "Careers That Make a Difference".

**Soror Bettye Marshall Adams** on her promotion to Assistant Principal at Waverly Elementary School.



\* Sorors, please submit any birthdays, condolences or congratulations to the Hodegos.

## Reminders & Notes.....

**Chapter dues** (including the late chapter fee) should be forwarded to Soror Shanika Solomon, Pecunious Grammateus. You may find her contact information in the online Member directory – <http://www.rhoxiomega1988.org>

---

*Sorors please feel free to submit any of the following to the Newsletter Committee for upcoming editions at [rxoakanews@gmail.com](mailto:rxoakanews@gmail.com):*

- Photos and write-ups of your activities and participation on the MLK Day of Service (Feb. only)
- Any original poems, short stories, artwork or photography you'd like to share
- Committee meetings, conference calls, Sister Circles, deadlines or events
- Trivia Questions

Calling all writers and photographers, the Newsletter could use your talents. If you'd like to contribute to any the upcoming cover themes, please contact Soror Deanna at [missameraka\\_rxo@yahoo.com](mailto:missameraka_rxo@yahoo.com). The submission deadline for all issues is the 7<sup>th</sup> of each month.

### Pearls of Wisdom – Cover Stories & Themes

**February** - Annual Prayer Breakfast & African-American History Month

**March** - Women's History Month & After School AKAdemy

**April** - North Atlantic Regional Conference & Platform I

**May** - Rho Xi Omega Step Show and Scholarships, & Platform II

**June/July** - Celebrating the Black Male and Fathers & Platform III

---

## *Did you know???*



1. Rho Xi Omega is home to at least four sets of sisters. Do you know who they are?
2. A famous and important organization for African-Americans is celebrating their Centennial in 2009. Do you know which one?
3. Only three of the original cities (states) of the North Atlantic Region remain in the current geographic make-up. Can you name them?

\*\*\*\* Answers will be published in next month's issue.

---

*Pearls of Wisdom* is published ten times a year.

**Contributed to this Issue:** Sorors Deanna McCray-James, Tanisha Adams Dixon, Kimberly S. Williams  
Julia Cayette-Lawson, Katherine Carter, Tracey Barbour, Juanita Tynes Tillery & Sheryl Nelson.

Thank You Sorors  
**Thank You Sorors**