

SPRING 2020

THE METRO



St. Louis Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



inside this issue:

President's Pen



Greetings,

My last President's pen comes at an unprecedented time. It comes at a time that forces inward reflection. It is amazing how the entire world is impacted at the same time. However, I am encouraged by this scripture passage. St. James 1: 2 - 5 says, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your chapter president. I was able to execute my goal of being transparent and informative in all of the chapter's business and members. I hope you saw the execution of the impact on the community and within the chapter in a variety of methods. I appreciate the support that you showed me. I have learned that sisterhood has a colorful meaning.

Signing off for the last time with violet hugs and kisses.

Sisterly,

Dr. Latasha A. Jennings

- Chaplain's Corner
- Educational Development
- Social Action/Political Awareness and Involvement
- Membership Services
- Sorors in the Community
- Covid-19 Resource Referrals

Rites of Passage 2020-2021 Participants

The St. Louis Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter (SLMAC) of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is looking for upcoming, college bound high school senior females to be a part our 2020-2021 Rites of Passage & Jabberwock Program.

The Rites of Passage focuses on participants learning leadership skills, providing exposure to African and African-American history and art, sisterhood bonding experiences, mentoring, and much more! The culminating event of the program titled Jabberwock allows all participants to showcase their talents while raising funds for college scholarships.

The Program is adopted from the ancient African tribal Rites of Passage ceremony and still holds true to its meaning of presenting a system of socialization and education that each participant (Mahavavay) must master before the community sanctions the title of "woman." It includes a set of guidelines, workshops, fun activities, personal and group tasks, trials and sentimental rituals based upon African principles and traditions that each young lady will experience.

It's a 6 month fully committed program starting from August - February, and sessions are held on every other Saturday's from 9 am - 12 pm. If you know an upcoming high school senior female that will attend college in the 2021 - 2022 school year, and looking for scholarship opportunities please have them to complete the Mahavavay Interest Application and return it to ritesofpassage@dstslmac.com. The deadline to apply is June 30, 2020! We will send out information soon about our upcoming Orientation, which will be held during the summer. For additional information, please check out www.dstslmac.com or send an email to ritesofpassage@dstslmac.com.

**JUNE
30TH**

**APPLICATION
DUE DATE**

WWW.DSTSLMAC.COM



MEASURES TO ENSURE VOTING IN MISSOURI THE WAKE OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Recommended measures include:

- I. **Expanded absentee voting** by mail, including no-excuse absentee voting and elimination of the notary requirement. At minimum, social distancing required by COVID-19 must constitute a valid excuse for any voter to cast an absentee ballot.
- II. **Advance voting** before Election Day, allowing more citizens to vote over time rather than in a cluster on Election Day.
- III. Bolstered **online voter** registration.
- IV. **Polling place modifications** to ensure public safety consistent with **Center for Disease Control Guidelines**, and that ensure accessibility for voting populations that have traditionally faced barriers to the ballot.
- V. Robust **voter assistance and education**.



CONTACT YOUR OFFICIALS

Urge Missouri officials to move swiftly to adopt the policy measures contained in these guidelines and urge Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft to issue clear guidelines to ensure the accessible, safe and orderly conduct of the 2020 primary and general elections.

Tickets go on
SALE

JULY 1ST

Saint Louis Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter

**DELTA SIGMA THETA
SORORITY, INC.**

**JUNE LUNCHEON
IN AUGUST**

SAVE THE DATE

AUGUST 8, 2020

Alumnae-45.00
Collegiate- 35.00



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

100,000 and Tragically Counting *Prayer*

With Covid-19 virus deaths now over 100,000, these are truly difficult and stressful times. We may find ourselves surrounded by uncertainty. Our hearts and bodies may be weary. Our minds and hearts may be overwhelmed and confused.

As the families of the UNARMED African Americans mourn and grieve the loss of loved ones we MUST remember to have faith in Our Lord God. He is an ALMIGHTY GOD and he loves us unconditionally.

I offer two prayers; one for the morning and one for the evening or to be used interchangeably. It is during these times we must pray and we must pray often.

Morning

Lord, today I reach out to you for your guidance, wisdom and direction. Order my steps, calm my anxious thoughts and strengthen me if I falter, stumble or feel weary. Amen.

Evening - The Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change
Courage to change the things I can
And wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

Submitted by Karen Johnson, Chaplain

DOING THE WORK

Visit these websites to partner with organizations doing social justice work:

- **Action St. Louis** | www.actionstl.org
- **Campaign Zero** | www.joincampaignzero.com
- **Faith for Justice** | www.faithforjustice.com

What to Bring to a Protest

- Small bag or backpack, fanny pack
- Water and snacks
- Face mask
- Hat and/or sunglasses
- Band-aids, first aid supplies
- Protest signs
- Hand sanitizer
- Nondescript clothing, layered clothing
- ID and cash
- Emergency contacts, card with medical information
- Ear plugs

**FORM A GROUP AND
MAKE A PLAN.
AVOID TAKING PHOTOS
OF PROTESTERS.**

Do Not Bring/Consider first

- Cell phone without turning off face touch ID or going on airplane mode
- Jewelry
- Contact Lenses

Advocacy with Social Action/Political Awareness and Involvement

STATEMENT REGARDING THE RECENT KILLINGS OF UNARMED AFRICAN AMERICANS

National President & CEO Beverly E. Smith released the following statement on the recent killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd:

"In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois wrote that the 'problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line.' As we near the third decade of the 21st century, the color line continues to divide America and define how law enforcement is practiced in our country in ways that are psychologically damaging and, far too often, deadly for people of color.

The use of excessive force by law enforcement, specifically in matters involving Black people, has created an environment of distrust and anxiety between the officials and the communities they have sworn to protect and serve. The recent killings of Ahmaud Arbery in Glynn County, Georgia; Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky; and George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota, are etched in our minds as symbols of injustice and the painful reminder that Black lives don't seem to matter in the land of 'liberty and justice for all.' While social media has brought these injustices to the mainstream, we know, all too well, that many more undocumented incidents are the reality for many African Americans every day.

All three situations underscore the need for stakeholders – from policymakers to community activists to police union leaders and law enforcement professionals – to join forces to create strategies to address challenges such as implicit bias in law enforcement in a meaningful way.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated reaffirms our stance against the use of excessive force by law enforcement. We urge all chapters and members to use the power in their voice to engage with law enforcement agencies and help repair the relationship between members of law enforcement and the communities they serve. While it is little consolation, we extend our sincere condolences and prayers to the families of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd during this difficult time."



We Need Your Voice

We need your voice! It is time to contact your local and state leaders. Call your mayor and demand policy reforms. We need to work together with local organizations doing similar work.

Make our voices heard! Refer to these discussion points:

- Requiring police to wear body cameras
- Implementation of de-escalation training for law enforcement
- Requiring psychological evaluation of police officers before hiring
- Review of your jurisdiction's use of force policy and a review of its alignment to best practices
- Requiring the collection of statistical information on excessive use of force complaints
- Mandating the creation of a citizen review board to review police misconduct complaints
- Requiring unconscious bias training for all police officers



SLMAC IN THE COMMUNITY



Events pictured:

- Sisterhood night at UMSL
- Diapers and Wipes donated to Sparrow's Nest in collaboration with the St. Louis Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
- Metro Melodees sing for the residents of the Crystal Creek Facility in Florissant, MO.



LOCAL COVID-19 NEWS

Visit these Websites for Community Information & Resources:

- **St. Louis City Information** | www.stlouis-mo.gov/covid-19/
- **St. Louis County Information Center** | www.stlcora.com
- **Living in the 24:1** | www.our241.com
- **St. Louis County Library** | www.slcl.org
- **St. Louis Public Library** | www.slpl.org
- **St. Economic Development Partnership** | www.stlpartnership.com