

ABQ Alumnae Chapter-Convention 2016 Report

It was my honor and privilege to represent the Albuquerque Alumnae Chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta at the 2016 Grand Convention June 23-26, 2016 at the Biltmore Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona. There were 143 Alumnae Delegates, 138 College Delegates, members of Grand Council, Trustees, Corporation Boards, Alumnae and College District Directors, Convention Staff and Guests among the **830 Theta attendees**.

The highlights of the convention included:

- The first lesson learned was to pronounce Alumnae..."ALUM-NEE"!!
- An incredible donation of **\$200,000 was presented to CASA**, which was the initial donation toward Theta's commitment of \$1 Million over the next 3 years.
- **Pansy Patch** donations totaled **\$200,000** for scholarships and support funds for Thetas. The final donation of \$765 to round out the amount was made by one alum member who readily raised her hand and wrote the check!
- **"Give to Lead, Give to Learn Endowment Campaign"** raised **\$5.2Million** for the educational leadership consultant (ELC) and need-based scholarship programs for Thetas.
- **Legislation** –the first time use of electronic voting devices and all legislation presented was approved.
- The **election of the Grand Council** members.
- A **Friendship Fund Raffle** of a Tori Burch Tote bag... (Tori is a Beta Eta, Pennsylvania Theta)
- **Initiation** of Lauren McCarthy Palmer, Indiana U. who works at Central Office.
- The use of the **Convention app** which kept delegates informed of the schedule, gave notifications and provided connection with other delegates.
- The **Aspiration Plans through 2019**...to optimize member experience, use technology to deliver member value and demonstrate the relevance of the Theta experience.
- Our Albuquerque Alumnae Chapter received the **"Pansy Recognition Level Award"** for meeting all requirements of Theta affiliation.

Theta has truly moved into **the electronic age** and our fraternity continues to grow. This fall **five college chapters will be established**: San Diego State, Stetson, Colorado Mines, Georgia Tech and UC Santa Cruz. Much of our fraternity business and information will now be processed through electronic messaging. Theta is on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Linkedin, Snapchat and Periscope! Check

out the Reading Women, Global Thetas and Theta Traveler, etc. It's time to GET CONNECTED!

So much is being done to support, guide and educate both collegiate and alumnae members. We all can connect with these opportunities. The local and national web sites are extremely helpful. Our Albuquerque Chapter is doing well in all respects, and although we are small and somewhat isolated, we are achieving similar wonderful results like many of the larger alumnae chapters. It was agreed that the most important membership and participation recruitment tool for alumnae and collegiate chapters is to **promote our Service/Volunteer projects in our program planning**. We must also continue to strive to increase membership and personally contact Thetas, young and older, in our area and embrace them with programming and projects that appeal to their interests. We must also encourage members to become **"Life Loyal Members"**.

Legislation approved at Convention mostly applied to college chapters but one area of interest to the alumnae chapters is new member recruitment. The college chapters must initiate within 4-6 weeks of pledging and the rush parties will only be conducted with value based programming. The days of skits, lavish decorations, etc. are gone. **Emphasis is now to be placed on scholarship, leadership, and service**. All 26 National Panhellenic members are expected to adhere to this policy.

A strong stand was also taken about **hazing** and the penalties are stiff when members are faced with "emotional (*added*) or/or physical health or safety issues of a member or new member". It is important that we alumnae members know these points of interest when recruiting and referring new members.

And last, my personal treat was to have my two Theta daughters, Sharon and Leslie and granddaughter Meghan attend Convention with me. Their Theta experience was limited to their four wonderful years at TCU... but Convention was an awesome surprise when viewed among 830 beautiful Thetas, each of whom represented MORE THETAS!! I also had the happy surprise to connect with **Royce Freeman**, who was our Albuquerque Alumnae President in 1981. Royce and her husband live in Phoenix and she was a volunteer at Convention. I wore my beautiful silver Kite Pin every day and sold six pins. I also distributed many of our Kite Pin business cards to Thetas who admired the pin and may order pins in the weeks ahead.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent our Albuquerque Alumnae Chapter at the 2016 Grand Convention. It was an amazing celebration of the biennium's accomplishments and plans for the future of Kappa Alpha Theta.

The next Grand Convention will be held at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Orlando, Florida June 28 to July 1, 2018.

Sue Acklin Hutchison

Alpha Omega, University of Pittsburgh

Current Corresponding Secretary of the Albuquerque Alumnae Chapter