Greetings Sorors and Fraters!

“The only thing a person can ever really do is keep moving forward. Take that big leap forward without hesitation and without once looking back. Simply forget the past and forge toward the future.”

Two million children in the U.S. have lived through a parent’s deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Research suggests that a child’s functioning and coping are affected by a parent’s deployment. While most children manage the stress of the lengthy separation from a parent during a military deployment, research confirms that a child’s functioning can be negatively affected. Children of all ages can evidence disruption often in their behavior, mood, and academic performance when a parent is deployed.

Historically, rates of child maltreatment in the military were below those in the civilian population. With the onset of the conflicts in Afghanistan (2002) and Iraq (2003) however, rates for military families now exceed those of non-military families and have been reported as high as 43%.

The challenges military children face do not end when their parent returns home. The post-deployment re-integration phase brings disruption to the family re-organization and equilibrium achieved during the military parent’s 8-12 month absences. These challenges are magnified when the parent returns with a combat-related injury or disability, including the invisible, signature wounds of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, PTSD and traumatic brain injury. The Department of Veteran’s Affairs estimates that approximately 20% of returning service members develops PTSD. Due to the stigma attached to this disorder, an estimated 50% of these service members do not seek treatment. Children of service members with PTSD are at higher risk for depression and anxiety than children of non-combat veterans; they may also develop PTSD symptoms of their own in response to the parent’s PTSD-related behaviors. Children who tragically lose a parent in combat not only deal with the loss of a mother or father, but with a death that is traumatic.

There is an urgent need for early identification of children coping with the significant challenge of a parent’s military deployment. Nurses, in particular school nurses who care for these children are invaluable to this mission-they are readily accessible resource for school-aged military children, their parents, and the teams of professionals that educate them. Let us take time out to organize our family, friends and/or work colleagues to make care packages or write cards to those serving or wounded warriors. For more ideas and information contact Operation Troop Support at 1-978-774-5983 or www.operationtroopsupportusa.com.

We are working diligently to have a great 50th 2015 Regional Conference in Baton Rouge, LA! Updates will be forthcoming. Remember that we are still working together to “Break Barriers, Bridge Gaps, and Build Leaders!”

Sisterly,

Glennis P. Gray, MSN, RN-BC
Middle South Regional Director
Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc.
Psi Phi Chapter
Baton Rouge, LA.

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The 2014 49TH Middlesouth Regional Conference

WHAT DID MEMBERS TAKE AWAY WITH THEM?

The Middlesouth regional chapters met in Lufkin, Texas on April 4-6, 2014. Emphasis was placed on getting on board with member leadership, proper governance of meetings and membership recruitment and retention.

- **We are an organization that fosters recruitment and retention of its members**

  Soror Linda Tellison challenged chapter members in attendance to institute processes that would encourage recruitment, retention and ongoing active involvement of their members with her presentation on “Strategies to Enhance Recruitment and Retention”.

- **We are an organization that understands the advantages of power and strength in leadership while inspiring others to stand on their own**

  Words from the National President, Elcedo Bradley, emphasized “Generating Power through Leadership”.

- **We are an organization that promotes order in our meetings and opportunities to be heard**

  Finally, the governance of meetings was addressed by Soror Peola McCaskill who spoke on “Parliamentary Procedures” highlighting principles underlying parliamentary law, rules for debate, procedure for handling a main motion, amendments and voting.
One of the goals of Chi Eta Phi Sorority Inc. is to implement disease prevention service oriented activities through partnership collaboration within our communities. You may be asking “What does that really look like?” Here are some pointers to consider:

1. What outcomes do we want to accomplish (identify expected outcomes-i.e., parents will be able to identify healthy foods to purchase for their children at the supermarket to prevent childhood obesity)?

2. Who are the organizations or businesses within the community that have the resources that we need to achieve our outcomes (i.e., MacDonald’s (toy give-a-ways), grocery stores (food give-a-ways), and YMCA (exercise classes with instructors))?

3. Find out what makes the organization/business targeted for partnership tick (successful)? (For example, do they need to produce the numbers for blood pressure screening to meet certain grant requirements or do they need more community exposure to sell their products?)

4. Selling Yourself-Educate them about whom and what Chi Eta Phi Sorority Inc. is about with “Fact Sheets” that can be left with potential partners or with online Chi Eta Phi Sorority Inc. website information. Present what the chapter can offer to meet the organizational, or business’s needs.

5. Ask for what you have predetermined they can provide to make the service project effective in return for your chapter’s service provided by registered nurses.

**Something to remember Sorors and Fraters- “You do not have, because you do not ask”-James 4:3**
Upsilon Eta Sorors Continue to Implement Their National Motto, "Service for Humanity" Through Health Education

Upsilon Eta Chapter, in collaboration with its community partners, the East Zion District Men's Association, Integris Men's Health University, participated in the Fifth Annual African American Health Summit which was held on June 28, 2014 at the Metro Technology Centers' Spring lake Campus in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Soror Mercedes Campbell chaired Upsilon Eta's health information booth which provided information on kidney disease and diabetes. Seventy-five participants were served. The Summit was designed to educate men and their loved ones on the importance of men taking care of their health.

Zeta Chi Conducts Blood Pressure Screenings at the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority (MHMRA) of Harris County Employee Health Fair

As MHMRA demonstrates its belief in investing in the health of its employees on September 4, 2014, Zeta Chi was right there to support them with screenings for hypertension. The Health Fair was interactive with yoga and line dancing to encourage regular physical activity, chair massages, diabetes, cancer awareness and even information about financial wellness. Sorors Bennie Blake, Margery Watt, Linda Tellison (all shown in the photo below from left to right), Derotha Stephens, Ann Thompson and Lawanna Hart provided blood pressure screenings for 45 individuals, referring 6 to their physicians for follow-up. Zeta Chi has been one of MHMRA’s long time financial supporters to assist with the level of funding needed for services.
Soror Sonya White of Zeta Chi Receives the Daisy Award

Congratulations to Soror Sonya White, of the Zeta Chi Chapter, who was chosen from a very robust nomination pool as a Daisy Award winner. DAISY is an acronym for Diseases Attacking the Immune System. The Daisy Award recipients at the Houston Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center are judged based on the ICARE acronym of integrity, commitment, advocacy, respect and excellence along with 8 letters submitted by veteran patients. The award was created by the National Daisy Foundation to honor super-human work nurses do in direct care of patients and their families. Soror White is a PACT care manager in Ambulatory Care and a member of the Committee.

Soror White is featured on the extreme left in the photo along with Galveston Outpatient Clinic Daisy Award recipients.

PREPARING FUTURE LEADERS

Zeta Chi Mentors Membership in the Development of Leadership Skills

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I learn”

Soror Sonya White (inducted spring of 2014) and Shalandra Jones (transferring in the spring of 2014) are determined to move beyond membership to leadership as they become mentees for leadership roles as chairs of the Membership Selection Committee and Newsletter committees respectively. Shalandra Jones (left) is featured in the photo as she learns about key Leadership Summit highlights while attending Zeta Chi’s annual leadership planning meeting in August 2014.
Soror Louise M. Lavane, RN, BC, CLNC, CCM- Gamma Chi Chi, Lufkin, Texas

Business motto: “Dependable Confidential Service with Integrity and a Smile”

1. **What motivated you to start your own business?**

   My last position in the hospital setting as an administrator for Case Management/Utilization Review and encouragement from my father motivated me to start my own disability claim service business. Patients in that setting received inconsistent information in relation to Social Security Disability benefits and their health status.

2. **How do you manage to wear changing hats to make your business a success?**

   After 30 plus years in the emergency department and critical care area, you learn to wear many hats as well as become a coordinated task master. The key is to be culturally aware and sensitive to the needs of others while meeting the client where they are as an individual and moving through the process in a professional manner that leads to successful outcomes.

3. **What gives you the staying power to make it through difficult times?**

   Initially, many questioned whether the business would last six months without an attorney as the lead since that was who handled all of the disability claims in our area. However, being sensitive to the needs of others and watching clients experience a better quality of life and acquisition of decent healthcare has made these 14 years of service worthwhile! I think the reason this business has been so successful is that we have maintained the rapport that was established with the medical community.

4. **Where do you get started as an entrepreneur?**

   Once you have decided to take that step, do a feasibility study to see if there is a market for what you want to do and develop a sound business plan with strong financial and marketing strategies.
Soror Grooms has been the CEO of Agape Comprehensive Home Health Services, Inc. for over two decades. The agency provides health care services for a local “Free Clinic” and serves sixteen Oklahoma Southwestern counties. Evolving with primarily nursing staff, other professionals have been added such as physicians and rehabilitative specialists. She enjoys launching training opportunities for professional and non-professional staff and awarding local and regional nursing scholarships.

1. **What motivated you to start your own business?**

Soror Groom’s motivation began within a faith-based loving family. She later became self-confident in her ability to pursue successful interdisciplinary-clinical “excellence.” As a firm believer in Holistic health care, she now has Five Spiritual Centers that promote spiritual healing.

2. **How do you manage to wear changing hats to make your business a success?**

She has drawn from prior owned non-health related small business, leadership, clinical and administrative experiences to facilitate guidance for success. Her husband Kenneth and family members are an invaluable asset.

3. **What gives you the staying power to make it through difficult times?**

As a recipient of many prestigious awards, key characteristics describing “staying power” are: motivation, determination, resourcefulness, flexibility, likeability, and persuasiveness.

4. **Where do you get started as an entrepreneur?**

That’s a question she gets asked a lot. Idea + thought out idea + decision + action taken + more action, most often equals success. Soror Grooms says, the urgent needs of a complex health care system demands executive leaders with strong skill sets in healthcare policy, ethics, quality, safety, financial management, legal issues, risk management, strategic leadership and informatics. There is a big difference between day dreaming about making the leap to start as an entrepreneur and actually doing it.
1. **What motivated you to start your own business?**

Soror Emma Smith says she started her own business, Associates Health, Inc. 26 years ago because she wanted to be able to make her own decisions in offering quality nursing services without some of the restrictions often associated with going through the chain of command at many healthcare facilities. Associates Health Inc. provides in-home personal assistant services.

2. **How do you manage to wear changing hats to make the business a success?**

Soror Smith says to avoid that overwhelming feeling, handle one challenge at a time using careful prioritization of business needs.

3. **What gives you the staying power to make it through difficult times?**

Most of all, remind yourself of the hope that you can count on because the difficult times won’t last forever. Surround yourself with people who are resources to meet the ongoing needs of your business and **be sure** to stay connected.

4. **How do you get started as an entrepreneur?**

- It is important to eliminate any fear so that you are willing and ready to take necessary risks.
- Recognize that if someone else can do it, you can do it too!
- Research the business you want to start so that you know it intimately.
Zeta Chi Betas Support Texas Children’s Hospital Fun Run

Thirteen Betas from the Prairie View A & M University College of Nursing in Houston, Texas were inducted into Zeta Chi Beta in the spring of 2014. They readily showed their willingness to support Texas Children’s Hospital in its second Annual Family Fun Run (April 2014) which was created to educate and encourage Houston area children and their families to adopt active, healthy lifestyles.
“We can take better care of others when we take care of ourselves”

Soror Maye Etta Nolen of Upsilon Eta Chapter Shares How She Cares for Herself

Spiritually

The first priority of my day is prayer; thanking God for his bountiful goodness, mercy and love and praying that He will order my tongue and steps so that my words and deeds will be pleasing unto Him!

Physically

I maintain proactive relationships with my healthcare providers, adhering to their instructions for diet and medications. Water exercises three times weekly along with sufficient sleep 6-8 hours each night are inclusive to maintaining my physical health.

Psychosocially

The Golden Rule serves as my guide to interpersonal relationships, immersing social interactions with humor, compassion and empathy.

Overall

Although I am happiest spending time with my family, solitary time for myself almost daily with relaxation through non-fiction books, TV programs, or working mentally with challenging games such as crossword puzzles or Concepts Sudoku’s are planned activities of my day that I look forward to.

Recruitment and Retention

Upsilon Eta is happy to welcome back its former member, Soror Ketina Seay Barnett. Soror Barnett transferred to the chapter from Xi Phi Chapter during May, 2014.
Sorors don’t forget to include a trip to Baton Rouge, Louisiana April 9-12, 2015 for the next Middlesouth Regional Conference in your budget. It’s not too soon to place this annual event hosted by Psi Phi at the Renaissance Hotel on your calendar. Experience unique Louisiana style seafood, entertainment and fellowship with fraters and sorors while we continue to take care of the business of the Middlesouth Region.

FUTURE EDITIONS

The Informer will be published bi-annually. Each of the Middlesouth Regional Basilei and newsletter committee members will be notified via e-mail requesting chapter information submission by March 13, 2015 in order to publish in April of 2015.

We look forward to hearing about what’s happening in the Middlesouth region to move forward with the national and regional priorities of Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc. Please share this information for publication of the next newsletter.

Lawanna Hart, Editor
Newsletter Committee Chair