# Brooklyn

# Pearl





# APQ

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#### "Bringing Pearls of Opportunity to Brooklyn and Beyond"

#### From The Desk of the Basileus

Welcome to the June, 2020 Edition of the Brooklyn Pearl.

Sorors, our country is experiencing an overlapping of crises. While the COVID-19 virus continues to disrupt our daily lives, longstanding issues of racism and inequality have reached a boiling point in the United States with the recent tragedies of Ahmaud Arbry, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd. The injustice that people of color have been subjected to from law antercomput and the justice system for hundreds of years has torn the moral for

enforcement and the justice system for hundreds of years has torn the moral fabric of this country to shreds leaving nothing but the words: "I Can't Breathe" seared into our consciousness.

Delta Rho Omega has a rich history of civic engagement since its chartering. Most notably, it was the first Greek letter organization to show public and financial support to the Civil Rights Movement with a \$5,000.00 donation to the Montgomery Defense Fund. Systemic racism was built into the foundation of American society and endures to this day. What are we going to do to help change this narrative? Sorors, the time to act is NOW!

Our Supreme Basileus, Soror Glenda Baskin Glover, forwarded a call to action to membership this month. Action items include the following:

- Census 2020: Conduct activities to urge the community to complete the 2020 Census.
- AKAs L.E.A.D.: (Learn, Educate, Empower, Decide): Chapters are encouraged to double local voter mobilization and participation efforts through the organization When We All Vote.
- Poor People's Campaign March: Participate in the virtual march that will be conducted on June 12, 2020. Please register by June 12.
- N.A.A.C.P. Partnership: Support the organization's efforts to seek police reform through federal legislation. I encourage you to take time to review policy demands listed on naacp.org.

The Connection Committee created an action plan that will be discussed at the June meeting. Please commit to conducting at least one activity.

The June chapter meeting will include a vote to conduct an MIP in 2021. MIPs were suspended sorority wide due to the pandemic, but the chapter should have a decision on the record in case corporate office reinstates same. We will also vote for the chapter's candidates for Second Supreme Anti-Basileus and Undergraduate Members-At-Large (2).

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer!

Sisterly,

Soror Victoria Thomas
Basileus

#### Message from the First Anti-Basileus

#### **Greetings Sorors!**

During the month of June, we celebrate high school graduates and anticipate the next phase of their young adult lives. For Delta Rho Omega's graduates of the sorority's signature program #CAP, that next phase includes matriculating at esteemed institutions of higher learning while taking on little to no debt. We celebrate twelve young women with bright futures. Their stories are just beginning, and Delta Rho Omega should be proud of its contribution to their college application process.



I extend gratitude to Soror Nitiya Walker, Founder and Executive Director of Seeds of Fortune, Inc. who chairs the #CAP committee. Delta Rho Omega partnered with Seeds of Fortune to offer a summer college prep boot camp, execute college prep workshops, engage college prep coaches, and offer a financial literacy workshop. #CAP graduates also participated in a summer college tour of schools in upstate New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.

The incoming cohort of #CAP participants is an impressive group of 34 young women, selected from 155 applicants who reside across New York City. Sorors interested in joining the #CAP committee should reach out to Soror Nitiya Walker (nitiyawalker@gmail.com) for more information.

As we take a step back from sorority activity to relax during the summer months, it is time to turn our attention to the 2021 program year. The Program Committee will remain engaged during the chapter's hiatus to execute program chair training and review your program proposals. Sorors are also encouraged to contribute to their favorite HBCU during July and August to help determine Delta Rho Omega's adopted HBCU. The school with the most donations will be the focal point for our efforts on AKA HBCU Day, September 21, 2020. Please make your donation at https://donate.akaeaf.org/pages/HBCU\_Community\_Impact\_Day and earmark the donation for your school of choice.

It continues to be my privilege to work alongside you in service to our Brooklyn community.

Sisterly,

#### Soror Monique Okumakpeyi

First Anti-Basileus

#### Second Anti-Basileus' Message

We made it!! Despite all the challenges that were presented this year, we were able to pivot with a hair toss and ivy turn! Delta Rho Omega Chapter knows how to gracefully embrace change and rise to the occasion! As some of us prepare to take a well deserved mental and

physical break from the work of the Chapter, many of us will be working through the summer. Our goal is to make sure that the second half of the year is as robust and filling as the first half without overloading your schedules.

The Membership Committee will be working through the summer to bring you our first ever-virtual 1-day retreat: RETREAT in the MIDST! We are hoping to have the largest turnout of any retreat to date! We are planning an experience that is engaging, exciting and most of all easy to navigate! We have a few surprises for you so we hope that you register early once it opens!

We will also be planning an event or 2 over the summer including our annual Soror-to-Sister Tea, which will also be moving to a virtual platform. By the end of the year, you will be a virtual meeting pro!

Thank you for supporting our first #DROEXCLUSIVE event: A FAMILY AFFAIR – Memorial Day Party with DJ Ms CHU. We had a fabulous time unwinding and letting off some steam and busting a move! We learned our new official Chapter Stroll taught by our Award-winning Stroll team Captain – Soror Dawnasia Freeman. We also sipped on cocktails provided by Soror Valarie Taveres and the LiqNY. A good time was had by all!

Wishing you a summer of peace, serenity and unexplainable joy! We're all in this together!

Sisterly, Soror Phillipa Pearson 2nd Anti-Basileus/Membership Chair

#### **GRADUATE ADVISOR**



#### Graduate Advisor Delta Rho Omega Chapter



#### May 2020 Activities





God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved:

God will help it when the morning dawns. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Psalm 46



#### Congratulation to the Alpha Mu Graduation Class!





Have safe, healthy and blessed summer Sorors!

#### **HODEGOS CONNECTION**



#### Greetings from the Hodegoi

Dear Sorors, this is a most unstable time in our lives. Nothing is certain, nothing can be predicted, and nothing will be the same. In this time of great unrest and troubled hearts, let us remember our duty to do something, anything, to love, support, and uplift one another. Sisterhood and solidarity are the keys to our stability, and our power in numbers promises the greatest impact on our freedom.

Respectfully submitted and always
Sisterly Yours,
Soror Deena and Soror Tiffany
Hodegoi

"It is our duty to fight for our freedom.

It is our duty to win.

We must love each other and support each other.

We have nothing to lose but our chains."

-Assata Shakur

#### Happy Birthday Sorors!

#### June Birthdays

6/1	Soror Melinda Alexis-Hayes	6/9	Soror Lu-Shawn Thompson
6/3	Soror Azurée Montoute-Lewis	6/11	Soror Quintasia Welch
6/7	Soror Phillipa Pearson	6/14	Soror Judea Brown
6/7	Soror Nitiya Walker	6/21	Soror Kimberly Bugg-Allen
6/8	Soror Tracey Mina	6/23	Soror Regina Davis
		6/27	Soror Shanelle Gabriel



#### July Birthdays

7/1	Soror Jovanna King	7/18	Soror Elizabeth Esantsi
7/2	Soror Carole Brinkley	7/22	Soror Tanisha Francis
7/3	Soror Deborah Cuffey Jackson	7/22	Soror Jamilah Lemieux
7/9	Soror Verneda White	7/24	Soror Claudia Smith
7/10	Soror Nicole Chavis-Jackson	7/26	Soror Joelle Bonny
7/10	Soror Shonté Harrell	7/26	Soror Gina Chavez-Moore
7/10	Soror Yvette Mack	7/28	Soror Karmia Berry
7/11	Soror NēQuai Nipper	7/28	Soror Celeste Lewis
7/13	Soror Joanne Joyner-Wells	7/28	Soror Jodia Nesbeth-Vanel
7/15	Soror Aisha Alleyne	7/31	Soror Leandra Flores
7/17	Soror Mecca Hawkins	7/31	Soror Marlene Linen

#### August Birthdays

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8/4	Soror Mary Jemison-Head	8/12	Soror Bernarda Villalona
8/5	Soror Roxie Crandoll McKoy	8/15	Soror Tanya Stewart
8/8	Soror Latifa Reed	8/17	Soror Dorcas Miller Soror Benita Miller
8/10	Soror Loretta Easley-Gipson	8/18	Soror Tracyavon Ford
8/11	Soror Serena Castellano	8/26	Soror Valarie Taveras
8/11	Soror Tiffany Chang	8/28	Soror Deena A. Sellers
8/11	Soror Carol-Ann Huggins		
8/11	Soror Yardise Jones		

#### Congratulations are in order...

- ... for Soror Benita Miller, recently appointed as the President and CEO of Children's Aid and Family Services!!
- ... to the Delta Rho Omega Membership Committee for a super fun and super Sisterly "We Are Family" Memorial Day Party, with sounds by Soror Jamie Reliford (b/k/a DJ MSCHU)!!
- ... to the Ivy Rose Foundation, for a successful and well-attended fundraiser, the Pearl Jam, via Instagram Live, hosted by Power 105's own DJ Envy, and in support of The Campaign Against Hunger!!

#### Please keep in your thoughts and prayers...

- ... Soror Christina Hodges and her family, as they mourn the loss of her mother, Ms. Bonita L. Hodges of Durham, NC.
- ... Soror Aaliyah Bakayoko and her family, as they mourn the passing of her great- grand-mother, Ms. Evelyn Tyme of Cambria Heights, Queens (by way of Jamaica).
- ... Soror Celeste Lewis and her family, as they mourn the loss of her sister-in-law Ms. Anna Lewis; and her aunt, Mrs. Dorothy Tobin.
- ... Soror Shanelle Gabriel, as she recovers from a recent surgical procedure.

May they all remain in Christ's peace and comfort.

#### SISTERLY CONNECTIONS



#### Greetings from the Sisterly Relations Committee

The Sisterly Relations committee has kept our Delta Rho Omega sorors connected all throughout this season. In May, we hosted "You Can't Pour From an Empty Cup," a self-care workshop with Soror Jordan A. Madison. This workshop was meant to kick off Mental Health Awareness month and recognizing how important it is to make sure we are okay as women that wear many hats. On that call, sorors shared how they've been taking care of themselves during uncertain times. We also shared resources on how to strengthen your self-care so that you can tend to your loved ones. Some resources include:

- Self-Care Assessment on www.therapistaid.com
- Bible App for daily verses
- Eternal Sunshine App
- Calm App
- Headspace App
- Fit On App

Sisterly Relations Committee also hosted its second Virtual Book Club meeting to disucss The Wedding Date written by Jasmine Guillory. Our book club has served as a safe space for our intergenerational participants. We thank you for the laughs and moments where we get to escape from our reality and curl up into a book written by Black women. We look forward to seeing you at our next book club meeting!

Check out the DRO Connection for more information about our upcoming Sisterly Relations events:

June 24th, 2020 - Virtual Book Club at 7pm (American Spy written by Lauren Wilkinson)

Sisterly,

#### Soror Kimberley Bugg-Allen and Soror Antonia Hope

Sisterly Relations Co-Chairs

# Soror Spotlight: Soror Verneda Adele White



Submitted by Soror Jovanna King

This month's Soror Spotlight features Soror Verneda Adele White. Soror Verneda just returned from a 3-month sabbatical in Australia, and stated she feels beyond blessed to have gone and completed her trip just before the Covid-19 lockdown and quarantine hit. She spent this past Christmas with DRO's former Basileus, Soror Tomasina Boone and family in Sydney, Australia; experienced the Australian bush fires, rang in the New Year on the Sydney Harbor, volunteered on four different organic farms across New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, along with making friends with kangaroos, wombats, cockatoos, peacocks, koalas, and spent as much time at Bondi Beach as possible. She is now experiencing her second summer of 2020! Soror Verneda became a member of our illustrious sorority by way of the Mu Upsilon Chapter, Fall 2003 at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY.

Please see excerpts from our conversation below.

#### Please tell us about your family?

Interesting question in this current climate. The reality is that I do not know my nationality. To say I am African American, is to say I don't know where my ancestry comes from. I recently shared with non-POC friends of mine that I identify as black FIRST. My extended family hails from New Orleans, LA, while I was born and raised upstate in Rochester, NY. I am the youngest of two; my brother is 11 years older than me, and I have the pleasure of being an auntie to my 3 nephews and niece. I have not started my own family as yet, but I am excited about doing so in the future!



# Please describe your collegiate educational background and current profession?

I received my undergraduate degree; a Bachelor of Science, (B.S.) in Textile and Apparel Management from Cornell University and I went on to earn my graduate degree; a Masters of Business Administration, (M.B.A.) in

International Business from European Business School London in London, UK. With my background, I have been able to build a business and career in several areas that I love.

As a Social Entrepreneur, and out of my family's experience with Hurricane Katrina and losing my closest cousin to AIDS, I founded my first brand HUMAN INTONATION as a premium, charity-driven t-shirt brand dedicated to raising awareness and funding for pertinent social & human rights issues, with a primary focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, testing and treatment.

As a Social Entrepreneur, and out of my family's experience with Hurricane Katrina and losing my closest cousin to AIDS, I founded my first brand HUMAN INTONATION as a premium, charity-driven t-shirt brand dedicated to raising awareness and funding for pertinent social & human rights issues, with a primary focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, testing and treatment.

My love for fashion also led me to, and provided me with the freedom of, being an independent Event Executive Producer for events ranging from London Fashion Week to the GLAAD Awards, and Harlem United's 30th Anniversary Gala. I have definitely taken a non-traditional path in my career and I am in the process of seeing what's next. My Contributing Writer bug has returned! I recently started writing for OMNoire, an awesome wellness community for women of color.

### Are any of your relatives a member of a BGLO?

Yes, both of my parents are Greek, along with several of my family members across various organizations. My dad, Ronald White, is a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and I am of course proud to be my mom's legacy as she,



Dr. Darlene Riggins White, became a Golden Soror in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. this year!

## Are you a member of any other social/professional organizations?

Yes, a few! Most recently I have been a member of, or on the board of the President's Council of Cornell Women (PCCW), New York Knows (NYC Dept. of Health HIV Testing Initiative), Ending the Epidemic (NY State AIDS Institute HIV Initiative), BRAG (Black Retail Action Group), NYC Fashion Fellows, Contributing Writer for HuffPost, and the Apollo Young Patrons.

#### What are some of your favorite or fun things to do?

While many of my usual fun activities are on hold due to Covid-19, I love most to connect with my people. There's been lots of virtual date nights, hot yoga, girlfriend brunches, movie nights on my back deck, and dancing in my living room to a good #verzuz, but I am looking forward (in the distant future) to traveling again and spending time at the beach.

## How have you been able to use your platform as an entrepreneur to engage in community efforts?

Very much so! As time evolves it has been interesting to see how all the elements of my experiences have come together full circle. For example, my background in fashion, events, and HIV/AIDS led to my consulting work with the organization Housing Works, where I developed and I am the Executive Producer of WOC x WOC: Our



Voices, Our Health, Ourselves (Conversations for Women of Color by Women of Color) featuring Jacque Reid, Bevy Smith and our own Soror Jamilah Lemieux to bring an updated conversation and information about HIV and PrEP to women of color here in NYC and internationally via livestream. It is our demographic that continues to be disproportionately affected.

I am grateful for all the ways Sorors of Delta Rho Omega and the Ivy Rose Foundation have supported me, my brand, and have been active participants including DRO and IRF signing on as Community Partners for last summer's inaugural WOC x WOC.

This is one of my greatest experiences with our Chapter, beyond my many years on our HBCU College Tour committee which remains close to my heart. During the pandemic lockdown, I felt the need (as many of us have) to not only pivot my business to survive, but I wanted to make a contribution to the collective experiences and shifts that will be part of our fabric going forward. We took WOC x WOC virtual in April, on IG Live to bring the conversation about sex and HIV into context with Covid-19.

# Have you been able to participate in any civil rights pursuits or make contributions that support the racial injustice in our country?

For me, Black Lives Matter is more than a civil rights movement. We are in a HUMAN RIGHTS movement, for us as black people to be recognized as human beings with the right to be treated as human beings. I have socially distanced at three protests in downtown Brooklyn (I have not entered Manhattan or any other borough since March 12th), and I mentioned in my writing on OMNoire. My latest article is titled, "To Our Brothers: Know You Are Loved #justiceforGeorgeFloyd" link: <a href="https://bit.ly/2MIC8zP">https://bit.ly/2MIC8zP</a>

However, it is not only about black men. We must not forget to strongly elevate the black women whose lives have been wrongfully taken by law enforcement, yet their stories do not receive nearly enough attention. I encourage Sorors to uplift Breonna Taylor at this time, and here are a few actions each of us can take:

1. Call interim Police Chief Robert Schroeder at: 502-574-7111 (press 6 and then 4) and DEMAND he complete the investigation immediately and turn it over to Breonna's lawyers and the Attorney General

2. Call the Special Prosecutor, Attorney General Daniel Cameron at: 502-696-5300 and DEMAND he charge the officers who murdered Breonna Taylor or email attorney.general@ag.ky.gov

3. Call Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer at: 502-574-2003 and DEMAND the LMPD fire the officers who murdered Breonna Taylor or email greg.fischer@louisvilleky.gov

Please share any encouraging words to sorors that you feel may provide comfort or reflect the strength of our sisterhood.

I came into our illustrious organization bright-eyed and excited to form deep life-long best friendships within our sisterly bonds. Unfortunately, this has not been part of my Alpha Kappa Alpha experience in the way I thought or



imagined. I am grateful for the Sorors I have grown with over the years, and would encourage any Sorors who may feel she has not found her tribe within our tribe to just be herself. The greatest gift in life is to be comfortable in one's own skin. It is something I actively practice on a daily basis. Know that you deserve this. None of us are perfect, and being yourself does not require perfection. Who you are is absolutely awesome!

Connect w/Soror Verneda:

Instagram: @vernedaAdele

Facebook: Verneda Adele

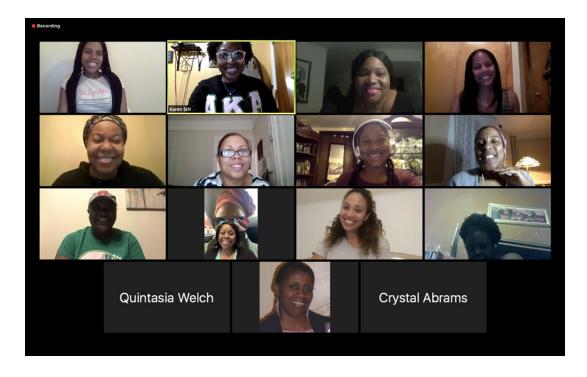
#### Virtual Book Club

The Sisterly Relations comittee hosted their Virtual Book Club on Zoom last month.



#### Self Care Workshop

The Sisterly Relations comittee hosted their Virtual Self Care Workshop on Zoom last month.







CT / DC / DE / EASTERN NY /EASTERN PA / MA/ ME / MD/ NH / NJ / RI / VT

Mary Bentley LaMar Regional Director



Sun Salutations (welcome the day!)

Monday • Wednesday • Friday
7 a.m. CST — 30 minute sessions

Vinyasa Yoga (get into the flow!)

Monday • Wednesday 8 a.m. CST — 55 minute sessions

Friday AKA Yoga (everyone is welcome)

Friday

8 a.m. CST — 30 minute session

**Prenatal Yoga** 

Tuesday

10:30 a.m. CST — 55 minute session

Mommy and Baby Yoga (Postnatal)

Tuesday

Noon CST — 55 minute session

Coming Soon:

Yoga for Runners

30 and 55 minute yoga sessions on **Zoom**, perfect for beginners and experienced practitioners.

Join us on Zoom Meetings, use this link:

#### yogawitheve.net

(type in this address, it will take you directly to the class!)

For more information, text Eve at: (215) 260-3542

Donations welcome (25¢ - \$16) via cashapp: \$PinkCocoa1908







Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Delta Rho Omega Chapter





6:30 p.m.

DIAL IN: (712) 775-7031 ACCESS CODE: 441-812-420

Delta Rho Omega's Daily Dose: **SOROR JENNIFER ROBINSON** 





#### Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Delta Rho Omega Chapter





### Gvening PRAYER LINE

JUNE 25, 2020 6:30 p.m.

DIAL IN: (712) 775-7031 ACCESS CODE: 441-812-420

### Delta Rho Omega's Daily Dose: SOROR SHONTÉ HARRELL



Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Delta Rho Omega Chapter







JUNE 23, 2020 6:30 p.m.

DIAL IN: (712) 775-7031 ACCESS CODE: 441-812-420

Delta Rho Omega's Daily Dose:
SOROR JANICE TAYLOR





Delta Rho Omega's Daily Dose:
SOROR CHRYLL CREWS





Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated

Delta Rho Omega Chapter

Sisterly Relations Committee's

VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB



Wednesday, June 24th at 7pm

#### Zoom Meeting ID:

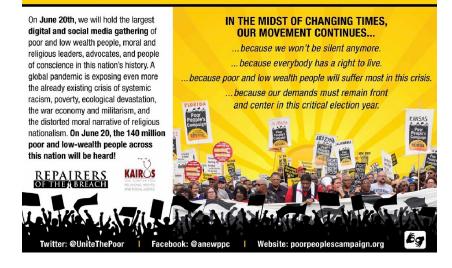
https://zoom.us/j/3140611226?pwd=cXoyZGINMmZLVVVkcE1yeUV0ZEJEZz09 Meeting ID: 314 061 1226

Password: 883836

#### **Poor People's Campaign**

A NATIONAL CALL for MORAL REVIVAL

# MASS POOR PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY & MORAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON IS GOING DIGITAL



#### June CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TIME
6/16, 6/18, 6/23,6/25, 6/30	Evening Prayer Line		Dial In:712-775-7031 Acess Code: 441-812-420	6:30pm
6/13	Chapter Meeting	Monthly Business Meeting	WebEx	2pm to 5pm
6/24	Sisterly Relations Virtual Book Club	ht	Zoom Meeting ID: tps://zoom.us/j/3140611226	7pm

### July Calendar

DATE	EVENT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TIME
7/15 7/16	Virtual Boul	e	TO BE ANNOUN	ICED

#### Please view our monthly calendar here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YaoL4BID8vNjp7WHH1MVBGV7ilnIkT-pL KB2 CYafWw/edit?usp=sharing

#### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**BASILEUS OFFICE HOURS** 

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MARY BENTLEY LAMAR

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#### STAY IN TOUCH!







