

Seminar





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Facilitating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Conversations with your Board of Trustees

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Delta Gamma Foundation Director of Strategic Communications

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Delta Gamma Foundation Executive Director

Introduction

- Who we are
- What we'll do today
 - Give context for our discussion around DEI and fundraising
 - Identify opportunities and threats facing fraternal foundations
 - Share our strategy and identify best practices for foundation boards, staff and volunteers
- What would you like to gain from today's session?



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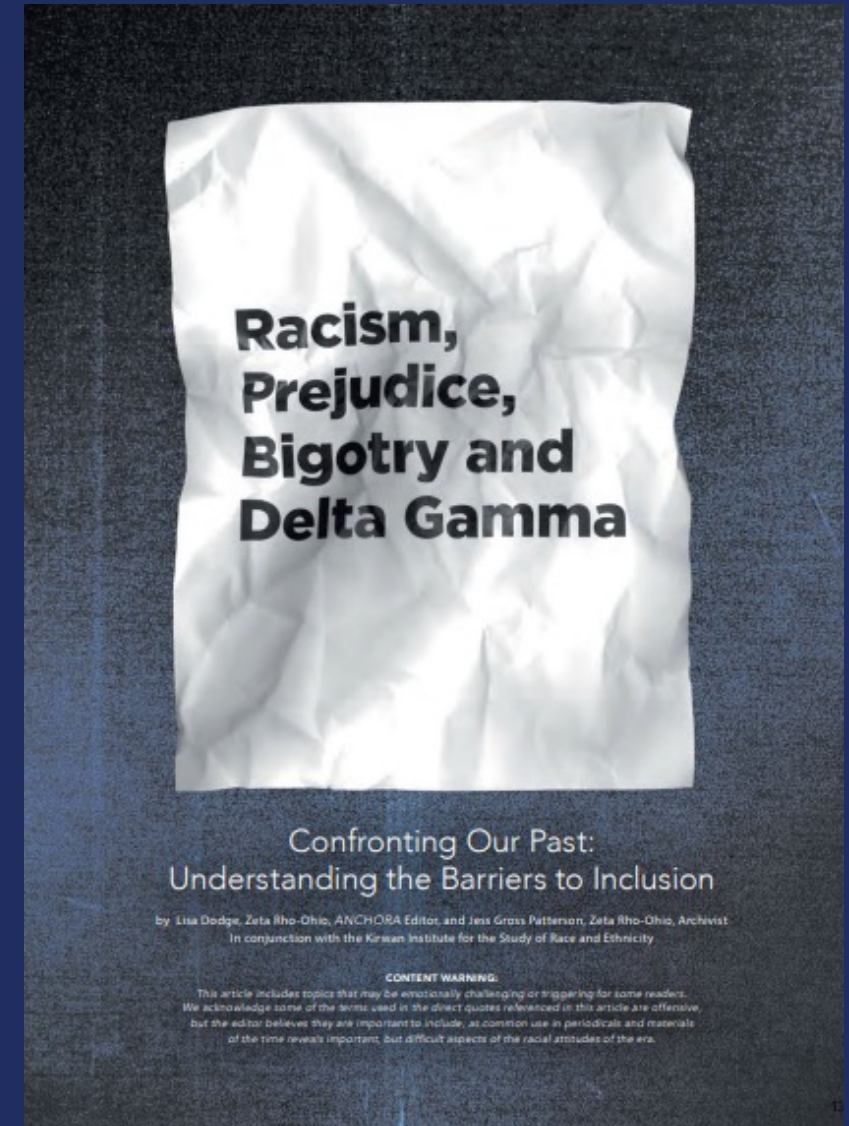
Setting the stage

What initiatives and policy changes have members responded to?

- Historical Contextualization effort and magazine story
- Positional Statements on DEI
- Legacy policy changes
- DEI training and programming for staff, volunteers and collegians
- Legislative/cultural changes



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Responses to DEI initiatives

- Letters to the editor, direct mail pieces, email solicitation replies, social media comments and DMs, included notes with response devices or online gifts, emailed equityinclusion@deltagamma.org, created individual posts or blogs on LinkedIn or other platforms, or reached out directly to Council/BOT leaders, staff, or other volunteers
- Both positive and negative responses have been received, i.e. included statements that the member could no longer give to the Foundation (or Fraternity) because of the changes or would start or continue giving because of the changes.
- What common themes have you seen in your responses to DEI initiatives in your own organizations?




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Delta Gamma IS NOT A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, and any attempt to make it so disregards the feelings and values of a large number of our dues paying and active membership. There is the risk that such political activism will alienate many Delta Gammas; and I submit, that if Delta Gamma Fraternity continues to presume to speak for its entire membership on political issues, that is just what will happen. In addition, those Potential New Members, who would be outstanding DG's, but who find Delta Gamma's political activism an affront to their beliefs, will look elsewhere for their college and lifelong Fraternity experiences.

Like Reply 2y

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 Author
Delta Gamma Fraternity ✓
Hi [redacted] - we are working to create an equitable sisterhood that has opportunities for all women in alignment with Article II and our Positional Statement on Inclusivity. We hope that through the recruitment process, potential new members will recognize the good work we are trying to do to ensure our sisterhood is inclusive.

Like Reply 2y

1

I am disappointed and disheartened to learn from Anchor that you have succumbed to pressure from a group I consider to be unwholesome and frankly unbiblical in the opposite of what DG has always been. I do not wish to be affiliated with this pressure group in any way even if it means disassociating to the extent possible from Delta Gamma. I will not be sending any more contributions to the Foundation.

June, 2020

Do Good.

Delta Gamma's timeless motto is being perverted by a staff and (presumably) a Council and Foundation Board of Trustees that insists on seeing the world through the rubric of "differentness" rather than through the rubric of sisterhood. It seems "good" is defined solely as "being a mouthpiece for those who claim society has wronged them" whether they, themselves, have been wronged or not. No expanding or dissenting voices are permitted.

☐ you're all doing such outstanding work. I'm totally blown away by all the **deep dives** in our history DG is taking, and having so many difficult and important and necessary discussions.

SO SO IMPRESSED!

I was initiated in 1999 and all these years later, I am even more proud to be a DG.

Thank you and your team! And if you ever find yourself in Delray Beach, don't hesitate to reach out. :)



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Representative Positive Responses

- Please keep doing what you all know is right. This is one DG who applauds the efforts the Fraternity is making with care and conscience.
- Personally I am thrilled that our organization focused on transparency, authenticity and has the guts to move into uncomfortable spaces. If we are to be truly sustainable and healthy, we need the courage to recognize that the tough questions have to be asked....and answered.
- I am giving money again after your incredible apology to Black women. Best issue of *Anchora* ever published.
- You're all doing such outstanding work. I'm totally blown away by all the deep dives in our history DG is taking and having so many difficult and important and necessary discussions. SO SO IMPRESSED! I was initiated in 1999 and all these years later, I am even more proud to be a DG. Thank you and your team!



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More Positive Responses

- I respect the important work that both the Fraternity and Foundation are doing and recognize that by time and geography I am very distant and unaware to the needs of our entire membership. Luckily, I put my full faith in decisions of the leadership.
- I'm sorry that you've had to have these difficult conversations. I want you to know that there are sisters who are in total support of what the Foundation is promoting in the area of DEI.
- For what it's worth, in my 27 years as a Delta Gamma, I have never been prouder of our Delta Gamma volunteer leadership and staff or to be a member. Thank you to all of you for taking a stand and for making thoughtful adjustments to how we operate and live our values. I'm sure it is both difficult and rewarding on a daily basis. Change - even the best kinds of change - is hard. Be well. Stay the course. Keep going. And know that all the hard work you all are doing does not go unnoticed or unappreciated.



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Representative Negative Responses

- I find my values and Delta Gamma are not in accord, so I will be donating directly to the Service for Sight philanthropies.
- After the decision to dishonor alumnae and no longer recognize legacies, my heart was broken. There are other ways to promote diversity- perhaps with scholarships for minorities vs. slapping us alumnae in the face!
- Regrettably, I can no longer support the Foundation. While I am able to accept welcoming a diversity of pledges and members, I think including transgendered “women” is foolish and foolhardy. I would not want my granddaughters to face such choices. When this is addressed, I will be back.



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More Negative Responses

- It appears that our beloved Delta Gamma has become a political machine instead of a sisterhood striving to Do Good. When I see that Delta Gamma has returned to the organization our founders created, I'll start supporting the Foundation and paying my dues. I hope you understand.
- I will no longer be able to support the Delta Gamma Foundation. I find it most disheartening to read the policy of turning in sisters for having a difference of opinion. I understand Delta Gamma felt they needed to take some sort of stance, but the supporting of groups (Color of Change) and a woman's opinion (1619 Project) that go against the very pillars of our country (nuclear family, defunding the police) as well as faulty history, would be counter to my moral filter.



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Opportunities and threats

- With these positive/negative responses and themes they represent in mind, we worked together with the Board to determine what the opportunities and threats were to our Foundation and fundraising.
- Using the handout provided, work together with others in your organization or those sitting around you to identify to 3 most salient opportunities/threats that face your organization related to DEI initiatives and fundraising.
- We'll come back together in 15 minutes to share some of the things you identified.



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Our Threats

- Misinformation and ultimately no decision-making power over how new policies, initiatives, etc were communicated to the membership
- Dependency on members' affinity for Delta Gamma and/or Chapter as a major source of loyalty to giving
 - Loss of long-time annual donors because of dissatisfaction with Fraternity
 - Loss of major and planned gifts
- Interest of younger donors to give to charitable organizations that have great social/welfare impact and less of a sense of giving out of loyalty
- Perception or feeling that the organization's values are no longer congruent with members' own values



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Our Opportunities

- Harness the positivity around Fraternity initiatives to increase affinity to the Foundation
- Identify and retain donors who are specifically interested in supporting the DEI work of the Fraternity and show them impact of their gifts to create opportunities for major gifts
- Focus on how changes will make Delta Gamma a better, stronger, more sustainable organization enabling the Foundation to fulfill its mission and do even more good
- Leverage brand messaging and organizational values to instill positivity into messaging (For example: Redefining the Path for those who come Next)
- Emphasize immediate needs/how donors are responding
- Garner support for Service for Sight by noting we serve people who hold marginalized identities, we are advocates for accessibility, and help create a true sense of belonging in society for those who are living with blindness



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General Impressions and scale

- There seems to be a sentiment among some of the dissatisfied members/donors that Delta Gamma's membership is primarily white, Christian, heterosexual and biological women.
- The vast majority of our donors have not responded specifically to these changes, but rather continue to give in a way that feels right for them.
- Some of the comments "I'll no longer give" or "I'm taking DG out of my will" on social media came from members for whom we have no record of individual giving/planned gift.
 - Positive responses: at least 16
 - Negative responses: about 21



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Strategy: Board/staff communication

- Coordination between leadership and staff vital
 - Regular updates and opportunity for discussion and questions during monthly Board calls/staff meetings
 - Created and shared the process for how outreach should be handled with Board, Council and professional staff
 - Gave advance warning of planned Fraternity communications in as many instances as possible to ensure consistent messaging across the Board
 - Created resource for Board with timeline and links to all communications related to DEI work with links to original source
- Provided guidance on how to respond to conversations with donors/members
 - Acknowledge without agreement
 - Okay to say “I don’t know” but I’ll follow up, or have someone follow up



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Resources and links to DEI communications

Delta Gamma website: <https://www.deltagamma.org/inclusion>

1. Overview and Resources

2. Contextualization and Equity Assessment:

<https://www.deltagamma.org/inclusion/contextualization-equity-assessment>

3. Supporting a Sister: <https://www.deltagamma.org/inclusion/supporting-a-sister>

4. Reporting and Accountability:

<https://www.deltagamma.org/inclusion/reporting-and-accountability>

5. DEI Advisory Commission:

<https://www.deltagamma.org/inclusion/dei-advisory-commission>

Contextualization:

Winter 2019: Anchora Story on Contextualization:

<http://digital.watkinsprinting.com/publication/?m=3174&i=647238&p=14&pre=1>

January 17, 2020: Winter Directors' Meeting Contextualization Training provided by Kirwan Institute (slides from this training available upon request)

January 23, 2020: Positional Statement on Contextualization Press Release:

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/dg-library/Contextualization-Press-Release.pdf>

January 29, 2020: Council Comment regarding contextualization:

<https://mailchi.mp/9546ee065d58/council-comment-january-29-2020?e=592db7e823>

November 2020: Contextualization Webinar hosted by Jess Patterson:

<https://vimeo.com/486156753>



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Delta Gamma Foundation Board of Trustees Resource Sheet for Delta Gamma Policy Changes and DEI Initiatives

Compiled by: Jennifer Magro Algarotti, PhD, Director of Strategic Communications

DEI and policy changes quick timeline:

February 2019: *Research of Alpha Mu chapter closing began*

June 2019: *Positional Statement on Contextualization announcement at OTS*

Winter 2019: *Contextualization story published in Anchora and WDM training*

May 2020: *Council endorses DEI training plan for all members*

June 2020: *Council releases "Doing Good means Doing Better" statement related to DEI*

June 2020: *Legacy policy changed*

July 2020: *Equity Assessment project starts in partnership with Kirwan Institute*

October 2020: *DEI and accountability information published to all members in DG*



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Strategy: Responses to members

- Listened and responded through the appropriate process
- Acknowledging the thoughts and feelings without agreeing to their position/displeasure
- Remarking that they care about Delta Gamma enough to reach out and that passion for the future of the organization is admirable
- Focus on how the changes are an effort to live out the values of the organization
- Misconceptions or inaccurate information is corrected when possible
- Positive comments have also been responded to by staff with gratefulness and a thank you
- Tracking interactions in member database



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FROM THE DESK *of the Executive Director*



Dear Sister,

Recently, we celebrated the close of the 2020-2021 fiscal year; a year full of challenges and hard work, but also connection and success. Along with Ruth Alsbrooks, Chairman of the Delta Gamma Foundation Board of Trustees, I had the distinct honor of virtually presenting the State of the Foundation in June, where we highlighted the year in review. I invite you to learn more about what this time has meant to the Foundation by watching the video here: <https://vimeo.com/582139157>

As I approach my one-year anniversary in this role, I want to thank you all for making this past year so rich in experience and meaning. With that appreciation comes the acknowledgment that we've been having some difficult conversations lately. I love hearing from those of you who feel connected to the mission of the Foundation; your support means the world to me. And I also deeply admire those of you who reach out because you're frustrated. The act

Please know, and I cannot emphasize this enough, that I welcome and encourage ALL of your questions and feedback. Ultimately, my goal is to strengthen and grow the Delta Gamma Foundation, and your honest and constructive feedback is what allows me to do that.

Some of you have expressed that the direction in which Delta Gamma is heading is not in line with your beliefs and that as a result, you'll no longer be supporting the Foundation. We care about our sisters much more than we care about dollars and cents. Philanthropy is about goodwill to fellow members of the human race and we celebrate all the ways you choose to live out your philanthropic purpose. If you feel that you can't financially support the [mission of the Foundation](#), would you consider leaning into Service for Sight, our decades-long philanthropy, and volunteering your time?

Navigating change is hard work. It requires us to examine everything we've been taught and at times, to carefully choose to unlearn those behaviors that are harmful to others, even though we may not see them that way. Our sisterhood, and the diverse experiences it offers, is a big part of what makes Delta Gamma so special. I hope my note today serves as a reminder that the Delta Gamma Foundation exists for, and because of, YOU. It is my most sincere hope that you'll participate in this sisterhood with an open heart, allowing the Foundation to be our common thread, and philanthropy the tie that binds.



In the Bonds,

Leslie Loop Martin, MPH, CFRE
Gamma Rho-Wittenberg
Executive Director
Delta Gamma Foundation



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Strategy: External communications

- Collaborated closely with Fraternity professional staff to encourage clear and transparent messaging in communications around these topics, to help members understand fully the differences between the Fraternity initiatives and Foundation work
- Communicating need and impact at every turn
- Social media focus on stories of impact, showing the good donors' gifts do, chapter fundraising, our mission,
- Created social media policy and process for how comments are responded to or not
- Leaned into Service for Sight as a possible giving and service option



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Ultimately, the goal is to put Article II into practice by acknowledging our past, identifying and removing barriers and bias, and working toward a more inclusive future.

The new Positional Statement on Contextualization introduced earlier in this article (see page 12) and exploration of our past are just the first steps in being aware of our history and reflecting on how that has shaped our present. Throughout the last several months, we have been in partnership with the Korean Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at the Ohio State University. As experts in the field of inclusion, they will assist Delta Gamma in a multi-year partnership, including an equity audit. This will help us gain an understanding of how the policies and procedures, ceremonies and interpersonal climate that govern Delta Gamma shape the experiences of our members.

In October, our director of marketing and communications and ANCHORA editor and the archivist at Executive Offices traveled to Beloit, Wisconsin, at the invitation of the college archivist. The purpose of the visit was to explore Delta Gamma documents and records contained in the college archives.

Experts from Korean conducted workshops with our Collegiate Development Consultants in December, as well as our Fraternity Leadership and Council in January. Members can expect to see some of the curriculum developed through this partnership through in-person meetings, trainings and gatherings, including Convention, and online modules. Ultimately, the goal is to put Article II into practice by acknowledging our past, identifying and removing barriers and bias, and working toward a more inclusive future.

This work will be ongoing. As this evolves, initiatives will continue to be developed and executed. It is with hope for building a stronger Fraternity by addressing these facets of our past in a comprehensive and proactive manner that we will truly help to inspire the best qualities of character among all who bear the name of Delta Gamma.

If you have questions about these efforts, please email DGcontextualization@deltagamma.org.

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Delta Gamma Foundation
March 29, 2021 ·

For the past 85 years, Delta Gammas have been dedicated to Service for Sight, thanks to Ruth Billow, Eta-Akron, blazing a trail. In 1936, Ruth read an appeal typed in braille to the Lake Placid Convention body to adopt Sight Conservation and Aid to the Blind as our national philanthropy.

The power of women in philanthropy is undeniable, thanks to the women who have been fighting for a seat at the table for decades. Read more about Ruth's impact and our philanthropy in the most recent From the Desk of the Executive Director: <https://dgffoundation.informz.net/.../bWFpbGluZ2luc3RhbmN...>

#WomensHistoryMonth #DoGoodSisterhood





Ruth Billow,
Eta-Akron



“I am so thankful for this scholarship and the Foundation for encouraging and supporting women.”

Remy Shannon, Delta Eta-Cal. State, Sacramento





**Foundation Focus:
Why Philanthropy Matters**

Tuesday, November 30
6 p.m. PT / 9 p.m. ET




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Other ideas and thoughts



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Thank you!

dgfoundation@deltagamma.org