

Legacy



PHI SIGMA SIGMA FOUNDATION

Spring 2007

A Message from the Foundation President

I find myself doing a lot of reflecting lately, as last year not only did I turn 50, I also lost my two most valued mentors in my Phi Sigma Sigma life: Past Grand Vice Archon-Undergraduates Beverly Parkes and Past Grand Archon Jeanine Goldberg. These extraordinary women brought me in as a Phi Sig volunteer and taught me so much about our Fraternity and the meaning of volunteer service. Some 28 years later, my sorority volunteer experiences have generated some of my greatest joys. Today, as I find myself steering my life towards that which is most fulfilling, I realize my work with the Phi Sigma Sigma Foundation remains the most rewarding.



Kim Hildred

As volunteers, we refer to the Foundation as the “heart” of Phi Sigma Sigma. That’s because our focus is living the values of our Founders as we work to raise funds through meaningful connections with collegiate and alumnae sisters, and promote the advancement of womanhood and our core value of leadership through service.

The Foundation has made substantial progress, thanks to our treasured donors, committed volunteers, and outstanding Foundation and Fraternity staff. Our revenues have increased 100% in the past three years and our endowment is fast approaching two million dollars. This past year, these resources have enabled

the Foundation to award 24 educational grants and scholarships to deserving collegiate and alumnae sisters (ranging from \$500 to \$2200), fund the ACHIEVE values-based leadership program presented at leadership conferences across the country, and sponsor the National Kidney Foundation’s Transplant Games.

Our greatest challenge is reconnecting with our alumnae sisters so that the spirit of Phi Sigma Sigma we experienced when we joined as collegians is rekindled in our lives today. Though time has changed all of us, what hasn’t changed is that spirit of sisterhood that binds us together.

Through this issue of the *Legacy*, you may experience that spirit as you learn about our sisters’ attendance at the Transplant Games – where they met organ donors, donor families and donor recipients whose lives have been immeasurably altered through the greatest gift, the gift of life. You will also meet two alumna sisters living our Founders’ twin ideals of the brotherhood of man and the alleviation of the world’s pain.

Next time you take a moment to reflect upon your life, I hope you will consider reconnecting with Phi Sigma Sigma. Reconnecting may mean getting in touch with a sister you haven’t heard from,

Our amazing impact at the 2006 U.S. Transplant Games

“What exactly is ‘Phi Sigma Sigma’ and what are you doing here?”

That was the No. 1 question Phi Sig sisters volunteering at the National Kidney Foundation’s 2006 U.S. Transplant Games heard from thousands of curious athletes, their families and others at this life-affirming, life-changing event based in Louisville, Ky.

For two days in June, Phi Sig sisters canvassed the city and the Games’ sporting events, sharing news of our chosen philanthropy with everyone they met and demonstrating our strong commitment to promoting kidney wellness and organ donor awareness.

People who’d never heard of our work before were deeply moved by our support – and felt

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attending a Phi Sig event, helping to plan an event, or sharing your special expertise or skill in one of our committees. Your support, no matter the amount of time or talent you have to give, means so much to us and to those we serve. Please contact us through our Headquarters, our Web site, or by emailing us at foundation@phisigmasigma.org.

Best wishes to you and your family.

Warmly,

Kim Hildred

2006 Transplant Games cont . . .

triumph with us. Here are two we'll never forget:

Fred's story: "Rob Gates is my hero."

To see middle-aged Fred Girscht, of Salem, Ohio, laughing and joking with the sisters of Phi Sigma Sigma, you'd never believe he was once so ill from kidney disease he expected to die. He'd been a diabetic since 1980. Nearly eight years later, his body took a turn for the worse, and he was forced to undergo dialysis. Growing sicker by the day, his only hope was to get a kidney transplant, and fast. But there were no guarantees.

Fred and his family finally received word that a donor had been found, but the news was also difficult to hear: The donor was Rob Gates, a 24-year-old man who'd been in a terrible car accident. He was not expected to live.

Since the day in 2001 that Rob's parents agreed to donate his kidney and pancreas to Fred, he has shouted one message to the world – on T-shirts, during the Games, and to anyone nearby: "Rob Gates is my hero!"

Today, Fred remains close to Rob's parents and, together at the Games, they honored Rob and the miracle of organ transplantation.

Aubrey's story: "Why I'm proud to be a Phi Sig."

For Aubrey Birden, a Phi Sigma Sigma sister from the Iota Epsilon Chapter (Indiana University-Kokomo), the Games had special meaning. At the age of 6, Aubrey nearly died after a rare disease caused massive kidney failure. Her dad donated his kidney, saving her life. It's a story she told



Aubrey with Larry Hagman

again and again as a volunteer at the Transplant Games this year.

"I wish that all of my sisters could be here!" she said. "If you could only imagine how incredible it is to watch these living, wonderful people who survived just like me as they compete and have a good time!"

Aubrey hopes to be a competitor in the next Games, scheduled for 2008. Meanwhile, she celebrates the work of Phi Sigma Sigma. "I joined mainly because our volunteer efforts benefit the National Kidney Foundation. I was so happy that this organization did something that is so close to my life!"

Our sister, her father's hero

Though the Transplant Games gave many of us the chance to relate personally to our philanthropic efforts promoting kidney health, some of our alumnae – including Susan Mazzuco of the University of Delaware – know its importance firsthand.

When Susan's father went into a diabetic shock last year, she had no idea that his fight against kidney disease would soon become her own. Shortly after he fell ill, he suffered a heart attack and required quadruple bypass surgery. At the time, his kidneys were functioning at 20 percent of their normal capacity. In May he started dialysis, and in July the search was on for a kidney-transplant donor.

As with many transplant patients, Susan's father had two options: receiving a kidney from a living donor (such as a family member, spouse or friend) or from an unrelated, non-living donor. Transplants with living donors have several advantages:

- When living-donor transplants involve family members who are genetically similar, there's often less risk of rejection.
- A kidney from a living donor usually functions immediately, improving chances of a successful transplantation. Some non-living donor kidneys do not function immediately and, as a result, the patient may initially require dialysis.
- Potential donors can be tested ahead of time to find the person who is most compatible with the recipient. Also, the transplant can take place at a time convenient for both donor and recipient.

When presented with the options, Susan didn't hesitate to act. Once she learned that she was a "match," she immediately volunteered to donate her kidney to her father. After a two-month recovery period, Susan was back to work and healthy as ever. Her father is doing well, and his quality of life has improved because of Susan's generous donation.

Since the operation, Susan has become an even stronger advocate of the National Kidney Foundation. She has a friend whose mother has been on the transplant list for five years, but hasn't yet found a donor. Susan is thankful that she was able to help her father, but realizes that more research is necessary to help find a cure for kidney disease without surgery. The support that Phi Sigma Sigma offers to the National Kidney Foundation may one day help to find a cure for the many people waiting on the transplant list.



Foundation launches a blog! Check it out!

The Foundation sponsored its first blog ever in June 2006 to chronicle our experiences at the National Kidney Foundation Transplant Games (see related article). A blog provides an online forum to post messages of congratulations, share ideas, and share resources from the Foundation. Not only does the blog allow the Foundation to post information, but it allows you, and all those who visit the blog, to post comments and share information back with us.

Because of that blog's resounding success, the Foundation launched a permanent blog in December. We hope that you will visit the blog frequently as new posts are being added all the time! To access the blog, visit us at www.phisigmastigma.org and click on "Foundation Blog" at the bottom of the homepage.



Michelle and a friend practice Phi Sigma Sigma values

Finding our twin ideals within herself

Michelle Werzinski, a Zeta Omicron alumna, is a sister who truly lives our twin ideals. As a collegian, Michelle was extremely active. She served as archon, member-at-large, Greek council representative and she chaired several committees. When she wrote to Foundation recently about a service trip she planned to make to Africa, we asked if she'd be willing to share her experiences upon her return. This was her message to us – and you:

“This summer I had the opportunity to live out our twin ideals in my everyday life. I went on a summer mission trip to South Africa. This wasn't the first time I've been there... or even the second or third for that matter. I grew up there as a missionary kid, and I have seen our twin ideals lived out in the adults around me for as long as I can remember. But this time was different – because this time I was the one striving to make a difference.”

“What I saw and experienced there was far too vast to explain in a few paragraphs, so I want to share this one thought with you: The children of South Africa have forever implanted themselves in my heart. Although the majority of the time I could not understand a word that came out of their mouths – or they, mine – I witnessed a contentment, a joy, a compassion and a willingness to give all they have to others in need, qualities often lacking in our world today.”

“So often in life we aspire to greatness: to be remembered for something amazing, to change the world significantly for those around us.... I aspire to change the world around me through the little things, which are often forgotten. We have an opportunity now to impact the generations to come, because this world of ours is getting smaller by the day. The legacies we leave behind might not get our names written in the history books, but who knows if one careless smile could change the life of someone you know forever?”

Annual Appeal

The annual appeal is the cornerstone – the heart – of the Phi Sigma Sigma Foundation's alumnae fundraising efforts.

As the name implies, it runs on an annual cycle, each year starting over at square one. Yet our goals are always the same. First and foremost, we want to educate our constituents – you, our alumnae and donors – on how we allocate your donations, assuring you that we honored our commitment to steward your gift wisely.

Not only is the annual appeal a valuable source of revenue, it is also a treasured connection with our Phi Sig alumnae. Through the annual appeal, we invite new donors to join the ranks of our annual fund supporters and encourage past donors to renew their support.

With the annual appeal, we are preparing the next generation of Phi Sigs to lead. Annual appeal donations support the Fraternity's leadership education program, ACHIEVE (Aspire, Challenge, Honor, Integrity, Engage, Value, Excellence). This value-based, innovative program helps prepare our collegians for bright futures. Values-based leadership is about ideas and values. It is about understanding the different and conflicting needs of members and energizing them to pursue a higher goal than they had thought possible. It distinguishes Phi Sig from its peers.


The annual appeal also supports educational grants that the Foundation awards yearly to its most deserving sisters. These grants can make the difference between a sister staying in school or being forced to drop out, the difference between staying active in her chapter or minimizing her involvement due to financial constraints.

By making a gift to the annual appeal, you are donating to a sister's future, you are providing opportunity, and you are sending a powerful message about your ideals and values.

By making a gift to the annual appeal, you join other Phi Sigma Sigma alumnae to ensure that we have the flexible funding needed to continue to create access to unique opportunities of learning, exploration, and discovery for our collegians.

The current annual appeal has arrived in your home. We thank you for entrusting your philanthropic dollars to the Foundation.

As we have learned over the past 93 years, a vibrant set of values provides the basis for forming and regenerating community. Donors to the Foundation's annual appeal put life into our values. Donors to the annual appeal give life to our mission – the advancement of womanhood through personal growth, intellectual development, and selfless giving.

We thank you for your support. 

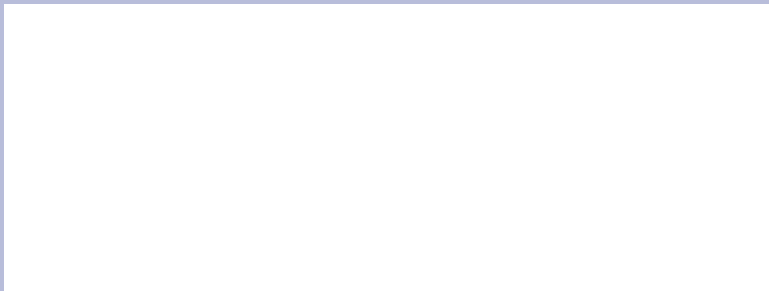


PHI SIGMA SIGMA FOUNDATION

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PHI SIGMA SIGMA FOUNDATION

Vision Statement

We strive to attain the highest commitment to the advancement of womanhood through personal and intellectual development and dedication to selfless giving.

Mission Statement

The Phi Sigma Sigma Foundation provides funds for the educational and philanthropic pursuits of the Fraternity and encourages our members to value charitable endeavors.

**Kim Hildred, President, Past Grand Archon,
Gamma Epsilon '78**

**Candace Hogan, Vice President, Acting Director of Special
Events, Gamma Nu '86**

Aggie Malter, Secretary, Gamma Xi '80

Norma M. Castillo, Treasurer, Beta Theta '86

**Elizabeth M. Rodriguez, Director of Administration,
Beta Theta '85**

Heather J. Kelley, Director of Marketing, Beta Psi '97

Nancy Hay, Director of Programming, Beta Rho '76

Judith Distler, Director, Past Grand Archon, Zeta '68

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