



**ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA TO CELEBRATE CENTENNIAL IN 2008
AT BIRTH HOME OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY
Member Phylicia Rashad Among Guests Scheduled to Attend**

In January 2008, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. becomes the first African-American Sorority to reach its 100-year milestone. In commemoration, from January 12-15, thousands of members will make a solemn pilgrimage to their founding home of Howard University. There, in a series of joyous and solemn tributes, they will salute Alpha chapter on its Centennial and reflect on the journey that took them from nine founding members of Alpha Chapter in 1908 on one campus of Howard University, to 200,000 members in 975 chapters worldwide.

Led by international president Barbara A. McKinzie, members will walk hallowed ground and engage in a series of sentimental rites of passage. They will also pay tribute to the foremothers whose brilliant vision gave life to Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. They include Ethel Hedgeman Lyle, Anna Easter Brown, Beulah Burke, Lillie Burke, Marjorie Hill, Margaret Flagg Holmes, Lavinia Norman, Lucy Slowe and Marie Woolfolk Taylor.

In reflecting on Alpha Kappa Alpha's remarkable 100-year odyssey and the host of commemorative events being mounted by the Sorority in 2008, McKinzie declared, "The prevailing message of this celebration is that Alpha Chapter members continue to accomplish the goals established by the founding members and continue to live up to the Sorority's credo: 'to provide service to all mankind.' It is a foundation of service that has withstood the test of time because our founding mothers had a profound vision of the impact African-American women could achieve through the vessel of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority."

McKinzie said that the Sorority has endured because it was built on a bedrock of strength. "The conviction of our founders to create an organization dedicated to service has enabled Alpha Kappa Alpha to thrive through ten decades. In this 100-year span of time, we have rendered an invaluable service to the worldwide community. During this Centennial year of tributes, we will salute, honor and revere our members who brought us this far by faith. We will also look ahead to the future as we continue the legacy of service."

This nostalgic pilgrimage home to Alpha Chapter will feature **A Walk Through History** where members will follow the same sacred paths as the founders. In what is being hailed as an "emotional visit," members will also rededicate themselves to the powerful concept of service that represents the Sorority's core mission. Among those who will return to their roots are five former international presidents, along with high-profile members like: actress Phylicia Rashad; the Honorable Peggy Quince, Florida Supreme Court Justice; and 102-year-old Mrs. Hazel Hainsworth Young, a retired educator from the Houston public schools and one of the Sorority's most senior members.

The campus will be bedecked with Historical Markers that will chronicle pink-and-green-letter-dates in Alpha Kappa Alpha's history. In an act of remembrance, members will re-enact the ceremonial process that led to the birth of Alpha chapter and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

As the historic birthplace, AKA history is embedded in the fabric of Howard University. Because of this, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, the official home for Alpha Kappa Alpha's archival records, will add a Centennial exhibit to its vast Alpha Kappa Alpha collection.

The Centennial birthday celebration will feature the launch of the Sorority's official publication, *Ivy Leaf*, in digital form. Taking the magazine to a new technological level represents a milestone in Alpha Kappa Alpha's long and impressive history.

And, in keeping with the Sorority's credo "to provide service to all mankind," members will participate in a series of projects where they will outreach to seniors, cancer patients and respond to the needs of the community. A climactic high point of the weekend will be the dedication of a library. Sorority members will donate books to the library and solicit donations of reading material from area bookstores.

The weekend is being driven by the theme, **Extra Special Preservation**, which embraces President McKinzie's **ESP** programmatic theme. Heading the Centennial Birthday Celebration Committee, which is overseeing the celebratory festivities, is Faye Bryant, Alpha Kappa Alpha's 21st international president and former Alpha Chapter member.

McKinzie said the Alpha Birthday Celebration is the first of two major celebrations to take place during its Centennial year. She announced that more than 20,000 members will converge upon Washington, D.C. for its Centennial International Conference from July 12-18. At that time, more tributes and commemorations will take place. At the same time, the Sorority will engage in a weeklong series of meetings, plenaries and "conversations" about how to deal with today's pressing issues while charting a course for the Sorority as it enters its second millennium. The public will be invited to some of the events.

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Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is America's first Greek-letter organization founded in 1908 by, and for, African-American college women. Headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, it is one of the world's leading service organizations. The Sorority's members have made a commitment "to serve all mankind" through a nucleus of more than 200,000 women in over 975 chapters in the United States, the Caribbean, Canada, Germany, Korea, Japan and in the continent of Africa. Barbara A. McKinzie is the 27th International President. Because her term coincides with the 100-year anniversary, she is being hailed as the "Centennial National President." McKinzie's administration is marked by the theme: ESP, which stands for Economics, Service and Partnerships. For more information, log on to www.aka1908.com.