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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA MOURNS THE LOSS OF DR. DOROTHY HEIGHT

“Heartbroken.”

That is the word that captures the overwhelming feeling of grief that Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is feeling upon learning of the death of Dr. Dorothy Height.

Speaking on behalf of the organization's 250,000 members worldwide, AKA's international president Barbara A. McKinzie hailed Height for her service as president of the National Council of Negro Women, where she championed the rights of black women and advanced their agenda for change. In viewing her life's mission, McKinzie described Height as an authentic hero who devoted her entire life to promoting civil rights, human rights and women's rights.

McKinzie noted that from her earliest days as a teenager, Dorothy Height was speaking out against injustice. This lifelong passion elevated her to iconic status as she continued her crusade by speaking out against racism, speaking up for equality and outreaching to the highest level of government to achieve parity for African Americans and black women.

The international president noted that Height was inspired by Frederick Douglass' charge that change comes as a result of "agitating." Taking that word as a call to action, Height adopted the word "agitate" as her style of leadership. It was a style that effected change, achieved results and catapulted her onto the world stage as a heroine. Her numerous awards—including the Presidential Medal of Freedom awarded to her by President Bill Clinton—were testimonies to the power she wielded, the successes she achieved and the international reverence she enjoyed.

Recalled McKinzie, "She was a valiant and vibrant leader who was unrelenting in decrying injustice and urging that wrongs are righted. It was her lifelong mission." For that reason, McKinzie pointed to Height as her "role model whose example served as a source of strength to all who gained by her grit and fight."

"Her courage inspired admiration, love and respect. Most of all, she moved those on the sidelines to join her in the fight!"

McKinzie recalled that Dr. Height was on the podium when Black Greek-lettered organizations marched to the Capitol in 2008 during Alpha Kappa Alpha's Centennial Celebration. She recalled how Height used that occasion to urge the crowd to continue the fight for justice. The international president added that she is part of the Ford Motor Company Fund, National Committee of Honor, that pays tribute to Dr. Height as one of the Freedom's Sisters Legends in an exhibit that is touring the country.

She extended condolences to the National Council of Negro Women, to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, over which she served as president; and to the millions who benefited from her lifelong mission to make the world a better place—for all.

She asked that members of the Sorority pause in prayer today to mourn the loss of a true giant whose record of achievement through agitation will serve as her legacy.

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