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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SALUTES WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

Chicago, Illinois – March 6, 2008 - Alpha Kappa Alpha’s international president, Barbara A. McKinzie, urged the Sorority’s 200,000 members to celebrate women during March, which is designated as Women’s History Month. She issued the call to members—and everyone—to participate in events praising women and to reflect on their greatness while the spotlight is focused on women this month.

Declared McKinzie, “Since 1908, when Alpha Kappa Alpha was founded, its members have made an impact during the Suffragette movement, during the civil rights era and throughout history. Alpha Kappa Alpha women have been in the forefront of effecting change as trailblazers, champions and history makers.”

She observed that Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is the oldest and largest sorority of college-educated predominately African-American women and noted that AKAs have played a major role in shaping history through their advocacy, example and achievements. She observed that AKAs serve in the highest level of government, the legal profession, business, education, civil rights social services and athletics and have penetrated every industrial area.

She said that Alpha Kappa Alpha women have recorded many firsts in their 100-year history including:

- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf – president of Liberia and the first female to serve as head of an Africa nation;
- Phylicia Rashad – the first African-American woman to win a Best Actress Tony Award for a dramatic leading role;
- Dr. Mae Jemison – the first woman of color to be launched into space.

Other remarkable AKAs include the late Coretta Scott King; Peggy Quince, a member of the Florida Supreme Court; vocalist and musician Alicia Keys; actress Jada Pinkett Smith, U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee; poet Maya Angelou and many more.

She added that as the membership grew and expanded its presence and sphere of influence, the Sorority extended its presence and service reach globally. Today, she said, its members make a difference on every continent. She noted that long before it was popular, Alpha Kappa Alpha had sponsored schools in rural South Africa. Known as Ivy AKAdemies, the schools were constructed in the ‘90s, remain viable today and have helped bring hope to the continent.

McKinzie spoke with pride in stating that Alpha Kappa Alpha is celebrating its Centennial this year... a milestone that the Sorority is celebrating all year. She said it is on the strength of its illustrious "sisterhood" that the organization has flourished.

"Alpha Kappa Alpha members have been in the forefront of creating History since the beginning of time," said McKinzie. "During this month set aside to rejoice in our accomplishments, I urge everyone to join me in celebrating the triumphs, achievements and excellence of women."

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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 serves 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. The sorority launched its Centennial with a birthday celebration at its founding home – Howard University -- in January 2008; and continues with its Centennial Conference in July 2008 in Washington D.C., where more than 20,000 members are expected to converge to celebrate its 100-year milestone. Barbara A. McKinzie is the 27th International President and will be the leadership face during AKA's Centennial Celebration in 2008. 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.