

Newark (NJ) Alumni

December 14, 1947

The Newark (NJ) Alumni Chapter was chartered on December 14th, 1947 by twelve enterprising and distinguished men: Dr. Everett Simmons, Polemarch (Kappa, 1924); Albert Tillery, Vice Polemarch (Epsilon, 1929); William Maddex, Keeper of Records (Epsilon, 1930); Dr. William T. Harper, Keeper of Exchequer (Epsilon, 1935); W. Arthur Ricks, Historian (Alpha Gamma, 1932); Melvin Federicks, Strategus (Alpha Lambda, 1940); Dr. Clay Irving (Epsilon, 1932); Dr. Phillip Gear (Alpha Lambda, 1940); William Jackson (Beta, 1932); Dr. Harold Scott (Pi, 1923); Dr. Spurgeon Sparks, Jr. (Epsilon, 1933), and Dr. Eugene Sims (Alpha Delta, 1940).

The Newark Alumni Chapter was only one of forty-six alumni chapters established during the forties. Past Grand Polemarch Earl B. Dickerson summarized the ambivalence towards Blacks during his opening address of the 37th Grand Chapter Meeting held in August of 1947: *“America is not yet in a position to assume world leadership, and will not be until she has shown a will to master her own domestic problems.”*

Later that year, in November of 1947, the Fraternity’s most revered Founder, Elder Watson Diggs, passed away in his sleep. One month later, almost as a testimony to the determination of Brother Diggs, the brothers of Newark, New Jersey, banded together to promote the interest of the Fraternity. It is to these men that the members of the Newark Alumni Chapter dedicate their efforts.

As the oldest Kappa chapter in New Jersey, and the fourth oldest alumni chapter in the Northeastern Province of **Kappa Alpha Psi**, the Newark Alumni Chapter has hosted the Northeastern Province Council Meeting in 1962, 1973, 1986, and 2001. The chapter’s relationship with the Northeastern Province has been exemplary. The members have relished the occasions when they have been honored with the privilege of hosting Province Council meetings. In addition to adhering to the Fraternity’s fundamental purpose of Achievement, along with the chapter’s embracing of the core elements of the Fraternity’s foundation — Guide Right and scholarship — the Newark Alumni Chapter has sponsored youth athletics, clothing and food drives, voter registration drives, Black Heritage Day parades, and other community service activities. The Chapter promotes progress and the public welfare by encouraging its members to become concerned and involved in the affairs of their community. Members of the Newark Alumni Chapter were instrumental in the establishment of the Montclair Alumni and Iota Epsilon Chapters (Montclair State University), both in Montclair, New Jersey.

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During the last weekend in March 1980, as they celebrated their annual Kappa Weekend, the chapter was honored with the presence of Founder Edward Giles Irvin. Brother Irvin inspired and motivated the entire chapter as he reminded them of their commitment to the Fraternity, the community and to themselves. Also in attendance at the event was Past Province Polemarch, the late James M. Kidd. In 1985, the chapter celebrated its Diamond Jubilee Founders' Day Banquet, featuring Past Grand Polemarch Hilary H. Holloway and Brother Jonathan Hicks, past Editor of the *Kappa Alpha Psi Journal*. In 1991, the chapter's Founders' Day Banquet was again honored with the presence of Laurel Wreath Awardee, the late Dr. Samuel Proctor, as the keynote speaker. On December 20, 1997, the chapter celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a gala black tie affair at the Westwood Manor in Garwood, NJ. The audience was thrilled to be addressed by one of the chapter's charter members, Dr. William T. Harper.

It is always difficult to speak of your brother in the past tense, so when the subject of the "Chapter Invisible" is broached, brothers are often removed to a reluctantly somber disposition. The Chapter Invisible is the final destination of all Kappas upon their departure from this Earth. The Newark Alumni has not been spared its share of painful losses, and with each one, another bright Diamond goes dim. However, while we mourn our losses, we celebrate that our dear brothers are in a better place. Over the years, brothers have expressed, and have received expressions of sympathy and love in many forms, but one occasion will remain in the chapter's memory. Upon the death of Brother Wilcox H. Brandon, the chapter presented his widow, Mrs. Gladys Brandon, with Brother Brandon's Life Membership Pin, plaque and identification card. Mrs. Brandon was overwhelmed with emotion and gratitude. Her letter of thanks remains in our Archives to this day, and the chapter established the Wilcox H. Brandon Scholarship Fund at the J. F. Kennedy High School in Patterson, New Jersey.

The cornerstone of the Fraternity's service program is the National Guide Right Program and Kappa Leadership League. That program currently consists of students from Newark's Malcolm X Shabazz High School. The program ensures that the principles of leadership, discipline, etiquette, scholarship, sportsmanship and ethics are always the focus. The Newark Alumni Chapter has always "been there" for the youth of our community. With the chapter's guidance, the Kappa Leaguers have established an annual Thanksgiving Food and Clothing Drive during which the young men donate turkeys to homeless shelters each year. The Kappa Leaguers participate in an annual scholarship competition. During the past five years, the chapter has awarded more than \$7,000 in scholarship awards. At the 70th Northeastern Province Council Meeting in Hartford, CT, Mr. Garry Dennis, the President of the Newark Kappa League, was named the Outstanding Kappa Leaguer of the Year. In 1986, the chapter's Guide Right program has been featured in the *Newark Star-Ledger* newspaper for its outstanding Career Day program at West Side High School.

Realizing that the success of any task depends entirely on teamwork and cooperation, the chapter recognizes the tireless contributions of their wives, sweethearts and families to the success of many of their community and social action programs. In October 2000, chapter members were instrumental in the establishment of the Newark-Montclair Silhouettes

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of **Kappa Alpha Psi**. The charter members are Mrs. Valerie Pierce, Mrs. Shirley Fitzhugh, Mrs. Candis Stanley, Mrs. JoAnn Trotman, Mrs. Linda Bullock, Mrs. Diane Sutton, Mrs. Juanita Providence and Mrs. Linda Green.

The fundamental purpose of **KappaAlpha Psi** is Achievement—in every field of human endeavor. The brothers of the Newark Alumni Chapter have never let this goal waiver. The chapter has been the home of the Director of the New York City Area Small Business Administration (Woodie Williams, 1975); President, National Dental Association (James Lassiter, 1979); the current Northeastern Province Life Membership Pin was designed by Brother Nathaniel Crartie (commissioned 1998); Horatius Greene was appointed to the Hudson County Ethics Committee by the New Jersey Supreme Court (1985) and Chief Judge of the Municipal Court for the City of Orange, New Jersey (2001); Bert Newton was appointed to the Electronics Advisory Council by the Morris County Board of Education (1987); Willis Edwards III was appointed as Housing Commissioner, City of Orange, New Jersey. Over the years, the Newark Alumni Chapter has earned the following awards: The NAACP Chapter Life Member Award (1973); Northeastern Province Chapter of the Year (1986); Northeastern Province Medium Chapter Reclamation Award (1995); Northeastern Province Guide Right Kappa Leaguer of the Year, and the Northeastern Province Guide Right Director of the Year (2001). The following chapter members have served the Province in the following capacities: Province Parliamentarian and General Counsel (Horatius Greene); Chairman of the Province Nominations Committee (Albert Harris); Province Board of Directors (William Evers, Roscoe Trotman, Grayson Hampton).



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