**State of Florida**

**22nd Annual Delta Days and the Capital**

***“Our Legacy…Stand, Vote, Change”***

**Tallahassee Florida ~ January 24-26, 2016**

**Delegate Report**

**Tampa/Clearwater Delegation:** Dr. Leslie Brown (President, Tampa Alumnae); Audrey Sullivan-Moore (Social Action Co-Chair, Tampa Alumnae); Sandra Fletcher (Member, Tampa Alumnae); Ann Bush (Member, Tampa Alumnae); Angelica Alexander (President, Tampa Metropolitan Alumnae); Deborah Ford (Social Action Chair, Clearwater Alumnae)

Other Attendees: Dr. Paulette C. Walker, National President, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and Heddie Sumpter, Social Action Chair, Tampa Alumnae

**Legislative Visits:**

* ***Representative Richard Corcoran*** (Dist. 37/Pasco): Appropriations Chair and Alt. Chair Joint Legislative Budget Commission (Funding)
* ***Representative Chris Latvala*** (Dist. 67/Clearwater/Pinellas): Criminal Justice and Education committees
* ***Senator John Legg*** (Dist. 17/Hillsborough/Pasco): Chair Education PreK-12, Fiscal Policy
* ***Representative Ritch Workman*** (Dist. 52/Melbourne): Chair Rules, Calendar & Ethics Committee (was refusing to allow our resolution to be read in the House of Representatives. Special thank you to Rep. Ed Narain, Senator Joyner and Senator Gibson for assisting Rep. Clarke –Reed in this endeavor)

**Primary issues addressed during legislative visits:**

* **Education**
1. Support continued budget support for our Historically Black Colleges and Universities
2. Oppose School Choice due to concerns that splintering of school districts may cause a return to segregation. This also leads to unbalanced allocations of resources with rich areas getting more and depressed areas getting less.

(HB 7029)

* **Healthcare**
1. Support for the continuation of the Affordable Healthcare Act
2. Support for Medicaid expansion (HB 819/SB994)
3. Support recurring funding for American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Mary Brogan Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program and three other legislative priorities
4. Support prohibition of balanced billing (HB 221)
5. Support Breast Cancer Lottery (HB 1189)
* **Criminal Justice**
1. Support body cameras for Law Enforcement (HB 93/SB418)
2. Support Investigations of lethal force by law enforcement (HB 933/SB810)
* **Economic Survival**
	+ 1. Support Renters Insurance (HB 237/SB 342)
		2. Support Specialty License Plates for NPHC (for DST funds go to DREF) ( HB 1349/SB1008)
		3. Support prohibition of Assignment of Benefits (oppose increasing premiums for Home Owners Insurance due to increase in claims)
* **Political Awareness and Involvement**
	+ 1. Support Provisional Ballots (give additional to cure all signatures; make every effort to allow for votes to be counted) (HB 369/SB 532)
		2. Watch for upcoming legislation to address: online voter registration (in law – ready for implementation); voter registration for military (streamlined process)

**Interesting Points to Remember:**

* “Early voting” has the best impact for Democrats while “day of voting” is typically favored for Republicans
* Absentee Ballots are very important and returns need to be encouraged
* Social media, news outlets, money and in person visits influence our legislatures the most

**Current Florida Concerns to be monitored:**

* Concealed Weapons legislation (open carry law under consideration)
* Governor seeking permanent tax cuts (will impact roads, public safety, infrastructure and health care. He wants a manufacturing tax and to get rid of corporate tax with the money going to Enterprise Florida)
* Amendment 1 was signed into law (must monitor or could see a Flint type situation)
* Restoration of civil rights (including voting) for ex-offenders that have completed their legal consequences
* National Federal Flood Ins. Program is bankrupt…currently seeking carriers to underwrite flood insurance
* Push for more carriers to provide coverage for sinkholes
* Life insurance policies without identified benefactors are being held by life insurance companies when someone dies. They keep the premiums and collect interest. State is proposing a bill that would have the unclaimed policies going to the states unclaimed property division so the state can collect interest. (Why not search and give funds to closest living relative or estate?)

**Committee Meetings/Workshops Attended:**

Transportation Committee Meeting (discussion of oversight of waterways and discussion of NPHC license plate)

Education Committee Meeting (discussion to reinstate recess in schools)

DDAC 101: Legislative Briefing

Workshop 1: Running for Political Office (Topics: Build Your Brand, Maintaining Sincerity, Getting Endorsements, Lessons Learned, Dealing with Negativity)

Workshop 2: Voter Registration/Education (register chapter as 3rd party

**The Honorable Carrie P. Meek Servant Leadership Social Action Breakfast Awards**

* **The Spirit Award –** Ms. Nadine Smith, Executive Director, Equality Florida (Nominated by Tallahassee Alumnae)
* **The Mercerdese R. Clark Trailblazer Award –** Soror Joann Manning (Jacksonville Alumnae)
* **Trendsetter Award – Soror Dorothy M. Russ, Jacksonville Alumnae** (Former Kappa Iota)
* **The Legislator of the Year Award –** Representative Gwyndolen “Gwyn” Clarke-Reed
* **The Honorable Carrie P. Meek Servant Leadership Social Action Award - The Honorable Dorothy Bendross Mindingall, Miami Alumnae**
* **The Dr. Paulette C. Walker Social Action Award Alumnae – Miami Alumnae**
* The American Cancer Society Top Fundraiser Awards
* Relay for Life – Tallahassee Alumnae (raised in excess of $5000)
* Making Strides Against Breast Cancer – Tampa Alumnae (Tampa Deltas, Family, and Friends raised in excess of $3000)

**Legislative Reception: A Tribute to the Honorable Senator Arthenia L. Joyner for dedicated service and leadership.**

**Social Action Charges:**

* “Do More!! Take the issues back to our community and push our legislatures to advocate on our behalf.” (Soror Yazmeane Watson, Lambda Psi)
* “We are the change…never forget who we are or whose shoulders we stand on – Never forget the power of the Delta vote!” (Soror Valdez Demings, Retired Chief of Police, Orlando, FL)
* “We are a Delta of one. If we don’t do it now…who or when will it happen? Remember the 22…pull it together…We got to Go!!” (Soror Cheryl Turner, Regional Director)
* ““Remember Deltas actualize and mobilize…we do not socialize! Time to do what we need to do…embrace our legacy…time to do the work!” (Soror Paulette Walker, National President)

**Final words of wisdom from our National President:**

Emphasis is on ONE:

Will you be the one to make the difference in 2016?

Will you be the one to prove that Black Lives Matter?

 “We must leave our place of comfort and complacency…Now is the time and You be the One. Remember when you knelt on the Delta pillow and took the Delta Oath? You wanted the job, you asked for the job, now get off you’re a\*\*\* and do the work/job!”

Respectfully submitted,

Soror Leslie Brown, President

Soror Audrey Sullivan-Moore, Co-Chair Social Action