



**DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.**

**EFFECTIVE SOCIAL ACTION:  
TO BE SEEN AND HEARD**

**2009 REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

# AGENDA

- ⦿ Mission
- ⦿ Historical Perspective
- ⦿ How we Net-WORK
- ⦿ Goals and Objectives
- ⦿ Current Issues
- ⦿ THIS IS HOW WE DO IT...
  - Action Plan
  - Work tool
  - Commitment

# MISSION

- Political Awareness and Involvement
- Address issues that affect public policy, economic viability and social justice
- Promote leadership, advocacy, and empowerment among members to bring about effective solutions to challenges
- Establish positions on emerging or perennial public issues determines appropriate response, and direct the actions of members and chapters
- *“I will use my influence toward the enactment of laws for the protection of the unfortunate and weak and for the repeal of those depriving human beings of their privileges and rights.”*

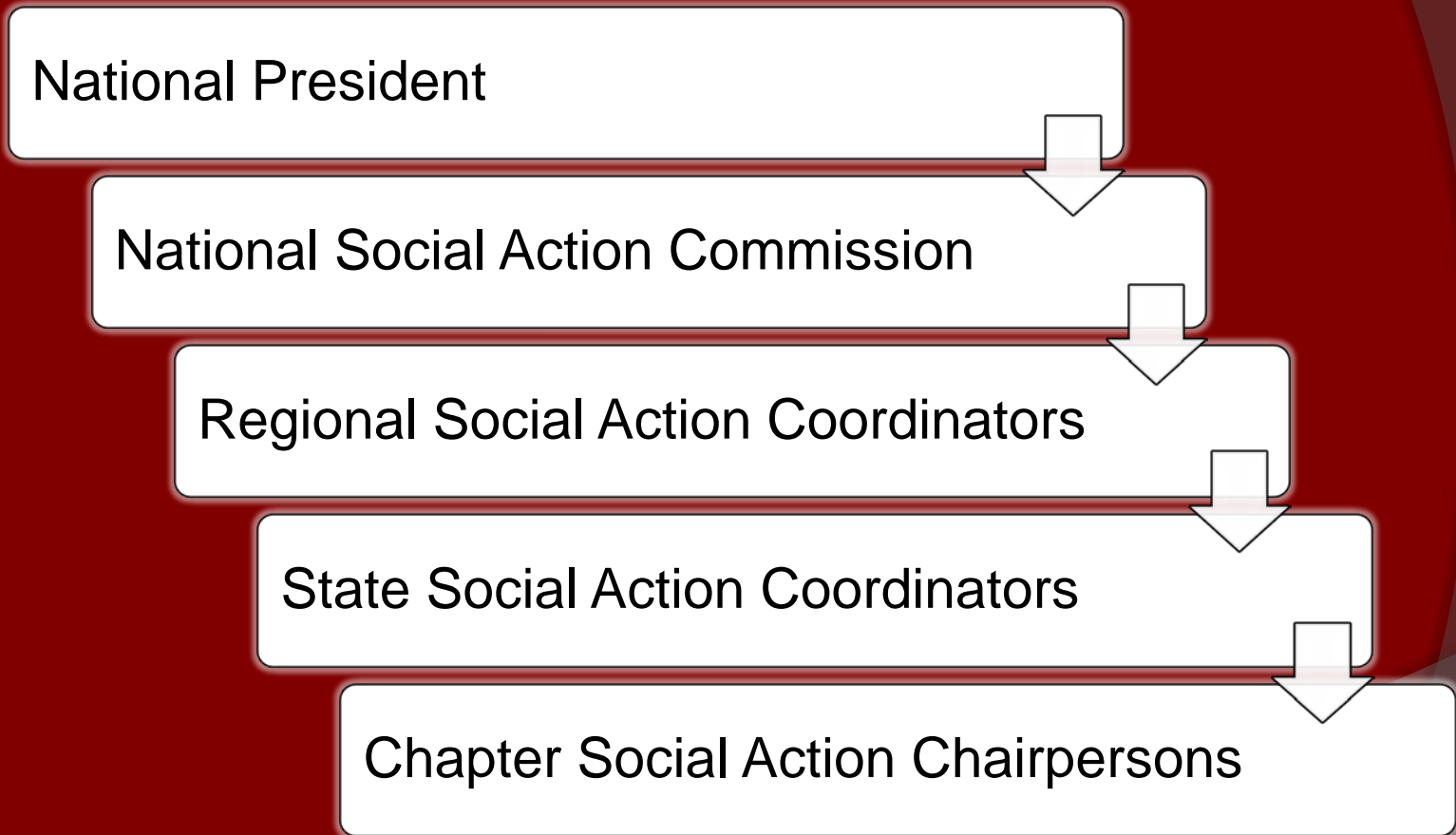
# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- January **1913**, Founders formed Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, envisioning her as a viable force in the movement for social change
- March 1913, Delta's first public act, participation in the Women's Suffrage March-- our commitment to social action was recognized in the *Washington Times*
- In **1917** the National Vigilance Committee was formed
- In the **1920s 30s and 40s Deltas** fought the backlash of racism and discrimination against Black Women. In tandem with other organizations , we advocated for Congress to end discrimination and segregation of the armed forces.

# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- **Late 1950's & early 1960's** targeted racism, sexism, discriminatory employment practices, unfair housing policies, and other social ills and actively participated in the Civil Rights Movement
- **August 1963** – Social Action Commission was established and advocated for the Voting Rights Act
- **March 1989** – First annual “**Delta Days in the Nation's Capital**”
- **August 1995** – Deltas participated in the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of women's suffrage march.
- **March 2003** – First annual “Delta Day at the United Nations”

# HOW WE Net-WORK



# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- **To develop the membership's appreciation of Delta's potential for influence in the community.**
- **To increase the membership's knowledge of current local and national issues, so that every Delta will be an informed and effective citizen, advocate, and voter.**
- **To encourage the membership's active participation as individuals in political activity.**
- **To influence the enactment of legislation, national and local, of particular interest to African-Americans and women.**

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- **To maintain vigilance over action or inaction by local judicial and administrative agencies and officials.**
- **To cultivate, in the membership, a person-to-person relationship with the community power structure.**
- **To join and volunteer leadership in civic and other social action organizations, including diverse groups.**
- **To encourage increased appointment and upgrading of African American women in policy-making**



# CURRENT ISSUES

- Census 2010
- Economy
- Jobs
- Justice and Equality
- Energy
- Affordable Housing
- Foreclosures
- Supreme Court
- Wars -- Iraq & Afghanistan
- Global Terrorism
- Global Warming
- Education – Pre K to Post Doc
- Foreign Policy
- Global Trade
- Health Care
- Immigration
- Violence Against Women

# CALL TO ORDER

- Greater work
- Greater service
- Greater social activism

# CALL TO ACTION

- Control our destiny
- Become a constant, vocal stakeholder in the issues that matter to us
- Speak Up and don't be tricked into inaction or apathy
- Institute ongoing, sustainable advocacy for local, state and national issues of significance to the communities we serve
- Make our voices heard --- continually, not just on "Delta Days"
- Make every day a "Delta Day" in the mind of the legislators

# This is how we do it...

## ➤ Voting & Census 2010

- Voter registration & voting
- Felony Disenfranchisement
- Poll Watchers
- Ensure 100% count in 2010

## ➤ Economic Survival

- Addressing the rising cost of basic needs – health care, housing
- Personal economic stability – a job at a living wage
- Creating & retaining wealth

# This is how we do it...

## ➤ Quality Education

- Support legislation and policies that are designed to increase African-American high school graduation rates & college enrollment/graduation rates -- with laser focus on the African American male
- Responsible citizenship training at the high school level
- Promote the teaching of grade appropriate African-American history at all levels

# This is how we do it...

- Eco-Friendly Environment
  - Uniform adaptation of eco-friendly laws & practices at local, state and federal levels
  - Be alert of environmental racism
  - Support eco-friendly practices & promote recycling

# This is how we do it...

- Keeping Our Connection to Africa
  - Continued support for Delta sponsored institutions – Mary Help of the Sick Mission Hospital; Group home for AIDS orphans in Swaziland; Adelaide Tambo School for the Physically Disabled; TREE Project
  - Speak up about the devastation in Darfur

# This is how we do it....

- Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) recognized by the United Nations
  - Promote the well-being & safety of women and girls
  - Identify other public policy & human rights issues to raise at the UN or with global governments
  - Utilize Delta Day at the UN for enlightenment and ideas to incorporate in our local social action initiatives



# This is how we do it...

## ○ *Regional and Local Issues*

- American Recovery & Investment Act Data for States in Region
- Critical Elections and Referendums for Localities & States in the Region



# This is how we do it...

- Ongoing initiatives that confront legislative & voter apathy, enhance voter issue awareness, and ultimately increases citizen participation in the governance process
- Engage **every** region, **every** State, **every** chapter, and **every** member, at **every** level of governance, on **every** issue of significance

# This is how we do it...

## *Taking on an issue*

- Clearly identify the issue
- Research issue for most reasonable resolution
- Construct action path to produce desired outcome
- Delineate scope of impact and decision level – city, county, state, national – clarity on real decision makers
- Create strategic timeline & central point for tracking against strategic plan and assessing action reports on assigned tasks
- Engage appropriate players – chapter, state or regional network and/or build coalitions with other groups with like interests

# This is how we do it...

## *Taking on an issue*

- Assign tasks to ensure each critical action is executed according to plan and timely with an action report
- Track and assess progress or lack thereof – create and deploy alternative strategy if original plan not producing desired results
- Maintain ongoing communications with execution team and all other key players
- Publicize your actions throughout the process – state what you are going to change and report on how you are doing along the way – build support for your position

# Keep it Going...

- Initiate annual city, state & Board of Education “Delta Days” with sustainable follow-up & ongoing contact
- Maintain ongoing dialogue with legislators and policy makers to interject DST’s perspectives in the formative discussions
- Make DST a viable factor in all policy formulation and decision-making processes
- Utilize Resolutions to publicize your objective
- Keep your seat at the table!

# Use Your Social Action Worktool

PDF download available @ [www.deltasigmamatheta.org](http://www.deltasigmamatheta.org)

- Organizing chapter committee
- Tracking legislation
- Writing legislative letters
- Addressing elected officials
- Preparing timely issue papers
- Listing of relevant websites
- Effective advocacy
- Preparing effective resolutions
- Planning a Delta Days conference
- Planning Delta Youth Days
- Building coalitions
- Voter education & registration

# KEEP IT GOING...

## *It's Our Oath*

- Every Member of DST committed to being alert and proactive on social action issues – check the DST website frequently along with your national & local media sources
- If a current event is developing that needs to be addressed and there is no communication or call to action from your chapter, state or regional social action coordinator then contact your Chapter President, Regional Director, or DST Headquarters --- and ask “Why no action by DST?”
- National Headquarters Contact: Candi Mundon, Public Policy Specialist, 202-986-2400; [cmundon@deltasigmamatheta.org](mailto:cmundon@deltasigmamatheta.org)

# QUESTIONS????