



# DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED

*A Service Sorority Founded in 1913*

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## **DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED JOINS THE CALL FOR CHANGE AT CNN**

WASHINGTON – Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated has a 106-year record of taking proactive measures that result in equity and dignity for the African-American community. Because the picture of a people as portrayed in the media is singular in setting the tone for the world’s view and value of those people, we stand with the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) in their call for CNN to make their newsroom reflective of America’s diverse population.

NABJ reports that their preliminary research finds a “lack of black representation within the ranks of CNN’s executive news managers and direct reports to CNN President Jeff Zucker,” and that CNN has not presented any evidence to the contrary.

As the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) stated when standing with the working journalists of NABJ, “It is vital that news organizations reflect the diversity of our country, which includes people of color, in key decision-making roles which are responsible for shaping news coverage and providing nuanced perspectives, especially around issues directly impacting Black America.”

NABJ states these specific concerns:

- CNN President Jeff Zucker has no Black direct reports.
- There are no Black executive producers at CNN.
- There are no Black vice presidents on the news side at CNN.
- There are no Black senior vice presidents on the news side at CNN.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated is pleased that NABJ is also moving forward to convene a special team for additional research and analysis of CNN’s diversity, inclusion and equity practices. The organization also reports they are “calling for a civil rights audit to examine the company’s hiring, promotion and compensation practices involving Black employees.” The Sorority supports these fact-finding efforts.

The largest organization of journalists of color in the nation, NABJ is expressing concern that they have not been able to meet with CNN leadership, even as they are in talks that they deem productive with the leaders of other broadcast media companies – FOX, CBS, NBC and ABC – about their diversity efforts.

“This would mean that CNN, a global leader in disseminating images of our community, stands alone in not sitting down at the table with NABJ,” said Beverly E. Smith, National President and CEO, “These journalists

are taking a stand to seek inclusion for Black media managers – and to have a role in shaping the images projected around the world of our people and our nation - and we support them.”

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated therefore stands with NABJ and calls upon CNN to take the necessary steps to enter dialogue and to increase the diversity in executive news leadership. NABJ notes that “National organizations representing millions of voices of color, including the NAACP, NNPA, Color of Change and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., have joined NABJ’s call for more diversity at CNN,” and Delta proudly adds her voice to this call to action.

Twenty-five years ago, the Sorority passed a resolution calling for the inclusion of Black voices in newsrooms, advocating for “public access to the media and increasing the number of minority women at every level in the field of communications including programming and policy-making positions.” While it is difficult to believe we stand today making this same demand, we note with pride of purpose that we are joined by millions of supportive voices and that we are not deterred. We call upon the media to hear our combined message of concern.

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### **ABOUT DELTA SIGMA THETA**

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated was founded in 1913 on the campus of Howard University to promote academic excellence; to provide scholarships; to provide support to the underserved; educate and stimulate participation in the establishment of positive public policy; and to highlight issues and provide solutions for problems in their communities. Today Delta Sigma Theta Sorority has over 300,000 initiated members and more than 900 chapters worldwide. The Sorority uses its Five-Point Programmatic Thrust of economic development, educational development, international awareness and involvement, physical and mental health, and political awareness and involvement to create its national programs.

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