

Alicia Hughes

October 14, 2025

Soror Shenitra Austin
President, Gamma Psi Chapter
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®
Texas Southern University
3100 Cleburne Street -- TSU Box 1908
Houston, TX 77004

RE: *Alumnae Committee Brunch/Activities to Support Endowment and Commemorate 75 Years*

VIA Electronic Mail -- shenitraaustin@gmail.com

Dear Soror Shenitra:

I hope this letter finds you well and in good spirits. An attempt was made to send it to the Gamma Psi Basileus, a position I held while in college, Gamma Psi Graduate Advisor, and Alpha Kappa Omega Basileus on Friday, October 10, 2025. Though the letter has been received by President Fullmighter and Graduate Advisor Anderson, I mistakenly sent it to Soror Kennedy instead of you. I thank Soror Chantel McKinney for noting my error, which enables me to get this letter I sent before to a Gamma Psi past president. First and foremost, thank you so much for all of your efforts to ensure Gamma Psi has a remarkable 75-year celebration. Your efforts are not lost on me, and I fervently believe we all have a common goal in mind: the best interest of Gamma Psi, and in perpetuity. I had the privilege of a conversation last week with South Central Regional Director Shawn Simmons. I shared some thoughts and concerns with her and with her blessing, I am sending this communication to you all regarding alumnae committee events to complement Gamma Psi Chapter planning for our Diamond Anniversary and to fundraise for our new chapter endowment. I (Spring '94) will chair the alumnae committee, and Soror Regina Carrington (Spring '73), Miss TSU '74, former Gamma Psi Graduate Advisor and former Alpha Kappa Omega Basileus, has agreed to co-chair the alumnae committee. We will not interfere with, but we will wholeheartedly support chapter activities through our attendance.

Our objective is not, and has never been, to compete with, but rather to complement and bolster all current Gamma Psi efforts to be the absolute best undergraduate chapter in our region, in our sorority. Truly, we are all one family, and as goes the conversation with my line sisters from time to time, like birth sisters, we do not always see eye to eye. However, when it is important, in love, we come together for a good greater than the sum of our parts. As I have noted before, Gamma Psi is my home and therefore, part of my heart. I graduated college almost 30 years ago and know sorors who graduated over 50 years ago all over this country. These sorors share my love and interest, and similarly, prioritize legacy. You don't see us a lot, but you must know people who share our roots are in the world doing a lot with Gamma Psi pride in their hearts and wanting to help young sorors. My start to a storied career was born when I was made in 1994. I know that sorors want to commune, sorors want to reminisce and want to give, and sorors want to help, to feel like a part connected to the core. The current chapter is the core, and we look forward to the dinner presentation put on by our current chapter sisters at the gala and we look forward to the opportunity to learn about them, their goals, so that if possible, we help in the achievement of those goals. We help each other. There is a way for alumnae sorors to help, convene, and commune that does not create chapter or sorority liability while making the current Gamma Psi Chapter and its leadership look better than it already does, which is hard given all the recognitions you have amassed. We will be hosting a brunch to raise money for

you that you can take credit for ... and we want you to. We cheer from all around the country when home wins, and we want you to have more wins, more visibility, more credit. Nothing would make our hearts prouder than to arrive at Boule to the announcement of the Gamma Psi Endowment as part of the Educational Advancement Foundation fully functional at \$25,000 but candidly, with a hope for \$75,000 by November 14, 2026 to mark \$1,000 for every year we have existed under current chapter and regional leadership. For my heart, this is a real expression of love. Working together, we can do this. Can we get on the same page?

In speaking with Madam Regional Director Simmons, I discussed a minimal targeted raise of \$5,000, the seed requirement to put us on the map at corporate for an endowment, our anniversary weekend organized through/around an alumnae committee brunch. She believes it is an excellent idea that has her support. If she can return from a cluster meeting in time, she will be in attendance. There are alumnae sorors on the ready to make brunch a reality with family and friends on Sunday, November 16, 2025, to close out what we are sure will be a beautiful weekend celebrating Gamma Psi glory and brilliance. Soror Bianca, we would love for you to lend your name to the host committee in a show of solidarity uniting graduate and undergraduate sorors. Soror Shenitra, we would love for you to bring greetings and be on hand to accept the "check" denoting what has been raised for the endowment as the current Gamma Psi Basileus. You are welcome to be an honorary member of the host committee and/or to designate a chapter member or two as honorary members to work with us. Please advise by Tuesday, October 14, 2025.

Sorors Bianca and Staci, as a lifelong educator at every level in the secondary to graduate level education spectrum, I agree with you that teaching and learning by doing are important, and I admire many aspects of how you are working with our undergraduate sorors. I believe in a combination of modeling, shadowing, and guided learning. It is how I was taught, and I started meaningfully raising in 1999, moving to a level where I was responsible for adding to a \$5,000,000 endowment whose principal funded a center in higher education. I know that foundation-level and advancement raising can make for lucrative careers. If you want an undergraduate or few to shadow how we move to reach fundraising goals, you are welcome to put them in touch to work with us, although the brunch initiative will not be current Gamma Psi Chapter-led. Getting to \$75,000 or even \$25,000 is not a one-event pony. While we have a short turnaround here, I hope and trust the chapter will lead other endeavors to get us across the finish line, which would make some engagement with how we raise a meaningful experience for members of the current Gamma Psi Chapter. None of us can do everything, but we can all do something. Below in italics is language that will inoculate the chapter while extending alumnae support:

The Pretty in Pink at 75 Alumnae Committee is composed of Texas Southern University alumnae initiated as members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® (from the 1950s through the present time) while undergraduate students in Texas's most long-standing chapter of uninterrupted service: celebrating 75 years. Pretty in Pink at 75 Alumnae Committee activities are neither sponsored by nor officially sanctioned by the Gamma Psi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® or Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® However, all revenue (income minus expenses) generated by Pretty in Pink at 75 Alumnae Committee activities, including the Farewell Jazz Brunch Benefit, will go directly to seeding a Gamma Psi-specific endowment through the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® Educational Advancement Foundation Endowment to benefit Texas Southern University sorority initiates while in undergraduate school, permanently memorializing and honoring 75 years of exemplary service, leadership, strong character, and high scholastic "Excellence in Achievement" in the Houston metropolitan area and beyond.

In close, while the focus of this letter is to advise of an alumnae committee effort to raise funds to benefit a chapter endowment, I hope and trust that there will be meaningful conversations around the legal structure

for determining award parameters and a committee for oversight at the local level. By way of background, we have always been trailblazers. In the 1990s, while under the leadership of Soror Regina Carrington as Gamma Psi Graduate Advisor and Soror Gwen Brinkley as Alpha Kappa Omega Basileus, Gamma Psi became the first undergraduate chapter to contribute \$1,000 to the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.'s ® Corporate Office Improvement Project ["COIP"]. I inherited that legacy as a neophyte Gamma Psi Basileus in 1994, with my line paying into that seed when we were made. The result is Gamma Psi is prominently noted as the first undergraduate chapter on the Ivy Wall of Fame at the international headquarters in Chicago for our contribution. While we may not be the first undergraduate chapter with an endowment, we can endeavor to have one of the largest endowments for an undergraduate chapter, and we should, under your leadership. Working together, we can. This is a legacy. This is forever. A \$100,000 endowment "nets" or provides income based on the investment return and spending policy of the endowment, typically yielding 3-7% per year, which would be \$3,000-\$7,000 annually. The objective here would be to get to a point where we could provide \$5,000 in scholarships annually to undergraduate sisters initiated at Gamma Psi in perpetuity. I look forward to us doing our small part for a win here.

Thank you, again, for everything you have done and are doing to give alumnae reasons to root on the home team and for creating memorable experiences at homecoming and for our official, black-tie gala celebrating 75 years of service next month. I hope to hear from you soon and extend

Warm regards,

Alicia R. Hughes

Soror Alicia R. Hughes

Gamma Psi Spring '94

Gamma Psi President '94-95

Texas Southern University Student Government Association President 1995

Miss Black USA 1999-2000

CC: Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® South Central Regional Director Shawn Simmons

Soror Regina Carrington

Soror Chantel McKinney