Black greeks set goals: stress all-round potential

By Robert Hunt
7 March, 1979

The black greek system encourages its members to achieve personal goals, serve the community and realize their potential, according to some presidents of black fraternities and sororities.

"The thing we stress is achievement—not just academic, but in all forms and fashions. Our members strive to attain some personal goal," said Philip Shotwell, president of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity.

Learlie Kay Allen, president of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, said being in the sorority helped her develop her personality. "I was always there, but I never developed it. Now I speak up."

Community service is a large part of black greek life according to the presidents. Shotwell said Kappa Alpha Psi has a tutoring program organized for Spring Quarter. Members of Kappa Alpha Psi will tutor elementary and secondary school students in reading and math. The fraternity is also involved with the Big Brothers program, Shotwell said.

Allen said Delta Sigma Theta has worked with Girl Scouts for the last three years. The sorority also sponsored the regional contest for Miss Black America held at Ohio State last year.

Sabrina Lucas, president of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, said her sorority has been doing a tutoring project with the North Central Mental Health Association teaching retarded people.

Rochelle Kelley, secretary of Zeta Phi Beta, said the sorority sponsors an annual fashion show in addition to service projects. None of the black fraternities or sororities have houses, but most said they do not miss them.

Allen said Delta Sigma Theta sorority is looking toward having a house in the future. She said the absence of a house is not detrimental to the sorority. Allen said the sorority meets regularly in the Ohio Union to conduct business.

"We've never had a house, so I don't know if it would be better or not," Lucas said.

The presidents said there is interest among some black greeks to participate somewhat with the white greek system, but blacks are satisfied that their own system meets their needs and is growing.

"It's not a racial thing but a cultural thing," said Shotwell.

Lucas said in the past, her sorority did not feel the white greek system had much to offer them. "But now I feel they have a lot to offer and we could be part of the whole system."

Zeta Phi Beta is the only black sorority in the Women's Panhellenic Association.
The OSU Black Greeks Account for Themselves

by Richard Payne

They are certainly the most controversial characters in the episode of Black progress on the OSU campus to date. They have shown in the past to be a dominate force in shaping the attitudes of Black students on the yard. They are the Black Greeks.

Just what are Black Greek about? Are they the party-going-bandits that some members of the observing public believe them to be? Or are they really the positive social organizations they profess to be?

Regardless of the rhetoric spread from both sides (for and against), the Black Greeks are a force to be reckoned with.

OCTN recently spoke with members of some of the Black Greek organizations and received the opinions from the members inside.

"What I would like to see is a lightening of the tensions," said Jackie Newett, member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. (Theta Chapter), and a senior from Cleveland.

"Basically—with reference to the non-Greeks—they feel distant from us."

Newett referred to the opinions by the non-Greeks that the Black sororities and fraternities at OSU are about nothing except partying and getting high.

"The parties and things that we give... we have to be very selective at what we do... we know what everyone wants and we do it."

Francine Mays, OSU graduate administrative associate, said "I would like to see them taking a more positive leadership role, not only on this campus, but in the community at large."

Mays is facilitator for the leadership workshops given for Black Greeks through the Office of Black Student Programs. She is also a charter member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. (Zeta Lambda Chapter, out of the University of Tennessee in Martin.)

In Mays opinion, some of the activities of Black Greeks at OSU need to be redefined by their members.

"There are people who are not about anything, but they profess to be," Mays said of members in any organization.

"Mays was disturbed by some Greek organizations that have participated in activities which are both degrading and demeaning. In a related occurrence, members of Omegà Phi Phi Fraternity Inc. mooned on the stage of Hitchcock Hall April 11. Several people in attendance saw the activity as both degrading and demeaning."

"Mays said she feels that the Greek organizations do offer a lot of positive things. She said that she does not know whether the rumors spread about them are true or not, but regardless, there has to be a redefinition of the purpose of Greek activities."

Paula Hairston, a junior from Columbus and member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, said she does not know if the Black Greeks portray a positive or negative image.

"Our chapter had not gotten reinstated until this Spring. I was looking for a group that was getting into service activities... Our chapter had completely died out."

-Conclusion-

The fading out and reinstatement of Sigma Gamma Rho Fraternity is simply a prelude of what Black Greek organizations may be facing. Starting all over again may not be easy, but it is a lesson to be learned.

Black Greeks are not the sole cause of the problems faced by Black students at OSU. However, unless they proceed in a positive and uplifting manner they will seem as a force working against Black progress toward equality. It is a task that they must do themselves.

The job of the public is to evaluate and monitor their activities. And if the conclusion is reached that Black Greeks are detrimental to the cause, then they will simple fade out from their own misconduct.
The Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Theta chapter, will be sponsoring its ninth annual Greek Sing and Step Show Friday at 6:30 p.m. at Hitchcock Hall.

The sorority invites the other seven black fraternities and sororities to participate in singing, dancing, and stepping.

Stepping consists of a variety of movements, similar to a dance routine, which are unique to each fraternity and sorority. All groups compete for top entertainment awards; judges are selected by AKA.

The Greek Sing and Step Show has been a positive way to get black greeks together, said Kai Weaver, a senior from Newark and president of AKA.

A lot of people are interested in greek life, especially freshmen. This gives them a chance to see the groups and meet members, Weaver said.

Michele Willingham, a sophomore from Youngstown and member of Zeta Phi Beta sorority, Xi Gamma chapter, said the Greek Sing and Step Show is entertaining and fun.

"This is a big annual event for most black students," said Willingham.

The show is open to the public. Admission is $2.50 at the door.
Black organizations rush to collect food items for unfortunate

By Michelle A. Artis
Lantern staff writer

The race is on for black greek organizations and black campus-area organizations.

In a two-hour period, they will dash throughout campus in pursuit of canned foods. Whomever collects the most food items wins the race, gets a pizza party and ultimately feeds the hungry.

The race is the third annual "Have A Heart Canned Food Drive" sponsored by the Ohio State Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

The drive will be held today at the Frank W. Hale Black Cultural Center.

Proceeds will be given to WRNS 10TV Food Parade benefiting Operation Feed, a county-wide program dedicated to feeding the homeless and less fortunate.

"It's time to clean out our cabinets and give to the needy," said Tiffany Chavers, vice president of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

The drive is done yearly, Chavers said.

"A lot of people remember the poor and less fortunate only on holidays," Chavers said.

In the past two years the drive has collected more than 1,000 food items and is expected to keep the pace, Chavers said.

"It should be a natural instinct to help people in need and to help people help themselves," said ShaNay Norvell, former president of Black Association of North Campus Students, an organization providing support for black students in the North Campus area.

The association has participated in the drive every year, collected the most food items last year and will participate this year as well.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. will also be participating.

The drive gives fraternities and sororities the opportunity to give back to the community, said Melvin Davis, president of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

A lot of people suffer from hunger, especially children, Davis said.

"It's important that we contribute to their needs so they will be able to accomplish future goals, like going to college," Davis said.

Besides providing for the less fortunate Chavers said the drive appeals to the competitive nature of greek organizations and will counterbalance the negative opinions people may have about black fraternities and sororities at OSU.

Chavers also said that the drive promotes unity among black greek organizations so they can focus on their primary purpose, community service.