



MIGHTY MIDWEST REGION



Midwest Missile

Midwest Impact Day of Service



WINTER 2023-24



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Greetings

Sorors of the Mighty Midwest,

What an outstanding start to the 2023-2024 Sorority year! We are mighty in service and impactful in deeds, and the results from this year's Midwest Impact Day of Service prove it!

A big thank you to our outstanding Program Planning & Development committee for compiling the data on MIDS. Delta's reach throughout the region is second to none, and I am proud to say more than 1600 sorors participated in our regional day of service. All together we donated 8478 books, registered 360 more voters, and signed up 190 new youth to our educational programs. Midwest Deltas work!

Sorors, in this Winter 2023 Edition of the Midwest Missile we highlight the phenomenal programs your chapters implemented in celebration of African-American literature. The partnerships you formed with libraries, reading circles, churches, and community centers to emphasize the importance of literacy.

Also in this issue, we take a look at the 2023 Social Action Priorities and ask the question, "What are you doing to advance justice and equity in your state?" We also introduce you to the Midwest Region's 3rd PEARL Cohort; sorors preparing for future regional leadership.

Sorors, enjoy this edition of the Midwest Missile. It is assembled with the great works of your chapters and proves once again that service is what we do!

Yours in Delta,

Brittani N. Blackwell

Midwest Regional Director

BRITTANI
BLACKWELL



Greetings

Across the Midwest Region, this 2023-2024 Sorority year, we are handling Delta business! Impacting our campuses and communities as we honor our commitment to service.

On campuses, sorors implemented dynamic programming for the Midwest Impact Day of Service. Donating books that honored the stories of African-American authors. Many collegiate and alumnae chapters partnered to expand their reach and work collaboratively to offer the gift of literacy to their communities.

Along with book giveaways and registering voters, Midwest collegiates contributed to the 695 people who signed up for library cards. Providing them with access to an unlimited number of Black authors on a variety of subjects, right in their communities and joined forces with book stores, public schools, and community groups to do so.

In this issue of the Midwest Missile we take a look at all you did to put the impact in MIDS, and we also examine the role of the collegiate advisor and the contributions they make to the chapter and their members.

Delta's Emergency Response Team wants us to be prepared and make a plan. They share everything we need to know in case of an emergency.

Sorors, we are a MIGHTY region, but it is working together that makes us strong!

Sisterly,

Aleyah Oliver

Midwest Regional Representative





Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated

Advisors

Advising the Future

What is the purpose of Advisors you ask...

- To mentor and provide expert knowledge and insight gained through experiences to members.
- Assist chapters in planning a program of activities; setting short- term and long-range goals around the five-point program thrust; writing plans of action; sponsoring retreats; guiding chapters in developing and implementing effective programs in keeping with the standards of the Sorority.
- Encourage adherence to deadlines; assisting in preparing forms, reports, and bookkeeping; and encouraging accurate record-keeping through the implementation of the financial policies of Grand Chapter
- Encourage open communication and assisting in clarifying the roles of officers
- Assist in the use of parliamentary procedures and implementation of the chapter's policies and procedures
- Monitor the required GPA.
- Be present at all chapter organized events, activities, and help along all phases of Membership Intake process.
- Be detail oriented, encouraging, patient, respectful, timely, and wise.

The Mighty Midwest Region of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated would like to thank all the hard-working advisors for all you do to keep our collegiate chapter in compliance and serving their campuses and surrounding communities.

Sangeya K. Wiggins, *Advisor Co-Coordinator*
advisor@dstmidwestregion.com



Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated Midwest Region Emergency Response Team “Sisters Organize And Respond (SOAR) with ERT”



New Year Resolution #1: Make an Emergency Preparedness Plan

As we begin to close out 2023 and prepare to make plans for 2024, you must make your #1 resolution: **Make an Emergency Preparedness Plan and Resolve to be Ready!**

At the beginning of the year people tend to be more motivated to get things done and start something new. This is the perfect opportunity for you to add emergency preparedness into your plans. Preparing is essential! Potential emergencies that are created by disasters such as the tornadoes that ripped through Kentucky, the frequent wildfires and the COVID-19 variants created uncertainty for many. **When you prepare for 4 primary reasons, the overall goal of emergency preparedness is easy to envision.**

- **Disasters are becoming more frequent.** The growing threat of climate change brings more severe weather and disasters. Two easy ways to prepare for severe weather include signing up for emergency alerts and knowing what risks are high in your area. Monitor the news and sign up for emergency alerts and download the FEMA app so you're never surprised when bad weather is on the way.
- **A plan can save the lives of you, your family and your pets.** Knowing ahead of time how you will respond to a disaster, will take away some of the fear and uncertainty. It's important to make a family plan. Know how you'll contact one another and reconnect if separated. Establish a family meeting place. Your pet is an important member of your family, so you'll want to plan for them too! Also, it's important to include an emergency kit in your plan, ready for use at any time.
- **Preparing can save you money.** There are many things you can do to prepare your finances for a disaster. While making a financial plan, you may want to save up an emergency fund and check your insurance to see what type of damage it covers
- **Preparing can better connect you with your community.** Some resources that help you prepare for and recover from disasters can be found in your community. This can be a great way to connect with your neighbors. You can join a local Community Emergency

Response Team (CERT) program to get trained on basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations.

As you enter the new year, committing to just one preparedness step can make a big difference in how you respond and recover to a disaster. **Resolve to Get Ready and Stay Ready to Readily Recover**



Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated

Leadership Team

Midwest 3rd Pearl Cohort

The Midwest Region is excited to announce its 3rd PEARL Cohort. PEARL (Preparing Emerging and Aspiring Regional Leaders) is a 10-month Regional Leadership Program designed to cultivate and nurture members aspiring to Regional Leadership in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. by connecting, developing and motivating alumnae members who have demonstrated achievement and leadership experience in preparation for the next level of service personally and professionally. The goals of the PEARL Leadership Program are:

- To develop the talents and skills of participants seeking to enhance their personal, professional and Delta leadership abilities by exposing them to a 10-month leadership development program that will help them maximize their full potential
- To increase leadership capacity across all seven regions
- To develop and enhance essential leadership skills while gaining an awareness and understanding of Delta Sigma Theta. The goals are accomplished through a curriculum focused on
 - Development: Encouraging personal growth and advancement
 - Synergy: Bringing individual parts, skills, together with outcomes greater than the individual parts and;
 - Transformation: Shaping future success by inspiring impactful change in self and other.

Members of the Midwest Region's 3rd Cohort at the Pearl Kick-off Event



Jasmine Williams Holson | Cincinnati Queen Alumnae
Tiffany Jones | Southfield Alumane
Nettie Cohen | Lexington (KY) Alumnae
Marsha Lewis | Southfield Alumnae
Andrett Calloway | Greater Cleveland Alumnae
Sara Corprew | Greater Cleveland Alumnae
Sherri Nimpson | Southfield Alumnae
Elyssa Smith | East Saint Louis Alumnae
Tanisha Jenkins | Columbus Alumnae
Erica Thomas | Joliet Area/South Suburban Alumnae
Rasheeda White | Cincinnati Queen Alumnae
Tara Walker | Southfield Alumnae
Tammala Lawson | Dayton Alumnae
Mia Gutridge | Grand Rapids Alumnae
Tanisha Brewer | Schaumburg-Hoffman Alumnae
Khaliyah Fisher-Grace | Greater Cleveland Alumnae
Victoria Bellows | Dayton Alumnae
Dawn Clapton | Fort Wayne Alumnae
Francine Cannon | Frankfort Alumnae
Neidra Bulter | East St. Louis Alumnae
Gabrielle Reed-Pugh | Glen Ellyn Area Alumnae



Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated Midwest Social Action Team



What Have You Done to Advance Change?

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is an organization of college educated women committed to constructive development of its members and to public service with a primary focus on the Black community. We understand the imperative of actively engaging in our communities to drive positive change. Our Sorority's commitment to Social Action is rooted in the belief that by advocating for justice and equality, we can have transformative results. State Coordinators, what have you and your state team done to advance justice?

Through Social Action, we address issues of racial inequality, education disparities, and economic injustice head-on. By active participation in initiatives, protests, and outreach programs, we amplify our voices to bring awareness and change. It is our duty to stand up for the voiceless, to challenge discrimination, and to work towards creating a world where all people have equal opportunities. Chapter Presidents, what has your chapter members done to challenge discrimination?

Through Social Action, we harness the collective power of our sorority and partner with like-minded organizations such as the NAACP and Run Vote Lead, to make a meaningful impact. It is not enough to merely discuss change; we must actively work to make it a reality. Social Action is the vehicle through which we drive progress, uplift our communities, and honor the legacy of our founders. Social Action Chapter Chairs what has your Social Action Committee done to drive progress in your service area?

Below are our **2023 Social Action Priorities**. What are you doing in your states and chapters to advance justice and equity?

- Voting and Civic Engagement
- Economic Justice
- Education
- Environmental Justice
- Health Equity
- Reimagining Public Safety
- Reproductive Justice

ΩΩ

Nona Amelia Gibbs Ross



How do you sum up the measure of one's life in just a few words, a life rich in love and experience, marked by sacrifice, devotion, unwavering faith, and a commitment to leave the world better than when she entered it? Mere words are hardly enough, but the measure of one's life lies in the moments, relationships, and impact they left on others; Soror Nona Amelia Gibbs Ross left us a legacy.

In the tapestry of her life, every thread was woven with intention and care. From her mother's decision to relocate her daughters from Mississippi to Chicago to her enrollment at Howard University, Soror Ross was destined for a life of purpose. In 1945 Soror Ross was initiated into the Alpha Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. It was also at Howard where she cultivated an interest in political activism. Soror Ross would go on to petition for social justice in her local community on the Southside of Chicago, advocating for equity in public education through the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU). Soror Ross was also a big proponent of civil rights, especially the right to vote, which led to her volunteerism as a deputy registrar and a lifetime of activism, including meetings with former U.S. Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. She was a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW).

During her 78 years of membership in our glorious sisterhood, Soror Ross served in several positions, including president of the Chicago Alumnae Chapter from 1961-1964, 13th Midwest Regional Director from 1964-1968, and member of the National Housing Committee. Soror Ross served as Regional Director during a time of significant social, political, and cultural upheaval. From the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War to the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, these years were a transformative time in both U.S. and Delta history, shaping the trajectory of social and political movements for years to come. During the mid-1960s, the Sorority actively sought to support the nation's leaders in the fight for social change. Delta women across the U.S. mobilized in the name of civil rights, and chapters in the Midwest Region were no exception! Under Soror Ross' leadership, the priorities were education and social action; members participated in sit-ins, marches, protests, and letter-writing campaigns to elected officials. While the passing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 prohibited discrimination in public schools and educational programs based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin, securing financial support for college was a challenge for many Black students and their families. Alumnae and collegiate sorors fundraised to create scholarships to assist in college-going rates. The Midwest Region worked diligently, exemplifying the pillars on which our Sorority stands: scholarship, sisterhood, service, and social action.

Soror Ross' life was a testament to 1 Thessalonians 3:12. Her capacity to love was boundless and showed in her care for the community, family, friends, and sorors. She married the love of her life, Fred Ross, on September 5, 1948. To this union, two daughters were born, Yolanda and Sydney, and one son, Fred. The Ross' raised their children to value education, public service, and social responsibility. These values, along with the virtues of fairness, kindness, courage, and humility, were the foundation of their family's ethos and served as guiding principles that helped shape the character of everyone they encountered. She and her husband, Fred, were known for opening their Southside home to others, serving as true pillars in their community.

Selflessness was inherent to Soror Ross' character, evident in her interactions with her students, bridge club friends, and neighbors. Her genuine concern for others reflected a deep-rooted commitment to compassion and community. She also demonstrated this commitment at First Baptist Church, where she served faithfully for nearly seven decades. She was often found in the kitchen, preparing weekly Wednesday supper or Saturday morning breakfast. Soror Ross served as moderator, Sunday School teacher, and Board of Christian Education member.

Soror Ross recognized her role as a steward of positive change and embraced it wholeheartedly. Through intentional acts of kindness, she created a ripple effect that extended far beyond her immediate circle. Her legacy is not just in the memories of those who knew her but in the enduring impact of the change she championed. Her life's work is an invitation for others to continue the journey of making the world a better place, one act of love at a time. To know her was to love her. The depth of her character served as a constant source of inspiration and influence, leaving a lasting impact on those fortunate to share the richness of her journey. We are grateful for the gift she was and will miss her sorely.





Mighty Midwest Region



This year's Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) was held on September 28, 2023. With a focus on literacy, the theme was the ***Midwest Library Project: Seeing Black in REaD***. This initiative paid homage to the National Library Project launched in 1937.

As a region, we distributed nearly 8,500 books, registered 360 new voters, and facilitated nearly 700 new library card sign-ups. Because of your efforts, 190 youth were enrolled in our Educational Development programs.

Mighty Midwest Region



All across the great Land of Lincoln, in the true Mighty Midwest spirit of going ABOVE & BEYOND, Illinois chapters heeded the charge of our Midwest Day of Service, *The Midwest Region Library Project: Seeing Black in REaD*, by educating hundreds of Illinois residents on the efforts to erase our history and the importance of books written by, for and about African Americans.

An introduction to some and re-introduction to others, the distribution of over 3,000 African-American books helps to empower our communities by telling our stories, shaping our lives and lifting us as a people.

Bloomington-Normal Alumnae

Black in the REad: A celebration of African-American Books

The Bloomington-Normal Alumnae (BNAC) and Theta Delta Chapters hosted Black in REad: A Celebration of African-American books. Seventy-two people, including 22 sorors, filled Western Avenue Community Center's gym. Attendees received hand sanitizer, masks, and bleach wipes courtesy of the Bloomington-Normal Chapter of the NAACP.

The day began with presentations promoting journaling and reading for mental wellness and self-care. Later, attendees joined reading circles where they discussed passages from banned books. "I absolutely loved the reading and discussions. I also enjoyed understanding/learning about what the books mean and represent," said one participant.

The Bloomington Public Library donated ten banned books and sponsored a pop-up library. Attendees checked out books and learned about library resources. Twenty people received library cards.

Fifty banned books were given away including a set to the Wester Avenue Community Center. Director Edwin Sargent appreciated the chapters' partnership and looked forward to future collaborations.

Sorors registered ten future voters, signed up three Delta Gems, and hosted a bookmark and journal decorating table.

Everyone who completed the evaluation form indicated they were glad they attended. BNAC Chapter President Lawrence said it best, "This event exemplifies our commitment to education and empowerment by celebrating our culture and promoting reading literacy."



Sorors Linda Foster and Renee Thompson show off their newly acquired library cards.



Soror Kristal Shelvin discusses the joy of reading African-American books.

Carbondale Alumnae

Title Midwest Library Project: Seeing Black in the REad

The Carbondale Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated hosted the Sorority's annual 2023 Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) at the Carbondale Public Library on September 30th, 2023 from 1pm to 3pm. This year's theme was "Midwest Library Project: Seeing Black in REad".

Chapter members volunteered to emphasize the importance of literacy by providing activities to the community including a book give-a-way, library card registration, voter registration and a meet and greet with local authors Sherrica Davis-Hunt and Pastor Larry Barnett.

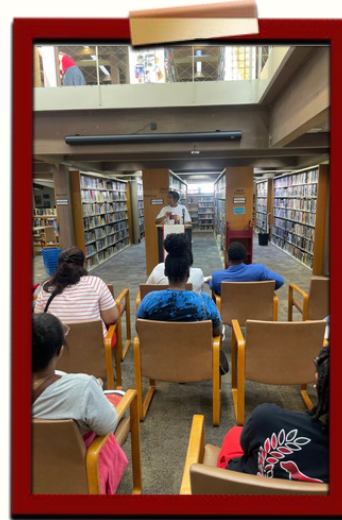


With 20 people in attendance and 10 Sorors assisting with activities throughout the event, the chapter was able to conduct a very thriving, yet intimate, event. The Carbondale public library assisted with a total of 15 books donated and given away while also registering the community to obtain much needed library cards and to vote in upcoming elections.

Attendees noted that the intimate setting was wonderful and the information provided was relevant as they were able to gain knowledge on several banned books, as well as, learn about the power of literacy in their daily lives.



(from left to right)- Pastor Larry Barnett and Soror Sherrica Hunt listening to remarks while Soror Keyantta Houston and Soror Camille Burgin look through some of the banned books to be given away.



President Danielle N. Cox thanking our attendees for coming out to our 2023 Midwest Impact Day of Service

Chicago Alumnae

An Extraordinary MIDS on Chicago's West Side

At the Douglass library on Chicago's West Side, applying for a library card is simple and free. On average, five applications are submitted weekly.

There was nothing average about the 2023 Midwest Impact Day of Service, when librarians received 41 library card applications thanks to the Chicago Alumnae Chapter (CAC) in collaboration with collegiate chapters Lambda and Upsilon Upsilon.

Planning and passion led to collecting and distributing 1,005 books by Black and Brown authors, many facing bans, recruiting 18 youth initiative participants and registering 10 new voters.

CAC partnered with seven organizations to produce this dynamic day for families: Literacy Chicago, Planned Parenthood, Westside Justice Center, TCA Health, Timothy Community Corporation, Chicago Park District and WVON1690AM. Highlights with strategic priorities include:

- The Big Dream Workshop children's storytime featuring a Black female author; Empowerment of Women and Girls (EWG) and Appreciation of Our Culture (AOC)
- The Legacy of Literacy and You author's panel and journaling workshop with soror authors, playwrights and an artist; EWG and AOC
- The Poetry Jam Experience; EWG, AOC and Community Impact (CI)
- A satellite site at the Teens in the Park Fest, the city's largest platform for artists ages 14-24; Social Action, CI, EWG and AOC





Guests participate in one of the MIDS panels presented at Douglass Library.



Soror talks with a youth about his book choices during the Teens in the Park Fest.

Chicago Metropolitan Alumnae

The Chicago Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter highlights the Freedom of Literacy for Families and Children!

Chicago Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter (CMAC) begins its 4th sorority year focusing on engaging our sisterhood while directly impacting Chicago residents, all while staying aligned to our sorority's focus through projects that reflect Delta's National Five-Point Programmatic Thrust.

During Midwest Impact Day of Service, CMAC hosted a book literacy event, "Seeing Black in REaD", highlighting African American literature for families and children. The event was hosted at two Chicago Public Library locations; Austin Library on Chicago's West Side and the Carter G. Woodson Library on Chicago's South Side.

CMAC's dual events included arts & crafts projects for all ages, along with Read Alouds to the children while residents signed up for free library cards and voter registration. CMAC members led a community session on the issue of banned books and the importance of maintaining the freedom to read. Over 200 books were collected and distributed by CMAC members volunteering at both locations.

In recognition of National Preparedness Month, CMAC also raffled Disaster Kits, Emergency First Aid kits, and Smoke/Carbon Monoxide detectors during the event. Attendees participated throughout the day in physical activities such as Yoga and breathing exercise sessions and ended the day with Line Dancing with the CMAC chapter!



Arts and Crafts



Arts and Crafts



East St. Louis Alumnae

The Library Project: Seeing Black in the REaD

On September 30, the East St. Louis Alumnae Chapter (ESLAC) collaborated with the Epsilon Xi Chapter to host The Library Project: Seeing Black in REaD at two different locations. Members collected nearly 500 banned books to leave for distribution at the East St. Louis and Cahokia Heights Public Libraries, with a portion of the books being left for distribution at one of the Chapter's signature events, the 52nd Annual Breakfast with Santa. In addition to collecting and distributing banned books, sorors along with local celebrities conducted reading huddles, provided resources for families and both Chapter presidents recorded sight word videos to be accessed by a QR code for families of first and second graders. Local celebrities, Olympic Gold Medalists Jackie Joyner-Kersey and Dawn Harper Nelson, East St. Louis Mayor Charles Powell and State Senator Christopher Belt were in attendance. Seeing Black in REaD also highlighted seven ESLAC authors, including our Centenarian Dr. Katie Harper Wright, author of several manuscripts and publications. A new library card, designed by ESLAC member Kendyll Hansbro, was presented and the Chapter is currently working with ESLAC's own, Councilwoman Jo Anne Hamilton Parks to relaunch the city's bookmobile.



Local children's book author, Aiesha McIntosh, reading her book "I Am Perfectly Imperfect".



East St. Louis Alumnae Chapter with community members, local authors and East St. Louis Mayor Charles Powell, in front of the newly re-launched bookmobile.

Evanston-North Shore Alumnae

Black Authorship, Scholarship and Resistance: Seeing Black in REaD

Evanston - North Shore Alumnae (ENSA) and Theta Alpha sorors have a myriad of connections to the Evanston Public Library, so it was ideal for Seeing Black in REaD, a celebration of Black authorship and a clarion call to resist censorship and exclusion of Black writing. The day began with a keynote address, "The Erasure of African-American History," from Dr. Sherwin Bryant, Northwestern University Associate Professor of African American Studies and History. He underscored how the preservation of oral histories along with resident activism resists efforts to erase significant history.

L'Oreal Thompson Payton, author of Stop Waiting for Perfect followed the keynote. Her book is described as a "pocket-sized pep talk" where the author uses her own life as an example of conquering imposter syndrome and perfectionism. Concurrently, youth attendees were treated to storytelling sessions with three female authors. To conclude the event were two concurrent panel discussions. Two ENSA sorors, who serve as Evanston Public Library trustees, helmed a panel about library services, board volunteerism, and community library support while sorors from Theta Alpha Chapter led a consequential discussion about book banning. With over 30 registered participants and consistent foot traffic, **Seeing Black in REaD** was a success.



Dr. Bryant discussing the erasure of African-American history.



Seeing Black in REaD presenter, Evanston Public Library Trustee Esther Wallen.



Joliet Area/South Suburban Alumnae

JASSAC is Elevating the Literacy Landscape

The Joliet Area/South Suburban Alumnae Chapter (JASSAC) orchestrated five Library Literacy Fairs on September 30, 2023, complemented by a month-long series of activities to advocate for Library Card Sign-Up Month. The Literacy Fairs were attended by 90% women and children and included read-aloud, parent literacy mini-workshops, library card sign-up, voter registration, Delta youth programs registration, and book giveaways notably including previously banned works by African American authors.

JASSAC made an impactful mark by reading aloud to or engaging in discussions with nearly 700 young minds. The focal point of this outreach was to enlighten these individuals about the myriad benefits of library cards. This outreach encompassed the Library Literacy Fairs and Library Card Sign-Up Month Campaign Pop-Up events held at local schools and recreation centers. Over 1,600 books were given to the youth, signifying JASSAC's unwavering commitment to improving literacy.

JASSAC MIDS 2023 reached the following goals:

- Gifted 1600+ books to children.
- Read aloud to 103 children.
- Obtained 103 parent literacy pledges.
- Gifted 50 banned books by African American Author
- Helped 84 people register for new library cards.
- Completed 9 new voter registrations.



Children selecting books.



JASSAC Soror reading to children,

Peoria Alumnae

2023 MIDS Library Project: Impacting Literacy Book by Book

Collaboration is the best word in describing the success of our Midwest Impact Day of Service for Peoria Alumnae Chapter. Collaboration with the Peoria Public Library-Lincoln Branch, Parents and friends within the Peoria Community, and gifted author of children's books, Ms. Billy Young.

Through the creation of a relaxed, welcoming environment, pre-school through primary school aged children were seated around Ms. Young, for approximately 2 hours, as she read excerpts from 4 of her children's books. This experience was very interactive as Ms. Young paused to ask questions and gain the insights of the participating children. Each child was given an opportunity to select a gift autographed by Ms. Young. Sorors and other adults in attendance shared memories of earlier times when reading children's books was a vital part of their younger lives.



PAC pictured with author Ms. Billy Young.

In an atmosphere where approximately 15 children were coming and going with parents and friends, Peoria Alumnae Chapter has moved ever closer to our goal of, not only, increasing the literacy of our children, but also, fostering the love and excitement of reading for our children, and



Rockford Alumnae

Rockford READS

Members of the Rockford Alumnae Chapter (RAC) partnered with the Rockford Public Library Mobile Library and the Community Life Center of Rockford for the Midwest Impact Day of Service. Over 50 children and adults were in attendance.

Participants were able to board the state of the art mobile library which featured high speed internet for an afternoon of fun and learning. RAC members and guests read books and participated in the many activities. Attendees were allowed to check out videos, books, video games, audio books and more. RAC also provided free books, from all genres to everyone in attendance.

Local authors were on hand sharing information and giving away autographed copies of their books. Overall, it was an amazing day for the Rockford Alumnae Chapter to partner with chapters throughout the Midwest to engage members of their community in the joys of reading.



Children selecting books at Mobile Library Event



Sorors at Mobile Library Event

Schaumburg-Hoffman Estates Alumnae

Seeing Black – Book Fair

Below sunny skies in a church parking lot, the Schaumburg-Hoffman Estates Alumnae Chapter (SHAC) held a book fair that serviced the community in multiple ways, with a primary focus of access to banned books.

In partnership with Second Baptist Church of Elgin, SHAC cultivated an opportunity to highlight the voices of Black and youth authors, giving away 75 books, 50 of which were on the banned book list. Authors also read out loud to youth and offered their books at the event.

SHAC partnered with a total of nine community groups including the nonprofits, Dream Scribes and the League of Women Voters, and had just over 100 children and adults participating in the event. Voter and library card registration tables were present.



A Soror reads to young children at the Author's corner.



Amongst the activities, food trucks offered delicious dishes with options that sold-out. Children played games and SHAC provided prize opportunities to all who came. Community members left the event giving two thumbs up!

For more information on the Schaumburg-Hoffman Estates Alumnae Chapter visit the website at <https://dstschaumburg.org>.

For partnership opportunities, contact, webmail@dstschaumburg.org.



Sorors Jo Bailey, Lena Whitaker and Gerri Crider share the children's book they read to youth..

Theta Alpha

Theta Alpha and Evanston-North Shore Alumnae Chapter MIDS Collaboration

Theta Alpha Chapter kicked off their year with a collaborative and powerful partnership with Evanston-North Shore Alumnae Chapter (ENSA) to present this year's Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) program., Seeing BLACK in REaD. Evanston community members, along with students from Northwestern University spent the day at Evanston Public Library participating in storytelling and breakout sessions for children and adults, listening to a passionate keynote message on the Erasure of Black History, and were able to have an open discussion on the impact of banning books in this country.

Dr. Sherwin K. Bryant, a Black Studies professor at Northwestern and member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc, presented the keynote address. His words and presence were coupled with a display of books available at the Evanston Public Library currently listed on several banned book lists across America. The chapters later welcomed author L'Oreal Thompson Payton to facilitate a motivating discussion on the impacts of imposter syndrome, anxiety, and self-doubt among Black Women. This discussion resonated with attendees well into their careers, as well as, college students in the audience. The efforts of Theta Alpha and ENSA displayed true sisterhood in collaborating to bring this shared vision to life.



Award-winning journalist, motivational speaker and blogger L'Oreal Thompson Payton reads from her new book at the Evanston Public Library for Delta Sigma Theta Sorority's Midwest Impact Day of Service. Credit: Carlos D. Williamson



Sorors Logan Phillips and Olivia Pierce leading a discussion on the impact of banned books on American education.



Mighty Midwest Region



Indiana

For chapters in Indiana, this year's Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) not only brought attention to banned books, but highlighted community collaboration with organizations such as the Urban League and local NAACP chapters. Indiana MIDS activities included giveaways and donations of banned books to local schools and libraries, voter registration opportunities, promotion of Delta youth programs, and presentations by local authors.

Anderson-Muncie Alumnae

Midwest Impact Day of Service 2023

The Anderson-Muncie Alumnae Chapter's Midwest Impact Day of Service activities were held at the Maring-Hunt Library in Muncie, IN. Members of the chapter contributed to the donation of 85 books for the event. Attendees received free banned books, were able to sign up for a library card, and were also able register to vote. Those in attendance were informed about Library Card Month, the importance of reading and literacy, and the necessity of supporting "banned" books.

Participants heard a brief presentation and storytelling from Cassandra Patterson-Day, Director of Library Services for Ivy Tech Community College - Anderson Campus and also experienced spoken word presentations by Megan Benion and Jesse Benion.



Cassandra Patterson-Day -
Speaker/Storyteller, presenting
during the event



Donated books to attendees

Evansville Alumnae

Donating for MIDS!

Evansville Alumnae Chapter observed their Midwest Impact Day of Service by visiting an Evansville Vanderburgh County elementary school by donating books for the school's Media Center. The donations were very much appreciated.

Gary Alumnae

Donating for MIDS!

With the growing calls to ban books and history of African-Americans and marginalized groups, Gary Alumnae took this year's Midwest Impact Day of Service to heart by organizing a book giveaway. In partnership with the Gary Literacy Coalition, NAACP, the Urban League of Northwest Indiana, the Gary Public Library, and Sisters Helping Sisters, Gary Alumnae welcomed youth of all ages to the Gary Public Library and Cultural Center to receive free books that were not only written by authors of color, but also books on African-American history. Participants also participated in a raffle where tablets were given away. Award-winning local author, LaTanya Hicks, spoke on how libraries and having access to books not only shaped her writing career, but helped her pen eight children's books.



Twenty-six youth and their parents/guardians attended the event. In addition to the giveaway and raffle, Gary Alumnae's youth program chairs were in attendance and gave a presentation on Delta Academy, Delta GEMS, and EMBODI. Several youth signed up for each of the programs.



(rt to lt) Gary Alumnae President Lisa Derico, 1st Vice-President Sandra Brown, and 2nd Vice-President Tinisha Greenwell



Participants at the MIDS Book Giveaway

Indianapolis Alumnae

IMPACT IN ACTION

IMPACT is defined as “the resulting effect, positive or negative, that the actions we take have to change the physical or mental state of others around us—and therefore have the power to change the future path of an individual or group.” Jack Cohen

The Indianapolis Alumnae Chapter had a positive IMPACTFUL MIDS event focusing on African American literacy and banned book awareness.

This event was IMPACT IN ACTION, bringing together authors, reading specialists, educators, Black librarians, and book clubs to galvanize, educate, and inform our community. Special guests included Deputy Mayor Judith James, actress Vickie Daniel, and local Delta authors.

With an audience of more than 70 attendees, there was something for everyone. This event boasted an interactive book fair (free and for purchase), banned book reading from *The Color Purple* and *The 1619 Project*, reading specialists for children, local author highlights, poet reading of “Pyramids to Plantations, to Projects, to Penitentiaries,” and a colorful singing enactment of *Madam C.J. Walker*.

According to audience testimonies and event surveys, this event was an informative experience that opened eyes, changed mindsets, and encouraged attendees to do more surrounding literacy in the Black community.



Community engagement during MIDS Book Fair



Captive audience during banned book reading



Mighty Midwest Region

Kentucky

The chapters in Kentucky took their communities by storm by participating in the 2023 Midwest Impact Day of Service. Each chapter dedicated its efforts to raising awareness about censorship, promoting the freedom to read, and the importance of literacy in their local community. The chapters in Kentucky partnered with local libraries and community organizations to host read-ins, in which sorors and community members read books to attendees as well as book drives, in which books were donated for distribution to community youth organizations. Kentucky sorors are dedicated to standing up for everyone's right to read.

Alpha Pi

Connecting with Kids of the King Center

The Alpha Pi Chapter had a chance to work with an organization which serves the youth of Frankfort, Kentucky. The Kings Center, a faith based non-profit community center offers after school care for students as well as programming and events throughout the school year breaks. Fortunately, Alpha Pi Chapter donated a few of their old books to the center for adolescents and were able to help the students with their homework. Ms. Denneen, director of the center, has a set schedule for students, where they complete their homework for the first hour, work on an activity for the second hour, and use the rest of their time to play outdoors if the weather permits. On average, about 45 students are present daily, and we had 5 sorors who were able to spend time at the center for this event. The director was so pleased by the connections made with the children, she suggested the chapter returns to mentor the young ladies and teach them about girlhood, sisterhood, and being respectful. It was a great experience to assist a gem of the community which relies on its volunteers and donations to thrive, and have adolescents remember who you are, and request for your return.

Hopkinsville Alumnae

Spilling the T.E.A. with the Deltas

“There’s no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish.” – Michelle Obama. The ladies of Hopkinsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. partnered with the Christian County Public Library to host Spilling the T.E.A. for the Midwest Impact Day of Service event. T.E.A. stands for transform, empower and aspire as the event's goal was to uplift and empower the women to continue to grow as they learned about topics related to womanhood. The audience included nearly 30 girls and women ages 8 and up along with 20 chapter members. The topics covered by the guest speakers included empowerment, beauty, etiquette, library cards, and banned books. The group participated in a one-word challenge activity. Each person was tasked with picking a word that would help guide them and keep them focused throughout the year. Some of the chosen words included team, family, peace, and determination. The Mental Health and Awareness committee passed out information and healthy snack treat bags and the Social Action committee provided voter registration information. The participants learned about the Delta GEMS program and how they could get involved. Overall, the event was informative and engaging and had something for everyone.



President Carrie Caples stands in line with event participants.



Kaelyn Sova, a member of the Community Alliance Mentoring Program (CAMP) proudly shows off her puzzle piece where she chose the word team with worker bees for teamwork.



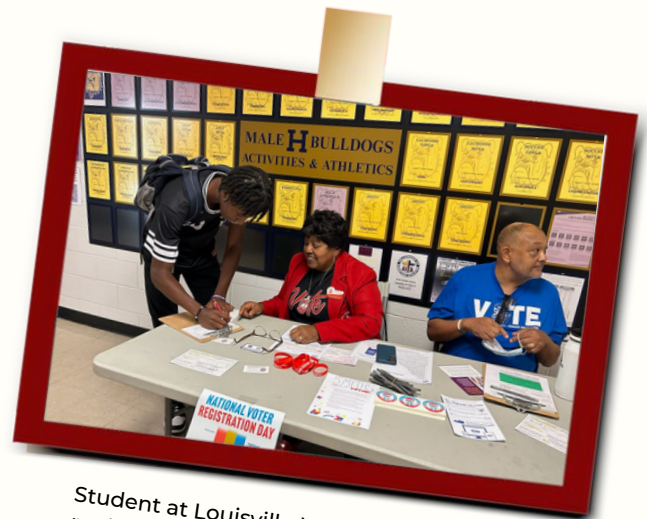
Louisville Alumnae

MIDS and Social Action

To have a major community impact in Louisville, KY, the Louisville Alumnae Chapter hosted our Midwest Impact Day of Service over two days. Social action took voter registration into high schools in the city, registering more than 100 students on National Voter Registration Day. This venture coordinated by LAC included all Divine Nine Organizations in the city. In collaboration with Xi Chapter and the I Love Books Foundation, sorors visited the Louisville Free Public Library and the University of Louisville where 70+ attendees of all ages were treated to thought-provoking discussions and readings. We were able to shed light on the banning of books and enrich the community's knowledge of the benefits and resources of libraries. International President Elsie Cooke-Holmes, Regional Director Brittani Blackwell, and Regional Representative Aleyah Oliver broke away for a moment from Leadership Delta to say hello and support our program. Fortunately, in Louisville, the students still have the right to read books that have come under fire in other communities. Together, Social Action and Arts and Letters will continue to fight to keep all books accessible to our citizenry.



(l-r) Midwest Regional Representative Aleyah Oliver, Midwest Regional Director Brittani Blackwell, and International President Elsie Cooke-Holmes in attendance at MIDS program.



Student at Louisville Male High School registering to vote.

Paducah Alumnae

Paducah Positively Promotes MIDS

The Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) became a transformative event for the Paducah community. Boasting a turnout of 35 attendees, MIDS brought together significant activities aimed at empowering and enriching the lives of those in attendance.

Included in a drive to encourage reading and knowledge sharing, ten banned books were given away illustrating a dedication to advocating for freedom of expression and embracing diverse perspectives. Additionally, Paducah Alumnae promoted civic engagement through voter registration resulting in two individuals registering to vote. Three youth attendees signed up for Delta GEMS and five other individuals obtained library cards.

MIDS created a captivating atmosphere by bringing literature to life through a dramatization of Maya Angelou's acclaimed memoir, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." A local screenwriter, well-versed in the power of storytelling, engaged the audience by reading excerpts from the book, captivating their hearts and minds.



MIDS also showcased local talent by inviting a guest singer to perform an empowering rendition of "4 Women" by Nina Simone. This powerful performance sparked emotion and resonated deeply with Attendees further reinforcing the event's message of empowerment.

To ensure participants felt valued and appreciated, light refreshments were served at the conclusion of the event.



A participant in the event registers to vote.



Sorors with participating guests.

Xi

Politics & Paint

Xi Chapter hosted a Pre-MIDS event entitled "Politics & Paint" which allowed attendees to participate in a voter education presentation led by the local NAACP. During the event, attendees painted their favorite political figure or quote. As a result of the event, 20% of attendees registered to vote. Xi Chapter also collaborated with the Louisville Alumnae Chapter for Midwest Impact Day of Service in which sorors visited the University of Louisville Ekstrom Library as well as the Louisville Free Public Library to engage in interactive discussions and readings regarding books that have been banned or challenged throughout history in schools and libraries. The event welcomed over 75 attendees as well as our International President Elsie Cook-Holmes, Midwest Regional Director Brittani N. Blackwell, and Midwest Regional Representative Aleyah Oliver. Through the informative discussions, attendees were encouraged to celebrate open access to information and the freedom to read.



Attendees at Pre-MIDS Politics & Paint event



(l-r) Sorors India Murphy, Anella Noble and Janay Williams at the registration table for the MIDS event



Mighty Midwest Region



“I can’t change where I come from or what I’ve been through, so why should I be ashamed of what makes me, me?”

Angie Thomas, author of The Hate You Give (a banned book)

On September 23rd, sorors across the state of Michigan understood the assignment for the Midwest Impact Day of Service Library Project. Armed with banned books, giveaways, clipboards with voter registration forms and much more - sorors Seeing Black in REaD marched into libraries, schools, community centers and yes even a homecoming tailgate party to educate Michiganders about the importance of African American literature and efforts to ban books that speak to our lived experiences. Michigan sorors know that knowledge is power and that the pen is indeed mightier than the sword. We invite you to see how Michigan chapters went Above & Beyond for the 2023 MIDS Day as we continue to impact our communities through service.

Detroit Alumnae

Detroit Deltas Impact Lives, Spread Love of Learning on MIDS Day

It was a full day of service as Detroit Deltas joined forces with the collegiates in the citywide Delta Psi Chapter, for the Midwest Impact Day of Service Library Project. The chapters spread the love of learning and the importance of keeping books accessible – encouraging community members to sign up for library cards.

MIDS Lead Tonya Roscoe said it was, “an opportunity to educate people about the importance of libraries and the dangers of limiting access to this public resource when branches close.”

“Seeing Black in REaD” was held at two libraries. The day included reading to children and a youth Lego challenge. The involvement provided encouraging support to the professional librarians who serve the public each day. The literacy-focused day was augmented by the “I Have My Library Card” social media campaign, including a customized social media frame.

“We were proud to assist with powerful programming that resulted in library card sign-ups, and to host a community-building jewelry making workshop utilizing a library gathering room,” said DAC President Stephanie L. Williams. “The opportunity to advocate for reading was even more relevant in this current challenging climate where books are actually being banned.”



A metro Detroiter proudly displays the library card she was prompted to apply for on MIDS Day.



Soror Doreen Odom assisting young men in selecting books to read – helping to see themselves in literature during the “Seeing Black in REaD” event.

Flint Alumnae

Flint Alumnae Chapter is on Fire for Literacy

Flint Alumnae Chapter (FAC) held a highly community-engaged Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS). The MIDS: Library Project partnered with Mu Phi Chapter and was held at the Gloria Coles Flint Public Library. The event included awareness-raising activities to continue highlighting the critical need to keep diversity in literacy with Seeing Black in REaD. According to reports by the American Library Association, of the record 2,571 unique titles targeted for censorship, most were by or about people of color. The event was featured by several local news outlets and aired by WJRT ABC12.

In addition to celebrating the freedom to read, more than 50 Genesee County children and families enjoyed meet-ups with local and regional authors, book giveaways, a Banned Books list bookmark, voter registration, library card registration, food, and prizes.



School Supplies and books presented to the principal Potter Elementary school by chapter sorors



An author proudly displaying her books during MIDS Day

Grand Rapids Alumnae

Seeing Black in REaD

The Grand Rapids Alumnae Chapter (GRAC) joined sorors in this year's Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) by hosting a fun time at the Madison Square Branch of the Grand Rapids Public Library.

GRAC took this charge to help combat the erasure of Black literature and continue the ideas of the National Library Project. There were 18 people present including 10 sorors. We discussed the importance of reading and saving Black literature with many sharing their appreciation for authors such as Toni Morrison. GRAC was able to give away five "banned" books.

GRAC was honored to have Soror Olivia Means provide two recitations of her recently published children's book, "Untying My Wings." As a self-published author, she provided invaluable information about writing and publishing children's books. Attendees were impressed to learn her motivation and purpose for authoring the book.

Also, attendees were able to obtain library cards. One attendee, who signed up for a card, was excited to learn about the benefits. Social Action Committee members were available to register new voters.

Upon their departure, many attendees expressed their appreciation for the event. Some people suggested we should host this event again.





Soror Olivia Mann reading her book to the audience

Inkster Alumnae

Let Freedom Ring – MIDS Day

The Inkster Alumnae Chapter began its Midwest ImpactDay of Service campaign by launching a virtual book drive using an Amazon wish list of the suggested books from the banned book list. A total of 83 new books were purchased. The books were donated to their community partner, the Leanna Hicks Library in Inkster, Michigan, to support the Let Freedom Read week. The week consisted of an engaging and impactful moderated Town Hall discussing powerful topics such as constitutional rights, the need to get and stay involved, and the non-negotiable support needed from organizations, school boards, and the community. The Let Freedom Read week activities also included a Read-In Marathon for youth and adults to drop in and read the banned books. Every person who participated received a book from the banned book list. The week's activities were supported by local city council members, US representatives, and mayoral candidates, who supported obliterating censorship, promoting literary freedom, and fighting against muzzling the voice of history. The partnership with the Leanna Hicks Library produced a successful and powerful week of activities.



Sorors and community members in attendance



Attendees listening to the panel discussion



Kalamazoo Alumnae

Kalamazoo MIDS Library Project

The Kalamazoo Alumnae Chapter hosted the Midwest Impact Day of Service Library Project Seeing Black in REaD at the Alma Powell Branch of the Kalamazoo Public Library. The Physical and Mental Health committee provided adult coloring sheets to promote relaxation. The Political Awareness and Involvement/Social Action committee ensured all participants were registered to vote and the Delta GEMS Committee signed up three young ladies for the program. There were 39 individuals in attendance. We received assistance from librarians, Ida Robinson and Bill Caskey, with library card registration. The people signed up for a library card. There was a display of eight banned books which were either given away or donated to the library. A Black author panel including Dr. Carol Hogan and Dr. Margaret Hale-Smith gave a synopsis of their books. Sorors either read to the children or had the children read to them. Our final collaboration was with Ms. Deanna Roberts, the creator of the Library Mailbox Project, by financially assisting her with the repair of the mailbox previously located in front of the Douglass Community Center.



Soror Ta'Alea Fluellen helping Ms. Deanna Roberts repair the library mailbox and put back in place

Lansing Alumnae and Epsilon Epsilon

Lansing Alumnae and Epsilon Epsilon Celebrating African American Literature

The Lansing Alumnae and Epsilon Epsilon Chapters donated 57 books, registered 23 women to vote and signed up 31 people for library cards. We supported Lansing's Black-owned bookstore, Socialight Society, by hosting part of the event at the bookstore and purchasing over \$250 in books. Our other location was the East Lansing Library, near the Michigan State campus drawing mostly college students. Books were donated to children, college students and adults at both locations. Sorors who were authors were able to share their experiences with those who aspired to be writers. Some of the most impactful encounters involved sorors reading to children and seeing the joy when receiving books that reflected their African American heritage. It was also inspirational to witness Black women asking Black authors about writing, publishing and pursuing their dreams.



Audience listening to the author describe her experience writing and publishing.



Saginaw Alumnae

Saginaw MIDS – Family, Books and Brunch

Family, books and brunch were the focus of the Saginaw Alumnae Chapter's (SAC) Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) event. The program was held in late September at the Willie E. Thompson Middle School in Saginaw, MI. During the event, participants had a full morning of breakfast, creative literacy, STEM activities, and reading. A special 'meet the author' session featured children's author, Lavenia Price, who shared from her book "A Lady Making Change." One of Saginaw's own, author and SAC member, Soror Whitney B. Tinsley also shared excerpts from her new book, "Life Support: Success Against All Odds."

Committee Chair Janae Alexander-Bady said, "feedback from attendees confirm the success and influence of this day of service in the Saginaw/Bay community."

Soror Tammie Gillespie co-chaired the committee with Soror Alexander-Bady. Sorors Sylvia McAfee and Alia Sims served as committee members. In addition to engaging and reading to children, sorors donated 91 books with 15 given to youth on-site. Additional books were donated to families in the community.

"Our key objectives, to explore the historical contributions of African American women and to empower women and girls in our service area, were fully achieved," SAC President Lisa Ingram said.



Soror Janae Alexander-Bady, Saginaw MIDS Committee Chair leads a group reading session



Soror Whitney B. Tinsley, Saginaw MIDS Guest Speaker/Author



Southfield Alumnae

Reading is Fundamental

Southfield Alumnae Chapter served 104 participants at their Midwest Impact Day of Service Literary Scavenger Hunt. Banned books and bookmarks featuring authors of banned books were given to the first 30 participants who completed the scavenger hunt by visiting all six locations, including the Southfield Public Library. The chapter provided resources from seven national and local partners including NAMI, Southfield City Domestic Violence and Awareness, and the American Red Cross. Participants also registered to vote and received library cards.



MIDS Chair Ilycia Maschatt and participants



Soror Elizabeth Whittaker-Walker and participants at the Southfield Public Library

Tau and Macomb Alumnae

Tau Chapter Takes on MIDS

The Mighty Tau Chapter collaborated with the Macomb Alumnae Chapter to host Midwest Impact Day of Service: Seeing Black in REaD! We hosted an event at the Clinton Macomb Public Library where we had discussions about empowering women and girls in education. We collected and redistributed Black authored books, specifically banned books by Black authors. We learned about ways we can turn our SWAG on from motivational speaker MIMI Brown and how we can preserve our legacy and history as Black scholars from Soror. Rema Vassar. Nearly 100 books were donated of varying genres and every participant was able to leave the event with new knowledge and a new book (or two) to read!



Presidents Willis and York providing information about MIDS and this year's initiative.



Our soror, The Honorable Rema Vassar, educating attendees about the importance of literary freedom.



Zeta Rho

Making an Impact During Homecoming Tailgate

The Zeta Rho Chapter's Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) Program was held during our Homecoming Tailgate, which attracted over 5,600 people. During our allotted time, we connected with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends to discuss the importance of African American literature. In doing so, we created a registry on Amazon for banned books by African American authors. With the help of many sorors and supporters, participants donated more than 100 books in honor of MIDS Day. As a result, we distributed more than 60 books to those who attended our event. We also had the privilege to register many students on campus to vote. Attendees were excited to be a part of our event and it was such a blissful experience to see the impact that we were able to make within our community.



Sorors during Homecoming with our collection of African American literature.



Mighty Midwest Region



Minnesota

The Midwest Impact Day of Service is important to the Minnesota community. We must continue to inform our community and our sorors about Black authors and tell the stories of our history.

Minneapolis-St. Paul Alumnae

Currently in our country, the attempted censorship of Black/African American people has increased dramatically. That is why the Minneapolis-St. Paul Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. hosted a phenomenal session for Midwest Impact Day of Service to honor our local authors and continue the legacy of literacy! The authors described their purpose of continuing forward to tell the story of Black lives through creative measures.

We held an in-depth forum that highlighted the value of educating our children with our history in mind by reviewing which books were placed on the banned list. As a chapter, we understand the value of leading the charge to educate our children and communities. Our local authors contributed valuable insight on their journey of authorship and why it is crucial for our communities to know the truth about our past and inspire our futures. The main message our participants took away is “Sankofa”, which means to actively retrieve things of value from the knowledge of our past. We left this session with a call to action to purchase books on the banned-book list to keep our history protected! Our Midwest Impact Day of Service was an absolute success!



Mighty Midwest Region



Midwest Impact Day of Service is an annual tradition that the State of Ohio has grown to love. Many chapters in Ohio leaned into the theme of SEEING BLACK IN REaD by participating in various activities throughout the state. Some chapters partnered with local libraries in MIDS programming which also garnered an increase in library card holders. For extended reach the chapters in Ohio partnered with close to 20 organizations throughout the state including national partners such as NCNW and NAACP.

Additionally, some chapters chose to sponsor “Little Free” Libraries in their community to provide youth with easy access to various books. Chapters also took advantage of a captive audience by sprinkling additional programming into their activities such as mental health sessions, voter registration, donation drives, blood drives, youth arts & crafts activities and showcasing featured speakers. There is no doubt that MIDS made an impact in Ohio!

Akron Alumnae

Empowering Women and Girls to Appreciate a World of Black Literature

Akron Alumnae Chapter in collaboration with Zeta Alpha Chapter hosted a 2023 MIDS event, SEEING BLACK IN REaD, which welcomed women and girls from Akron and surrounding communities.

Eleven community partners helped achieve the programming goal: Akron Public Schools (swag bags), Elizabeth's Bookshop & Writing Centre (mobile bookstore), Darletta Turner of Progressive Community Initiatives presented the mental health session "It's Okay Not To Be Okay," and Urban Ounce of Prevention (resources). Akron-Summit County Public Library and Project GRAD Akron provided FREE books. They showcased local author/Mrs. Ohio 2020 Cynthia Bowers-Martin and local youth authors Kamilla and Kamryn Smith.

Breakfast and lunch were courtesy of Akron Council of Negro Women, Cookie's BBQ, and The Law Office of H. Gambrell, LLC. Gift cards and the banned book "Their Eyes Were Watching God" were raffled as prizes. Attendees had the opportunity to sign-up for the Delta Academy/Delta GEMS programs. The Social Action committee provided voter registration.

Akron Alumnae will continue efforts to empower women/girls to appreciate a world of black literature throughout the sororal year.



Elizabeth's Bookstore and Writing Centre -
The only independently owned bookstore by a
Black woman (Rachel Carole) in Akron, Ohio



MIDS participants listen attentively to Darletta Turner of Progressive Community Initiatives as she provides a mental health session titled "It's Okay Not To Be Okay."

Beta

Doing for the Culture

As we all know, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is all about service. The Midwest Day of Service fostered a day of collaboration between Beta Chapter and Dayton Alumnae Chapter. The chapters provided young scholars with hygiene items, books and giveaways at the Dayton Metro and Trotwood Libraries. Beta Chapter was able to donate over 100 hygiene items to pass out to area children and teens. It was powerful for the chapter to interact with the students that came because service is “doing” without looking for anything in return.

It was an honor for Beta Chapter to impact the campus and local community which reminds us why service is so important in the Black community.



Sorors of Beta and Dayton Alumnae Chapter working together to bag hygiene items for the youth.

Cincinnati Alumnae

The Library Project: Empowering Through Literature & Strategic Partner Collaboration

The Cincinnati Alumnae Chapter, along with other Greater Cincinnati area chapters supported the 4th annual Midwest Impact Day of Service on September 30th with a key focus on empowering girls and women, via the celebration of African American literature. In collaboration with NCNW Cincinnati Section partners, this effort amassed more than 300 donated books used to distribute to local families.

In collaboration with several local libraries, sorors engaged with families and children, not only promoting library card sign-ups, but also gifting each child with an age-appropriate book written by an African American author. Additionally, kids explored the library by participating in a scavenger hunt and decorating personal bookmarks.

Area chapters also partnered together with the Cincinnati NAACP as they hosted their annual Education Summit the same day. Families enjoyed a “reading nook”, where four local African American female authors showcased their books, sharing stories during designated reading hours.



Young reader excited to dig into her new copy of "I Am Enough" by Grace Byers



Students browsing and selecting donated books at Bond Hill Public Library in Cincinnati Ohio



Cincinnati Queen City Alumnae

The Queen City seeing Black in REaD

Cincinnati Queen City Alumnae Chapter collaborated with sister alumnae chapter, Cincinnati Alumnae Chapter, and local collegiate chapters in partnership with the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library and national partners Cincinnati NAACP and NCNW. The Midwest Impact Day of Service project was widespread throughout the city in three Cincinnati libraries and one high school. At each location, young girls and women were empowered by an afternoon of interactive children's book readings, voter registration, and library card sign-ups. The chapter was able to engage library staff and sorors during Black literature scavenger hunts and literacy crafts. Participants earned gift cards donated by United Dairy Farmers. At a local high school, the chapter partnered with NAACP for their Education Empowerment Summit where the community engaged in workshops. There was also a "Kid's Literacy Zone" where local black authors were featured for book signings as part of a book fair.

Seeing Black in REaD's impact was powerful throughout the community. The library managers were appreciative of the initiative highlighting libraries and all of the available resources offered. Over 310 books featuring Black authors and characters were distributed to the children who attended MIDS, local schools, and the YWCA Domestic Violence shelter.



Sorors from collaborative chapters pose with some of the featured books



Chapter sorors engage with some of the youth

Columbus (OH) Alumnae

Words Unchained: Embracing the Freedom to Read

It's disheartening to note that 32 states, including Ohio, have banned books of African American Authors. Fortunately, Franklin County has not succumbed to this, ensuring that all students and families have the freedom to read.

Woodland Christian Church was the recipient of the Columbus (OH) Alumnae Chapter Little Free Library. Scholastics Publishing Company donated 14 books while sorors donated 244 books of which 74 were from the banded book category. Forty members of the community supported the unveiling of the Little Free Library along with 23 Sorors. Community partner Cheryl's donated 100 cookies for attendees.

In an effort to incorporate the National Strategic Plan's focus on women and girls, there was a collaboration with five Black female local authors who donated 11 books. The collaboration with Social Action, Educational Development, Youth Programs, and Arts & Letters proved to be beneficial to the community as it generated 10 youth program registrants, 56 new voters and 47 library cardholders as representatives from the Columbus Metropolitan Library and the Ohio Unity Coalition were on-site for registrations.



The freedom to read is crucial; always remember, that children are the architects of our future and they deserve to learn about our nation's history.



Staff from the MLK Metropolitan Library were on-site signing attendees up with a new library card and supporting African-American women authors by purchasing their books.



President Tamara Staley unveiling the Little Free Library filled with all banned books of African-American women authors to share with the community.

Dayton Alumnae

The Magic of Reading in Greater Dayton

The Dayton Alumnae and Beta Chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated partnered with the Trotwood and West branches of the Dayton Metro Library for a day of reading, book giveaways, magical storytelling, and more.

The chapter facilitated book drives to collect books by Black authors placed on the Banned Book and Challenged Book lists across the country to address the local literacy rates and gaps in the Greater Dayton areas in preparation for our planned Midwest IMPact Day of Service events. Chapter members donated over 100 new books and welcomed readers in grades 3rd-6th.

At the West Dayton location, a magician (children's librarian) from the branch taught participants about the different parts of a story while reading to them. Children also participated in button making, painting, and physics related activities. Chapter members gave backpacks, books, coloring sheets and crayons out to each participant. Beta Chapter members contributed personal hygiene products and Dayton Alumnae members contributed snack items as these items are needed in the West Dayton area.

With over 30 participants and over twenty Sorors, community partners and parents, the event was a success. Dayton Alumnae plans to continue this work with Dayton Metro Libraries in the future.



Children, parents, and sorors reading with children.



Children parents, and sorors engaging in activities with children.



Greater Cleveland Alumnae

GCAC Impacts 5 Inner City Recreation Centers in Cleveland

The Greater Cleveland Alumnae Chapter answered the call with multiple events for the Midwest Impact Day of Service. There were a series of events that attracted over 200 youth. The chapter was featured on a local television show called “We the People” hosted by television personality Leon Bibb to roll out the chapter’s programming for the week. There was a virtual discussion on Censorship, Banned Books and Black Erasure. The chapter donated a Little Elephant Free Library supplied with 100 books to a local domestic violence shelter. The culminating events were a two hour program simultaneously hosted at five different inner city recreation centers filled with literacy engagement, donation of over 1,000 books, voter registration opportunity, vaccine awareness, guest speakers, introduction of the chapter youth groups and lunch.

A proclamation from a local Councilwoman was presented to each recreation center. The program concluded with a raffle of 10 Disney Immersive Experience tickets donated by partner Literacy in the Hood. The chapter collaborated with Epsilon Mu and five community partners (Literacy in the Hood, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, Seeds of Literacy, City of Cleveland, and Upward Bound).



Soror Evette Jackson Clark
reading with young attendees



Soror Meredith Turner stocking the
Little Free Library with books

Lorain County Alumnae

Making Impact

Many in the community joined the Lorain County Alumnae Chapter as we hosted our Midwest Impact Day of Service: Seeing Black in REaD. A major focus of the event was to promote literacy and increasing access to literacy in the Black community. Additionally, in light of the dramatic uptick in the number of banned/challenged books over the past few years, this was also a great opportunity to raise awareness about banned books and support the freedom to read.

Activities included storytelling, a banned book session, library card sign up, voter registration and free book giveaway. All attendees received a goody bag and donated books of African American content.



Donated books for giveaway



Toledo Alumnae

Black Author Joy

For the Midwest Impact Day of Service, the Toledo Alumnae Chapter decided to spread the word about Black authors. About ten chapter members met at the Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Mott Branch and handed out lists of Black authors, bookmarks, wristbands with encouraging words, mental health resources and information about joining Delta G.E.M.S. and Delta Academy to the youth and families. Over 30 bags were distributed to the community. The chapter enjoyed talking to members of the community, educating them on the resources the city of Toledo has to offer and learning resources from the library. The day was all about spreading positivity throughout the event.



Sorors pose with donation bags

Youngstown Alumnae

The Power of the Pen: Using writing as a revolutionary tool to turn your silence into noise

Youngstown Alumnae Chapter's Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS) event emphasized a focus on literacy through the Midwest Library Project: Seeing Black in REaD. It capitalized on the development of one's voice through the power of the pen. Young people from the community joined sorors on the campus of Youngstown State University to discover and discuss ways in which writing can be used as a revolutionary tool to turn your silence into noise to affect change.

Featured speaker TeiAsha Simms, an entrepreneur and poetic genius, captivated the audience by sharing her inspiring journey into discovering the power of the written word and the way in which writing became her voice. Ms. Simms' story motivated the young people to participate in the examination of banned books by Black authors. Discussion of the ideas and feelings these books conveyed led to their comprehension and appreciation of the power that can come from organizing and voicing their thoughts through the written word.

Before leaving, many of the attendees signed up for library cards, which most had never owned. More significantly, they all left with the knowledge that they too possess the power to impact the world by "putting ink to paper."



Youth engaged as they listened to the presenter



Snapshot of the books displayed and supplies for the youth



Montgomery City Alumnae

Seeing Black in REaD

The Montgomery County (OH) Alumnae Chapter partnered with the Northwest Branch of the Dayton Metro Library on September 30 and hosted, "Seeing Black in REaD," a day of theatrical readings, giveaways, and fun!

The day focused on women's empowerment, cultural appreciation, and social action.

Women's empowerment featured members of the Chapter reading books about Shirley Chisholm and Misty Copeland, with a special guest appearance and reading by Soror Mattie White dressed as Rosa Parks, enhancing educational awareness.

Cultural appreciation of Black History was actualized during the event, as participating children helped to bring the books to life by answering questions, singing songs, and making arts and crafts. Every child in attendance was able to take receive free books and have nutritious snacks provided by the Montgomery County (OH) Alumnae Chapter.

Social action was also incorporated into the day as parents, grandparents and other adults were given the opportunity to register to vote through community partners. In all, the day highlighted over 25 youth of various ages, 15 sorors, and partners from the Dayton Unit NAACP and Dayton Section of the National Council of Negro Women.



Sorors from Montgomery County (OH) works with youth for puzzles and games.



Soror Mattie White dressed as Rosa Parks reading a book to the children.

Rho Xi

Seeing Black in REaD

On September 30, 2023 The Rho Xi Chapter of Xavier University partnered with the Zeta Chapter of the University of Cincinnati and the Greater Cincinnati Alumnae Chapters to empower young women and girls in grades K-12 to read African-American Literature. This initiative allowed the collaboration to donate over 300 books authored by African Americans to three different libraries in Hamilton County, the Cincinnati NAACP, a YWCA Domestic Violence Shelter, Lockland City Schools, and other locations in the Cincinnati area. The chapter was grateful for the help of strategic partners, the NAACP and NCNW and are excited they were able to bless so many lives during this event with books as well as help families register for library cards!



Zeta

Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS)

The Zeta Chapter partnered with the Cincinnati Alumnae and Cincinnati Queen City Alumnae Chapters for the Midwest Impact Day of Service (MIDS). Chapter members volunteered at various locations, including libraries and schools handing out free books, reading to children and assisting children in reading. As a partner in this collaboration, Zeta donated books to the cause. The chapter assisted with library card information as well as voter registration.

In the end, the chapter helped distribute 216 books and seven library card sign ups. The leftover books were donated to schools and a domestic violence shelter. Zeta Chapter enjoyed meeting more Cincinnati area sorors and look forward to MIDS next year!

Zeta Alpha

Zeta Alpha MIDS

Zeta Alpha Chapter in collaboration with Akron Alumnae Chapter had a successful Midwest Impact Day of Service held on September 30. Our focus was to allow community residents to obtain banned books and provide services that focused on reading material from Pre-K through Adulthood.

Mental Health was a huge component themed: "It's Okay Not To Be Okay" which was held by Soror Turner, a licensed mental health therapist. The MIDS event also included face painting, lunch, voter registration, an African American author series, free books giveaways and one-on-one conversations with the therapist.

Community Partners who supported the Midwest Impact Day of Service were:

- Akron Council of Negro Women
- Akron Public Schools
- Akron-Summit County Public Library
- Cynthia Bowers-Martin, Mrs. Ohio 2020 and Author
- Darletta Turner, Mental Health Presenter for "It's Okay Not To Be Okay"
- Elizabeth's Bookstore and Writing Centre - The only independently owned bookstore by a Black woman (Rachel Cargle) in this region, located inside The Well CDC
- Kamilla J. and Kamryn Smith, Youth Authors
- Progressive Community Initiatives
- Project GRAD Akron
- United Way Summit & Medina
- Urban Ounce of Prevention



Soror Darletta Turner, licensed mental health therapist, presenting on the Mental Health of Black Woman.



Soror Taniqua Jones being given a banned book from community partner, Elizabeth Books



Mighty Midwest Region



Ontario

The Ontario community benefited from our Midwest Impact Day of Service. We partnered with Jaku Konbit, a local organization that supports disadvantaged individuals and families of African and Caribbean decent. Together, we joined forces to spread and promote the joy of reading and literacy with our youth.

Greater Toronto Area Alumnae

Leaders are Readers

The Greater Toronto Area Alumnae Chapter (GTAAC) partnered with local community organization, Jaku Konbit, to host "Leaders are Readers: REaDy to Read" for this year's Midwest Impact Day of Service event held in Ottawa, Ontario. The event was open to youth ages 4 – 10 and included storytelling activities, group discussions and arts and crafts. The younger children were invited to create puppets to reflect their unique characters while the older children created their own superhero adventure, which included exploration and discussion around identifying areas of need that gives back to the community. Parents were also engaged as they were invited to sign up for library cards onsite. To close the event, all the kids engaged in an act of community service by creating bookmarks which GTAAC donated to a local public library in Ottawa. All kids left with a book and a journal to help inspire their creativity and the writing of their own stories.



Engaging the 8 to 10-year-olds in an interactive storytelling seeing themselves as superheroes giving back to the community.



Engaging the 4 to 7-year-olds in puppet making to go along with their story.

Mighty Midwest Region



West Virginia

Midwest Impact Day of Service was a success in West Virginia, as our chapters donated books written by African American authors to local libraries, promoted library card acquisition, facilitated reading circles, supported local authors, and conducted library tours. These activities led to the acquisition of 96 new library cards and the donation of 305 books across the state.

Eastern Panhandle Alumnae

Leading Children to Literacy

The Eastern Panhandle Alumnae Chapter (EPAC) members led and participated in three signature events to promote early literacy and amplify Black authors' voices for our Midwest Impact Day of Service regional library project. EPAC also assisted families with completing 85 library card applications for their children.

EPAC sponsored and partnered with the Shepherdstown Book Festival to host an engaging author panel discussion and hosted Black author Crystal Good's book signing as part of the festival. Thirteen sorors attended the panel discussion.

EPAC partnered with the Charlestown Public Library at Ranson Elementary to help parents sign up their children to receive library cards. Seven sorors attended and 60 library card applications were distributed. Each child received a bookmark and a free book for completing an application.

To culminate the month of literacy events, EPAC sponsored a field trip to the Shepherdstown Library for the second-grade class at North Jefferson Elementary. Twenty-five students received a library card and were able to check out books. EPAC gave each student a gift bag with books about George Washington Carver or Harriet Tubman.

EPAC is committed to helping ensure that all children have access to diverse books and resources to promote literacy and an equitable education.



Soror Carla Hunter passing out a library card application at Ranson Elementary Open House



L-R: Soror Cheryl Roberts and Soror Delores Foster give gift bags to students for the field trip at Shepherdstown Library.

WEST VIRGINIA



Mighty Midwest Region



Fall 2023 began with “good trouble!” As some tried to silence the voices of Black and Brown authors, Wisconsin joined the entire region defying the current political tide through the distribution of Black banned books! As we supported our community in understanding “Knowledge is the Key - Books Unlock the Door” in Madison to “Seeing Black in REaD” in Milwaukee, throughout the state, we pushed the boundaries collectively to raise the voice of our Black authors. Our Northeast Wisconsin Chapter continued the work beyond reading to include social action with voter registration and sisterhood.

Madison Alumnae

Knowledge is the Key - Books Unlock the Door

The Madison Alumnae Chapter, Black Girl Magic Educational Services, Inc., the Madison Reading Project and the Madison Chapter of Women in Focus joined forces at the annual Black Women's Wellness Day on September 30th for the Midwest Impact Day of Service. The goal was to empower young Black girls to read books focused on African Americans and promote literacy and a love for reading.

Girls between the ages of 11-18 attended a dynamic culturally themed workshop at the event where they explored and displayed their natural gifts in a sacred space cultivating leadership skills while centering their powerful voices. Gaining knowledge through books was highlighted and reinforced throughout the day. The 50+ attendees received gift bags of donated books with relevant titles demonstrating that we will not let our young Black girls be silenced by banned books, or hidden and rewritten history. These books also validate and affirm their identities as beautiful Black girls.

This collaborative effort supported the Midwest Region's Library Project mission and is one event that can change our community. By celebrating African American literature and knowing our history, we can fight back and fight forward – a clear way to change the narrative and empower our young Black girls.

Milwaukee Alumnae

"Seeing Black in REaD"- Connecting Through Literacy

The Milwaukee Alumnae Chapter's Program Planning and Development Committee hosted an impactful Midwest Impact Day of Service. The event aligned with the National Strategic Plan priorities: Empowerment of Women and Girls, Community Impact, Social Action and the Appreciation of Arts and Culture, as well as the Five-Point Programmatic Thrust, Physical and Mental Health. The event was held at the Good Hope Branch Library. We held various activities including read aloud sessions and Delta Academy, Delta GEMS, and E.M.B.O.D.I. educational program presentations. Additionally, the Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Program (WEOP) provided families with information about pre-college opportunities. A mental health wellness workshop, "B.O.L.D. Method to Burnout Prediction" underscored the importance of mental well-being and furnished invaluable tools to safeguard against burnout.



Author Kelly Melton reading her book, "Did You Say Baby?" to a group of children

With the participation of 85 community members and the dedication of 56-chapter members, the atmosphere was one of unity, connection, empowerment, and education. Because of the Midwest Impact Day of Service, the Milwaukee Alumnae Chapter and the community at large provided a total of 140 banned books. Of which 68 of these books were distributed to community participants. The remaining books were donated to Ascension Fellowship Church and the Delta Youth Programs.



Northeast Wisconsin Alumnae

"Seeing Black in REaD"- Connecting Through Literacy

The Northeast Wisconsin Alumnae Chapter (NEWAC) continues to engage in social action activities throughout our service area. NEWAC kicked off the sorority year through the Midwest Region's Library Project with a book drive to collect books for youth in the community. Community members and NEWAC sorors donated over 65 books written by Black authors. NEWAC partnered with Lovin' the Skin I'm In (LTSII), an organization whose programming focuses on the personal and leadership development of Black girls, to lead a literacy program for LTSII and donated the books collected to members of LTSII.



Save the Date

THE DELTA TAKEOVER

*Connecting Champions
of Change*



ΔΣΘ



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