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## ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY CHARTERS FIRST CHAPTER IN THE MIDDLE EAST



Chicago, Illinois – January 22, 2016 - Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® made history today when it chartered its first chapter, Omega Theta Omega, in the Middle East. The chapter's 37 women, located in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and throughout the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are business executives, attorneys, educators and physicians, among other accomplished professionals. Dr. Sherrish Holloman, an Education Advisor in Abu Dhabi, is the chapter's first president.

To commemorate the chartering, a delegation of 600 dignitaries, family and friends journeyed to Dubai for the celebration, led by International President Dorothy Buckhanan Wilson, L.H.D. and International Regional Director Gizette L. Thomas.

“Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is excited to welcome its first chapter in the Middle East as we look to further extend our service mission around the globe,” said International President Dorothy Buckhanan Wilson. “Our service mission has consistently been focused on uplifting those most in need in our community. I am confident that the members of Omega Theta Omega Chapter will bring this spirit of service, scholarship, and sisterly love to Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority continues to have a global impact as we Launch New Dimensions of Service internationally.”

Chartering members include Talima Andrews-Harris, Kia Beguesse, Sarah Boswell, Laurie Bryant, Misti-Dawn Curry, Donica Cuspard, Dionna Davis-Taylor, Tiffany Dill, Nicole Ferguson, Tanesha Fisher, Dinisa Hardley Folmar, Roxanna Gario, Jia Gay, Kimberly Glaspie, Tamika Gordon, D' Yana Hardaway, Terra Hassell, Tanisha Hickman, Tamara Jackson-Cruess, Pamela Johnson, Shelia Johnson, Tangela Johnson, Cassandra Jones, Mellissa Miller, Verna Morton, Ayoluwa Parham, Janise Phillips, Vonzia Phillips, Princess Powe, Natosha Roberts-Jones, Lisa Robinson-Holness, Jacqueline Rudd, Nneka Russell, LaTonya SmithBennett, Brittini West-Ware, and Kim Williams. While the members represent a diverse cross-section of professionals, they are all bound by their allegiance to the sorority's mission to be of “Service to All Mankind.”

The journey to chartering the Sorority's inaugural chapter in the Middle East began several years ago when Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority women located in the UAE expressed a desire to establish an Alpha Kappa Alpha presence focused on providing services to women and children in need. After much research, the women narrowed their focus area to the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Cognizant of Alpha Kappa Alpha's charge of service, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's International Regional Director Thomas worked with local leaders to identify additional members in the area, build the foundational elements of a chapter, and launch programs of service within the two emirates.

"I am truly delighted to welcome the newest chapter of the International Region and our first in the Middle East," Said Regional Director Thomas. "I congratulate all 37 members who have worked cooperatively on this journey to achieve the expansion of our sorority. I had the opportunity to interact with this dynamic and progressive group of women, and I know firsthand that they are ready to make an indelible imprint on Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the surrounding Emirates through their service projects and community efforts."

Over the past few years, Omega Theta Omega, formerly known as the Pearls of Arabia Interest Group, has provided strategic and meaningful programs in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Programs of service include donating backpacks and other resources to the Special Care Centre, which provides support for special needs children from 14 countries, participating in the annual Diabetes Walk and joining with other community-based organizations to provide service to the Abu Dhabi and Dubai communities. Also, Omega Theta Omega is partnering with the Special Care Centre in Abu Dhabi to build a school for special needs children.

The chapter's newly-elected president, Dr. Sherrish Holloman, shared her sentiments on the influence Omega Theta Omega, would have on the region, the country and the world.

"Our members represent various levels of professional, educational and social backgrounds and extend the sorority's legacy of sisterhood and service to the UAE. The journey from envisioning to chartering a chapter in the UAE has been richly rewarding for both us and the communities we serve. I remain honored and humbled by this experience and hope that we will continue the sorority's lasting principle of 'Service to all Mankind' in the UAE through impactful program delivery," said Dr. Sherrish Holloman, President, Omega Theta Omega Chapter.

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