



Alumni Reflect

ON INSPIRATIONAL LEGACY OF NEW CAMPUS LANDMARK

Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway Construction Is Almost Complete

Less than two years ago, during the 2019 Homecoming weekend, the Millersville University campus community and cultural Greek organizations celebrated the beginning of an important project to commemorate the rich history of the nine Greek sorority and fraternity organizations included in the National Pan-Hellenic Council, Incorporated (NPHC), plus Greek organizations of the National Multicultural Greek Council Inc. (NMGC) and the National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations, Incorporated (NALFO) through the construction of the Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway. The Greek organizations of all of these groups combine to form the Cultural Greek Council (CGC) at Millersville University, and the walkway includes 12 spaces representing the traditional Black Greek-lettered organizations and other Latinx fraternities and sororities.

As of this spring, construction is almost complete for the Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway, located along Shenks Lane, near the Student Memorial Center. Through a tremendous outpouring of donor support from many alumni members of the Greek organizations represented in the project, the fundraising campaign achieved incredible success. The generosity of more than 190 alumni and friends who donated to the project made the creation of the new area on campus possible. For alumni who supported this meaningful project, the construction of the walkway serves as an inspiration and fortifies the legacy of the Greek organizations that are represented in the campus landmark for the Millersville University community.

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*Divine Nine & Cultural
Greek Council Unity Plots on
Memorial Walkway located
along Shenks Lane, near the
Student Memorial Center.*

HOMECOMING 2019

Dedication of Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council
Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway



Photo Credit: Dr. Myava Clark '93



Denise Draper '80

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has been a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. at Millersville University since 1978, and served as an alumni advisor to the Lambda Gamma Chapter at Millersville for 30 years, until recently. When reflecting on the significance of the Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway for alumni, she states, "I don't know if they could have foreseen the beauty of what is being created, something that will be here for generations to come, that's huge. It's like going to a museum, knowing that there are certain artifacts that will be there long after you're gone.... For us as alumni, it's a legacy that is imprinted in a space that when we return, we know we are all a part of." As the new space on Memorial Walkway becomes a part of campus life, Draper expects many positive outcomes to arise throughout the Millersville University community and beyond. "I think the cooperation and the collaboration – alumni, undergrads and the University – demonstrates a partnership that will build dividends beyond belief."

Many alumni members from the Greek organizations were passionately involved in bringing the project to fruition at Millersville University through generous support for the fundraising campaign. "It means everything, which is evidenced by the fact we, in a very short period of time, raised thousands of dollars," says Draper. "When undergraduates look at alumni and they see this legacy, when they see that we not only talked about

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supporting them, we demonstrated our support with our dollars.... the great thing about all of this is showing when given the opportunity, MU alumni rally together for worthy causes to make a difference."

Through her active involvement in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated as an alumni advisor, Draper has nurtured the success of members at Millersville University over the years. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. is one of the nine international Greek-letter sororities and fraternities of the National Pan-Hellenic Council Inc. (NPHC), which are collectively referred to as the "Divine Nine."

The Lambda Gamma Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. began at Millersville University in 1974, and Draper was president of the chapter from fall of 1978 until she graduated in 1980. As she explains, "Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated at Millersville was a training ground for me to learn about leadership, to be involved in teamwork, and to experience mentoring, things which have carried through my career with State Farm Insurance Company."

In reflecting on the valuable role of Greek organizations for students and their communities, she notes, "Greek organization members hold dear their role after college and the ability to go back to their respective communities and tell other young people that a college education is a path worth pursuing. In addition this place of learning that builds leaders, those skills

we take with us and our communities benefit. Upon graduation we looked forward to going home or someplace new and sharing the information that college has many benefits. It is our mission to put into the hearts of others a college education can be within reach and it is a viable post-high school choice. Yes, we learned about leadership through our organizations, and we took our newfound abilities to the community, and we became members of committees and boards and we 'serve' and our experiences through these D9 organizations prepared us for those roles. Sorority and Fraternity life was a training ground to learn about leadership, to be in groups and committees on campus, to fellowship with each other and to emerge as leaders, and to take the things that we learned and the things that we felt were important back to the places we called home — our communities."

At Millersville University, the new space on Memorial Walkway will highlight the historical impact of the

Greek organizations and reflects a shared connection among members of the organizations that transcends generations. "The plot speaks to that history that is rich not only across Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., but across each of these nine organizations of the Divine Nine and the other multicultural organizations that are part of this epic structure," says Draper. "For Divine Nine organizations and for the multicultural organizations that are a part of this space, it really demonstrates our collective unity, we stand together as multicultural students and students of color. We stand together as students that have a rich history very engrained in Millersville. Then to have the University rise to this level of commitment – it makes me emotional when I think about it. This was a huge undertaking that will stand as a recognition of what these organizations mean to the Millersville History and for that we all stand proud."

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Members of the Lambda Gamma Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. celebrate their 45th Chapter Anniversary at Millersville University.

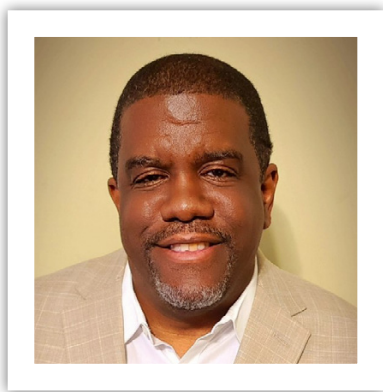
Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway located along Shenks Lane, near the Student Memorial Center.



Homecoming events at the University bring alumni from many Greek organizations together to reconnect and celebrate.

Derrick McCutchen '98

is a member of the Lambda Tau Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. at Millersville University and a member of the Millersville University Alumni Association Board of Directors. Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated is included in the "Divine Nine" Greek-letter sororities and fraternities of the National Pan-Hellenic Council Inc. (NPHC), and has had an uninterrupted presence on campus at Millersville University since May 15, 1977, receiving its official charter at Millersville University on September 17, 1983. McCutchen was involved in Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. at Millersville during the 1990s. "I would say fall of 1991 to spring of 1993 ... then roughly fall 1996 through fall of 1998. Also, for the past two years or so, I have been a member of the advisory team for the undergrad members," he explains. Through his involvement in the Lambda Tau Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. at Millersville, McCutchen experienced many valuable benefits that positively influenced his life. "Two things that come to mind in this regard. One... when I stepped on campus initially, I was very reserved, shy, and laid back. Meeting the members on campus and after I was initiated, I was able to mature and grow socially. Two...I would say the fraternity held me accountable while on campus and it continues to do so to this day. With our main motto being 'achievement,' Kappa



Derrick McCutchen '98

Alpha Psi always taught me work to be best and achieve in every field of human endeavor."

Regarding the construction of the Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway, McCutchen is proud and excited about the creation of the new space on campus and the positive impact it will make for students, alumni and the Millersville University community. McCutchen states, "I feel the plots will give the members on campus a greater sense of worth, pride and inclusion on the Millersville campus.... I look for the plots to serve as a meeting place for all alumni to meet and explore in the future when visiting campus. I hope it can serve as an inspiration to current students to look into joining these organizations. I hope they can serve to open up discussions to show all of the Millersville community the positive impact members of these organizations have brought to the Millersville community and to society as a whole."

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Alumni members from the Lambda Tau Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. return to campus for Homecoming reunions.



Members of the Lazuline Chapter of Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority Inc. by the campus pond at Millersville University.



Natacha Reyes-Fisher '13

Natacha Reyes-Fisher '13 is a member of Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority, Incorporated and was active in the Lazuline Chapter at Millersville University from 2011 through 2013. Founded in 1981, Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority Inc. is the nation's first multicultural Greek-letter sorority, and the Lazuline Chapter at Millersville University was established on November 12, 2005, by five diverse women. Involvement in Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority Inc. at Millersville was a transformative experience for Reyes-Fisher. "Mu Sigma Upsilon has impacted my life in so many ways. I cannot thank MSU enough for the opportunities and friendships I have gained. It truly set me on the right path when I doubted myself and almost gave up on school. They provided me with a network for professional development when I was in need of a career path and academic support. I gained a lifelong sisterhood and best friends I never thought I could have."

As a member of Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority Inc. and an alumna of Millersville University, Reyes-Fisher anticipates many positive outcomes to develop for alumni through the Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway. "When we return to visit Millersville for any event, such as for homecoming or our retreats, we can see our organization on display and reminisce on experiences and the challenges we pushed through to be where we are today personally and as an organization. This will now be a gathering space that will mark our history for our past, present and future members," she says. "This new space solidifies the role of our organizations and the impact we have on the university. We not only are underrepresented; we are leaders in our community and are making history."

In her career, Reyes-Fisher works in the field of higher education as an assistant director in undergraduate admissions at the University of Delaware. Through her professional experience, she recognizes the valuable benefits of the Divine Nine & Cultural Greek Council Unity Plots on Memorial Walkway for prospective students and the Millersville University community. "As I continue to work in higher education, I see current trends in enrollment. The diversity of each incoming class continues to increase," says Reyes-Fisher. "This walkway will be validating a space and will show those who are interested in attending Millersville that our diverse organizations have a presence. This area will have a tremendous impact for our community as our organizations continue to provide leadership and service in the areas we serve. Although our organizations are small, we are mighty. We are leaders on and off campus and can provide the community and the university with resources and services." ♦



The Lazuline Chapter of Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority Inc. on campus in the Student Memorial Center.