



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.[®], to host Legacy Bench Celebration at USF in honor of Sonja W. Garcia

TAMPA, FL (April 16, 2025) – Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated[®], will host a Historical Legacy Bench Celebration in honor of the distinguished Sonja W. Garcia on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 10:00 AM at the Marshall Center on the campus of the University of South Florida.

This momentous occasion will recognize the groundbreaking achievements and lasting contributions of Mrs. Garcia, a pioneering leader whose influence spans both Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.[®], and the University of South Florida.

A visionary and trailblazer, Mrs. Garcia has held the rare distinction of serving as president of both the Alpha Alpha Theta Omega and Gamma Theta Omega chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha in Tampa, FL. She made history as the 14th South Atlantic Regional Director, leading more than 20,000 members across Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. Under her leadership, she founded the Stella Lett Undergraduate Leadership Institute and the Stella Lett Scholarship, ensuring continued support for emerging leaders. In recognition of her unwavering commitment, the Sonja W. Garcia Undergraduate Leadership Endowment in Honor of Stella J. Lett was established to empower students who demonstrate exceptional leadership on campus and in their communities.

Beyond her extraordinary service to Alpha Kappa Alpha, Mrs. Garcia's legacy is deeply woven into the fabric of the University of South Florida. Her 36-year career at USF began with her historic role in integrating the university's support staff, setting a precedent for future generations. Throughout her tenure, she served in multiple influential roles, retiring in 2000 as an associate director. She later shattered racial and gender barriers once again by becoming the first African American woman to serve on the USF Board of Trustees.

The installation of her Legacy Bench is a fitting tribute to a woman whose career, service, and dedication have shaped both the university and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.[®]

Joining in this historic celebration will be esteemed representatives from the University of South Florida and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.[®]:

University of South Florida Faculty

- Ms. Carol Ann Borchert, Senior. Associate Dean of USF Libraries Research & Instruction

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® Leaders

- The Honorable Tiffany Moore Russell, Esq., South Atlantic Regional Director
- Charletta Wilson Jacks, International First Vice President
- Carolyn Gause Randolph, International Secretary
- Norma Solomon White, 25th International President
- Carolyn House Stewart, Esq., 28th International President
- Vertelle Middleton, 12th South Atlantic Regional Director
- Lucretia Payton Stewart, 13th South Atlantic Regional Director
- Marsha Lewis Brown, 17th South Atlantic Regional Director
- Sharon Brown Harriott, 18th South Atlantic Regional Director

This event is not just a recognition of past accomplishments but a celebration of an enduring legacy—one that will continue to inspire future generations of students, leaders, and community advocates.

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Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® (AKA), an international service organization, was founded on the campus of Howard University in Washington, D.C. in 1908. It is the oldest Greek-letter organization established by African American college educated women. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®, is composed of more than 325,000 initiated members in graduate and undergraduate chapters located in 12 countries including the United States, Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada, Dubai, Germany, Japan, Liberia, Nigeria, South Korea, South Africa and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Led by International President & CEO Danette Anthony Reed of Dallas, Texas, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, is often hailed as “America’s premier Greek-letter organization for Black women.” For more information on Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® and its programs, visit www.aka1908.com.

About the South Atlantic Region

With more than 25,000 graduate and undergraduate members in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina, the South Atlantic Region is the largest region in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®. The Honorable Tiffany Moore Russell, Esquire, leads the region in her role as South Atlantic Regional Director.