

Gamma Phi Beta

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GAMMA PHI BETA INTRODUCES THE BELONGING AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

September 22, 2020

Centennial, Colorado – Gamma Phi Beta is proud to announce the selection of the Belonging and Inclusion Committee (BIC).

In early 2019, the 2018-20 Gamma Phi Beta International Council (IC) established the Belonging and Inclusion Task Force (BITF). The BITF's charge was to recommend a strategy to increase members' competency and Sorority practices related to diversity, belonging and inclusion. In October 2019, the BITF submitted recommendations to IC based on their experiences and professional learning, listening tour results, individual appointments made to discuss the topic, as well as their general knowledge of current sorority culture, practices, policies and relationships. International Council accepted the report, and as a result established the Belonging and Inclusion Committee to carry out the work of the BITF.

The BIC is a standing committee appointed by IC to support their prioritization, identification and implementation of practices related to belonging, equity, diversity and inclusion (BEDI) in the context of Gamma Phi Beta Sorority. The BIC formation is a direct result of Gamma Phi Beta's work in this area the past two years. To view our progress and future work, visit GammaPhiBeta.org/PrioritiesAndActionPlan.

We asked our newly appointed committee members to answer questions about their hopes for the future of Gamma Phi Beta. Their passion and dedication belonging, equity, diversity and inclusion is clear in their responses. We are grateful for their leadership in this important arena.

Committee Chairwoman Rachel Christine (Texas A&M-Corpus Christi)



What do you hope to accomplish in your role on the Belonging and Inclusion Committee?

I hope to lead the team to a space where we can discuss and propose ideas that will lead to a more equitable Gamma Phi Beta experience for all current and future members.

What do you think the future of Gamma Phi Beta looks like?

The future of Gamma Phi Beta looks like women from all walks of life working together to help women lead the way. I believe that the vision of Gamma Phi Beta, "to inspire the highest type of womanhood," is



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exemplified by the idea that we support each other no matter our outward differences.

How will you bring your own unique skills to the table to advance Gamma Phi Beta's belonging and inclusion efforts?

I bring a knowledge of BEDI from a corporate and educational standpoint. Along with a passion and love for the sisterhood inside Gamma Phi Beta.

Why do you believe this committee and the work it will do is so important?

I love our organization. I love the things that we stand for. I believe that this committee will be able to show all members that we have a true love and loyalty for who they are as people inside the organization. And will also help to end the idea that sorority women have to be a monolith, we can be different and embrace those differences, but still be connected under shared basic values.

What would you like to see this committee do in its first three to six months?

I want this committee to start to feel like family and a safe space. I want the entire committee to feel like there are no dumb questions and no previously conceived boundaries that we cannot push for the betterment of our sisterhood.

Fraya Lynn Black (Michigan)



What do you hope to accomplish in your role on the Belonging and Inclusion Committee?

I am looking forward to serving as a member of the Belonging and Inclusion Committee because I believe the way to best address these serious issues and responsibilities is to acknowledge and tackle them head-on. I want to make a difference and impact by acting in a role to bring the belonging, diversity, equity, and inclusiveness topics to the table and facilitate open and honest dialog to enact meaningful action.

What would you like to see this committee do in its first three to six months?

After thoroughly reading and digesting the Belonging and Inclusion Task Force Report, I have a list of questions and topics to bring up for discussion. To begin, we need to finalize an action plan for organizing and implementing the report that considers timing (e.g., Now, six months, one year, etc.), prioritization and required resources. Some of the initial discussions the Committee could include defining inclusive terms, integrating belonging and inclusion items into communications/training, evaluating the Legacy Policy and discussing strategies and practices to attract, recruit and retain a diverse membership.



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2020-22 International Council Liaison Kelly Dunne (William & Mary)



What do you think the future of Gamma Phi Beta looks like?

I believe Gamma Phi Beta will be a place where our diverse membership is heard and celebrated. We will show love for and loyalty to each other by proactively creating a welcoming environment for all sisters.

How will you bring your own unique skills to the table to advance Gamma Phi Beta's belonging and inclusion efforts?

The Sorority's 2021-24 strategic plan focuses on creating and sustaining an inclusive and diverse membership. As a member of International Council (IC), I will serve as a liaison, integrating the efforts of IC and the BIC as we work to achieve this vital goal.

Teresa Haney (Northern Arizona)



What do you think the future of Gamma Phi Beta looks like?

I envision a Gamma Phi Beta where all women can find a place to belong and be accepted for the differences they bring. An inclusive sisterhood that celebrates each woman for who she is, acknowledging her as a person first regardless of social or racial identity, religious preference and/or disability. The quintessence use of practices and programs which are truly reflective of the diversity of our sisterhood in Gamma Phi Beta.

How will you bring your own unique skills to the table to advance Gamma Phi Beta's belonging and inclusion efforts?

Volunteering with Gamma Phi Beta for 14 years, I intend on bringing a wealth of knowledge to best support our collegiate and alumnae members and chapters. Thinking beyond the normative especially during our current climate is imperative, and as an innovative thinker I am ecstatic to help formulate new ideas and bridging the gaps. Every team needs a cheerleader when striving to obtain higher standards and unprecedented measures and I am a natural encourager. I look forward to championing Gamma Phi Beta to create a space for all members starting from recruitment and into alumna membership. I plan on communicating from a place of love, warmth, and understanding as I recognize everyone may have a different perspective yet something of value in advancing Gamma Phi Beta's belonging and inclusion efforts.

Why do you believe this committee and the work it will do is so important?

Our four Founders were bold, courageous and broke the mold which this committee is continuing their example to help steer Gamma Phi Beta. The work of the Belonging and Inclusion Committee is imperative



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to the future of our Sorority as the world around us is changing and Gamma Phi Beta must continue to evolve as well.

Allison McMurry (Oklahoma City)



Why do you believe this committee and the work it will do is so important?

The work of this committee is so important because there are so many women currently in Gamma Phi who do not feel fully accepted and loved as sisters, and they deserve to feel like they belong in their sisterhood. Additionally, there are women who share our values and would thrive in this community, but perceived or experienced barriers to membership because of their identity. This committee will begin to do the tangible work of breaking down those barriers to make our sisterhood more accessible to all women and a place of true belonging for all sisters.

What do I hope to accomplish in my role on the Belonging and Inclusion Committee?

I hope to successfully be a passionate collegiate voice who advocates for collegians who do not feel like they belong and to create changes that will aid in their belonging and inclusion in their sisterhood. I hope to take actions that will make collegians feel included and like their voice is being heard. I want us to begin to acknowledge our past as we create a more inclusive future.

Lynnette Phillips (North Dakota)



What do you think the future of Gamma Phi Beta looks like?

I believe the future of Gamma Phi Beta looks and feels like an engaged group of collegians and alumnae actively impacting their local and global communities through the shared values of Love, Labor, Learning and Loyalty.

How will you bring your own unique skills to the table to advance Gamma Phi Beta's belonging and inclusion efforts?

As a coach I know it is often not about asking a lot of questions but the 'right question.' This coupled with the work that I do to uncover deep in the subconscious a clear understanding of values and beliefs and how that impacts our thoughts, feelings, and actions brings light to the emotional intelligence development that works hand in hand with diversity and inclusion work.



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Zach Shirley (Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.)



What do you hope to accomplish in your role on the Belonging and Inclusion Committee?

I hope to do my part to assist Gamma Phi Beta in forging one of the many paths in creating and nurturing a more inclusive and equitable experience for the members of the Sorority. As we work collectively to address the concepts of diversity, access and belonging across the fraternity/sorority world, I want to contribute to the work that Gamma Phi Beta is doing as one of the first organizations to start this conversation for the betterment of the entire experience.

How will you bring your own unique skills to the table to advance Gamma Phi Beta's belonging and inclusion efforts?

As a campus-based fraternity/sorority professional of 15 years, I have had the opportunity to work alongside talented and passionate fraternity/sorority students, advisors and headquarters staff, and with a diverse set of campuses as a fraternity/sorority advisor. My professional experience has allowed me the chance to learn best practices from both my own organization and organizations across multiple councils, thus providing me the knowledge and experience to combine the best of what works and have an eye for what does not. Also, as an individual who is not affiliated with Gamma Phi Beta through membership, I hope to bring an eye of an individual from the outside to help inform our work as the committee through the lens of a friend to the organization who has worked with partner groups to better the experience of all members across the board.

Kelsi Wall (British Columbia)



What do you hope to accomplish in your role on the Belonging and Inclusion Committee?

I hope that at the end of this committee's tenure, considerations of belonging, equity, diversity and inclusion are starting to be incorporated into all aspects of Gamma Phi Beta's operations. From the chapter level to our workforce, we need a cultural shift in our practices to make strides in this area. Coming from a policy background, I hope that I can raise questions about changes in policies and practices in areas that may not have an obvious impact on belonging and inclusion.



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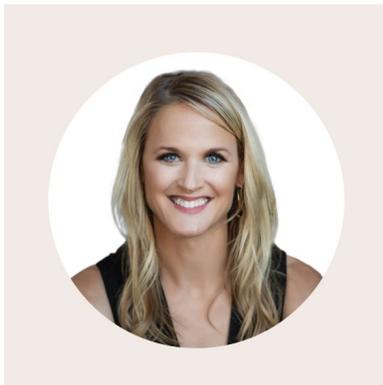
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Why do you believe this committee and the work it will do is so important?

The work of this committee is extremely important because if we, as Gamma Phi Betas, truly want to live our values we need to look inward to ensure that our organization is a welcoming, safe and positive place for all members. This will entail asking many hard questions but it's vital work if we want to ensure that every member feels at home in Gamma Phi.

Staff Liaison and Executive Director Megan Wick (Washington State)



What do you hope to accomplish in your role on the Belonging and Inclusion Committee?

In my role on the committee, I hope to provide clarity and access for the committee to the organization overall. My hope is to provide the information and support they need to navigate and make change in Gamma Phi Beta.

What do you think the future of Gamma Phi Beta looks like?

I think the future of Gamma Phi Beta looks inclusive and represents a diversity of thought and identity. This can be accomplished by auditing and rebuilding our processes and systems through a new lens of belonging, equity, diversity and inclusion.

How will you bring your own unique skills to the table to advance Gamma Phi Beta's belonging and inclusion efforts?

I am deeply committed to Gamma Phi Beta and ensuring the future of our sisterhood. This can only be done by our willingness to explore and acknowledge our history and how our sisterhood has been built and sustained over time. My ability to question, listen and make change in the organization will help the committee move forward and make an impact.

Why do you believe this committee and the work it will do is so important?

The future of Gamma Phi Beta and the membership it offers is so important to thousands of women, across many generations. This committee is critical to Gamma Phi Beta remaining relevant, resilient and able to evolve to be truly reflective of the generations of women entering college today.

What would you like to see this committee do in its first three to six months?

I would like the committee to establish immediate transparency and communication across all ages of membership. I want our entire membership to know the work we are doing, the changes we are working to make and how all members can be engaged in and support this work.



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Gamma Phi Beta is dedicated to diversity, belonging, equity and inclusion. We are committed to a focused, thorough, deliberate and actionable process that is rooted in and guided by our four Core Values: Love, Labor Learning and Loyalty. Gamma Phi Beta should be an organization where all members feel welcome and equally valued at all stages of their membership.

As we continue our commitment to being an inclusive organization, we understand that some changes will happen quickly, and other changes will require due diligence and time. Ultimately, we will show our members this year through action and accountability that our commitment to inclusion is unwavering, and stronger than ever.

ABOUT

Gamma Phi Beta was founded on November 11, 1874, at Syracuse University by four bold and courageous women. The Sorority's mission is to build confident women of character who celebrate sisterhood and make a difference in the world around them. Headquartered in Centennial, Colorado, the Sorority has chartered 189 collegiate chapters across the United States and Canada and has more than 224,000 collegiate and alumnae members worldwide.



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