

Gamma Phi Beta

TRUE AND CONSTANT

MEET THE GAMMA PHI BETA INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL: STEPHANIE CARRIERE (ARIZONA)

November 2, 2020

Centennial, Colorado – On June 27, 2020, Gamma Phi Beta made history by hosting our 79th Convention on a virtual platform due to COVID-19. During this time, we elected a new International Council (IC) for 2020-22. Collectively, this IC has 142 years of Gamma Phi Beta volunteer service at local, regional and international levels. They are all active community members and accomplished in their fields. Professionally, these leaders demonstrate deep experience in finance, education, social services, technology, marketing and counseling. Together, they will lead our organization through the next biennium's challenges and opportunities and continue to strengthen Gamma Phi Beta.

We asked each member of IC to answer a few questions about what they hope to accomplish in this biennium, as it relates to [the 2021-24 Strategic Plan](#). Meet Stephanie Carriere (Arizona). Stephanie is currently serving her second term as a Vice President on IC. To learn more about Steph, check out her bio on [the International Council page on our website](#).



Knowing strategic financial discipline is a priority, how will you show fiscal responsibility for our organization?

We show fiscal responsibility for our organization by ensuring decisions we make are financially sound. We review financial statements, the budget, cash flow, investment outcomes, etc. with a critical eye and ask questions to ensure we understand the Sorority's current financial position. Like our collegiate chapters practice, we also must make certain we have sufficient reserves set aside so the Sorority can operate, especially when unanticipated events like a pandemic occur. Because finance is not my strongest skill, I will continue to ask thoughtful questions and challenge

decisions as appropriate to ensure our financial decisions are not only strategic but also disciplined to help us achieve our mission and vision.

Why is having innovative and accessible lifetime member engagement important?

Our members made a lifetime commitment to Gamma Phi Beta and it is important we honor that commitment by providing innovative and accessible membership engagement opportunities. As we have grown, we have found a one-size-fits all approach does not necessarily promote lifetime engagement for our members. To engage all sisters throughout their lifetime, we must focus on making membership innovative, so our members find value in their membership at all stages of their adult lives. When we engage our members, Gamma Phi Beta is stronger. By focusing on making our membership experience more accessible, we also promote the idea of bringing more members into our sisterhood. We need to not



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only break down barriers keeping potential members from joining our Sorority but also barriers causing our initiated sisters to lose touch with us.

What will you bring to the table regarding belonging, inclusion, equity and diversity?

As an educator, the students with whom I worked did not achieve and succeed in the typical school setting provided to them. The behavioral expectations, academic requirements and general environment did not always promote belonging, inclusion, equity or diversity. Although we often discussed leveling the playing field for students, we really had to work to reframe not only the playing field but also the game we were playing so that all our students felt a sense of belonging, which in turn increased academic achievement. I strive to do that same thing with Gamma Phi Beta now. Not all women feel they have a space in our sisterhood and that can be changed. By identifying barriers, removing them and educating our membership on why we need to make changes, we can provide a more inclusive, diverse sisterhood where members and potential new members feel they belong.

What is a professional experience you will bring to the table when addressing the top three priorities of the strategic plan?

As a former school administrator with a background in special education, I bring professional experience to the table for the strategic plan's three priorities this biennium. In terms of inclusive and diverse membership, I worked with students who came from a variety of socioeconomic statuses. Students came from different countries and practiced a variety of religions; they varied in their abilities. It was my job to support these students in their education by meeting them where they were, tailoring their education to meet their needs and ensuring the staff were prepared to do this work - all while focusing on financial discipline. We had an extremely specific budget and had to ensure our financial expenditures were based upon our students' needs and our strategic plan. If we found we could not fund all requests, we had to make tough decisions and prioritize spending focused on annual strategic imperatives. Then we went to work, trying to find funding through other resources (e.g., grant writing and community partnerships) to possibly fund additional requests. A school administrator also understands the importance of innovative and accessible member engagement. If students are not engaged in their education, they run the risk of not graduating. Although my professional focus was to promote engagement through high school, I hoped I could promote lifelong learning in students. Most students with whom I worked throughout the years would not go on to attend college and if they did, were very unlikely to join a fraternity or sorority due to affordability. I bring a true understanding of those issues to the table as we discuss lifetime member engagement that is both innovative and accessible.

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 190 collegiate chapters across the United States and Canada and has more than 231,000 collegiate and alumnae members worldwide.



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