

The Making of Alpha Xi Chapter

Alpha Xi Chapter had its inception in 1976 when Cleveland area Theta Phi sisters were contacted by Mary Lou Conrad Swartz (then Board of Trustees Chair) to start a Cleveland area alum group. Bebe Russo Lombardo (Delta) along with Elaine Wilson (Epsilon), Laura Taddeo Stephan (Tau) and Linda Soeder (Alpha Zeta) were the women who answered Mary Lou's call for extension. In the Fall of 1977 a Cleveland area alumnae group was activated with sixteen members. Once the alumna group was established, it became time to initiate the groundwork to develop an active Theta Phi Alpha chapter at Cleveland State University (CSU).

The Cleveland State University was contacted via Dean of Student Group Services, Peg Polley and Student Activities Coordinator, Sarina Fleischer. At this time, CSU was evaluating bids from two other Panhellenic sororities for colonization. Happily, Theta Phi Alpha was chosen to be the first Panhellenic sorority on CSU's campus.

Once the bid was accepted by the Cleveland State University the alumna group began working. The Fall of 1977 brought alum planning teas, rush parties and open houses, all seemingly to no avail. Fortunately, the perseverance of these fine women continued until the Spring of 1978 when Maryann Ratusnik (then president of the Golden Heart little sister group) brought a group of interested women with her to join the ranks of Theta Phi Alpha sorority. Along with other prospective rushees, these women are credited with forming the first pledge class at CSU, and thus colonizing the Alpha Xi Chapter. Rush in the Fall of 1978 pledged ten more women who would complete the twenty member requirement for National initiation.

Alpha Xi Chapter was initiated on January 6, 1979 at Mather Mansion on the campus of Cleveland State University. Those who made it possible for the initiation of Alpha Xi Chapter through of