

# Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, Inc.

## The Southern Region

### Regional Directors



Soror Kay Davis  
Beta Nu



Soror Rosa  
Cochran, Emeritus  
Beta Nu  
Served 13 years



Soror Gertrude  
Sanders  
Alpha Xi



Soror Junnie Craig  
Alpha Pi



Soror Mary Williams  
Beta Nu



Soror Mary  
Blankenship  
Gamma Rho



Soror Jo Jean  
Sherman  
Alpha Alpha



Soror Mary Williams  
Hardick  
Beta Nu



Soror Deborah  
Hudson  
Alpha Pi



Soror Kartessa Bell  
Delta Alpha

The first appointed Southern Regional Director of Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, Inc. was Dr. Kay Davis. She accepted the task of expanding the sorority. She sat in her Willard High School classroom in Dayton, Ohio, in the Northern Region wondering how she would accomplish her goal of organizing a chapter in the Southern Region. At the spur of the moment, she walked across the hall to her coworker's classroom and asked her if she knew anybody in the south. The reply was "Yes, Mrs. Susie B. Whetestone in Montgomery, Alabama."

At the close of the school day, she placed a long distance call to Mrs. Whetestone explaining who she was and how she had obtained information about her. Continuing the conversation, she told Mrs. Whetestone the purpose of her call was to secure a contact person who would recruit potential members with two or more years of college education to join Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, a national organization of business and professional women, with headquarters in Detroit, Michigan. Mrs. Whetestone accepted to serve as the contact person, and in two weeks she telephoned Dr. Davis saying that there were 18 eager professional young women ready to accept the challenge. One week later, Dr. Davis arrived in Montgomery on a late Friday night flight. She spent the night in the home of Mrs. Whetestone, who then rolled out the red carpet welcoming mat of southern hospitality. The time spent was memorable.

Saturday evening 18 ladies gathered at the residence of Mrs. Whetestone to be introduced to Dr. Kay Davis. The group was given explanation of phases of Gamma Phi Delta Sorority in the organizing of a Pledge Club. The material was distributed to the group for learning, getting a transcript for college, and two letters of recommendation with joining fee payment.

Saturday, March 10, 1956, marked an important date for 18 professional women who assembled on the Campus Center of Alabama State College (now Alabama State University) for the initiation ceremony into Gamma Phi Delta Sorority. Presiding at the Installation was Dr. Kay Davis, first appointed Southern Regional Director. The first Basileus of newly formed Alpha Alpha Chapter was the late Mrs. Susie Whetestone.

Alpha Alpha Chapter (Alabama) was the first chapter organized in the South Region, which later included Florida, until the split in 1988. These historical facts were gathered by the late Soror Emsie G. Cummings of Alpha Alpha Chapter.

The Southern Region is comprised of chapters and members-at-large in Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Chapters include the following:

Alpha Pi - Montevallo, Alabama  
Delta Alpha - Jackson, Mississippi  
Delta Gamma (Undergraduate) - Jackson, Mississippi  
Gamma Gamma - Greenville, Mississippi  
Gamma Rho - Birmingham, Alabama  
Zeta Alpha - Memphis, Tennessee

**Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, Inc.  
43<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Southern Regional Conference  
Memphis, Tennessee  
March 10-12, 2017**







The Southern Region works diligently “empowering women and inspiring leaders.” At the local and regional levels, this dynamic group implements activities that include youth, community service, health promotion, education, social action, and economic development with professionalism.

The Southern Region believes that communication is key to achieving goals and improving the “The Solid South.” Officer and chapter training includes weekly, bi-weekly,

or monthly one-to-one sessions via face-to-face, teleconference, and video or web conference. To empower leaders and members-at-large and to strengthen chapters and the entire membership, Regional Director Ms. Kartessa Bell launched the *Regional Director Tour*, which is specific and unique to each chapter; *The Regional Membership Task Force* specific for each state or region; *The Member-at-Large Coalition*; and *The Regional Director Exchange*, a collaborative communication endeavor for the entire regional membership.

To further advance goals and rebrand the region in 2016, the Southern Region amplified its on-line presence with new social accounts (Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter) and the first regional logo.

### **2017-2019 Southern Regional Officers:**

Regional Director Soror Kartessa Bell (Life Member)  
Assistant Regional Director/Organizer Soror Shirley Carey  
Grammateus Soror Vernita James  
Financial Grammateus Soror DeQuebanese Norton  
Tamas Soror Keisha Kimbrough  
Editor Soror Linda McCray  
Anti-Grammateus Soror Charity Ware  
Nominating Representative Soror Katherine Thicklen



### **Past National Officers from the Southern Region:**

- Supreme Basileus Dr. Catherine Bozeman (deceased) from Selma, Alabama
- Supreme Second Anti Basileus Dr. Gertrude Sanders (deceased) from Birmingham, Alabama
- Immediate Past Supreme First Anti Basileus Ms. Shirley Carey from Jackson, Mississippi

Dr. Gertrude Sanders leaves us with a challenge. She stated that the one word written across the very zenith of the educational skies high above all others is SERVICE. She postulated that to implement the five-point program, Sorors should

**S**ee a need and fill it.

**E**nter a program and complete it.

**R**ecognize an opportunity and seize it.

**V**isualize an obstacle and avoid it.

**I**nternalize one's potentials and use them.

**C**apitalize on your expertise and share it.

**E**ducate youth for the 21st century.

As there is much work to be completed, the Southern Region will continue to provide a vision for the future, especially in the areas of membership development, chapter excellence, partnerships, and service.

*Historical information compiled by Past Regional Director Soror Mary Williams Hardrick.  
Narrative updated by Immediate Past Regional Director Soror Deborah Hudson and  
Regional Director Soror Kartessa Bell.*