

## Phi Alpha Delta History

The origin of Phi Alpha Delta is unique in that it is the only law fraternity whose roots were nurtured in a legal controversy. On November 4, 1897, the Supreme Court of Illinois adopted a rule for admission to the Illinois Bar which seriously affected many of the students then preparing for admission. To protect their rights, they organized the "Law Student League," which secured the passage of an act by the Illinois Legislature which exempted the students then studying for the bar from certain requirements of the rule. The Illinois Supreme Court, however, refused to recognize these exemptions, whereupon a test case was taken directly to the Supreme Court of Illinois (see in re Application of Henry M. Day, et al, 181 ILL. 73). The League was partially successful in this new undertaking. The members of the League, wishing to preserve the close associate formed in this common struggle, formed the Lambda Epsilon Fraternity in 1898, with Lambda standing for "law" and Epsilon for "equity."

Soon it became apparent that this type of organization was of universal interest within the legal profession and that it should be reorganized to allow its benefits to become available throughout the legal profession. The delegates to the convention held at the Colonial Tavern in South Haven, Michigan, on July 16, 1902 unanimously adopted a resolution dissolving Lambda Epsilon. The next day, the South Haven Articles were signed which were to become the foundation of Phi Alpha Delta. A committee was appointed to suggest a method of procedure. After several months of arduous work a meeting was held in Chicago on November 8, 1902, and the Articles, Constitution, Ritual and Rules governing the organization of were proposed and formally adopted together with the name of "Phi Alpha Delta."

Within a month Blackstone, Story, Fuller, Webster and Marshall Chapters were installed. By 1910, the roster had increased to twenty-three in number. Subsequently, Phi Alpha Delta secure in its principles and purposes has weathered war and depression and has proceeded along a steady, conservative policy of expansion until at this writing there are 196 chapters chartered at law schools in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and Mexico, and 97 alumni chapters. The Fraternity has initiated over 270,000 members into chapters at accredited schools only.

In September of 1970 Phi Alpha Delta became the first law fraternity to admit women. In 1972 Phi Delta Delta Law Fraternity, the leading fraternity for women was, by joint action, merged into Phi Alpha Delta and 5,000 leading women judges, attorneys and educators became members of Phi Alpha Delta.

The Public Service Center was created in 1978 to conduct foundation-type activities for the Fraternity, and is funded primarily through Federal grants. Its principal activity has been in the area of law related education, and has, since its inception, provided an opportunity for the members to teach young people about the law.

The 1980 Convention adopted a program of Pre-Law Chapters and in the Spring of 1981 the first Pre-Law Chapter of the Fraternity was established at Southwest Missouri State University. Today there are over 270 Pre-Law chapters chartered.

The fraternity continues to grow and expand its services, benefits and programs to members all across the world.

*Ray Judice*

Last Past Supreme Justice, and author of Phi Alpha Delta . . .The History Continues,

*C. Raymond Judice (Houston, '59)*