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24



Post-Retreat Letter



Dear Beta Alpha Forever Sorors,

I'm thrilled to share that the BADST Forever Level-up Retreat has sparked some truly strategic ideas. These ideas, born from our collective passion and commitment, will undoubtedly help us elevate our brand and impact within our beloved chapter. In the spirit of these ideas, we are diligently laying the groundwork for the BADST Forever Level-up Foundation. This foundation, set to launch officially in late 2025/early 2026, is designed to support, enhance, and contribute to the professional development of our alumnae, Beta Alpha Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. The Executive Committee, with their leadership and commitment, has already begun shaping the framework and key pillars of the organization, with the BADST Forever Level-up Retreat as a central pillar.

On September 1, 2024, I transitioned to becoming the Board Chair of the BADST Forever Level-up Foundation. I asked Courtney Hughes Phelps to succeed me as the Committee Chair of the BADST Forever Level-up Retreat. Courtney served on the planning committee for our inaugural event and led the fundraising efforts. Under her leadership, we raised over \$68k! I'm

confident that she and her committee will raise even more money for our next retreat while curating high-quality programming to elevate and encourage our sisters to connect, build, and level up their professional and personal lives.

Sorors who have agreed to join me on the foundation's Executive Committee are Sharon Lettman-Hicks, Vice Chairwoman (Spring '88), Timicka Carrol Anderson, Treasurer (Spring '93), and Leigh Hughes, Secretary (Fall '96).

As volunteers dedicated to helping our sisters advance in life, we are deeply grateful for your continued support and prayers. Your grace throughout this process is needed and invaluable. Stay tuned for future announcements and ways in which you can be a part of these efforts.

In Sisterly Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erica", written in a fluid, cursive style.

Erica McGeachy Crenshaw
BADST Forever Foundation, Board Chair
(Spr. '98)





Event Summary

From February 22-24, 2024, hundreds of sisters initiated into the Beta Alpha Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. gathered in Atlanta, Georgia, to participate in the inaugural BADST Forever Level Up Retreat (LUR). Sorors shared, learned, laughed, cried, hugged, cheered, celebrated, connected, and supported each other in unprecedented ways. The planning committee encouraged Sorors to step outside their comfort zones and take a leap of faith in embracing our vision. As educated Black women (from the highest of seven hills), we know to ask questions, and Lord knows y'all asked them! It took some work to get Sorors to take the leap, but once you did it, you did it in a way that only the BADST can do it. Sorors showed up with a level of energy that can still be felt eight months later.



We dove into a broad range of professional topics spanning from building your personal brand, being an industry trailblazer, and leading in the classroom to weathering the storm when facing career challenges. We got real personal as we discussed subjects such as the motherhood journey, building generational wealth, and caring for elderly parents. You could not only feel our vivacity rising, but also our lives leveling up as our amazing MCs, KJ Rose and Kito Johorri, ushered us flawlessly through life-altering discussion after discussion. If the weekend could not have been any better, we were beyond honored when our phenomenal past National President, Soror Beverly Smith, showed up and declared that in hosting this BADST Forever Level Up Retreat, we were the originators and that “BADST is Bad ASS”!

What People Are Saying

“The BADST Level UP Retreat was a masterclass in so many ways, on so many issues, at so many levels.” ~ **Kristin Harper, CEO, Driven to Succeed**

“The retreat that I didn't know I needed. It was retreat-ing. It was giving personal coach, executive coach, therapist, financial planner, and praise and worship team, anointed warrior, what else?! Well done planning team and BADST Sorors. Cup overflowing” ~ **Donna Doleman Dickerson, Chief Marketing Officer, University of Michigan Credit Union**

“I am still reveling in the expertise, energy and enthusiasm of my phenomenal sorority sisters who were also able to attend.” ~ **Camille Pierce, SVP, Chief Culture Officer, Campbell's**

“You all have restored my belief in Sisterhood, Black Excellence, Community, and Collective Empowerment. I am so filled that I am trying to unpack all that was shared and all that was gained.” ~ **Sharon Lettman-Hicks, former CEO/Board Chair, National Black Justice Coalition**

“Sometimes, you don't realize what you don't know until you find yourself in a room full of people who do—and are generous enough to share that knowledge. We have an entire village of wise individuals, and I am truly grateful that steps were taken to foster an active exchange of knowledge.” ~ **El Brown, Founder and CEO, KinderJam**

Request for Volunteers

Sorors, this is just the beginning! We have so much to learn and share with one another. We hope to host the next BADST Forever Level Up Retreat in Fall 2025. We cannot do this alone. We are so grateful to all the Sorors who jumped in to offer financial and physical support for this first event. We could NOT have done it without you. You showed us what sisterhood is all about. But we need more of you! The BADST Forever Level Up Retreat is for BADST Forever Sorors, by BADST Forever Sorors. Please send us an email at badstforeverfamu@gmail.com if you are interested in serving on a committee, have sponsorship contacts, or are interested in being a presenting Soror.

Survey Says

We are thrilled to report that the survey results were overwhelmingly positive. With near unanimity, Sorors expressed their satisfaction with all aspects of the retreat. The enthusiasm was palpable, and the message was clear: You want more! Key highlights included: a desire for extended breakout sessions, more opportunities for bonding, additional ways to maintain connections, and further exploration of content. Your input drives our planning, and we are grateful for your active participation in shaping our sisterhood experience. We are committed to incorporating your suggestions to make future events even more rewarding.





Sorors have taken to heart and to action what they have learned and experienced at BADST Forever Level Up Retreat. We are *leveling up* everywhere and in all aspects of our lives! Sorors are connecting, stepping up, asking for their worth, transitioning careers, supporting each other's endeavors, organizing finances, and planning for future generations. We are on a new level!



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Some success stories and highlights...

01

Building a Foundation

The formation and development of the BADST Forever Level Up Foundation.

02

Sorors Supporting Sorors

BADST Forever LUR allowed us the opportunity to shine the spotlight on several BADST Forever Soror entrepreneurs. Sorors showcased their product at BADST Forever LUR, and Sorors got to experience the greatness of what our BADST Forever Sorors can produce. We love to see Sorors supporting each other's endeavors post-retreat. Soror Ann Marie Mingo is a stellar example of that support as she shared via a social media post about shopping BADST products Shay Latte and TLB during a layover in Atlanta airport.

03

Asking for What You're Worth

Soror Denitra Baldwin received a \$50k guaranteed retention bonus that will be eligible for renewal every three years, and she credits BADST Forever LUR for giving her the courage and confidence to ask for what she is worth. Through her AT&T mentors, Denitra learned that the company offers a retention bonus program for employees who have proven performance and added value to the business. Attending BADST LUR made Denitra realize she needed to step out on faith and ask for more money, even amid company layoffs. It became clear to her during one of the sessions that now was the time to act. She and her family have "leveled up".



04

Collaborations within BA

The Lip Bar and HBCU Culture Shop have joined forces in a partnership that officially launched Tuesday, October 1st, bringing together two fantastic brands to celebrate our heritage and beauty. This collaboration is a direct result of the networking and shared experiences fostered during our event, demonstrating the tangible outcomes and power of our gatherings.

We encourage everyone to support this amazing collaboration, which stands as a testament to the incredible achievements possible when we come together.



05

Tell Us Your Stories

Please share with us what you have done post BADST Forever LUR to level-up your personal and/or professional life.



Headshots

Please email

badstforeverfamu@gmail.com

for a custom link to your Headshot
photo album!



