

Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Incorporated

Founder's Day 2021



Good Evening, Sorors, today is Founder's Day and we are gathered together across Iotaland to celebrate 92 years of Iota history. As we go through life, we are faced with many adversities. How we react to those adversities says a lot about us personally and professionally. In 1929, during the time of great adversity and hardship, our Founder, Mrs. Lola Mercedes Parker took a risk and went forward with her idea to start an organization to encourage young African American women to upgrade their skills to help advance their careers in the business field and look where we are today.

Mrs. Parker did not allow the "Great Depression" which was the worst economic event in the history of the world, lasting from 1929 to 1939, to stop her. She took a risk and went forward with her idea, guiding us through the years of the depression and recovery. Today, we honor the tenacity of our leaders and members, who embodied the vision of our founder, Mrs. Lola Mercedes Parker. We honor their determination, resolve and persistence in carrying out the mission and aims of this great sisterhood. We say to them, we are still here and going strong!

Joseph Falkinburg, a professional wrestler, fitness instructor and motivational speaker known as, Diamond Dallas Page said, "In our personal and professional lives, we are constantly hit with one adversity after the other, most of which we have no control over. But the four things we have total control over is how we react, how we adapt, how we breathe, and how we take action."

As we pay homage to the legacy of these leaders and members, we must acknowledge the adversities that we faced this year. Not only did we face a worldwide pandemic, we also encountered economic and racial disparities, social injustice, police brutality and voter suppression. But these challenges did not stop us instead they brought out the best in us. We became more flexible, more determined and more resolute in overcoming these obstacles.

Members of Iota demonstrated the tenacity and strength of our ancestors, by not only surviving but flourishing during this past year. We watched as members and chapters adapted to the environment of virtual meetings, recruitment, initiations, inductions, activities and programs. We took action and set guidelines that members embraced, using Zoom meetings, webinars and Facebook Live to carry out Iota's mission. We participated in telephone campaigns, issued video statements and engaged in virtual and financial support for a number of organizations.

During this past year, as illustrated by our regional conferences, we have shown that Iota women are not only empowered and equipped as leaders to meet the challenges of today but they are ready to **Rise UP** and confront the challenges of tomorrow with collaboration, commitment and dedication, facing the future undaunted and untorn.

As we strive to make a difference in the lives of women and youth, we will continue to focus on designing programs that are innovative, forward thinking, creative and relevant. We must also continue to strengthen our sisterhood, building a sense of unity and cooperation.

Today, we gather on our 92nd Founder's Day to celebrate our history which has prepared us to move Upward and Onward in efficient service. Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Incorporated has stood the test of time and will continue to provide educational opportunities to women and youth in our communities. We pledge to continue to be a vital of our sorority, using our creativity and skills to enhance the ability of Iota to have an even brighter and more prosperous future. Have a wonderful Founder's Day!

Sisterly,

Dorothy M White

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23rd National President