

IOTA PHI LAMBDA, SORORITY, INC.



“Business and Professional Women Building the Foundation for Generational Financial Empowerment”

Sorors,

Today is Founder’s Day 2022. Today we are ninety-three years old, can you imagine the tenacity and resolve needed to survive for ninety-three years. The longevity of our existence illustrates that our founder, Mrs. Lola M. Founder and her six friends built a foundation that is still relevant today. The programs and projects were developed in a manner that still addresses the issues of today. They have stood the test of time.

As we look forward to our centennial birthday in 2029, we acknowledge that we are firmly “grounded in respect for the past”, but we must continue to grow for the future”. To prepare for the future, we must set goals to ensure that we will be relevant ninety-three years from today. As an organization, we understand that change is unavoidable and also essential to our growth. We must commit ourselves to fulfill the dream and mission of our Founder and her six friends. The mission, they envisioned, for Iota was one of inspiration, encouragement and assistance for women and youth. As Marcus Garvey stated, “A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.”

So, today as we celebrate our 93rd birthday, we pledge to build upon the ideas and aims of our founder, look towards the future and set goals to ensure that we survive for another ninety- three years. We must also address the risk factors that may affect the future liability of Iota.

During the next seven years we will strive to carry out the goals we are putting in place now to grow our membership, enhance our programs and projects, strengthen our relationship with our affiliates and develop more organizational partnerships. These goals will allow us to make a greater impact in the community. They will also help us to meet the challenges of social and racial injustice, voting rights and health care equity for our communities.

But, Sorors, we must also reevaluate our organization and develop strategies to encourage more participation in our programs and projects; Streamline our path to leadership, making sure that we are taking advantage of the skills possessed by our membership; Clarify and update our Bylaws, making sure that they are clearly stated and understood; Develop the pathway to earning CEU credits for our membership; Design a benefit package that comes with membership; And most of all we must come to grips with purchasing and sustaining a national headquarters. We are losing valuable archives that can never be replaced because they are housed across the country in members’ homes. We must strengthen

our ability to reclaim our material from individual homes and relocate them to a central headquarters that does not change from one administration to another.

And, lastly, as an organization charged with working with youth, we must encourage more chapters to work with our youth, including organizing a Future Iota Leaders Auxiliary. A structured youth group provides the best opportunity for us to have a sustained impact on today's youth, where we not only teach financial literacy and entrepreneurship, but also the principles of leadership and ethical behavior.

I recently heard a sermon entitled "Burn the Boat". The idea was that many people do not fully commit to a plan or idea, because they already have a built-in exit plan. If the boat is still available, you have an avenue of escape. But if you burn the boat, you have to make it work, there is no other way out.

Some of our members join Iota as a stepping stone to other organizations, so they never fully commit to the work and success of Iota. They already have an exit plan in mind when Iota fulfills its purpose. The only way we can be assured that we are still here for the next ninety- three years and our impact is widespread, is to fully embrace the vision of our founder and fully commit to the future of Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc.

As we come together on this first day of June 2022, we rededicate our talents, ingenuity, imagination and creativity to the mission upon which Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc. was built. We pledge to fully embrace the principles of Iota as penned by our founder, Mrs. Lola Mercedes Parker, to serve the community and encourage our members.

Sorors, we can only accomplish these goals if we burn that exit plan and fully commit to the future and longevity of Iota. As Pat Riley, the basketball coach stated, "There are only two options regarding commitment; you're either in or you're out. There's no such thing as life in- between."

Enjoy this day, fully commit to the success and longevity of Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc. and Have a wonderful Founder's Day.

Sisterly,

Dorothy M. White

23rd National President