

Chi Omega Gamma Beta

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION: COMMITMENT TO ACTION

June 2020; Revised February 2021

The Gamma Beta Chapter of Chi Omega stands with the Black community and our sisters of all backgrounds, ethnicities, and races in the fight against systemic racism and injustice. The sections below detail our commitment to action, including tangible, permanent changes we have made to our chapter to make Chi Omega a more welcoming and inclusive space for all Black women and women of color.

ADDRESSING THE HISTORY OF RACISM IN GREEK LIFE

To begin understanding how we can aid in dismantling racism, both as individual members and as an organization, we must first acknowledge our racist history. We recognize our institution's past participation in upholding racism and how we have failed to take the necessary actions to not only fight against it, but make Black women and women of color feel safe and welcome in our chapter.

It is crucial to recognize that Chi Omega was founded in 1895, when Black people and people of color were excluded from attending universities. Colleges did not desegregate until the year 1954. It took until the 1960s for WGLOs (white Greek life organizations) to completely eliminate policies that prohibited race-based membership. Even when permitted to join sororities, they experienced – and still experience – racial discrimination. We have failed to recognize how white elitist foundations have had a deleterious influence on our organization's current behaviors and events. This shortcoming has contributed to the perpetuation of systemic oppression, discrimination, and anti-Blackness. We have not paid proper attention to our own privilege and how our organization's past behaviors have contributed to anti-Blackness and discrimination in the United States today.

With that being said, we sincerely apologize to any and all Black women and women of color who experienced racism, discrimination, and exclusion of any kind at the hands of our chapter. Although we can never make up for the unacceptable and inexcusable actions of previous members, we promise and commit to never repeating them, in addition to cultivating an environment all Black women and women of color feel safe, welcome, and encouraged to participate in.

While our members reflect the diversity at UCLA, we have not done sufficient work to make Black women and women of color feel that they are welcome, fully supported, and have a voice in our community, and for that, we deeply apologize. Our failure to create an inclusive space for women of color, especially Black women, includes microaggressions during the recruitment process, within our chapter's culture, and in daily life as Panhellenic and collegiate women. We must and will do better to correct what has gone unaddressed for too long.

The Gamma Beta Chapter is committed to sustaining our active allyship and doing the long-overdue work to dismantle the harmful structures that have been conducive to racism in our organization. The following steps are a lifelong commitment that our organization and each of its members are taking to ensure that we are educating ourselves and others, addressing the racism in this organization, and taking action to create a more inclusive space for all Black women and women of color.

DONATIONS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Below outlines the first of many fundraising efforts Chi Omega will lead to financially support organizations better equipped to fight racial and social injustice and inequity in the UCLA and Los Angeles communities as well as in the and greater United States.

- * In June of 2020, UCLA Chi Omega chapter members individually fundraised for the [ACLU](#), [NAACP](#), and [Public Allies](#). Donations were tripled by Illumina, for a total of \$12,858 raised.
- * In July of 2020, a portion of the chapter's internal funds (\$500) was donated to [Black Women's Blueprint](#), which works to place Black women and girls' lives squarely within the larger racial justice concerns of Black communities.
- * The DEI Committee selected [RISE](#), an organization focused on student-led advocacy that fights to make higher education accessible to all, as the beneficiary of the proceeds of multiple DEI-sponsored events. As of January 2021, our chapter has raised over \$1,800, and future events throughout the school year will continue to benefit this organization.

ESTABLISHMENT OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

At the start of Fall Quarter 2020 in October, the Gamma Beta Chapter established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to educate chapter members on both the history and continuation of racism and discrimination and how to dismantle it in our chapter and communities. The committee consists of six chairwomen who oversee a general committee, composed of as many chapter members who wish to participate. The chairpositions include DEI of Campus Activities, Career and Personal Development, Marketing, Philanthropy, Sisterhood, and Social. To view the mission statements and goals of each of the chairwomen, click on their individual links.

[DEI of Campus Activities](#)

[DEI of Career and Personal Development](#)

[DEI of Marketing](#)

[DEI of Philanthropy](#)

[DEI of Sisterhood](#)

[DEI of Social](#)

HOLDING EACH OTHER ACCOUNTABLE

Our chapter has a zero-tolerance policy for racism. Any member exhibiting racist actions or speech will be removed from the chapter immediately. To best enforce this policy, we will equip our members to speak up against discrimination through workshops, trainings, and discussions, created and led by the DEI Committee. We will practice restorative justice and de-escalation techniques with chapter members to help us engage in difficult conversations when holding each other and other Greek organizations accountable. Engaging in this type of learning will allow our members to be vocal when we see or hear behavior that contributes to the endurance of racism. By doing all of the aforementioned, we will strive to create and uphold a safe chapter environment that supports all Black women and women of color who wish to participate in our chapter.

CREATING A MORE INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The DEI Committee is working with the Panhellenic community and the Chi Omega Recruitment Team to ensure that potential new members from all backgrounds and perspectives feel comfortable and welcome taking place in the recruitment process, including in our advertising, attire, and interactions. In Spring Quarter and Fall Quarter 2021, all active Chi Omega members participating in recruitment will be required to attend a series of implicit bias trainings, power and privilege workshops, inclusive language presentations, and financial accessibility discussions, to be properly equipped on how to implement inclusion and transparency into the recruitment process.

FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESSIBILITY

We recognize that it is a financial privilege to participate in Greek life, and that our chapter will never be accessible to all women as long as there is a cost of membership. Each year, through revisiting our budget and revising our bylaws, in addition to constantly searching for more scholarship opportunities, we strive to make Chi Omega more financially accessible for those who wish to pursue membership within our chapter. Due to the hardships created by COVID-19, we decreased the cost of dues for the 2020-2021 school year, to both accommodate those who were financially affected by the pandemic as well as reflect the cost of membership in a virtual setting. We plan to continue to do so as long as these circumstances persist. To learn more about the cost of membership in Chi Omega and how to finance it during a typical year, click [here](#) for our updated 2020-2021 Financial Transparency Presentation.

We have made mistakes, but we are learning and we will correct them. We recognize that allyship is not an end goal, but rather a constant practice for the rest of our lives. We are committed to doing the necessary work to deconstruct the harmful structures our institution has been perpetuating. This fight is not over. We are listening to and uplifting the voices of Black women and women of color in our chapter, as well as all Black individuals in the UCLA community.

Signed,

Chi Omega Fraternity, Gamma Beta Chapter
University of California, Los Angeles