

## *A Message from the House Corporation President*

It's that time of year again: cooler weather, tips of trees turning colors, and the shortening of days. It's a time of year when we think a little more about traditions, as the fall semester has started again at our alma mater. Many of us got to visit with our sisters this summer, and I think autumn brings fond reflection on those times, recent and long ago. I hope you'll join me in remembering and celebrating those memories over these months ahead as we support each other and our chapter in strengthening the bonds of friendship.

Over the past year, you've watched the now nationally famous Delta Links program reach collegians and alumnae alike. You've helped us celebrate in-person and virtual happy hours, expand the Pansy Pals program to support our undergraduates (consider becoming one!), and celebrate our seniors in the Circle Degree and Pansy Breakfast.

You'll see in this issue that we celebrate Jeanne Ruff of Ruff Maintenance, our essential partner for all those house related needs: new furniture, cleaning, maintenance, and general support. Jeanne is one of those long-term relationships for which we are so grateful!

We've also watched the advising structure for our chapter grow and are grateful for the Alpha Betas who have stepped up to support the collegians in all kinds of ways. **Andrea Belusko Hertzendorf '91**, **Alyse Mizia '09**, **Jennifer Joyce Kean '11**, and **Cristina Moeder Shaul '91**, thank you for your service and your investment in relationships!

If you're interested in joining the team advising the chapter, please let me know. We also welcome our new house director, **Jade Ovadia '22**, into the Alpha Beta family!

Finally, we're so excited about our expanding House Corporation Board and all the energy and excitement pouring in! Welcome to **Risé LeBlanc Wilson '85** and **Aruna Inalsingh '86** and thank you to **Judy Fox '72**, **Marianne Gardy Passarelli '82**, **Terry Schuster Petracca '76**, **Sonia Guior '15**, **Jenny Ritter Kelly '89**, **Joan Adamo '96**, and **Tara Benedict '01** for their continued service. A special shoutout to **Robin Secord '85** for her tireless advocacy and work as our property committee chairman! These remarkable women have committed to ongoing support of our house and our sisters, and we are grateful for them.

**Want to offer support for our work and collegiate needs?** Consider a donation to the House Corporation. See page 4 for information on where to send your donation, as well as details about how you can join us for our Annual House Corporation Meeting on November 3.

Delta Love,  
**Heather Britt '93**  
House Corporation President

## KEEPING OUR HOME FUNCTIONAL AND BEAUTIFUL

The energy in our Tri Delta house is very high this fall! Our Property Committee works to keep those positive vibes going with behind-the-scenes maintenance and updates. For fall semester move-ins, the usual preparation included the purchase of basics such as mattresses and bedframes, a deep cleaning of the house, and refreshed paint in common areas.

Looking ahead, Taitem Engineering, a consulting group with whom Tri Delta has a longstanding relationship, performed a professional evaluation of the property along with our Ruff Maintenance team in May. With summer starting earlier and ending later, an upgrade to our HVAC system was recommended; the recent installation allows efficient cooling of the kitchen, dish room, and dining room.

Other significant work this fall included the replacement of the second-floor roof above the dining room. The enhanced construction and refurbishment will shield our home from harsh weather and aid in the water remediation that Ithaca weather demands. Additional prevention projects identified are planned reinforcement to an exterior wall and restoration of a window well adjacent to the basement.

House Corporation meets regularly with chapter leadership and responds to member input. We all recall the very "standard" bathrooms provided on the second and third floors, and while lighting and fixtures



*Jeanne Ruff of Ruff Maintenance alongside Robin Secord '85, Heather Britt '93, and Joan Adamo '96.*

have been changed periodically, both members and our professional sources agree that we need more than cosmetic upgrades. Property Committee plans to obtain quotes and design proposals during the coming months to make these rooms both comfortable and modern spaces. These changes will make a difference in how we showcase the house and stay competitive with other housing offerings. This is a great opportunity for alumnae to contribute to the quality of life and the beauty of our Chapter House. Your donation to the House Corporation can be applied directly to bring some Delta Love to these tired rooms!

Our maintenance contractor, Ruff Maintenance, continues to ensure the house complies with both the city of Ithaca building and fire codes. Our long-time contact, Jeanne Ruff, has tirelessly helped with maintenance projects for many years and retired over the summer. While Jeanne Ruff is spending less time physically at the house in her "retirement," she still manages the service and maintains communications with both our House Corporation and chapter teams.

Delta Love,  
**Robin Secord '85**  
House Corporation Property Committee Chairman

## Alumnae Spotlight: Tara Benedict '01



**"It's never too late to connect with old friends! We love having new people reengage with Tri Delta through our Delta Links activities, so please be in touch if you'd like to get more involved."**

### Delta Links

remains busy this year, with plans to hold monthly informal "happy hours" over Zoom for alumnae to stay connected. Pansy Pals will continue, and the committee will continue to encourage regional meetups throughout the year. "We are also organizing a few virtual events featuring Tri Deltas who are doing cool things in the world. We're always looking for suggestions so please be in touch if you have any ideas!"

**Tara Benedict '01** didn't think about joining a sorority when she arrived at Cornell but signed up for recruitment out of curiosity, as she was looking for her "people" on the large campus.

"Turns out, 'my people' were 100-plus amazing ladies with a ton of different interests and talents from all corners of the world and all walks of life," she shared.

Tara met some of her best friends through Alpha Beta Chapter. She enjoyed wonderful moments with them, including living in a house in Collegetown with nine sisters for a summer and participating in formals.

"I loved the energy in the house as 30-plus of us were all getting ready, piling onto a bus that took us to some off-campus venue, tearing up the dance floor in our fancy dresses—way better than my high school prom!"

As a collegian, Tara served as the Panhellenic representative and house manager for the annex, which gave her experience that has helped her in her professional life. She also learned about nurturing relationships and all that came with them.

As an alumna, Tara has always enjoyed visiting the house with her sisters during Cornell reunions, but she wasn't all that involved with Alpha Beta until 2020 when she had more time on her hands during the COVID-19 shutdown. Wanting to get more involved with Cornell led her to serve on the Alpha Beta House Corporation and then the Delta Links Steering Committee.

"I've loved having an opportunity to interact with the on-campus sisters and other alumnae in a variety of ways. Through the Pansy Pals program, I've gotten to know some amazing young ladies." Tara has enjoyed reconnecting with and building

new relationships with Tri Delta sisters, and she has even brought along a few other people who have since gotten more involved.

When she's not volunteering with Tri Delta, Tara volunteers with the Cornell Club of Boston and the grants committee at her church. In her career, she has been working at Harvard University for nearly 20 years.

"Aside from the identity crisis I experience every year when Cornell and Harvard play each other in hockey, I actually really love working at 'that school in Cambridge.'"

Tara has held five roles during her time at Harvard and has worked with and met some amazing people. For over ten years, she worked in the Office of the University Marshal. Part of her role was to facilitate the visits to campus of visiting dignitaries and foreign delegations as well as celebrities.

"One highlight was when Rihanna was on campus to receive an award," Tara recalled. "Her schedule for the day included a private meeting with my boss and a few others. Something got messed up, though, and somehow, she showed up early and my boss was not yet back from another meeting. So yours truly sat in a room and chatted with Rihanna and her manager for 15 to 20 minutes before the schedule got back on track."

"We are also dog people, even though our beloved dachshund pass away recently. After our upcoming wedding and honeymoon we plan to adopt a rescue and be dog parents again."

Two of Tara's Tri Delta sisters will be bridesmaids in her wedding and another ten will be in attendance. You can connect with her at [tbenedict242001@yahoo.com](mailto:tbenedict242001@yahoo.com).

## EXECUTIVE TEAM OFFICERS

Collegiate Chapter President (CCP)  
**Allison Schwartz '26**

Vice President Operations (VPO)  
**Alexa Sheldon '26**

Vice President Membership Experience (VPME)  
**Emi Labbe '26**

Vice President Community Relations (VPCR)  
**Jana Mildner '26**

Vice President Chapter Programming and Development (VPCPD)  
**Danielle Koutsainis '25**



Alpha Beta's 2024-25 executive team.

## SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY AND OUR MEMBERS

Alpha Beta members had an exciting, productive 2023-24 academic year and are looking forward to the year ahead.

We raised around \$25,000 for St. Jude through our clothing sale, DHOP (Delta House of Pancakes), and 5k in a Day initiative. The 5k was the most successful event, during which we raised \$18,500 in 24 hours.

Academically, members are matched with academic bigs and littles in their majors, with whom they can study and turn to for advice. We have supported each other's on-campus ventures, attending theater performances, concerts, dance shows, volleyball tournaments, and comedy shows. Through involvement in Guiding Eyes for the Blind, sisters can often be found on the arts quad on a nice day playing with young puppies in training.

We are excited for the rest of the year and will continue to support our members socially, emotionally, and intellectually.



Delta Love,  
**Allison Schwartz '26**  
Chapter President

Collegiate Chapter President Ally Schwartz '26 at the 61st Biennial Tri Delta Convention as Alpha Beta Chapter's voting delegate in Orlando, FL.



Director of Philanthropy Magdalena Martinez '27 and VPCR Jana Mildner '26 in Memphis for the Tri Delta St. Jude Celebration in June. This event marked the 25th anniversary of Tri Delta's partnership with St. Jude and the milestone of raising a total of \$100 million.

## Welcoming Our Newest Alumnae Through Circle Degree

About 15 Alpha Beta alumnae converged in Ithaca the weekend of May 3-5, 2024, to celebrate the Circle Degree as 13 seniors transitioned from pine to pansy status. The Circle Degree Ceremony and Pansy Brunch were held in the International Room in Willard Straight Hall. Chapter officers **Danielle Koutsainis '23** and **Aisling Mannion '24** were instrumental in helping with these events.



Sisters gather at Pansy Brunch.

While in town, alumnae also enjoyed bowling at Helen Newman, the men's lacrosse Ivy League semi-finals, dinner at Maxie's Supper Club, the Ithaca Farmer's Market, the Campus Store, the Cornell Dairy Bar, dinner at The Heights, ice cream at Purity, and beverages downtown. One of the highlights was touring the house, meeting some of the active sisters, wandering the halls to see composites from past years, and reminiscing about the fun times we had while together at Cornell.

We were very impressed by the sisters we met, including many of the very dedicated and capable officers, and were excited to welcome 13 seniors into alumnae status.

### THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:

Eileen Adamo '93  
Tara Benedict '01  
Heather Britt '93  
Katy Carroll '93  
Jill Fields '88  
Judy Fox '72  
Christy Bleyle Frank '93  
Susan Kay Geringer '91  
Andrea Belusko Hertzendorf '91  
Jennifer Barber Kean '93  
Alyse Mizia '09  
Terry Schuster Petracca '76  
Robin Secord '85  
Cristina Moeder Shaul '91  
Deanna Smith Watson '92  
Cindy Cheney Wian '92  
Heather Toomey Zimmerman '93

### 2024 GRADUATES:

Lizzy Auwaerter  
Lily Childs  
Isabella Gray  
Kristen Ikle  
Millie Ketvoravit  
Maia Koszarsky  
Aisling Mannion  
Maggie Meister  
Nuray Ozden  
Anna Prybylski  
Sophie Roth  
Julia VanPutte  
Kira Weinberger

## SISTERS CONNECTING



Twenty-two Cornell Tri Deltas from the late '70s came together in the Berkshire Mountains for a wonderful reunion hosted by Jan Hendershot '77 and Alison Dick '77. We enjoyed some great meals, visited museums and historic houses, and completed the 50-year Circle Degree together!



A fun Tri Delta meetup in Hingham, MA, in summer 2024. From left: Danielle Koutsainis '25, Tara Benedict '01, Lexi Yelle '27, Gail Kurr Adler '74, and Aisling Mannion '24.



Sisters from the class of '89 at the Cornell Reunion.



Sisters from the class of '79 at the Cornell Reunion.

Delta Links, our networking and mentoring program, is off to a great start this academic year!

We continue to connect actives with alumnae through Pansy Pal matchups and sisters across generations through monthly Zoom happy hours. We have fun themes like travel tips, book recommendations, favorite cocktail recipes in honor of Zinck's Night, and favorite holiday recipes. Please join us on the third Sunday of the month at 7 p.m. EST. If you need a Zoom link, email [CornellDeltaLinks@gmail.com](mailto:CornellDeltaLinks@gmail.com).

We still have our "mini-LinkedIn" directory for Alpha Betas on our website. Please create a Delta Links profile and connect with sisters. Visit our website at [cornelltrideltaalumnae.com/register](http://cornelltrideltaalumnae.com/register) and use this invitation code: 28pi4hjkh59l.

In September, our very own **Jen Kantor Gersberg '99** was brought to campus by Cornell's Panhellenic Council to discuss "Sorority Success Beyond College" and was a big hit! Please save the date to celebrate Circle Degree on campus on May 4, 2025 at 11 a.m. to welcome the active seniors into alumnae status.



## Alpha Beta Data

Cornell Alpha Beta Alumnae  
Delta Delta Delta  
Cornell University  
P.O. Box 442100  
Lawrence, KS 66044-2100

*Address Service Requested*



Don't miss this year's Annual Meeting as we celebrate all our great work. We'd love to have you join us in person at 118 Triphammer or virtually by Zoom.

We'll gather on **Sunday, November 3, from 11 a.m. to noon EST**. The link to join is [tinyurl.com/AlphaBetaAnnualMeeting](https://tinyurl.com/AlphaBetaAnnualMeeting).

Meeting ID: 814 6165 2816, Passcode: 483743

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO LOYAL SISTERS

Our sisterhood truly appreciates the following sisters for contributing to Alpha Beta in 2024. Thank you, **Mary VanMeter Gordon '61, Nadine Smith Raley '73, Barbara Wooten Chamberlain '78, Antoinette Clark White '82, and Donnelly Nariss Maysey '97.**

To make your gift today, please visit [givecornelltridelta.causevox.com](http://givecornelltridelta.causevox.com), scan the QR code, or mail a check to: Delta Delta Delta Cornell University, Alpha Beta House Corporation, 410 Upland Road, Ithaca NY 14850



## BOARD OFFICERS FOR TERM 2024-26

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following slate for election to the Alpha Beta House Corporation Board of Directors at our Annual Meeting in November. Returning board members are also listed.

### Board Officers for Term 2024-26

VP Long-Range Planning Committee  
**Robin Secord '85**

Nominating Chairman  
**Aruna Inalsingh '86**

Members at Large  
**Heidi Heasley Ford '87**  
**Risé LeBlanc Wilson '85**

The following officers' terms will be continuing in 2023-25:

President  
**Heather Britt '93**

Treasurer  
**Jennifer Ritter Kelly '89**

Secretary  
**Joan Adamo '96**

Members at Large  
**Tara Benedict '01**  
**Judy Fox '72, Past President**  
**Sonia Guior '15**  
**Terry Schuster Petracca '76**

The board would like to acknowledge the hard work and contributions of all our standing committees over the past year. Here are our committee members for 2024-25:

Finance Committee  
**Cathy Reilly Elias '79**  
**Jenny Ritter Kelly '89**  
**Paula Boyer Kennedy '78, MBA '80**  
**Cathy Chang Ko '76**  
**Terry Schuster Petracca '76**

Delta Links  
**Tara Benedict '01**  
**Therese Dang '27**  
**Debbie Lathrop Lechner '77**  
**Terry Schuster Petracca '76**  
**Emily Roehr '16**  
**Ally Schwartz '26**

Communications Committee  
**Carol Benson Antos '77**  
**Debbie Lathrop Lechner '77**  
**Jeanne Moulton Turner '90**  
**Sonya Hand Stover '96**

Property Committee  
**Heidi Heasley Ford '87**  
**Carolyn Lockard/Newbold McMasters '71**  
**Robin Secord '85**  
**Susan Minch Starnes '95**

Nominating Committee  
**Tara Benedict '01**  
**Heather Britt '93**  
**Marianne Gardy Passarelli '82**  
**Ally Schwartz '26**

We welcome participation at any level. If you would like to get involved, please reach out to us at [alphabetahc@gmail.com](mailto:alphabetahc@gmail.com).