

TRI DELTA

Cornell Alpha Beta Alumnae

Alpha Beta Data

Spring 2025

Alpha Betas at Tara (Benedict) Desmarais's '01 wedding! Front row, from left: Meg Gwin Versteegen '01, Alison Brunger Hardgrove '01, Amanda Clark Naumann '01, and Emily Hollander Levine '01. Back row: Leigh Craven Saunders '01, Kristin Lorenze '01, Candice Meth Wood, '02, Kathy Frachetti Weigel '01, Lauren Eade Smith '01, Tara Benedict Desmarais '01, Erin Richter Weber '01, Alison Gilmore Carr '01, and Marcie Woodruff Carmody '99.



Cherishing Our Tri Delta Sisterhood

Happy spring, Alpha Betas! I hope this message finds you enjoying slightly longer days, a little more sunshine, and temperatures that are hopefully warmer than cooler. It takes a few rounds of spring to get to real spring in Minnesota, so here's to hoping for the best this year!

There's a lot going on in our country and across our planet—the kinds of things that make me long for my Tri Delta girlfriends to talk to, w(h)ine with, strategize, and laugh once we've cried together. My Delta besties are in a group that we've called 'MAD' (short for Middle Age Deltas), an acronym that I feel in my bones some days. I work in a nonprofit, so it's been an especially tricky year.

I'm also loving my monthly Alpha Beta House Corporation calls, in large part because they are so multi-generational. Right now, I love hearing and learning from all my sisters on the call, from those who preceded me at Cornell to those who are currently undergraduates. That cross-generational conversation and energy reminds me of our deep connections, the

importance of roots and branches, and the long arc of our beloved community. What a gift to spend time with these women each month!

We had an exceptional new member process this spring—Alpha Beta Chapter currently tops out at 188 women at our alma mater. We have great advising in place for the collegiate chapter, connecting our House Corporation to the advising team for the collegiates in a beautiful way that allows us to have conversations transparently and directly to support our thriving chapter. We have great new committee members for House Corporation, and if you're still interested in a committee or in joining the board, please reach out to [Aruna Inalsingh '86](mailto:arunainalsingh@gmail.com) at arunainalsingh@gmail.com.

We have twice as many women who want to live in as we do spots at 118 Triphammer, so we're undertaking a planning process for room renovation (think Crescent) and for bathroom renovation (you know we need it). If you're looking for a reason to contribute

to Alpha Beta, we've got you covered this year and next! More to come as the planning and contracting get moving. Know that we're excited to keep maturing the house into its next 100 years. We're also excited for the collegians as they undertake organizing and cleaning the basement and the closets that have accumulated so much good history over the years.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Pansy Breakfast at the house on Sunday, May 4, to celebrate graduating seniors. We also hope to see you at this year's reunion open house, which will be held on Saturday, June 7. Details on both can be found in the Delta Links update.

That's enough for now. Enjoy the great nourishing information in this spring's newsletter and remember to spread your Delta love!

Loyally,
Heather Britt '93
House Corporation President

A Busy Semester of Connection Through Delta Links

The Delta Links Committee continues to facilitate opportunities for Alpha Beta alumnae to connect with each other and engage with the collegiate members throughout the year. We've had a busy spring and are looking forward to more fun in the coming months!

This spring, we've coordinated monthly virtual happy hours, each with a different theme. Delta Links also recently hosted a virtual panel discussion with three alumnae who run small businesses.

The Delta Links Committee works closely with the lifetime experience advisor, **Cristina Moeder Shaul '91**, to connect alumnae with collegians for mentoring and other professional development support. The Pansy Pals program has been going strong all year, and we've connected juniors and seniors who are thinking about their post-Cornell professional lives with several alumnae in their fields of interest.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, April 20
7-8 p.m. ET

Our third and final virtual happy hour of the spring. This month's topic will be podcasts! Join us for some socializing and chatting about what we've all been listening to these days. Sign up at [us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/azrt1h8QQmCMKYj3vGIuSA#/registration](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81h8QQmCMKYj3vGIuSA#?registration).

Sunday, May 4
11 a.m.

Delta Links will lend support to the annual Circle Degree ceremony and Pansy Brunch, celebrating graduating seniors who will be transitioning from Pine to Pansy status. Alumnae are welcome to join! Several of us are making a weekend of it. If you're interested in coming to Ithaca that weekend, please email me.

Saturday, June 7
4-6 p.m.

Cornell Reunion open house at 118 Triphammer. Please stop by the house if you'll be on campus for the reunion!

We are also working on some engagement activities in the fall—stay tuned!

Finally, we are always looking for additional alumnae to get involved in our efforts! There are many ways you can participate, and we welcome all volunteers. Here are some examples:

- **Be a Pansy Pal.** Our alumnae/collegian pen pal program is a favorite initiative of both undergraduate sisters and alumnae. Spend a few minutes a month connecting with a current sister—trading emails or texts, offering advice, and occasionally sending a card or small care package. More information about signing up to be a Pansy Pal for the 2025-26 academic year will be coming over the summer.
- **Organize an alumnae meetup in your city.** Want to get some old and new friends together locally? We encourage anyone, anywhere, to put together a simple meetup in their hometown. Just find a spot and pick a date and we'll help you identify alumnae in your area to invite.
- **Help us with future Delta Links activities.** If you'd ever be interested in giving a talk to other alumnae and/or undergraduate sisters on a particular topic, or if you have ideas for other activities we can put together, please be in touch.
- **Join our committee!**

Please send an email to cornelldetalinks@gmail.com if you're interested in getting involved or want to learn more.

Delta Love,
Tara Benedict Desmarais '01
Delta Links Chairman
tbenedict242001@yahoo.com

Another Wonderful Year

Alpha Beta members have had an exciting, productive 2024-25 academic year and are thrilled for what is to come with the new leadership slate!

In the fall, we continued our annual 5K in a Day philanthropy push, which raised over \$40,000. We received many donations from Pansy Pals and our large alumnae advisory team and could not be more grateful for your ongoing commitment to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Last semester, we welcomed 12 new members and have added 61 this spring. Recruitment was incredibly successful, and we are proud of the motivated, passionate, and driven women we have welcomed into the chapter. Through their new member

period, they took part in various Alpha Week activities and were recently paired with their bigs.

Alpha Beta women can be found together in the Temple of Zeus cafe at most hours of the day, where sisters always know someone will have a table they can join. Academically, big and little pairs can be found studying together, women can network with alumnae through one-on-one matching, and members can sit with each other in class through the class database. As I end my term, I am so excited about the progress this chapter has made and what is to come.

Delta Love,
Ally Schwartz '26
Chapter President



The member selection committee during preference round of 2025 primary recruitment. Pictured: Collegiate Chapter President Ally Schwartz '26, Vice President of Membership Experience Lexi Yelle '27, and Director of Member Selection Ella Hartig '27.



Vice President of Community Relations Jana Mildner '26 and Director of Philanthropy Magdalena Martinez '27 after helping raise over \$40,000 in 24 hours for St. Jude.

Enhancing the Quality of Life in Our Home

We are excited to share that significant improvements are on the way to the inside of the chapter house at 118 Triphammer! Specifically, a near-range project committee is moving forward on the board's commitment to eliminate the "walk-through" situation in the Crescent rooms on the second floor (the rear room can only be accessed by walking through the two side rooms). Those who have lived in the Crescent know firsthand the challenges that the space creates and, therefore, what a positive impact the redesign will bring. Bids for this work are in progress, and we hope to have a contractor in place this summer. We'd love to hear from past "Crescent alumnae" for their input on a ribbon-cutting celebration. Please consider making a financial gift to help us fund this project—we'll add your name to the Crescent Honor Roll!

Comprehensive renovations of the second- and third-floor bathrooms are also in the planning phase. Due to the magnitude of the project, these are included in long-range plans, with work expected to begin in summer 2026. More than an update to fixtures and finishes, our goal is to maximize space and create rooms that showcase our commitment to high standards for our members. Keep your eye out for more information about the bathroom renovations in future newsletters.

Recent collaboration between our members and alumnae has been very positive as we work together to maintain the house and plan for improvements. 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 House Corporation can be applied directly to bring some Delta Love to these spaces.

Interested in helping out? Contact us to work on the Strategic Planning or Property Committees.

Delta Love,
Robin Secord '85
Heidi Heasley Ford '87
 House Corporation Property Committee

To donate, please visit
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



SPOTLIGHT ON KIRSTEN JOHNSTON BARKER



"From the moment I met the women of Tri Delta during recruitment, I felt at home," **Kirsten Johnston Barker '92** said. "I was seen and appreciated for who I was as an individual, and that sense of belonging made my decision to join an easy one."

Serving as a chapter officer and participating in recruitment events and post-event discussions gave Kirsten a strong foundation for her career and volunteer work.

"Learning how to collaborate, communicate, and lead in a group setting has been invaluable throughout my professional journey."

Throughout her career, Kirsten has worked as a fintech consultant on Wall Street, served as Chief Information Officer for a global nonprofit focused on public health and safety, and founded a tech startup centered on digital media and knowledge management.

"I firmly believe that careers are more like a lattice than a ladder. Nothing I've done (other than my first job as a consultant right out of undergrad) is something I would have predicted while sitting in my college classes—and my career has never been a clear or direct path!"

Today, Kirsten is the Program Director of the Bank of America Institute for Women's Entrepreneurship, which launched when Bank of America provided funding to Cornell to create an online certificate program in women's entrepreneurship. With an initial goal to enroll 5,000 students, all the seats filled up quickly and the program amassed a waitlist of 10,000. "Seeing this overwhelming demand, Bank of America expanded its support to 20,000, then 50,000, and ultimately over 100,000 students.

"Today, we have enrolled over 100,000 students, more than 80% of whom identify as women of color," Kirsten shared. "I never imagined I would be part of something that fosters such a powerful network of women supporting one another as they build their businesses. It has truly been one of the most rewarding roles of my professional life."

Outside of work, Kirsten has been an aerial circus artist for the past 12 years and has been an instructor for over a year. "I train in aerial silks, sling, rope, and trapeze. It's an incredible combination of artistry, athleticism, and problem-solving that keeps me both physically and mentally engaged." She also loves spending time outdoors, whether she's walking her dog, hiking, or exploring new trails.

Kirsten is married to her college sweetheart, Piers, and they have two sons, Weston and Reid, who are both Cornell graduates. They have resided in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, for the past 20 years.

Having lived in the Alpha Beta house her sophomore year and shared an apartment with her sorority sisters her junior and senior years, Kirsten made friendships that have lasted more than three decades, and she enjoys staying in touch with her sisters. You can connect with her at kaj22@cornell.edu.

TRI DELTA IS EVERYWHERE!

"Years ago, at a parent meeting for my son's elementary school, I unexpectedly ran into **Sue Purcell '90**, who had been president of Tri Delta when I was a pledge. It was such a fun and unexpected reunion—proof that the Tri Delta bond extends far beyond college!"

CALLING ALL DELTAS!



We're looking for House Corporation volunteers. We don't need a lot of time (unless you find yourself with lots of time on your hands), and you can help in any way you want—advisory only or committee support. Our committees include:

- Delta Links to have more student engagement
- Nominating Committee for staying in touch with your sisters
- Finance Committee for smart spending ideas
- Property Committee to ensure house upkeep and value
- Communications Committee for staying in touch (especially if you know CRMs or email blast software)

If you want to learn more, please reach out to **Aruna Inalsingh '86** at runainalsingh@gmail.com.

TRIDELTA

Cornell Alpha Beta Alumnae

Alpha Beta Data

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

Address Service Requested

PRSR-STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
KANSAS CITY, MO
PERMIT NO. 5264

SAVE

these

DATES

Sunday, May 4
11 a.m.

Circle Degree Ceremony
and Pansy Brunch

Saturday, June 7
4-6 p.m.

Cornell Reunion
Open House

Thank You to Our Loyal Sisters

Thank you to our generous alumnae who have made donations to help with renovations at 118 Triphammer: **Wendy Burdick Stummer '83, Jean Leskovec Davis '84, Tara Benedict Desmarais '01, Risé LeBlanc Wilson '85, and Barbara Wooten Chamberlain '78.** A special thanks to the alumnae who purchased food for the chapter during recruitment:

Joan Adamo '96	Melissa Herb Kovac '94
Maureen Laffey Bills '86	Jen Gray Moss '91
Heather Britt '93	Terry Schuster Petracca '76
Tara Benedict Desmarais '01	Emily Roehr '16
Morgan Fitzgerald '09	Luisa Santiago '91
Christy Bleyle Frank '93	Robin Secord '85
Susan Gilbert '78	Cristina Moeder Shaul '91
Alison Brunger Hardgrove '01	Kelly Ball Smyth '09
Linda LaMagra Holmes '92	Susan Minch Starnes '95
Aruna Inalsingh '86	Wendy Burdick Stummer '83
Karen Skibitsky Jacobson '95	Jocelyn Turkel '93
Jennifer Joyce Kean '11	Risé LeBlanc Wilson '85
Jenny Ritter Kelly '89	Felicia Zekauskas '84
Nina Kondo '82	April Watts '15

TRIDELTA