

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Georgia Rountree and Paula Stadeker

Interview #: SAA-A-D-2006-007

Conducted by the Springfield African-American History Foundation
For the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Georgia Rountree and Paula Stadeker discuss Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, including the history of the national organization and the structure of undergraduate and graduate (alumnae) chapters, their work and the responsibilities expected of their members. The establishment of the local chapter is described in detail. Mrs. Rountree's career as one of the first black teachers in Springfield District 186 is also discussed.

Interview date(s):	March 9, 2006
Interview Location:	Springfield, Illinois
Interview Format:	audio cassette
Interviewer:	Barbara Dickerman
Transcription by:	Susan Crapo Transcription Service
Edited by:	Mary Jane Logan, Edna Shanklin, Cheryl Pence
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Interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Abstract

Georgia Rountree and Paula Stadeker Springfield African-American History Foundation Project

Biographical Information and Synopsis: Much of this interview concerns the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, the first organization established for and by African-American women. The history of the national organization is explained, as well as the structure of undergraduate and graduate (alumnae) chapters, their work and the responsibilities expected of their members. Establishment of the Springfield chapter is described in detail, as are many of their service projects. Georgia Rountree was one of the chapter founders and Paula Stadeker is a younger member.

Georgia Rountree was accepted into the sorority at Tennessee State University in 1940. After graduating in 1941, she became a vocational home economics teacher. She married her husband in 1945 after he returned home from World War II. They were married secretly, because at that time, married teachers were not allowed to keep their jobs. In 1945, her husband accepted a job in Springfield, Illinois at the Illinois State Archives, and she joined him the next year. She applied to teach in the Springfield schools, but was told that Springfield was not yet ready for black teachers. Georgia went to work at St. John's Hospital as a dietician, and ten years later, was finally offered a teaching job. She taught at Edison School and was active in many community projects. She discusses organizing the WIC program for the Urban League and helping adults get their GED certificates.

Paula Stadeker joined Alpha Kappa Alpha while attending Illinois State University in 1973, and then joined the graduate chapter after moving to Springfield in 1980. She discusses many of the service projects that the chapter worked on with the Boys and Girls Club, the "Fashionetta" cotillion, scholarships, and the Ethnic Festival.

Topics Covered: Springfield, Illinois, 1940s – present; Alpha Kappa Alpha; sororities; Urban League; University of Tennessee; home economics; Boys and Girls Club; Ethnic Festival

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