

2008

# Eta Sigma Lambda Fraternity Records

San Jose State University, Special Collections and Archives

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## Guide to the Eta Sigma Lambda Fraternity Records

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Collection number: MSS-2007-03-01



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Date Completed:

2008

Encoded by:

Daniel Jarvis

Date Completed:

2008

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### Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Eta Sigma Lambda Fraternity Records

**Dates:** 1965-2008

**Bulk Dates:** 1970-2000

**Collection number:** MSS-2007-03-01

**Collector:** Eta Sigma Lambda

**Creator:** Eta Sigma Lambda

**Collection Size:** 10 boxes(8.34 linear feet)

**Repository:** San José State University. Library.

San José, California 95192-0028

**Abstract:** Records in this collection document the structure, finances, history, culture, and charitable contributions of the Alpha Phi Alpha alumni chapter Eta Sigma Lambda, which is based in San José, California. Materials of this collection were collected and donated by Eta Sigma Lambda. Notable materials include documents, pamphlets, and photographs that record the chapter's involvement with young African American men through programs like Project Alpha.

**Physical location:** For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog

**Languages:** Languages represented in the collection: English

#### Access

The collection is open for research with the exception of box four. Explicit permission is required to view the contents of box four.

#### Publication Rights

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#### **Preferred Citation**

Eta Sigma Lambda Fraternity Records, MSS-2007-03-01, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

#### **Acquisition Information**

Donated by Eta Sigma Lambda, in May 2007.

#### **Processing Information**

Processed by Daniel L. Jarvis, reviewed by Danelle Moon, encoded by Daniel L. Jarvis.

#### **Organizational History**

On December 4, 1906 at the campus of Cornell University, the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity earned the distinct honor of being the first Greek letter college fraternity to be founded by African American men. Nearly 60 years later, eight African-American men founded the Eta Sigma Lambda (ESL) chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity in Palo Alto, California. The founders of the Eta Sigma Lambda chapter laid the foundation to what would become a socially and charitably vibrant chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. The fraternity's vision statement best summarizes the purpose and spirit of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity:

*The objectives of this Fraternity shall be: to stimulate the ambition of its members; to prepare them for the greatest usefulness in the causes of humanity, freedom, and dignity of the individual; to encourage the highest and noblest form of manhood; and to aid down-trodden humanity in its efforts to achieve higher social, economic and intellectual status.*

Since their inception, ESL has raised thousands of dollars to fund scholarships that aide minority college students and the United Negro College Fund. In addition to their financial generosity, ESL has also provided innumerable hours of service to communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. At many junctures ESL has collaborated with other socially conscience organizations to raise awareness of social issues or to implement fundraising events. Such organizations have included the United Negro College Fund, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the March of Dimes, Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Train Ride, and the American Cancer Society.

To this day, one of the most successful collaborative ventures has been a joint effort between ESL and The March of Dimes. Since 1980, both have implemented Project Alpha, a program that has educated hundreds of young men on manhood, safe sex, and sexual responsibility.

The Eta Sigma Lambda chapter has also proven to be a vibrant and active participant in Alpha Phi Alpha events. In 1965, 1976, 1984, 1990, & 2002, ESL hosted regional Alpha Phi Alpha conventions, and in 1987 co-hosted the national convention in San Francisco. For their commendable role in both their community and the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, ESL received the NAACP 2002 Social Justice Award and won the Regional Alumni Chapter of the Year Award in 1987, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1994 and 2002.

A singular, yet memorable project that ESL planned is Project Olympus. With the guidance of late community leader and ESL member Tracy Wilson, Eta Sigma Lambda helped underprivileged youth attend the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, California.

Over the years, numerous members of ESL have lived out the Alpha Phi Alpha spirit by striving to establish not only distinguished careers, but to actively contribute to the betterment of society through involvement in other organizations and government entities. In 1987 Haymon Jahi played a key role in coordinating the first Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom Train event, which provided people of all ages an outlet to celebrate the first national observation of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Between 1987-2000, ESL member Wilbur Jackson served as the Regional Project Alpha Coordinator; and in 2001, Jackson was appointed as the National Coordinator of Project Alpha by General President Harry Johnson. At varying intervals, ESL members Charles McClinton, Louis Wilson, and Tom Schumake served on the Santa Clara Civil Grand Jury from 1994 to 1997, and from 2000 to 2007, Rick Callender served as President of the San José Branch of the NAACP.

#### **Scope and Content of Collection**

The Eta Sigma Lambda Fraternity Records document over 40 years of chapter history. The chapter has supported education through scholarships, mentoring, and other initiatives through the years. Records in this collection consist of local records from Eta Sigma Lambda, as well as regional and national level records. The collection is comprised of administrative files, financial records, member records, publicity and outreach materials, printed matter, photographs, and ephemera. This collection documents the structure, finances, history, culture, and activities of the Eta Sigma Lambda chapter. As a whole, this collection also serves as a history of the community service and leadership Eta Sigma Lambda has provided in the Santa Clara County and beyond.

#### **Arrangement**

This collection is arranged in three series: I. Administrative files, 1974-2008; II. Publicity, Outreach, and Printed Matter, 1965-2008; III. Photos, Memorabilia, and Ephemera, 1962-2006.

#### **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

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Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity -- History  
Men -- California -- Palo Alto -- Societies and clubs  
African Americans -- California -- 20th century  
Greek letter societies -- California -- Santa Clara County

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Series I: **Administrative Files 1974-2008**

**Physical Description:** 3 Boxes, 4.5 Linear Feet

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

This series contains documents that reflect the organizational structure of the fraternity, its bylaws and policies, its methods of fundraising, and the nature of their expenditures. This series include budget proposals, bank statements, correspondence, handbooks on fraternal policies, procedures, and conduct, meeting minutes, and annual reports. Financial records in this series often serve as record of a member's activity within the fraternity as well. The correspondence in this series documents Eta Sigma Lambda's collaboration with other organizations, as evidenced in letters to other fraternity chapters, businesses, and charitable organizations.

**Arrangement**

Files in this series are arranged alphabetically by format and chronologically by date.

Box/Folder 1/01-1/18  
Box/Folder 1/19-1/38  
Box/Folder 2/39-2/86  
Box/Folder 3/87  
Box/Folder  
3/88-3/106  
Box/Folder  
3/107-3/111  
Box/Folder  
4/112-4/131

**Administrative records undated 1974-2007**

**Correspondence undated 1975-2007**

**Finances undated 1975-2008**

**Memos 1990-2006 circa 2005**

**Minutes undated 1975-2008**

**Policies and Procedures undated 1979**

**Finances (Restricted) undated 1984-2007**

Series II: **Publicity, Outreach, and Printed Matter 1965-2008**

**Physical Description:** 2 Boxes, 3 Linear Feet

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

This series includes fraternal publications like the *Sphinx*, newsletters such as *The Alpha Spirit*, and membership directories, as well as publicity and outreach documents. These documents reflect Eta Sigma Lambda's commitment to improve their communities. This commitment may be most evident in materials such as flyers that promote the Project Alpha program to young African-American men; a press kit that describes the relationship between Project Alpha and the March of Dimes, and handouts that outline how a local Project Alpha program can be implemented. Documents and literature of significance to the chapter, though not produced by an Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, were also collected by various members of the chapter. These materials have been placed in folders designated as "printed matter."

**Arrangement**

Files in this series are arranged alphabetically by format and chronologically by date.

Box/Folder  
5/132-5/135  
Box/Folder  
5/136-5/159  
Box/Folder  
5/160-6/205  
Box/Folder  
6/206-6/223

**Agendas 1975-2007**

**Printed Matter undated 1980-2008**

**Publicity & Outreach undated 1965-2008**

**Serials 1984-2004**

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Series III: **Photographs, Memorabilia, and Ephemera 1962-2006**

**Physical Description:** 4 Boxes, 6 Linear Feet

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

The materials in this series include photographs that record fraternal gatherings and community outreach in Eta Sigma Lambda and other Alpha Phi Alpha chapters. Notable photographs include images of Eta Sigma Lambda members working with young African American men in Project Alpha, members camping with The Royal Ambassadors; a church group that serves African American boys, and the fundraising event, Chefs for the United Negro College Fund. This series also contains awards, certificates, and plaques that were given to honor the fraternity or particular members of the fraternity as well as t-shirts with Alpha Phi Alpha regalia, a charter for the Epsilon Mu chapter of San José State University, and other notable items of memorabilia.

**Arrangement**

Files in this series are arranged alphabetically by format and chronologically by date.

Box/Folder 7/224  
 Box/Folder 7/225  
 Box/Folder 7/226  
 Box/Folder 7/227  
 Box/Folder 7/228  
 Box/Folder 7/229  
 Box/Folder  
 7/230-7/259  
 Box/Folder 8/260  
 Box/Folder 8/261  
 Box/Folder 8/262  
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 Box/Folder 10/272  
 Box/Folder 10/273  
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 Box/Folder 10/276  
 Box/Folder 10/277  
 Box/Folder 10/278

**Awards, Certificates, and Commendations 1982-2002**  
**Event Tickets 1998-2002**  
**Gift Bags circa 2000**  
**Letterhead and Poster undated**  
**Calculator undated**  
**Fraternity Notebook undated**  
**Photographs undated circa 1980-1996 1978-2006**  
**Scrapbook undated 1982-1988**  
**Mayors Youth Conference Certificate 1989**  
**Program Uplift Award 2000**  
**City of San José Commendation 2002**  
**Green'n Hot Links Golf Cart Medallion 2003**  
**Centennial Celebration Handbills 2006**  
**Male Partnership Project T-Shirt undated**  
**Project Alpha T-Shirt undated**  
**Award Plaques 1982-2002**  
**Empty Binders with Regalia undated**  
**Epsilon Mu Chapter Charter 1962 March 6**  
**Epsilon Mu Chapter Charter(copies) 1962 March 6**  
**80th National Convention Poster 1986**  
**Eddie Robinson Football Poster 1986**  
**Musical celebration of Tracy Wilson Poster 1994**  
**Big Bro Sarcophagus undated**  
**March of Dimes pregnancy poster undated**  
**Group Photograph undated**  
**National Headquarters Fundraiser Poster undated**