

**Beta Delta-Colorado College**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: May 13, 1932
* Location: Colorado Springs, CO
* Region: 7

**History:**

Colorado College was founded in 1874 on land designated by U.S. Civil War veteran General William Jackson Palmer, the founder of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and of Colorado Springs. Founder Thomas Nelson Haskell described it as a coeducational liberal arts college in the tradition of Oberlin College. Like many U.S. colleges and universities that have endured from the 19th century, it now is secular in outlook, though it retains its liberal arts focus. Cutler Hall, the college's first building, was completed in 1880 and the first degrees were conferred in 1882.

The first record of a group at Colorado College petitioning Delta Gamma for a chapter occurred in 1904. At the time men's groups were allowed on campus. However, the college did not include women's organizations for the time being. This was one of the few times Delta Gamma was interested and the institution wasn't, for this was during Delta Gamma's period of very limited and selective expansion.

One interesting point concerning the opening of the campus for women's groups in 1932 was that it came from faculty action. In the late 1920s a concerted effort to improve the image of the school and to reorganize some areas resulted in the arrival of the president of the Carnegie Foundation to analyze the situation and make a number of recommendations. In order, these suggestions were: (1) discontinuance of the summer school; (2) discontinuance of the School of Forestry and the School of Engineering; and (3) establishment of national women's sororities on campus. As a result of this the faculty pressed for the opening of the campus to the national sororities, and by the time final approval came on May 14, 1931, the sororities were ready to move quickly. Delta Gamma was ready to take Minerva, the oldest and considerably strongest of the local groups. Kappa then took its rival, and Gamma Phi Beta and Theta acquired the other two groups.

The petitioning group, the Minerva Society, had held an outstanding place on the campus for 40 years. It had a strong group of loyal alumnae and was sponsored by many prominent women of Colorado Springs.

The pledging events were held in the Minerva Club House.

Installation was the weekend of May 13, 1932, when local Delta Gammas were cautioned to keep prices for the banquet and other expenditures in "keeping with the times"-referring to the Depression. Among the 87 initiates was one of the founders of Minerva who had started the club in 1891. The Initiation was held in the spacious home of Mrs. Jordan, an honorary member of the Minerva Society. The installing officers were: Mary MacHarg Halstead, Sigma-Northwestern; Florence Cornell Bingham, Chi-Cornell and Upsilon-Stanford; and Beryl Barnett, Alpha Iota-Oklahoma. Phi-Colorado came down for the event. Representatives also came from Alpha Epsilon-Washington and the new Beta Gamma-Utah. A large group of Denver alumnae attended and assisted at the various functions.

Following initiation, a banquet was held at the Antlers Hotel. The theme was the ascent of Pike's Peak, signifying various stages in their quest for a Delta Gamma chapter. Mrs. Giddings, a honorary member of Minerva Society, offered her home and garden for the reception. Delta Gamma was the first national sorority to install a chapter at the college-by one day. The people of Colorado Springs were cordial and friendly, and the fact that Delta Gamma was the first national charter to be granted to the college made the occasion one of unusual interest. Beta Delta was the newest Delta Gamma chapter for seven years as no other chapters were started during the depression.