

**Delta Lambda-Mississippi State**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: October 25, 1969
* Location: Starkville, Mississippi
* Region: 3

**History:**

Mississippi State University began as The Agricultural and Mechanical College of the State of Mississippi (or Mississippi A&M), one of the national land-grant colleges established after Congress passed the Morrill Act in 1862. It was created by the Mississippi Legislature on February 28, 1878, to fulfill the mission of offering training in "agriculture, horticulture and the mechanical arts . . . without excluding other scientific and classical studies, including military tactics." The university received its first students in the fall of 1880 in the presidency of General Stephen D. Lee.

In 1887, Congress passed the Hatch Act, which provided for the establishment of the Agricultural Experiment Station in 1888. The Cooperative Extension Service was established in 1914 by the Smith-Lever Act. The university has since had its mission expanded and redefined by the Legislature. In 1932, the Legislature renamed the university as Mississippi State College. In 1958 the Legislature renamed the university as Mississippi State University in recognition of its academic development and addition of graduate programs.

In December 1965, Eleanor Smith Slaughter and others began plans for “coming home again to Mississippi.” In 1967, Mississippi State University’s Dean of Women contacted Delta Gamma about possible colonization, but Delta Gamma decided not to colonize at MSU without comparable housing. Then in 1969, Delta Gamma was offered a basement suite in new women’s dormitory, and Delta Gamma moved forward with colonization. From February 5-8, 1969, the first recruitment period took place for Delta Gamma at MSU, and on February 8, 1969, a pledging ceremony took place with 29 women, and the Delta Lambda colony of Delta Gamma was established at Mississippi State. Eleanor Smith Slaughter, Alpha Psi-Mississippi, and Louise Callahan, Epsilon-Ohio State, coordinated the colonization of Delta Lambda, with the assistance of Nancy Tuttle, Alpha Pi-Arizona, who remained at the university with the new pledges during training. Alpha Psi-Mississippi, Beta Psi-Alabama, and Alpha Omega-Arkansas all assisted with colonization and pledging ceremonies at Delta Lambda. It was calculated that around 12,000 miles were driven to assist with colonization.

Delta Lambda was chartered on October 25, 1969. The Initiation of twenty-five women was held at the First Presbyterian Church in Starkville with members of Alpha Psi-Mississippi officiating. Eleanor Smith Slaughter acted as toastmistress of the installation banquet. Janet Lau Sullivan, Alpha Psi-Mississippi, was the installation speaker. Carolyn Coffman Moorman, Alpha Omicron-Miami (Ohio), presented Delta Lambda its charter to Bonnie McKenzie, first chapter president, as Mary Ann Lummis Bowyer, Beta Zeta-Denison, presented chapter members their membership certificates. During Installation, the phrase “Delta Lambda-The Beginning of Something Great” was chosen as their banquet theme and has stayed with the chapter ever since.

In 2003, Mississippi State University became the 10th chapter to establish a Dorothy Garrett Martin Lectureship in Values and Ethics. Then in 2005, Mississippi State and Delta Lambda hosted Jeff Corwin for the first Lectureship.

Delta Lambda members have helped install both Delta Pi- Southern Mississippi and Delta Sigma- Auburn chapters.

Construction for the Delta Lambda house began in 1988. In August of 1989, Delta Lambda collegians moved into their new home, named “The Gateway to Sorority Row.” An official dedication was held on April 22, 1990. Eleanor Smith Slaughter is credited for building the house, and Delta Lambda’s chapter room was dedicated to Eleanor.