

**Eta Mu-Lake Forest**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: October 10, 2004
* Location: Lake Forest, IL
* Region: 5

**History:**

Lake Forest College was founded in 1857 by Reverend Robert W. Patterson as a Presbyterian alternative to the Methodist Northwestern University in Evanston. It was originally named Lind University after Sylvester Lind, who had given $80,000 to launch the school. Patterson and his fellow Chicago Presbyterians established the town of Lake Forest and the university roughly halfway between Evanston and Waukegan two years after the Chicago and Milwaukee Railway began service from Chicago. Lake Forest Academy, a boys' preparatory school and the first project of the university, began offering classes in 1858; collegiate-level courses began in 1860. In 1865, the name became Lake Forest University. In 1869 Ferry Hall, a girls' preparatory school and junior college opened as a division of the university. It later merged with Lake Forest Academy in 1974. In 1876 Mary Eveline Smith Farwell started Lake Forest College, a coeducational division of the university under the leadership of the Reverend Patterson. By 1925, Lake Forest College split from Lake Forest Academy, and the school's only focus was on undergraduate liberal arts. In 1960, William Graham Cole, from Williams College, took over as president and brought with him Eastern faculty and students, further diversifying the campus. During his time as president, in 1965, the school's name was officially changed to Lake Forest College.

A local sorority Gamma Phi Omega was founded in 1989 at Lake Forest College. Three remarkable women, Marlene and Jayne Rapp and Adrienne Backsinski, laid the foundation for a sisterhood in early 1988. This grew into a group of women committed to each other and to the wellbeing of others. They tried to develop a group that would be an asset to others in the college community. As Gamma Phi Omega grew, their campus and community involvement increased, and they committed themselves to various social services projects. Their sisterhood grew through these projects and by 2004 they had shared their ideals with 179 women on campus.

Alpha Phi was the first National Panhellenic Conference group on campus, and the women of Gamma Phi Omega felt the time was right to approach Delta Gamma Fraternity about their interest in expanding their friendship to a larger family and promote a lifelong bond of sisterhood. On February 29, 2004, Delta Gamma’s Expansion Team visited the campus to listen to the group’s presentation. Beth Searcy, Epsilon Gamma-Virginia, Director of Expansion, told the women of Gamma Phi Omega of the Council of Delta Gamma’s unanimous vote to accept their invitation to colonize a chapter on the campus of Lake Forest College.

On Sunday, April 25, 2004, a Pi Alpha ceremony for 43 members of Gamma Phi Omega was held, followed by a reception for Delta Gamma’s Eta Mu new chapter. Heather Halle, new chapter president, attended Convention in June as the first Eta Mu representative. The new chapter period extended into the fall semester, with Collegiate Development Consultants Melissa Less, Gamma Epsilon-Kent State and Julie Beltz, Beta Tau-Miami assisting in Fraternity education and new chapter development.

The weekend of October 9-10, 2004 was selected for the Initiation and Installation of Delta Gamma’s 187th chapter. Coinciding with the Chicago Marathon and Homecoming weekend at Lake Forest, the Installation team and 14 area alumnae initiated 26 women (including four alumnae initiates) into Delta Gamma, followed by an Installation luncheon at the Deer Path Inn. Delta Chi President Aaron Kaplan welcomed Delta Gamma to the campus. Beth Searcy presented the charter to new chapter president Halle. All in attendance applauded the talented group of women and recognized the alumnae and parents who support them. The event served to share with the new chapter the network of the Fraternity through gifts, well wishes, and Share in the Future donations.

At the Eta Mu Installation ceremony, Molly Smith, while giving the chapter’s history, said “We have experienced the love of Gamma Phi Omega, strong and persistent. But now we are given the chance to experience a greater love, the love that is Delta Gamma. The strength of this love is unchanging, only now will it come from thousands of women scattered all around the world, strong, persistent and never-ending.”