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**Gamma Delta-Montana State**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: January 31, 1948
* Re-established November 24, 2019
* Location: Bozeman, MT
* Region: 7

**History:**

In February 1893, the Agricultural College of the State of Montana was founded as the state’s land grant college. Later renamed to The Montana College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, or Montana Agricultural College for short. The newly established college opened for classes in April for a ten-week summer term with a total of eight students enrolled for the first session, five men and three women. In the 1920s, the preferred name became Montana State College which remained until July 1965, when the thirty-ninth legislative assembly of the state changed the name to Montana State University.

The beginning of the Gamma Delta chapter can be traced back to the efforts of six women: Lorna Dawley, Nancy Hodgson, Barbara Johnson, Helen McCullough, LaVerne Pickert, and Beverly Stearns. In the fall of 1947, the girls pledged 9 girls with the encouragement of Delta Gammas and the cooperation of the five other sororities on campus.

On January 31, 1948, a formal banquet was held, and Gamma Delta chapter of Delta Gamma Fraternity on Montana State College campus received its official charter, welcoming its members as part of the national sorority. On February 1st, a reception was held at the Student Union and more than 750 guests were greeted by National officers of Delta Gamma. That month the new chapter members moved into the Quads on campus. Gamma Delta was honored by Alpha Pi chapter of Alpha Omicron Pi, the oldest national sorority on campus.

At the Mortar Board Carnival on April 19, 1948, the chapter had an ice cream bar concession trimmed in bronze, pink, and blue. That Sunday evening, they had their first Founder’s Day banquet at the Baxter Hotel, celebrating Delta Gamma’s 75th anniversary.

Gamma Delta members launched into campus activities, throughout the years many were candidates for Harvest Ball Queens and Junior prom queens, they entered an impressive float every year for Homecoming, which always earned them an honor.

In 1959, Lauris Collison was chosen as Pi Kappa Alpha’s “Dream Girl” and was Delta Gamma’s first queen. In the winter of that year, Gamma Deltas were first in grades, even over the men’s fraternities.

In 1965, the women won first place in the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Olympics. They also welcomed an exchanged student that year from Cochabamba, Bolivia.

The Gamma Deltas received their anchor in 1966. The father of one of the girls was Col. George Ryffel, USMC, Assistant Deputy Commandant for the Marine Corps at the Armed Forces Staff College. He located the 1200lb anchor for the chapter as the largest anchor of all the DG chapters and the farthest inland. That spring it was mounted in a concrete base with a plague and painted gold. That was also the year that a door was cut through quads E and F to connect the living quarters occupied by the chapter members. Judy Johnston was the first student to receive a B.S. degree in psychology from MSU that year.

In 1967, Karen Kamhoot was elected Miss MSU.

In the school year of 1972-73, Gamma Delta’s hosted a dinner for the blind citizens of Bozeman. They also assisted Panhellenic project, the Muscular Dystrophy Dance Marathon. The pledge class of October was named Pledge Class of the Month and the chapter hosted an exchange student from Peru for the year.

In the next school year, the chapter members participated in many intramural sports including basketball where they were undefeated. They planned and held one party a quarter and organized a Christmas party, Fall Fireside, Big-Little Sister Retreat, and a Coffee Hour to honor the 1974 Five-Year Speaker who was a Delta Gamma. In addition to their participation in campus activities, they also earned outstanding scholastic achievements. For the fall semester, the new collegiate members were first scholastically among Greek women and four Gamma Deltas were initiated into Alpha Lambda Delta honor society.

The philanthropic project of the 1974-75 school year consisted of dressing three dolls for the First National Bank at Christmas time and paying the full sponsorship for a Campfire Girls’ group, they also participated once more in the annual Muscular Dystrophy Dance-A-Thon.

The 1976-77 school year brought big things for Gamma Delta including a successful rush of 27 pledges. In the fall, the chapter pledged members to little sister program at five fraternities. Two members were part of the MSU cheersquad, and there was enthusiastic participation in events like intramural volleyball, homecoming activities, and a myriad of wakeups and serenading dates. Winter semester brought the Muscular Dystrophy Dance-A-Thon which was chaired by a Gamma Delta, and they raised over $11,000. They also held their first Anchor Splash®.

Spring semester was highlighted by the annual university awards ceremony – Women’s Day of Recognition – at which several Gamma Deltas were honored, and one member won the top award. They also won scholarship cups for the highest grades. To cap off the year, chapter members won the Hannah Award at Province Leadership School.

As the years went by, Gamma Deltas remained extremely active in intramural sports, campus events, the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Olympics, Sigma Chi Derby Days, Pi Kappa Alpha Week, and Greek Week.

In 1982, Gamma Deltas assisted in vision screenings at local elementary schools.

In October 1985, the Gamma Delta House Corporation bought a new house for the chapter, and after some delay, the house was opened in October 1987.

In the years to follow, Gamma Deltas would face some trying times and the chapter ultimately decided to relinquish their Delta Gamma charter in June of 1991. Throughout the years, there has been much discussion about Gamma Delta re-establishing at Montana State, and now the time has finally arrived, and the chapter was reinstalled in Fall of 2019.