

**Gamma Rho-Wittenberg**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: March 10, 1956
* Location: Springfield, OH
* Region: 4

**History:**

Associated with the Lutheran Church, Wittenberg University was founded in 1845. Ezra Keller, Wittenberg University’s founder and first president, chose Springfield, OH as the permanent location of the university. The school was named after the original Wittenberg University in Germany, made famous because of its association with Martin Luther during the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. The school’s original focus was the training of Lutheran ministers. In the 1880s, Wittenberg began to integrate science into its curriculum. By the turn of the century, Wittenberg added new courses in art, music, and science, and became one of the first Lutheran colleges to be fully accredited.

Fraternity and sorority life first came to campus in the mid-1800s. By the 1950s, the campus’ sorority and fraternity life was flourishing. In 1925, Delta Gamma made first contact with Wittenberg University and continued to watch progress of the university. Through this time, Delta Gamma’s interest in the campus grew. By the summer of 1954, numerous inspections of Wittenberg University were conducted by representatives of the Fraternity. On February 10, 1955, Clarence Stoughton, President of the university, invited Delta Gamma to establish on Wittenberg’s campus.

On October 5,1955, the Gamma Rho new chapter was established. Roberta Abernathy, Epsilon-Ohio State, Polly Kline, and Sylvia Carlson, Beta Gamma-Utah held panel interviews at Wittenberg during the initial recruitment process. Field Secretary Jean Shade Sheahan, Epsilon-Ohio State spent three weeks in Springfield to be sure Delta Gamma would make quota. In September 1955, Delta Gamma held its first recruitment at Wittenberg University and pledged 14 women to establish the colony.

The colony began its preparation for Installation under the direction of Field Secretary Marilyn Monahan, Alpha Gamma-Toronto. The Installation of Gamma Rho was held at Springfield Country Club on March 10, 1956. The Initiation ceremony was performed by the collegians of Alpha Rho-Ohio Wesleyan.

Gamma Rho’s first housing was a rented apartment at Ferncliff Hall. In the fall of 1956, the chapter moved to a house on Woodlawn Avenue, and then moved again in 1959 to the “Sun House”, where they remained until 1961. Margaret Moyer, Zeta-Albion was the Housing Corporation President and was integral in establishing the plans for a new house to be built for the Gamma Rho chapter. In 1960, Gamma Rho broke ground on a new house. This house was completed in 1962 and was the first sorority house built on Wittenberg’s campus. The new house at 501 North Wittenberg Avenue was dedicated on October 28 and is still occupied by the Gamma Rho chapter to this day. Marilyn Monahan was the first house mother.