



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

JANESE LEWIS GEORGE
Councilmember, Ward 4

COMMITTEE MEMBER
Human Services
Labor and Workforce Development
Recreation, Libraries and Youth Affairs
Transportation and the Environment
Special Committee, COVID-19 Recovery

January 12, 2023

Nyasha Smith
Secretary, Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith,

Today, I, along with Councilmember Henderson, am re-introducing the "Xi Omega Way Designation Act of 2023". Please find enclosed a signed copy of the legislation. This bill will symbolically designate Fourteenth Street, N.W., between Allison Street, N.W. and Arkansas Avenue, N.W. in Ward 4 in honor of the Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

The year was 1923. Washington DC was a segregated southern city. People of color were relegated to substandard housing and no health care. Police brutality was commonplace with no recourse.

Twenty women, college educated, most of them teachers and nurses, said, we have seen enough. We must do something to help our people. And so, on December 23, 1923, twenty women chartered Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. This is the beginning of a "Legacy of Service for 100 years to the Washington, DC community".

Xi Omega women immediately began the work of improving poor sanitation and health care problems in Washington with specific programs targeting children and women. In the 1960s, the vision screening program for elementary school children identified hundreds of children for referrals to ophthalmologists. Most of these little ones had never had an eye exam. Again, in 1981, Xi Omega in partnership with the Prevention of Blindness Society provided vision screening for 903 DC School children, finding that 105 needed advanced eye care.

One of Xi Omega's longest running programs of service is Monday Activities. For more than 42 years, every Monday, the doors of Xi Omega are literally and figuratively opened to seniors, currently ranging in age from 55 to 102 years old, for arts and crafts, sign language class, aerobics, bridge, memory stimulating games, Spanish class, and free lunch. During the isolating days of COVID, Xi Omega pivoted to virtual Monday Activities to ensure no seniors were left isolated and lonely.

Xi Omega's long history of organized social activism began in the 1930s when the chapter worked to assure decent living conditions for people of color, eliminate police brutality and establish home rule. In the 1940s-chapter members participated in non-violent demonstrations, marches and sit-ins. The struggle is ongoing, yet the women of Xi Omega have never run away from a righteous

cause. The chapter holds voter registration drives, voter forums and transports voters to the polls ever year. Xi Omega Chapter has also been recognized by the DC Government for its successful series of consumer advocacy seminars on effective buying strategies and ways to avoid impulse buying.

Xi Omega Chapter's economic investment in the Washington community extended to real estate ownership. In 1956 the chapter purchased property at 1751 New Hampshire Avenue N.W. to hold chapter meetings, offer housing for graduate students and rental space for events. This was a phenomenal achievement for black women in 1950s America. When they outgrew the property 25 years later, Xi Omega Chapter purchased the Xi Omega Center at 4411 14th Street N.W., where they remain active members of the 14th Street Community.

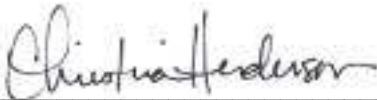
For the past 41 years, Xi Omega has continued to meet and operate its programs and services from this location including a "little library" converted to a food pantry during the pandemic. I am proud to amplify their request for recognition of our tenure and service to the community with a request that the 4300 and 4400 blocks of 14th Street, NW be named "Xi Omega Way" during their 100th year anniversary in 2023.

From 20 charter members in 1923 to 680 members today, the women of Xi Omega Chapter have worked diligently to respond to the community's needs in ways that make a positive and lasting difference. This is Xi Omega Chapter's Legacy of Service for 100 years to the Washington DC Community!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janeese Lewis George". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Janeese Lewis George
Ward 4 Councilmember


Councilmember Christina Henderson


Councilmember Janeese Lewis George

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To symbolically designate Fourteenth Street, N.W., between Allison Street, N.W. and Arkansas Avenue, N.W. in Ward 4 as Xi Omega Way in Ward 4.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Xi Omega Way Designation Act of 2023”.

Sec. 2. Pursuant to sections 401, 403a, and 423 of the Street and Alley Closing and Acquisition Procedures Act of 1982, effective March 10, 1983 (D.C. Law 4-201; D.C. Official Code §§ 9-204.01, 9-204.03a, and 9-204.23), the Council symbolically designates Fourteenth Street, N.W., between Allison Street, N.W. and Arkansas Avenue, N.W., in Ward 4 as “Xi Omega Way”.

Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

Sec. 4. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.