



Dear Sisters and Alumnae,

I hope you are as excited about convention as I am, and I hope to see you all there. This year's convention will be held in Hartford, Connecticut, July 19-23, 2006, at the Hartford Hilton. The Hilton is located in the heart of downtown and connects to the Hartford Civic Center. From chain restaurants to locally owned establishments, your dining pleasure is only a short walk away... the variety of restaurants and other services within a five block radius of the hotel is essential. The food in Hartford is delicious, even at the hotel restaurant. The Hilton has incredible amenities, a few of which are a gym, indoor pool, sauna, FREE wireless internet (available in public areas) and a business center if you need to print a boarding pass or do some homework for your online class.

Hartford is one of our country's oldest cities. It was founded in 1636 when a group of English settlers, led by Rev. Thomas Hooker left Massachusetts and formed a colony. They lived peacefully there with the Algonquin Indians for many years. The colonists adopted a set of Fundamental Orders in 1639 as a means to govern themselves, and this was the first document in history to establish government with the consent of its people. This example was followed by the founding fathers of the U.S. Constitution, and Connecticut received the nickname "The Constitution State." Hartford is also known for being the insurance capital of the world. The insurance industry was created there in 1810 with the formation of the Hartford Fire Insurance Group. Our nation's oldest insurance company is still located there – the Hartford Insurance Company. Hartford is also home to many of the largest insurance companies in the world including Aetna and Travelers. Not only is Hartford a role model for democracy, and the home of the insurance industry, but it is also the home of many well know inventors, writers, pioneers, and a wealth of history. Samuel Colt pioneered the use of interchangeable parts in his handguns. Hartford is the home of Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe, who were next door neighbors. Imagine the conversations they had.... You can see a tour of the Underground Railroad and Amistad sites or an ancient burial ground. If art is what you're interested in, visit the Wadsworth Atheneum, the nation's oldest public art museum - founded in 1844; with the support of prominent benefactors like J.P. Morgan it became one of the top ten art museums in the country. If theatre is your thing, Hartford has four venues which have plays, musicals (including Broadway touring companies), concerts, and much more. You may also take a Lady Katharine Cruise on the Connecticut River; these cruises are named after Katharine Hepburn because she is also from Hartford. And the city has even more to offer, those are just the high points!



This will be an exciting time to explore OPA's history as well. Close proximity to Bridgeport and alumnae attendance will allow the actives and young alumnae to learn about Beta Chapter. We will also have in attendance a lauded guest speaker, Linda Terzian Cartiglia.

A few quick reminders... convention registration is due no later than June 1st. The fee for late registration is \$25. Rooms are \$99/night plus tax for any room – single, double, triple, or quad. This means that the room rate is based on how many people stay in the room each night. Room reservations received after June 1st will be subject to the hotel's availability. Make sure and plan to attend Convention Kickoff and Closing Banquet. We have some surprises in store for you this year that you'll learn more about later.

This year we aren't planning any projects that require donations or fundraising... be prepared to roll up your sleeves and do some hands-on service in the Hartford area. Numerous workshops will be given to expand your knowledge of and about OPA. This is a sisterhood year, so don't forget to prepare for some fun sightseeing or just chatting until the wee hours of the morning... and don't forget to bring sensible shoes.

I would like to encourage all actives and alumnae to attend Convention this year. Not only is Hartford a city rich in history and architecture, but it is only about three hours from Boston and New York City, either of which would make an excellent side vacation. This convention will still cover business, although there will be much less business than last year. Our focus this year lies on sisterhood, so get ready to share and learn new things. Details about convention will be posted on the website as they are available, so please check it often to stay abreast of any changes. Additional registration forms and payment methods are available via the website, as well. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about convention, please contact Myrinda Grantham, Convention Coordinator, at convention@omegaphialpha.org.

Hotty Toddy, y'all! See you in Hartford!

Myrinda Grantham
2006 Convention Coordinator
Alumna - Alpha Beta Chapter