

Name: BethAnne Hutchinson
Pledge Class: Spring 1980
Officer Position: President

As a prospective officer & leader of the ODPAA, what do you consider your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?

As a prospective president of ODPAA, I believe my greatest strengths include my previous experience as an ODPAA Legacy Representative and Secretary, as well my years of service to the SUNY Potsdam Alumni Board as a Trustee and Executive Committee Secretary. Over time and experience, I have learned the workings of both our governing association and that of the college. I understand well the necessary commitment of time and energy. I also bring my experience as a successful business owner through which I proudly stand as a champion for women. I lead with respect, compassion, fairness, and the ability to recognize my own faults and failures. I am committed to open and honest communication, and will work collaboratively to repair broken trust and welcome all to the table. Lastly, I humbly admit that my greatest weakness is that of not always holding my thoughts while listening to those of others. I work to improve on this every day.

If elected or re-elected to the position you seek, what is your commitment to serving out the full term?

I am committed to the full term.

Please describe accomplishments in your career and personal life that would benefit the ODPAA.

I am a proud mother of two wonderful adult children. They make me proud every day as I see evidence that they are good, caring, and compassionate humans. As a family, we respect each other's differences and points of view, we listen and learn from each other, and we always offer forgiveness. Beyond my family life, I am a successful business owner who is well respected not only for the good work we do, but for being honest, transparent, respectful, and willing to accept responsibility.

What is your vision for the future of the ODPAA? What changes would you advocate and why?

My vision for the future of the ODPAA is one of transition from a focus on the issues of the active house to one that focuses on unity of purpose for our alumni sisterhood. The specifics of our new purpose(s) will be not mine alone or the board's alone, but developed through the collective wishes of our members. I can envision our organization working to support important endeavors at both SUNY Potsdam and Clarkson, supporting the Potsdam community, philanthropic opportunities, and working together to leave a positive mark on the world. I would advocate for a simpler, more well-aligned constitution, the use of well-purposed committees to explore areas of interest and return recommendations to the board, fewer, more

purposeful board meetings to improve interest in participation, and regular and transparent communication.

If elected or re-elected, please describe what you seek to accomplish:

If elected, I seek to transform our existing organization into one that focuses on unity, seeking common ground, development of a common purpose, a big tent in which all are welcome, respect and acceptance of our different generational views, and to improve willingness to serve.

What does Omega Delta Phi mean to you? Please describe your experience as both an active member and an alumni.

As an active member of Omega, I found my family and my home away from home. I learned so much from my sisters, from understanding our history, working together as pledges, observing unity of purpose in our sisterhood, to learning how to take care of ourselves and our home. I took all that I learned at Omega into my life beyond college, though I don't know that I realized that until I grew older. As many sisters did, I too left Potsdam and went on to a career, marriage and family; time passed with a primary focus on family. When I came back for the 50th, I realized just how impactful my sisters and sisterhood were on my life. I realized then that I would never be without my sisters in my life, every day again.

How would your sisters describe you?

I believe my sisters would describe me as honest, trustworthy, open, fair, compassionate, and respectful. They might also believe that I possess qualities and experiences that lend well to the position of president.

Please describe your approach to communicating and working with the ODPAA membership.

My approach to communicating and working with ODPAA membership is rooted in unity of purpose with respect for individual and generational differences. More regular communication is needed for the purposes of gathering information as well as disseminating it. Seeking contribution of ideas is important to the future of our organization as well welcoming the expertise of our sisters when their individual experiences and skills lend themselves well to our collective endeavors.

How do you deal with difficult people & situations? Please describe a situation in which you took a position that upset someone else, and explain how you handled it.

Recognizing that we are all individuals with our own beliefs and ideas is necessary for the unity of our organization. It is reasonable to understand that when we feel misunderstood or marginalized that we may express that through frustration or difficult behavior. When I am presented with this, my first goal is to deescalate the situation by acknowledging the other person's right to express their frustration. Next, I want to understand the facts as well as the emotion behind their frustration by actively listening. I will want to show support for coming

forward and work to find common understanding. I feel it is best to not try to unilaterally solve problems that need more than my own attention.

How do you motivate others?

I motivate others by acknowledging and supporting their individuality, showing respect for their ideas, working collaboratively to develop common understandings and purposes, and in recognizing their contributions. I also believe that reasonable expectations go a long way to keeping people motivated and limiting burnout.

How do you handle criticism?

Over both my personal and professional lives, I have had opportunities in which I faced the option of fighting it out to save face or to accept criticism, learn from it, and take responsibility. This is a practiced skill and has not always been easy for me, but over time I have learned that my being right is not most important. I have learned many lessons by being willing to listen carefully to constructive criticism, reflect on my own behavior, and work to apply what I learned moving forward.

What top 3 qualities do you think a leader should have?

All leaders should be honest, trustworthy, and respectful of others.

Would you rather be liked or respected? Why?

I much prefer to be respected rather than be liked. I say this because integrity matters and we tend to act more honestly with each other when we put that over being liked.

How do you spend your free time?

During my free time I enjoy activities with family and friends, travel domestically and internationally, cook and bake, read, enjoy cultural events and the arts, and express myself creatively. I most enjoy any opportunity to spend time with my Omega sisters.

For Fun: What's your 'superpower' or 'spirit animal' and why?

My superpower is compassion. I am innately intuitive and sensitive to the emotions of others. This superpower allows me to notice and tap into the feelings of others and offer my support.

Is there anything else that we haven't already covered/asked that you would you like to share with your sisters?

I recognize the division that currently exists in our sisterhood and take this opportunity to offer my time and effort to work with others to try to repair old wounds, find common goals and understandings, and transform our organization into one that recognizes, respects, and unifies around a common purpose. Thank you for the opportunity.