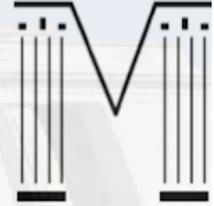


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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2012

## Sisters Learn to Lean on One Another

By **Meaghan O'Connor**

*"Ritual is like an antique frame with a modern day picture. It continually needs to be changed, but the frame remains the same."*

On Monday, January 23rd hundreds of Panhellenic sorority women came together in Rackham Auditorium to listen to Dr. Mari Ann Callais speak about the importance of preserving our ritual and strengthening our Greek organizations. Theta Phi Alpha, which was founded on U of M's campus in 1912, presented the speaker as a gift to the Panhellenic community to celebrate the 100 year birthday of the organization. A sister and former National President of Theta Phi Alpha (who also currently works for Delta Delta Delta), she clearly knew how to communicate and reach out to the women on our campus.



Campuspeak

As she pulled out her guitar, invited women in the audience on stage, and began to play songs such as "Hakuna Matata" and "Lean on Me," she stressed the importance of developing the *sisterhood* that so many of our organizations claim to offer. She emphasized that this invaluable bond is something that we should hold on to and cherish, something that few outside the Greek system can truly understand. She encouraged women to come on stage and share examples of the sisterhood that women on our campus are experiencing every day.

Some told stories of encouragement and laughter. Others emphasized that their sisters would always be there for a laugh or a shoulder to cry on. One member even told a story about buying a drink for sister (who she didn't know) on an airplane, and how connecting with another member



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outside her local chapter was something truly special and unique. By participating in a Greek organization, we create a community of people who care for one another simply based on the values and morals we stand by and have promised to uphold.

*So where does this fit into how our organizations work every day?*

That's where the big 'R' comes in: *Ritual*. During the final moments of the program, Mari Ann Callais stressed a few extremely important points for us to consider and to bring back to our own chapters. Being part of an organization like this is about more than having a social life, attending chapter events and planning activities. When you pledge to be a part of a Greek organization with years of history behind it, you make promises to live and uphold this ritual everyday. Sure, it may not seem like a big deal right now (we've all got tests, homework, and other activities on our plates), but learning about the history and values that make your chapter special is one of the most important things you can do as a member.

Posted by [Meaghan O'Connor](#) at 9:26 AM

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