

# Alpha Gamma Delta IRD 2018

## Coming Together to Fight Hunger

*The following speech was written by Stephanie Simpson—Gamma Zeta, 1993, Philanthropy Committee Chairman, based on the IRD theme. It may be used in its entirety or as inspiration.*

Our 2018 International Reunion Day theme is Coming Together to Fight Hunger. These are powerful words to describe how sisterhood and service go hand in hand.

We can look to our Purpose to discover why serving in the context of sisterhood is especially meaningful.

Say it with me:

*To welcome the opportunity of contributing to the world's work in the community where I am placed because of the joy of service thereby bestowed and the talent of leadership multiplied.*

This sentence in our Purpose is full of important phrases – I'll break it down.

**To welcome the opportunity of contributing to the world's work.** We are fortunate to sit in a position of privilege in the land of plenty. Although this is true for many, it isn't for all. We should be thankful we can give of our time, talent and treasure. And while there are hundreds of worthwhile causes, it's hard to think of one that is more important than fighting hunger, as it addresses a basic human need. For without food, not much else matters.

**In the community where I am placed.** We are internationally united as we serve under the same focus, but we can also make a difference right where we live. This means that you can see more of your impact while feeling the power of unification with literally thousands of sisters throughout the United States, Canada and wherever our sisters are placed and fighting hunger, too!

**Because of the joy of service thereby bestowed.** The purpose of service isn't for our own self-satisfaction or to make us feel good. As the old saying goes, "For it is in giving that we receive." By doing, we also become more empathetic, more passionate and better women, while bringing deep joy and fulfillment to those we serve, as well as to ourselves.

**And the talent of leadership multiplied.** When I hear this line of the Purpose, a quote by Helen Keller comes to mind: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." We each have our own strengths and when combined, we are even more effective. I believe "Coming Together to Fight Hunger" is a true reflection of this line in our Purpose.

Last summer, we launched a branding initiative around our new philanthropic focus. As you have hopefully seen, our ongoing philanthropy campaign is *full plates, hearts, and minds*.



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Much attention was given to the development and meaning of this phrase, and it honors our philanthropic roots which began in 1919 when we developed a camp for undernourished and underprivileged children. This phrase also highlights our dedication to living healthy, which aligns with another line of our Purpose: *To develop and prize health and vigor body.*

Hunger affects every community, every race, every age. It is a problem at the forefront of society because it affects the very future of our society. The statistics are staggering and the solution starts with each and everyone one of us.

**This is why we're filling plates.** Literally. By volunteering and raising funds in our local communities so those who are hungry receive proper nutrition needed to live an active lifestyle.

- We volunteer at food pantries and soup kitchens.
- We host events such as 5th Quarter – a program that re-packages unused food for distribution after college sporting events.
- We fill backpacks so kids don't go hungry over the weekends.
- We promote growing fresh food for balanced meals by volunteering at local community gardens.
- We maximize the impact of our local initiatives through our partnerships with Feeding America and Meals on Wheels and by volunteering with organizations in the Food Banks Canada network.
- We raise money for the Alpha Gamma Delta Foundation for not only women's education and leadership, but also for grants to our local community partners in the fight against hunger.

And our work doesn't stop there. **We're filling hearts—the hearts of others and our own.** When people are fed, they feel loved and supported. They can reach their potential. As we ask each of you to become more involved and act as connectors to critical resources that bring hope and compassion to those dealing with food insecurities, know that these actions strengthen friendships and Panhellenic bonds.

**We're also filling minds.** Through educational initiatives and awareness programs such as our Week of Service and Hunger Action Month, we fill minds while calling attention to the issues surrounding hunger.

Lastly, I want to emphasize why serving with sisters is so special. Connecting with each other while helping to meet a need is a wonderful way to develop relationships with sisters at a variety of ages and stages of life. It also allows collegians and alumnae can volunteer together, which further strengthens the bonds of sisterhood within your local community. There's also the practical: the time it takes to complete many tasks can be significantly reduced and the impact strengthened when done together. And why not have FUN while serving together?!

As we have gathered on International Reunion Day and have so fortunately enjoyed this nutritious meal together, I hope you will be further inspired to focus on our philanthropic efforts—to Come Together to Fight Hunger. Our Purpose provides the roadmap, and—with sisters working together to provide *full plates, hearts, and minds.*—the possibilities are endless.



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As you reflect on today, I hope you will think about your participation in this very important cause. How will you educate yourself and others? How can you make a difference? Find what inspires YOU and *impact the world* through service and sisterhood. These are the pillars of Alpha Gamma Delta, because of the joy of service thereby bestowed and the talent of leadership multiplied.



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