

Spotlight on Que:
Brother Maurice Dismukes
By. Brother Jeffrey T. Smith

Brother Maurice Dismukes is a member that has a rich and principled history in Omega Psi Phi and in the Metro Denver community. To gain a firm appreciation of Brother Dismukes and his strong, passionate love for Omega, one must first understand his background or upbringing. Dismukes proudly states he is a military dependent from the old-school, born an only child. His father retired in Denver, Colorado after 29 years in the United States Army; yet, Dismukes traveled back and forth to other areas of the country namely Mississippi during his formative years. Ultimately, he received his secondary education as a high school student in Crawford, Mississippi. Dismukes has a firsthand experience of racism, social injustices, and inequality having lived in communities steeped in segregation practices. He was inspired by men of conscience, purpose, and steadfastness to rise to a plane of unselfishness in order to make a unique contribution to society.

Brother Dismukes began his Omega experience in the Lampados Club during the fall of 1966. He crossed the burning sands as the tail-dog, one of three lamps to enter Sigma Sigma Chapter, Texas College on April 14, 1967. His college career started at Tyler Junior College, an all-white institution of higher learning in Tyler, Texas, the rose capital of the world. He was one of 31 African-American students to attend the school in 1965. Dismukes often visited nearby Texas College because his school did not offer social events for African-Americans.

Brother Dismukes finished his initial college training in Texas in May 1967, receiving an Associates of Arts in Fine Arts (Theater Arts and Physical Education). He left Texas to complete his college education at Colorado State College in June 1969, obtaining a Bachelor of Science Degree in subjects US History and Recreation (an emphasis in Physical Education). Colorado State College would later become the University of Northern Colorado (UNC).

Brother Dismukes was drafted into the US Army in 1969 where he was trained as a Military Policeman, serving honorably for two years. Upon his discharge in 1971,

Dismukes joined the police force in Aurora, Colorado and worked as a patrolman through 1989. He was one of two African-Americans on the force when he started. In 1990, Dismukes became a US Marshal working court security until his retirement from federal service in 2005. In retirement, he owns and operates a lawn care business.

Brother Dismukes is a man about the community holding membership in several organizations. Since 1974, he has been a member of Centennial Lodge #4 PHA. Dismukes is also affiliated with Mountain & Plains Consistory #33 (Valley of Denver, Orient of Colorado) and Syrian Temple #49 A.E.A.O.N.M.S. along with various houses therein. Dismukes is the Chairman of the Board for the Owl Club of Denver, serving in the group since 1983. He was a 'big brother' for 23 years with Big Brothers, joining before the union of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Dismukes is a past member of the Cerebral Palsy Association and the Adams County Diversion Team, a group dedicated to helping young people assigned to the diversion program. He contributes monetarily to the UNC Alumni Association, UNC Women's Volleyball program, and the Denver CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates). His passion remains high for community service even though his involvement has subsided over the past few years.

Brother Dismukes awards and accomplishments in Omega are numerous. He received two Omega Man of the Year Awards. He has two Founders Awards and he received the chapter's 2011 Centennial Year 'Bridge Builder' Award. Dismukes served 15 years as the Keeper of Records and Seal (KRS) and two years as Keeper of Peace (KP). He was Dean of Pledges (DOP) for 20 years. Dismukes served on the 1979 Grand Conclave planning committee, the 8th District Rules committee which included Brother Lloyd Jordan before he was elected as District Representative and Grand Counselor. He was the secretary of the Scholarship Board which was later changed to the Holmes Omega Scholarship Foundation. Dismukes was on the chapter's housing authority which attempted to secure an Omega care facility in Denver. He is life member number 362. Brother Dismukes has been an active, financial member in good standing throughout his entire Omega journey; he has the 25 Year service pin and certificate, and the 40 Year service pin and plaque, as a reward for his outstanding record.

Brother Dismukes has been lead, mentored, and inspired by several members of

Chi Phi Chapter from yesteryear. He stated that Brother William H. Pinkett was a precise person with a penchant for following the rules thoroughly as well as being a leader on the national and district levels. Dismukes remarked that Brother Dr. William Bowers was an articulate man and direct to the point. He worked extensively with the Omega Life Member Foundation. His commentary on Brother Raymond Holman was one of a quiet, steadfast brother and he would counsel a person on what's right privately. Dismukes said Brother James Burress was a strong, tough Omega man, committed to doing it right; he was a director with the Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) government agency. He indicated that Brother Dr. Earl Phillips, Sr. was a 'Who's Who' in Omega and a distinguished scholar teaching college in North Carolina and South Carolina. All of the men and many others helped shaped Brother Dismukes perspectives, protocols, and principles not only in Omega Psi Phi but also in the community at large.

Brother Dismukes aspirations for the Fraternity are straightforward. First, he encourages members to develop a deepen relationship with each other and to remove barriers to friendship; learn about the brother's profession, family, and goals. Second, he would embolden members to rely on their cardinal principles along with other core values to support their Omega journey; brothers must be tough-minded for leadership and service in Omega. Last, he stated Omega's success is through active participation of her members working on committees first and then holding chapter office; he commented that Omega men must be obligated, dedicated, and resolute in upholding Omega's history, values, legacy and hopes for the future.

Brother Dismukes is a proud and honorable Omega man thoroughly immersed in the true Omega spirit. His influence touches the fraternity and community similarly. He loves his brothers and their family members, and is willing to go the extra mile for them. When the phrase 'Long Live the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity' is mentioned, men like Brother Dismukes are responsible for the reality. Friendship is essential to the soul!