



Multicultural sorority Theta Nu Xi to form at U. Utah

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(Daily Utah Chronicle) (U-WIRE) SALT LAKE CITY -- Theta Nu Xi, a relatively new national sorority with a twist unlike the University of Utah's existing sororities, hopes to start a chapter on campus.

The twist to Theta Nu Xi is that it is based on multiculturalism; and is the only sorority in the nation based upon this claim. The Greek letters of the sorority's name make up the word "one."

"I think it will be great," said Melissa Ermis, U greek coordinator. "The sororities on campus have been very supportive."

Two members, Mandy Richmond and Sandy Eng, of the chapter of Theta Nu Xi from Utah State University, met with an ethnically diverse group of women Saturday morning to create the beginnings of a Theta Nu Xi chapter at the U.

"I think what makes us so distinct in the nation is the multiculturalism," Richmond said.

This is in contrast to the normally homogenous makeup of sororities and fraternities, Richmond said.

"It will be wonderful to have a diverse group of women on Greek Council," Ermis said.

The new sorority could be recognized as early as February of 2001, but will differ greatly from existing sororities on campus as it will be unhooded and much smaller than other sororities.

"Our chapter has only eight people," Richmond said. The USU Chapter was founded in the spring of 2000, making it relatively new as well.

Richmond and Eng related their experiences to those present Saturday in order to encourage applications to the new chapter.

"This sorority has truly made an impact on my life," Richmond said.

Eng, a Logan local, related her experiences of finally finding "sisters" and a place to belong.

"I always have another family I can count on," Eng said.

U students who were present at the meeting are excited at the opportunity to become a part of such a new and diverse sisterhood.

"It's needed here," Yazmin Pulido said. "There is diversity in Utah, but you just don't see much of it."

The U students who wish to join Theta Nu Xi will go through an application process in which the Utah State chapter will hand pick those girls who will found the chapter at the U.

Despite the potential for competition, that did not deter any applicants.

"There wasn't any hesitation on my part," said junior Alexandria Nash.

USU, thus far, is the only chapter outside North Carolina, and the national organization has only five chapters. It prefers to stay small because the sorority was founded in 1996, and is still relatively new.

"It's a part of history being the first multicultural sorority in the west," Eng said.

The Theta Nu Xi sorority originated at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and was created by a biracial young woman, Melissa Murchison-Blake, and six others.

Thus, all the traditions and values distinct to Theta Nu Xi come from the East Coast.

"It's a whole different culture," Richmond said. "We even have a party walk."

A party walk is a type of dance in a line typical to east coast sororities and fraternities; they also have a "hand sign" to show their sorority pride.

"This is what we promote, differences in culture," Richmond said.

Each Theta Nu Xi chapter separately decides its service projects and activities. The USU chapter holds a yearly walk to raise money for multicultural education in local schools and has helped the juvenile court system plant trees.

"In Theta Nu Xi you all know what you stand for," Richmond said.

Applications to Theta Nu Xi are due by Nov. 24 and those interested can find more information at www.thetanuxi.org

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