



## U. Utah's Theta Nu Xi: 'Sisters of diversity, together as one'

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(Daily Utah Chronicle) (U-WIRE) SALT LAKE CITY -- As a University of Utah freshman, Jennifer Indo wanted to enrich her college experience beyond the realm of academics. She dreamed of fitting in with one of the campus sorority groups.

Two years later, she found the connection she had been looking for in a flier with a simple, but powerful, statement: "Sisters of diversity, together as one." The flier was an advertisement for the Theta Nu Xi multicultural sorority.

"The idea really spoke to me," Indo said. "I attended a meeting and from there was absolutely hooked."

The sisters of Theta Nu Xi see a challenge on the U campus to elevate awareness of ethnic diversity and strive to celebrate the differences that many students might miss.

"The U is a great place to have a sorority like Theta Nu Xi," Indo said. "So many people have a misconception of multiculturalism. We're here to promote what it is really about, and dispel boundaries that are based on things like race."

The Iota Chapter of the group, which traces its roots to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was founded at the U in 2001. The sorority is celebrating its national tenth anniversary this year and is currently composed of 25 chapters across the country. The U chapter is often involved in service projects, which are part of Theta Nu Xi's outreach commitment and dedication to diversity issues. The group has been involved with the Humane Society and the Clothesline Project, which is a national group that addresses awareness about violence against women.

Theta Nu Xi has also worked with local food banks and participated in multiple events for the National Conference for Community and Justice, a human relations advocacy group fighting bias, bigotry and racism. The group is involved in and supportive of the greek community at the U, but is distinctive in several ways. Unlike other sororities and fraternities, the group does not conduct a traditional rush in seeking out new members. It does actively recruit, but its approach is more individual.

Potential members are interviewed and invited to attend a meeting to get a feel for the sorority. To preserve and protect the individual connections that are a part of the goals of Theta Nu Xi, chapters are kept small and are limited to 30 members. New members must have completed the first semester of their freshman year before admittance. This is in recognition of the acclimation time that those new to college life must experience, and helps ensure that membership does not contribute to an activities overload.

The tenets of the group are simply stated, but to its members they have powerful meaning -- scholarship, service, leadership, sisterhood and multiculturalism. Amanda Tomchak, a 2004 U graduate and co-founder of the Iota chapter, spoke about how the group's celebration of diversity resonated with her.

"What drew me to Theta Nu Xi was that I have always been interested in learning about different cultures and peoples' backgrounds," Tomchak said. "It's been amazing to find out about our sisters' different backgrounds and lifestyles."

Additional information about Theta Nu Xi can be found on their website at [www.nicoleteresa.com/iota](http://www.nicoleteresa.com/iota)

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