

Diverse backgrounds unite sorority

By [Stephanie Soto](#)

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Czechoslovakian, Native American, Filipino and Mexican-American races are normally separated, but thanks in part to Theta Nu Xi, a new multicultural sorority, all can work together.

As the fourth undergraduate chapter in Texas, the sorority is ready to start strong at UTEP

"The girls at UTEP are genuinely sweet and caring, they have the heart we want," said Jennis Brandon-Watson, acting director of Theta Nu Xi. "They care about what is going on in the world, and they go out and give to the community."

Melissa Jo Murchison-Blake born in Manhasset, N.Y., founded the sorority at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Being a biracial woman, she did not want to choose between the Caucasian or African-American sororities, but wanted to join one that embraced both races. Along with Geeta Kapur, Natalie Barker, Peggy Long, Brenda Eribo, Katherine Stanley and Janelle Poe, Marchison Blake made this dream possible.

The Founding Monarchs, which are the national founders, built the foundation for Theta Nu Xi at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a Multicultural Sorority as the Alpha Chapter April 11, 1997.

After 12 years, the sorority has about 30 different undergraduate and 43 graduate, alumni and professional chapters and colonies in the United States.

"We are new and very different from any organization here at UTEP," said recruiter and education chair Ana Karen Ramirez. "Plus, there are only three other chapters in Texas, that is a big accomplishment."

The sorority was officially initiated March 21 and is planning events for the rest of the spring and the fall semester. One of their goals is to bring their national philanthropy organization, Girls For Change, to help teen girls.

"We want to meet with elementary and middle school girls to raise their self esteem," said President Sharon Navar. "We want them to look at their inner beauty and give them the confidence they need at a young age."

In addition to Girls For Change, Theta Nu Xi wants to bring awareness to racism, sexism and other variations of discrimination to the UTEP and El Paso community.

"We want to raise awareness on controversial issues and know what the UTEP community thinks," Ramirez said. "Although we are a multicultural sorority, we are not just about ethnicity; it's more about where you come from. We want people to embrace it like we do."

Next semester, the sorority will focus more on initiation and recruiting members, as well as getting involved with the Greek activities such as Homecoming Week.

Stephanie Soto may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

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