



# Revival of the Spirit

AN UPDATE OF THE CAMPAIGN  
TO PRESERVE & RENOVATE HISTORIC SISTERS CHAPEL

## Sisters Chapel - A Beacon of Hope

I've always been intrigued by the history of Sisters Chapel. This beautiful monument must have seemed out of place in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. After all, she was built in the middle of a school for Negro women! Can you imagine the emotion the Spelman woman of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century must have felt, entering a building so beautiful and magnificent? I'm sure most of them had never seen such grandeur.



Gail Atley, '83, Chapel Co-Chair in Sisters Chapel

Sisters Chapel represents hope. She was built in a time when Black folk didn't have the right to vote or the ability to earn a fair wage. She stood tall during the civil rights movement, offering a gathering place for men and women to follow the call to action. Sisters Chapel represents the future. Still standing, after nearly a century of providing a place for comfort, a place to share ideas and a place to dream.

I have fond memories of Sisters Chapel. Every Wednesday we'd meet for "Freshman O", the one hour orientation session. We heard inspirational speeches from important leaders. The special programs like the pageants delighted us. Our souls were soothed in the quiet of Friday night vespers. Every Sunday morning, the doors of the Chapel were open for church. We went to rallies, collected clothes and food for the needy, and performed in the chapel.

A year ago, at the *Revival of the Spirit* campaign orientation, I sat with the other co-chairs in those lovely carved pews. The windows were open and you

could see the majestic trees that surround the Chapel. Dr. Johnson played our favorites on the Grant Holtkamp organ – Deep River, Amazing Grace and the Spelman hymn. Nearly twenty years of fond memories came flooding back. I thought, I want to help raise the money to keep this precious monument in tact for the women of Spelman College.

Over the past months, I've talked to so many Spelman sisters about the *Revival of the Spirit* campaign. It is such a wonderful experience – we are so incredibly blessed! Our years at Spelman developed a strong foundation. It's our turn to give some of our gifts to the College to ensure that other young women will have a place for beautiful memories.

Sisters Chapel represents *our* past. She represents the future. Collectively, we can raise enough money to guarantee her future!

*-Gail Atley, Chapel Co-Chair*

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### Campaign Leadership:

- **Dr. Mildred Ponder Stennis, C'47**  
*Eloise Alexis, Director of Alumnae Affairs*
  - **Jerri L. DeVar, C'79**  
*Angela Glover, Major Gifts Officer*
  - **Gail M. Atley, C'83**  
*Ka-Msiyara Corbett, Major Gifts Officer*
  - **Daphne M. Walker, C'94**  
*Trisa Long Paschal, Vice President of Institutional Advancement*
- Karen B. Clay  
Director of Major Gifts  
& Staff Campaign Co-Chair*

# An Alumna Remembers Chapel

The air hung, unmoving — filled with an oppressive heat for which growing up in New England could never have prepared me. My white dress clung to the back of my knees like a child to its mother on the first day of school. I was instructed to look to my left, look to my right and make sure the sisters beside me were still there in four years.

On August 23, 1991 in Sisters Chapel, I began my journey toward wholeness and was welcomed with open arms into the Sisterhood that is Spelman. For me, Spelman is not just an institution with buildings and grass and books and other inanimate things. My connection with Spelman is like that with an old and wise grandmother who nurtured me and supported me through times of joy and sorrow, giving me information and experiences to support me throughout the rest of my life.

As I look back on those four years, I remember how often I tried to avoid Sisters Chapel, but how grateful I am today for meeting Mae Jameson, Angela Davis, Bell Hooks, Danny Glover, Maya Angelou, Wynton Marsalis and Cynthia McKinney. Sisters Chapel was a place

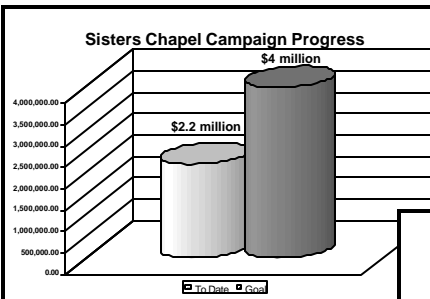
we came to for entertainment during Celebration in Black, for campus politics during SGA and class elections and for comfort during the Rodney King riots.

If Spelman were an old and wise grandmother, Sisters Chapel would certainly be her heart. When I learned of the Sisters Chapel Campaign, my decision was not if I would contribute, but rather how much. Over 400 young women made a pledge on that hot August day ten years ago: "Today I make my commitment to excellence. I possess the courage and strength to soar to heights thought unattainable by others. I will claim my space in time as an extraordinary individual and bring vitality to this otherwise complacent world. I am a nation builder. I am ready to embrace Spelman in order to absorb all that she has to give and to help her grow through my contributions." Spelman has honored her pledge, so I leaped at the opportunity to honor mine.

*"If Spelman were an old and wise grandmother, Sisters Chapel would certainly be her heart"*

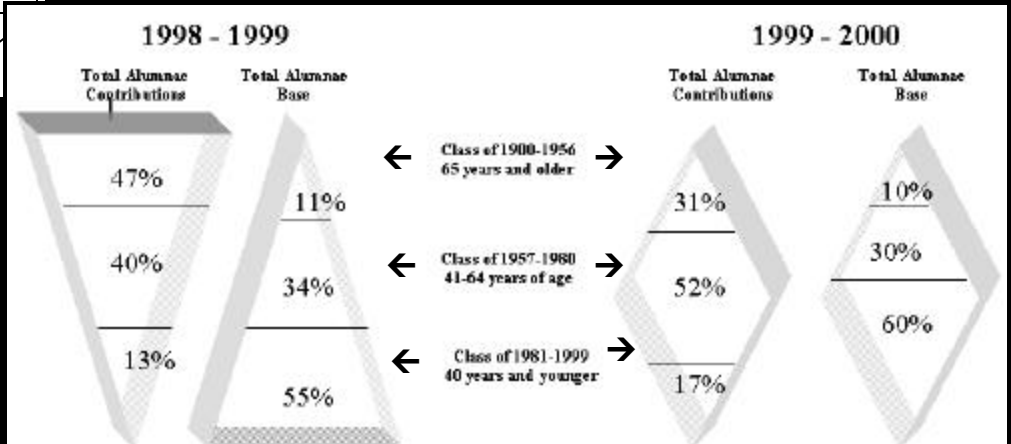
- Kiana M. Ellis, Class of 1995

## A Look at Giving



**Alumnae contributions are especially important to the success of the Sisters Chapel Campaign. With your support, we have raised over \$2.2 million and are nearing the Campaign goal of \$4 million!**

## Generational Giving: Participation is Key!



Alumnae 41 years of age and older were the College's most generous donors in FY 2000, providing 83% of alumnae contributions. Alumnae 40 years and younger represent 55% of the alumnae base, however they contributed only 17% of total alumnae contributions.

## Chapel—What does it mean to me?

## A Student's View

I adore Sisters Chapel. During my first year at Spelman, it was a privilege to have an opportunity to attend services and convocations at a place that honors two women of integrity; Laura and Lucy Spelman. Not only did I admire the weekly events held there, but I also was awarded the opportunity of stating the invocation once during convocation in Sisters Chapel. As a rising sophomore, I am honored to learn the amazing history of past traditions.

I have had such great experiences within that holy place.

*Spelman thy name we praise  
Standards and honor raise,  
We'll ever faithful be  
Throughout eternity....*

At the end of every convocation, we sing the Spelman College hymn to pay tribute to our School. Sisters Chapel seems to give off a touch of security and warmth as if I were home, and also a sense of peace. As I continue my years here at Spelman, I know that some future experiences will allow me to cherish Sisters Chapel more and forever more.

And so, in years to come, I know that I will dwell on....

*May peace with thee abide  
And God forever guide  
Thy heights supreme and true.  
Blessings to you!*

*-Tamara Johnson, Class of 2004*



## Chapel Highlights

*Many of our fondest memories of Spelman College took place in Sisters Chapel. Recent Chapel events proved to be of the caliber certain to foster lifelong memories for graduating seniors and alumnae alike.*

**Thursday, April 5, 2001**

**Convocation featuring Ms. Jerri DeVard, C'79**

Ms. DeVard, Chief Marketing Officer of E-Commerce at CitiGroup, spoke to a captivated audience of Spelman women about her education, her experience and her ambition. She also spoke about philanthropy and her commitment to service, relating it all to the young women and their possibilities for the future.

**Friday, May 18, 2001**

**Reunion Convocation**

Students and alumnae came together in the sanctity of historic Sisters Chapel for a Convocation program hosted by the ten-year Class of 1991.

**Senior Class Day**

The event featured the Ivy Oration delivered by the senior who earned the highest scholastic average. The Senior Bench was also presented, along with the Cap, and the Emblem. The first Bench was first dedicated at the Class Day Program in 1941. Located near the Alumnae Arch, the Bench is to be used only by seniors. The Senior Class Traditions culminated in the Procession through the Alumnae Arch.



Seniors march through the Arch during Alumnae Weekend



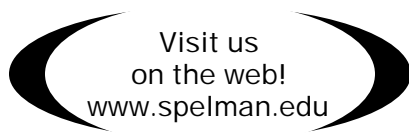
Students gather for a Convocation

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CHAPEL

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Please send your gift to Sisters Chapel  
to the Spelman College address above.



## ***Chapel Fast Facts***

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- Sisters Chapel was completed in 1927 with funds from the estates of Laura Spelman Rockefeller and Lucy Maria Spelman.
- Construction of the Chapel took 4 years.
- The original cost to build the Chapel was \$203,328.
- The Chapel seats 1,040 people and is the largest seating capacity on campus.
- The symbol of learning, the scroll is prevalent throughout the Chapel, in all of the light fixtures, chandeliers and carved in the wood at the end of each bench.
- Founder's Day is always held in the Chapel.

*Did you know these Chapel facts?  
?*

*Look for more Fast Facts in your next newsletter!*

