



GAMMA XI PHI
PROFESSIONAL ARTS FRATERNITY

National Program Overview

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Gamma Xi Phi Professional Arts Fraternity was founded on October 7, 2010 at Ramapo College of New Jersey. The fraternity was later incorporated in Washington, DC in 2012. At various points between 2010 and 2011, Gamma Xi Phi Professional Arts Fraternity created its Cardinal Principles, Motto, Purpose, and Mission. Those ideals remain steadfast as the fraternity advances forward.

The first National Program was created in this era as well. Chapters were directed to perform activities that were in alignment with the Purpose and Mission of the fraternity, namely Service to the Arts, The Spirit of Fraternity, and Artistic Leadership Development. Each programmatic theme had several sub-themes which chapters (and the fraternity itself) were to implement.

In 2013, upon the election of the 2nd National President Malcolm Minor, the tradition of Presidential Themes was begun. Brother Minor chose “Climbing the Gamma Staircase Through Expanding, Expounding, and Elevating” to represent the key objectives around which he sought to galvanize the fraternity.

As of 2015 National President Rashid Darden has introduced a new Presidential Theme and a reorganization of the National Program to better serve our communities as well as our chapters. The Cardinal Principles remain the same, as do our Motto, Purpose, and Mission. The new Presidential Theme and National Program structure refine and focus how we achieve our purpose. It has been created as a response to the types of programs chapters have expressed interest in implementing and as a way to provide chapters with greater focus and guidance in the planning of their activities throughout the year.

Brothers and Sisters, welcome to a new era in the fraternity. We are *Investing in Artists for the Community and the World.*

ABOUT THE PRESIDENTIAL THEME



Investing in Artists for the Community and the World was chosen after a long period of deliberation. After careful review of the fraternity's needs, it was decided that, at its core, Gamma Xi Phi provides service to people, primarily artists, but also the entire community through art and artists. Our community is us, but our community is also outside of us.

If our core is service, then serve we must. We serve through the expense of our time (volunteer hours), the expense of our talent (intellectual capital), and the expense of our treasure (payment of dues and other donations).

Membership in Gamma Xi Phi is an investment. The notion of investment is a central theme of our work as we move forward. Hence, *Investing in Artists for the Community and the World*.

We believe, publicly and privately, that our work is to unite all artists, one at a time, whether or not they are members of the fraternity. Our service is our investment into a better tomorrow.

NATIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Program Areas correspond with the three Cardinal Principles of Philanthropy, Sodality, and Elevation.

PHILANTHROPY = INVESTMENT IN THE ARTS

SODALITY = INVESTMENT IN ARTISTS

ELEVATION = INVESTMENT IN THE MEMBERSHIP

PROGRAM AREA I: INVESTMENT IN THE ARTS:

- Artistic Awareness
- Creative Enrichment
- Odeon
- African Heritage Protection

INVESTMENT IN ARTISTS

- Artists Serving Artists
- Healthy Artists in Mind and Body
 - Fit Artists
 - Check On Me
- The Young Artisans Awards

INVESTMENT IN THE MEMBERSHIP

- Artistic Mentoring Program
- EconArtistry
- The Network of Allies

ARTISTIC AWARENESS

Gamma Xi Phi Professional Arts Fraternity, its chapters, and its members invest in the promotion of the accomplishments of artists of color through educational campaigns, activities, and programs. Historical, contemporary, and emerging artists will be highlighted through national and local campaigns independently and in tandem with **Americans for the Arts** and **Ubuntu Biography Project**.

The Fraternity shall, through national campaigns:

- Observe National Art and Humanities Month in October 2015 and October 2016
- Observe Black History Month in February 2016 (visual artists) and February 2017 (theater)
- Observe World Radio Day on February 13, 2016 and February 13, 2017
- Observe National Poetry Month in April 2016 (Latino poets) and April 2017
- Observe Jazz Appreciation Month in April 2016 and April 2017, with emphasis on International Jazz Day on April 30 of each year.
- Observe Black Music Month in June 2016 (hip-hop) and June 2017 (gospel)
- On an ongoing basis, promote the work of artists of color who are also in the LGBT community.

Local chapters shall implement at least annually an activity in the following vein:

- Plan teach-Ins
- Distribute and post educational fliers
- Arrange guest speakers
- Facilitate film screenings
- Organize museum outings

CREATIVE ENRICHMENT

Gamma Xi Phi has always invested in activities which benefit artists in the community, from National Novel Month Write-Ins, to guest speakers and lecturers. These activities fall under the theme of **Creative Enrichment**. Members themselves facilitate workshops for the community. Chapters also invite outside speakers, panelists, and facilitators.

The purpose of Creative Enrichment is to help community artists become great through focused, directed training.

Local chapters shall implement at least annually an event such as:

- NaNoWriMo Write-In
- Poetry Workshop
- Painting Class
- Guest vocal coaches
- Visiting musical lessons

Chapters of Gamma Xi Phi have experienced success through their various talent showcases. **Odeon** seeks to formalize these activities by branding them under one banner. As a young organization, it's important for us to use words, phrases, and ideas that sound timeless, traditional, and at times, mysterious.

An Odeon in ancient Greece and Rome was a theater in which acting, music, and poetry were performed. **Odeon** in Gamma Xi Phi is the name of any major showcase that the chapter produces. This major investment is the signature event of each chapter.

Local chapters shall implement at least annually one of the following performing art activities:

- Talent Showcase
- Poetry Reading
- Hip-Hop Cipher
- Concert

AFRICAN HERITAGE PROTECTION

Gamma Xi Phi promotes the protection of cultural and artistic artifacts in Africa. Chapters will organize programs that highlight awareness of illicit trafficking of cultural property, restitution of cultural property, and armed conflict of heritage. Programs may include letter-writing campaigns, lectures, videos, and other relevant activities.

The fraternity shall, at the national level, implement an awareness campaign focusing on the following key talking points:

- KNOW that African cultural property remains in danger, from without and within;
- ADVOCATE for legislation and treaties that protect and restore African cultural property;
- PURCHASE African art only from trusted dealers—not art that funds conflict or terror;
- SUPPORT organizations that fight for African heritage; and
- VISIT an African museum.

March 2016 and 2017 shall be devoted to African Heritage Protection nationally, in conjunction with the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade Commemoration (March 25, 2016 and March 25, 2017). However, chapters may coordinate relevant programs at any time.

Local chapters shall implement one African Heritage Protection activity per year, such as:

- Guest lecture
- Letter-writing campaign
- Fundraiser
- Protests

ARTISTS SERVING ARTISTS

Chapters of Gamma Xi Phi initiate local service programs which directly benefit artists of limited means and special needs, including elderly artists and artists with disabilities.

Local chapters shall at least annually implement a project from this list or one like it:

- Holiday food baskets for elderly artists
- Clean-up day at the home of an elderly artist
- Arts/crafts project at a senior center, nursing home, or day program for the disabled
- Art supply drive for arts program serving seniors or the disabled
- Fundraiser for program serving seniors or the disabled
- “Rent Party” for a local artist or artists program in need

HEALTHY ARTISTS IN MIND AND BODY

FIT ARTISTS & CHECK ON ME

Gamma Xi Phi invests in the well-being of artists through the implementation of a two-part program called **Healthy Artists in Mind & Body**.

The first part, called **Fit Artists**, is a national campaign marketed to all artists to combat the health complications of a sedentary lifestyle. The fraternity will partner with several experts for a total media campaign. Locally, chapters sponsor fitness classes, yoga, and shared food and exercise diaries.

Check On Me, the second part of Healthy Artists in Mind & Body, focuses on the mental and emotional health of artists and specifically combats depression and suicide among artists and creative people. Local chapters are directed to implement programs which focus on developing the mental health of the artistic community as well as train allies and friends on how to recognize the symptoms of depression and warning signs of an impending suicide attempt.

The fraternity shall:

- Observe World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10, 2015 and September 10, 2016
- Implement extensive media campaigns for Fit Artists and Check On Me

All local chapters shall:

- Observe World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10, 2015 and September 10, 2016.
- Implement one Fit Artists Activity at least annually.

THE YOUNG ARTISANS AWARDS

Gamma Xi Phi believes in youth as an investment into the future. Hard-working young artists deserve recognition in the greater community of artists. Therefore, each fraternity chapter shall implement an awards program to recognize younger artists. That program shall be called **The Young Artisans Awards**.

Held during the spring of the fraternal year, chapters will collaborate with participating schools to nominate semi-finalists representing each school. The chapters themselves will identify one Young Artisan for the service area and will present them with an award.

Each chapter shall present their Young Artisan (and semi-finalists where possible), in one of the following formats:

- Young Artisans Summit (half-day or whole day conference for youth artists)
- Young Artisans Awards Program
- Young Artisans Reception
- Young Artisans Dinner
- Young Artisans Brunch

ARTISTIC MENTORING PROGRAM

All current and future members of Gamma Xi Phi will be linked to another artist, regardless of chapter, who is actively working in the same field. These one-on-one relationships will mutually benefit each artist personally, professionally, and creatively.

The fraternity shall:

- Maintain a database of active members that is searchable by profession/craft.
- Match new Apprentices with a member in their field for ongoing mentoring.

ECONARTISTRY

One major program that Brothers and Sisters have been clamoring for is an initiative that gives them the tools to be better professionals while improving their artistry. The professional development that our membership desires may now be implemented through the intersection of art and economics: **EconArtistry** (pronounced ee-kun-AR-tis-tree).

Potential experts will be recruited to provide blog entries, lectures, and workshops exclusively to members of the fraternity. Additionally, an organizational membership with **Americans for the Arts** provides access to additional professional resources to every active member.

The **fraternity** will also implement public media campaigns around the following causes:

- Black Business Month (August 2015 and August 2016)
- World Book and Copyright Day
- World Intellectual Property Day

Chapters may also plan EconArtistry programs that are open to members, advisors, and Apprentices/Journeymen only.

THE NETWORK OF ALLIES

- **Academic Partners:** Allies in the field of higher education who assist Gamma Xi Phi in promoting advanced artistic education as well as advising the fraternity on matters of interest to collegiate artists.
- **Licensed Vendors:** Businesses who have committed to the protection of Gamma Xi Phi's intellectual property and have permission to reproduce the fraternity's symbols.
- **Programmatic Partners:** Organizations who are working with Gamma Xi Phi on significant program initiatives and charitable causes.
- **Affiliations:** Membership-based entities that the fraternity has joined in order to advance its mission.
- **Patrons:** Commercial entities, nonprofit organizations, and individuals who have made financial, in-kind, and consultative donations to ensure the success of the fraternity.

DEFINITIONS

The National Program: The total collection of fraternity programs and projects as organized under the Presidential Theme and three Program Areas.

Program Area: One of the three areas of emphasis of the National Program. The Program Areas are Investment in the Arts, Investment in Artists, and Investment in the Membership.

Initiative: A program falling under one of the three program areas. The initiatives are Artistic Awareness, Creative Enrichment, Odeon, African Heritage Protection, Healthy Artists in Mind and Body (including Fit Artists and Check on Me), Artists Serving Artists, The Young Artisan Awards, EconArtistry, the Artistic Mentoring Program, and the Network of Allies.

Program: A program is the local implementation of an initiative. Examples:

- Creative Enrichment is an initiative; a NaNoWriMo Write-In is a program.
- Artistic Awareness is an initiative; a Black History Month Lecture is a program.
- The Young Artisans Awards are an initiative that may also be named The Young Artisans Awards locally.

Project: A project is another word for a program that functions like community service rather than a special event or lecture. Examples:

- Artists Serving Artists is an initiative; an Art Supply Drive is a project.
- Artists Serving Artists is an initiative; painting a mural with children is a project.