



Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service
Western Area

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Spotlight on Link Delores Smith

Who is Link Delores?

Being a Link for thirty-nine years is all about being active for Link Delores. She is a native Houstonian, who lived in Inglewood, California for four years prior to moving to Missouri City, Texas in 1977. Link Delores is a charter member of the Missouri City, (TX) Chapter and a Platinum Member, who was determined from the beginning of the chapter to make a difference for the community.



As Link Delores tells the story, she and a fellow sorority sister had just chartered a new AKA chapter in 1978 after moving to Missouri City. They were interested in becoming Links but did not get the interest of the local Links' chapter. Not one to be deterred, Delores took things into

her hands and reached out to Link Julia Purnell, then the National President of the Links, of whom she was aware because Link Purnell had been the National President for the AKA Sorority. Link Purnell was happy to provide the information that resulted in the chartering of the chapter. Link Delores recalls her new chapter having some of the youngest Links in the room during the 1979 Western Area Conference at the Westin Galleria in Houston, Texas. In May of 2019, Link Delores will have served the community and her chapter for forty years.

While many members who have reached Link Delores' tenure choose to become alumna members, that's not who Link Delores is. She loves to be busy, so much so that she still works a full-time job after retiring from Baylor College of Medicine in 2010 after 33 years. She is the Business Manager for the public relations firm Etched Communication, owned by her Link sister Toni Harrison.

When asked why she is still working after so many years in the workplace, Link Delores responded, "I don't want to sit at home and get old." There is no possibility that will happen as Link Delores' energy and passion for getting the job done are evident in all she does.



Link Delores on the job

A Family Affair

When Delores became the organizer for what became the Missouri City Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, she recruited her daughter Donna D. Smith to also become a charter member. Her husband of 58 years, Eugene Smith, was an active Connecting Link until he passed in 2013. Over the years, the family has lived the values of friendship and service. Her daughter Link Donna became an alumna member, yet Link Delores continues to be involved in her local chapter as an active member.

A Born Leader

Link Delores has been a leader throughout the community as well as in her Links' chapter. She has served the chapter as organizer, president, VP membership, VP programs, treasurer, and parliamentarian. On the Western Area, she served as parliamentarian, journalist, facet chair for NT&S and general chair of the Western Area Conference in 1999. And she has won her fair share of awards during her tenure as a Link, including two Western Area Achievement Awards and an MVP award. Link Delores was recognized as a Platinum member in 2014.



Link Delores proudly displays her Platinum medal

One of Link Delores' attributes as a leader is bringing people together. In her Links' chapter, when she was VP of membership, she led the chapter to bring in more than twenty members in two membership intake periods. She is most proud of her leadership when she was Western Area journalist under Western Area Director Thelma Rice. Link Delores wanted to brand the area newsletter and when discussing her idea with her Link sister Evelyn Thornton and Connecting Link Tull Thornton, it was Connecting Link Thornton who suggested the name, *The Chain*, for the Western Area newsletter.

Service Is A Central Value

For Link Delores, living her purpose means giving of herself in service to others. As a matter of fact, community service is a value that she has practiced all her life. She chooses to be in organizations that are all about service. She thrives on doing things that help others improve their status in life. Today, in addition to serving in her chapter

she finds time to participate in the Stephen's Ministry at her church, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church.

She is proud of the work her chapter has done in the area of the Arts, in a home for unwed mothers and teaming with the Society for the Performing Arts to present the Harlem Boys Choir and the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater on several occasions. One of her proudest memories was when her chapter sponsored the opening ceremony for Project Row Houses, an effort by local artist Rick Lowe, who converted 25 shotgun row houses into an arts community.

Some words of wisdom for her sister Links are: "Do service to help others, not to get awards." She is living proof that when your motive for service is to help others, the awards will follow.

Changes to Links over the years

Link Delores talked about the changes to Linkdom since she first became a member. She acknowledges that things are different and how with new leadership, new changes come. Even as the organization changes, she cherishes the amazing people she has had an opportunity to meet and the friendships she has been blessed to build throughout her many years as a Link.

Living the Life



Outside of the Links and all the other service organizations that she is a part of, Link Delores has some serious hobbies. She describes with excitement how she and a friend would travel all over the US

to "duplicate bridge" tournaments and how she attained a milestone of 300 masterpoints. For those of us who are not bridge players, that doesn't mean much; but to the experts, it's a big deal!

In addition to duplicate bridge, Link Delores is an over-the-top collector. She has collections of salt and pepper shakers, Beanie Babies and hundreds of drinking glasses. She also enjoys needlepoint.

Indeed, Link Delores is living a fulfilling life. She chooses to be active in all facets of her life. She is truly a role model for Links who are following in her footsteps.

...and this I promise