

For more information, please contact:

Mary Beth West, (865) 982-6626 or mb@marybethwest.com

For Immediate Release:

June 21, 2007

New Milestone: UTK's AOII Chapter Raises Half-a-Million Dollars for New Sorority House

Knoxville, Tenn. – The Corporation of Alpha Omicron Pi's 104-year-old Omicron Chapter at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville is please to announce its campaign has raised half-a-million dollars in funds for a \$3.5 million sorority house on the UT Campus.

AOII has been raising funds for nearly two years for the sorority house. By using both geographical and pledge class based initiatives AOII has been able to secure the half-a-million dollars in pledges and donations.

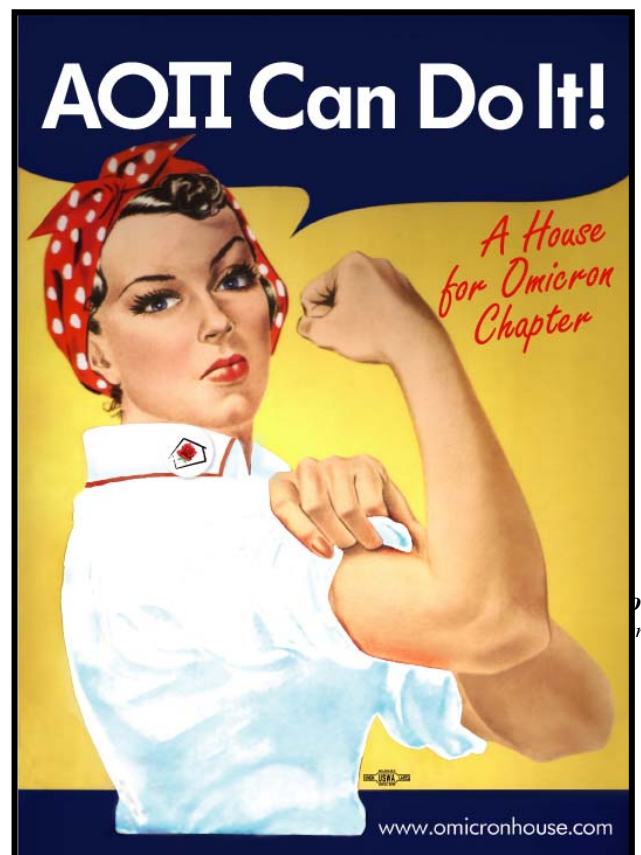
"This campaign has really been a grassroots effort on our part," said Ann Wallace, AOII's Building Campaign Chair. "We could not have done this without our wonderful Alumnae who have supported us throughout the campaign."

AOII – which includes some 170 collegiate members at UT and nearly 2,100 alumnae – is one of 13 Panhellenic sororities and one National Pan-Hellenic

Council chapter at UT-Knoxville with plans to build individual houses on campus. -

The new sorority houses will replace the overcrowded UT Panhellenic Building facility, built in 1964, where all sorority groups have occupied non-residential meeting space for more than four decades.

-more-



2-2-3 AOII House

Currently, UT is one of only two Southeastern Conference schools without sorority houses.

“Our appreciation goes to the UT Administration for working diligently to find a sizable, suitably located space for so many sorority groups, each with diverse house plans and facility needs,” Wallace said. “While there will be a great deal of work ahead toward site development, infrastructure, and other issues, it is encouraging to AOII that UT sororities are moving ever-closer to a dream of having houses.”



AOII plans a campaign brunch Sunday, October 22 for its alumnae, collegians, parents and other donors to reveal preliminary interior drawings of its own house, developed during the “program” planning phase this past summer with AOII’s architect, Knoxville-based Cockrill Design & Planning. The new campaign logo will play a central role to kick off “a new chapter of our Campaign,” according to Wallace.

The “Rosie the Riveter” image originally came about in the 1940s during World War II to recruit women into the manufacturing work force while men were at war. Today, it remains a retrospective symbol of female ability and empowerment – a message that AOII seeks to promote to its alumnae base, which includes some members who pledged the sorority in the 1930s, in its fundraising.

“We chose ‘Rosie’ because this image perfectly embodies what the AOII Campaign is about – rolling up our sleeves and getting a tough but important job done for the betterment of AOII and our beloved UT campus,” Wallace said. “Our campaign volunteers and donors have shown a can-do spirit since AOII publicly announced its plans to build a house in spring 2006. ‘Rosie’ will inspire that determination to continue.”

To date, AOII has nearly raised the \$350,000 “good-faith” deposit required by UT – 10 percent of the projected construction cost – as a short-term fund-raising goal.

“We feel good about what we’ve accomplished so far, but we have a long road – and much more money to raise – ahead of us,” Wallace said.

-more-

3-3-3 *AOIHouse*

About AOII's Omicron Chapter:

Founded in 1902, Omicron Chapter of Alpha Omicron Pi Fraternity stands as the oldest existing chapter of AOII in the world. AOII is one of the largest sororities in the UT Panhellenic system with approximately 170 members and currently holds the second-highest grade point average (GPA) in Panhellenic, with 3.28 on a 4.0 scale (Spring 2006).

In addition, Omicron Chapter manages one of the longest-running philanthropic events supporting Arthritis Research in the country, the AOII Barbecue, which raises thousands of dollars annually and on Saturday, October 21, 2006, enters its 46th year. Omicron Chapter is supported strongly by its local Knoxville Alumnae Chapter, which includes some 575 members throughout the Greater Knoxville area.

About AOII International:

Headquartered in Brentwood, Tenn., AOII was founded in 1897 at Barnard College of Columbia University in New York City. AOII has more than 126,000 initiated members in 179 collegiate chapters and 250 alumnae chapters across the United States and Canada. Alpha Omicron Pi is an international women's fraternity promoting friendship for a lifetime, inspiring academic excellence and lifelong learning, and developing leadership skills through service to the fraternity and community.

About the UT Panhellenic System:

The University of Tennessee-Knoxville's Panhellenic Council is the largest women's organization on the UT campus and serves as the governing body for 17 sororities: 13 National Panhellenic Conference Chapters, three National Pan-Hellenic Council Chapters, and one chapter of the National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations. Last year alone, Panhellenic sororities raised more than \$130,000 for charities in and around the Knoxville community and contributed more than 3,000 service hours. Panhellenic members constitute some 75 percent of leadership positions on the UT campus and hold an average GPA of 3.1/4.0.

#