Meet two of the newest recipients of the International Award of Distinction (IAD), the highest honor that Beta Sigma Phi bestows upon active members. Lois and Anna have shown their enthusiasm for all things Beta Sigma Phi.

**Mae Lois Smith**

Alabama Eta Nu, Mobile
Member since 1986

When it comes to describing Mae Lois Smith’s commitment to Beta Sigma Phi, perhaps her chapter sister Lillian Snow says it best:

“This amazing lady bleeds black and gold, with a yellow rose in hand. She’s always a spokesperson for Beta Sigma Phi wherever she goes. She is a leader in everything she does, her home is always open for meetings and other events. Caring and sharing is her motto, combined with an attitude of ‘we got this handled’ that exemplifies her spirit.”

If we were to print a full list of Lois’s sorority activities since 1986, we’d need to fill several pages of text. She has done everything from organize chapters to conventions, has been Woman of the Year multiple times, and her interests range from barbeque to crocheting. She’s used her writing and research talents to compile an Alabama convention history. Needless to say, she’s held nearly every office there is to hold, and has done a lot more besides.

“Her energy level and enthusiasm is endless,” writes Belinda Kay Peace of Alabama Eta Omega, Mobile. “She is always there for a sister in need. Lois promotes Beta Sigma Phi in her everyday life.”

Tina Gurley of Alabama Theta Epsilon, Grand Bay, agrees. “Lois is a leader...she dedicates herself to the service of our community and sisterhood of our sorority with grace and dignity. She is truly the example of Beta Sigma Phi that we, her sisters, aspire to be.”

**Anna Louise Matney**

California Epsilon Omicron Master, Mission Viejo
Member since 1958

Ann joined Beta Sigma Phi in 1958 in Riverside, CA. She has held every position on the chapter and city council levels. She served as Saddleback Valley City Council president twice, and has held several positions on the Orange Coast California Area Council, including president. Ann has worked on California state conventions and, of course, has completed all the other requirements to be eligible for the International Award of Distinction. In fact, a list of Ann’s accomplishments and involvement with sorority over the years is more than four pages long. Of course, office-holding is only half the story. Ann’s impact on her sisters is obvious.

“Ann is a wonderful sister. She is a pleasure to work with and is a great example of what Beta Sigma Phi stands for,” writes Clara Woodstrom of the Saddleback Valley City Council. “She’s a super girl who does a super job.” Carol Kennedy of California Preceptor Omicron Alpha, Mission Viejo, agrees. “This is a wonderful woman, the perfect representative of what Beta Sigma Phi should be—friendly, helpful, modest, caring.”

As a recipient of the Order of the Rose and other achievements, Ann has progressed through all the ranks of Beta Sigma Phi and today holds the Torchbearer degree.

Her sisters say that when Ann chairs a committee, she makes sure she is at every meeting and is always happy to do more than she is asked. Her enthusiasm and graceful demeanor are aspects of her that her sisters bring up again and again when writing about her.
If you ask Suzanne’s sisters about her, one thing comes up often – she’s not one to dominate the limelight. “She welcomes opportunities to be of assistance to others,” her sisters write, “but does not ‘but in’ or ‘step on the toes’ of others. She enjoys seeing others grow and shine their own light, by encouraging others to serve as officers or committee chairs.”

Not that Suzanne is a stranger to chairmanships or offices. In addition to the traditional offices, she’s also reached out to chair scholarship programs, rushing events, officers’ workshops, and more. Suzanne has also been instrumental in reactivating and advising chapters, giving them a new lease on life. She’s brought several pledges into sorority, and her sisters have noticed — she’s been named Woman of the Year 15 times.

Suzanne has a lovely reading voice and she is often honored with being asked to read rituals at important functions. She is a busy member of sorority, with near-perfect attendance since 1967 (she missed a few meetings when her son was born) and has been to every state convention since 1967 (except again for 1971, when her son was a newborn).

She is also active in her community, serving with her church, the Charleston Association of Insurance Professionals, serving holiday dinners to residents of a low-income apartment complex, and honoring hospice workers with an annual appreciation luncheon.

Suzanne retired from a career in the insurance industry in 2016, so now she has more time than ever to focus on sorority and community activities. That’s good news for her sisters.

“She leads by her example of true sisterhood with her many years of service, her devotion and her knowledge of the ideals of Beta Sigma Phi,” said Luanna Jones of West Virginia Alpha Theta Master, Charleston.

If you want to know more about Shenda Fink, ask Elaine Martin of Arizona Preceptor Alpha Delta, Prescott Valley, who says:

“She’s an awesome person and great at whatever she does. She always has a smile on her face. Give her a task and you know it will get done.”

Shenda has been instrumental in charitable work in her community, helping to raise funds for cystic fibrosis, Ronald McDonald House, and chairing her chapter’s service committees several times. At one point, when she owned a business, she organized local businesses to donate unsold merchandise to a program for abused women and children instead of just writing it off. She also hosts a yearly Bunco fundraiser that is so popular, sisters come from out of town to attend.

She said she loves working on city council committees because they are a great way to meet sisters from other chapters. She’s chaired quite a few important city council activities. Shenda also enjoys helping other ladies find the joys of membership. She’d noticed that younger women were not showing much interest in sorority, and did something about it — she worked hard to introduce 10 young women to sorority life. She also specializes in rush parties and encourages members to bring guests to meetings.

Shenda made her mark on sorority long ago when Bill Ross met her at a convention and was so impressed he offered her a full-time position at the International Office. It would have required too much travel, so she did not accept it, but was still honored by the offer.

Part of what makes Shenda’s commitment to sorority so special is her excitement about reaching out to transfer members and making sure they are welcome and find a happy Beta Sigma Phi home in their new surroundings.