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ADVOCATING FOR FAMILIES FIRST

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PHOTOS PROVIDED

November 3rd, election day, is fast approaching. To better understand a candidate's platform and stance on issues, constituents are looking for opportunities to interact with the candidates. Armed with knowledge, voters will make their choices at the ballot box on the leadership the voters feel will best affect community needs.

On October 20th, many constituents got the chance to engage with and hear from the Cincinnati mayoral candidates and candidates running for city of Cincinnati City Council at a non-partisan, political Q&A forum - *Advocating for Families First*. Sponsored by the Cincinnati-based Alumnae Chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., in partnership with the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency (CAA), *Advocating for Families First*, a two hour Q&A forum, gave a unique focus on the issues most important to the families of Cincinnati. "Families are the foundation of our community," says Kathy Sheffield, President of Cincinnati Queen City Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta. "It's important



*All three Cincinnati mayoral candidates – Mark Mallory, Brad Wenstrup, and Tom Chandler – and thirteen City of Cincinnati Council candidates – Jeff Berding, Anita Brockman, Laketa Cole, Tony Fischer, Kevin Flynn, Greg Harris, Nicholas Hollan, Chris Monzel, Laurie Quinlivan, Cecil Thomas, Bernadette Watson, Wendell Young, and George Zamary – participated in the non-partisan political Q&A forum, **Advocating for Families First**, presented by the Cincinnati-based Alumnae Chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency.*

that we elect leaders that will work hand-in-hand with the community to encourage economic development and positive environments so that strong, healthy families can grow and flourish."

By giving the forum a focus on family issues, attendees learned first-hand how the candidates intend to keep Cincinnati growing and improving. Said Deatria T. Walker, Social Action Chair, Cincinnati Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., "We

[Deltas] have a common goal to address through ongoing education and outreach efforts the challenges that face our community."

The issues voiced by constituents centered on the economy, jobs, and growth of small business. Moderated by Karen Bankston, Ph.D., FACHE, audience questions spanned concerns about public safety, health care, job creation, education, transportation, economic development, race relations, and youth recreation. In addition to questions from the floor, use of technology at the forum yielded questions from cyberspace through Facebook and Twitter. "The Political Forum provided a relaxed, non-intimidating setting for voters to meet the city's future leadership," says Kim Glenn, Social Action Chair, Cincinnati Queen City Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. "With last



*Candidates for Cincinnati Mayor and Cincinnati City Council shared their views and stance on issues at **Advocating for Families First** – a political forum sponsored in partnership by the Cincinnati-based Alumnae Chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency. Audience questions spanned concerns about public safety, health care, job creation, education, transportation, economic development, race relations, and youth recreation.*

ADVOCATING FOR FAMILIES FIRST (CONT'D)

year's historic election of President Obama, many more citizens have become involved in politics. Forums, such as this one, are effective in helping the community stay engaged in the political process."

The Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency (CAA), a private, non-profit organization that has served as a lifeline for low-income children, adults, and families throughout Hamilton County, was a great venue to host this political forum focused on family issues. All three Cincinnati mayoral candidates - Mark Mallory, Brad Wenstrup, and Tom Chandler - participated and fielded questions from those in attendance. Thirteen (13) City of Cincinnati Council candidates - Jeff Berding, Anitra Brockman, Laketa Cole, Tony Fischer, Kevin Flynn, Greg Harris, Nicholas Hollan, Chris Monzel, Laurie Quinlivan, Cecil Thomas, Bernadette Watson, Wendell Young, and George Zamarly - participated in the forum and presented their positions on issues and concerns. Both before and after the forum, the candidates interacted with the audience to have more one-on-one face time with constituents and answer questions.

Social action through political involvement has a strong tradition with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a non-profit organization established, January 13, 1913 by twenty-two visionary women at Howard University to provide assistance to persons in need. "Our first public act as a sorority was par-

ticipating in the Women's Suffrage March in Washington D.C., March 1913," says Tina Welch, President of the Cincinnati Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta. The tradition continues today as the Cincinnati-based Alumnae Chapters (Cincinnati Alumnae and Cincinnati Queen City Alumnae), collaboratively presented *Advocating for Families First*, which was viewed by attendees as "well organized" and "informative. Because of this effort, "People are better equipped to cast their votes on November 3rd", said one forum attendee.

About Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is a private non-profit organization established, January 13, 1913 by twenty-two visionary women at Howard University with the purpose of providing assistance to those in need. Today the sisterhood consists of more than 200,000 predominately African American college educated women with over 900 chapters located nationally and internationally providing assistance and support through established programs in local communities throughout the world.

About Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency (CAA)
The Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency (CAA) is a private, non-profit organization that has served as a lifeline for low-income children, adults and families throughout Hamilton County for more than four decades. The agency provides a safety net for those who have fallen and a ladder or those who are climbing.

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(left to right) Cincinnati Alumnae Chapter President, Tina Welch; forum moderator, Karen Bankston; and Cincinnati Queen City Alumnae Chapter President, Kathy Sheffield.



Constituents asked questions of the candidates during the 2 hour forum. Said one forum attendee, "People are better equipped to cast their votes on November 3rd."



Chairpersons for Advocating for Families First (left to right) Kim Glenn and Deatria T. Walker.