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Irma Clement

Ms. Irma Clement, 100, is the oldest member of Eta Omega Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha

Sorority Inc., ® and has been a member of the Sorority for over seventy-five years.

Interviewee: Irma Clement

Interviewers: Mark Naison, Ph.D, Lionel Spencer and Donna Joseph, President of Bronx AKA, and Saudah Muhammad (Saudah camera and microphone were off.)

Transcribed by Amy Rini, 10-17-22, revised 3.23

MN: “We're very proud to be able to have her talk a little bit about her life and experiences. So, Irma, could you tell us a little bit about where you were born and raised before we get into your involvement with the sorority?”

IC: “Well, I was born in Joliet, Illinois, but I was taken to Tennessee when I before I was one year old, so I was reared in Alcoa, Tennessee, which I'm going to include in some of my my addressed some of that speech today, but nevertheless, I went to school in Altour, finished high school there, went on to Knoxville college, graduated there, went from there to work at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, a beautiful experience. And the Tuskegee Airmen had a base fare at the time that I was there.

MN: So you were there in the middle of World War II?

IC: Yes, yes.

MN: Wow!

IC: And then I left Tuskegee Institute in Alabama and went to school for a library science degree at Atlanta University. I left there and taught and worked in the library in Tennessee, a small place in Tennessee, at a junior college for one year. Then I married and went to Detroit, Michigan. MN: Wow.

IC: I worked in that middle school library for well until I retired, and later, I moved to New York to be with my family. And there I met some beautiful neighbors who were AKA and that I had joined the sorority when I was in college. But then in New York, I met all these lovely ladies and I wanted to be a part of them. And so with their help, I have come this far.”

MN: “Now Knoxville college is an HBCU. That you attended. Yes, indeed. Yes, it was. Does it still exist? Yes, it does. It's in dire straits, but it is still there. And they're striving right now.

MN: What sort of work did you do when you were at Tuskegee?

IC: When I was at Tuskegee, I was like, “Oh, I taught English and civics in high school.”

MN: Wow.

IC: You know, that's Booker T. Washington's school. His school is there. But this was the high school that he formed. And so I worked at the high school.

MN: Right. And so your profession was first as a teacher and then as a librarian?

IC: That is for sure. That is right.

MN: And you joined Alpha Kappa Alpha at Knoxville college?

IC: “Yes.” On the night of the day that I graduated from college, I was inducted into the sorority that evening.

MN: “Now, were there other sororities at Knoxville college or was this the only one?”

IC: No, there were several others and I know about the Deltas and I know about the Zetas and I probably would have gone Delta had I not gone AKA.

MN: So what was the appeal of AKA?

IC: The appeal now and lovely ladies. I was impressed. No, I was impressed by the behavior of the manners, the dress, the ladies. And I was encouraged too by AKA but this is why I wanted to be a part of the organization.

MN: And were your parents also college educated?

IC: No. I was the first one in my family to graduate from college.

MN: Very exciting. So when you decided to move to New York City, you were joining family members who were already there?

IC: Yes. My daughter was here.

MN: Okay. And where was she located in New York City?

IC: In the Bronx.

MN: Oh wow. In what neighborhood?

IC: Spencer Avenue on Spencer Avenue in Riverdale in Riverdale.

MN: Okay, do you know this Lionel?

LS: I'm familiar with the area but anytime I hear any part of my name in the street, I just get excited.

MN: So, did you move in with her or did you get your own apartment?

IC: I moved there until I purchased my apartment.

MN: Okay. And it's in the same neighborhood?"

IC: Yes it is, ... eight blocks apart.

MN: Right, that's wonderful.

IC: It's beautiful.

MN: So how soon after you moved to New York City did you locate the local chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha?

IC: After I was settled? That's about a year and a half, I guess after a year and a half, maybe two years, I joined the local Alpha Kappa Alpha chapter.

MN: Did you know there was a chapter there before you moved to New York?

IC: Yes, I knew there were several chapters in New York. And I checked - well I called the several and we just talked briefly, but when I called the (bachelors? undecipherable) at Omega Omega (Phyllis Ford?) and talked with her, I was very much impressed. And I have been delighted with my selection ever since.

MN: That's wonderful. So what were the things that the sorority was doing? That got you excited? You know what were the things that chapter, you know, featured?

IC: Well, that theme was to help each other, help others. Community service was their goal, was their premise, I guess you would say, community service, and I liked the spirit. I liked the spirit of the ladies. Everybody was cooperative and eager and ready to work and welcoming and so this was all appealing.

LS: Now you're there any of the community service kind of projects you did while you were a part of them? And in what areas of the Bronx they were done?

IC: They were done all over the Bronx. Usually. I can say that the task that I liked most was working with the children. I worked with the greeting one to one at a daycare center. And that was my well, that was the project that I liked best.

MN: And where was the daycare center located, was it near you,

IC: No, over on Tremont? Okay, it was beyond you Yankee Stadium

MN: Ok. So, one of the things that's very interesting we deal with this all the time is in many parts of the country, there is a negative feeling about the Bronx. Did you have that before you came here? Or you had none of that negativity?

IC: No, no, no, and none of that, and the area in the Bronx where I live is ideal. It's just ideal.

MN: That's, that's great. Now, what are the socials... It sounds like this chapter has great people. And so what are the social aspects of it that make it enjoyable for you?

IC: Socially, the spirit of this, the first of all, is the spirit of the ladies. And then when we have activities and projects everybody works together to complete the successful and, and then when we have activities, social activities, say everybody is still in harmony. There's not ever no never bitterness and never a lot of fussing and, and this kind of thing, so I like the harmony of the group.

MN: Now were most of the people in the group members of chapters in the colleges they attended before they joined this chapter or is it something that varied from person to person?

IC: I guess it varies from person to person, and I'm not sure as to when many of them became affiliated with the organization. But well, I just don't know. I don't

MN: This is a question for Donna. Do you ... can you join this organization without having been a member in college?

DJ: I was already, you can join as an undergraduate member or you can join as a graduate member, so Irma and myself joined as undergraduates, but we have members that join in their 40s and 50s or 60s.

MN: Okay. So, when you were getting around to various centers in the Bronx, did you drive or go by public transportation, or did somebody drive you?

IC: Most of the time I went by public transportation. But when you say when I get around where it depended on where -

MN: For example that daycare center in Tremont

IC: I took an access-a-ride. I was of age where I could take an access-a-ride.

MN: Wow, okay, so that's something I can look forward to. I'm 74 So So, Donna, if you have questions or and if Irma, you have a statement. Let's start off with Donna's questions and then make a statement.

DJ: Okay. Good afternoon. I am the current President. My name is Donna Joseph. I'm the president of AKA Omega Omega and it gives me great pleasure, I'm honored to do this interview. So our first question here is, can you name an event or Irma that shaped your political activism?

IC: I hope you have time, and we definitely have patience. I am going to read if I may do so. Alright, I grew up and I'm going to tell you history and back. I grew up in Alcoa, Tennessee, which is located a railroad mile from the Aluminum Company of America. And that was because the company was located in this particular community called Alcoa. The company owned the houses and the land in that area and built the segregated schools for white children and the black children and for the black children. But the education system was controlled by a prejudiced Board of Education personnel. I bought our black school named Charles Martin Hall, for a white scientist. It was an elongated one story brick building, which at the time we thought was grand that school was a negro children's grammar and later grammar and high school. The white children had the privilege of having two school buildings: an elementary school basketball school and the high school, Springbrook High School. On one occasion, our high school choral group was invited to sing at the nearby Springbrook High School for the White Parent Teachers Association luncheon. They just loved our spirituals. Excuse me, just a minute. After we had sung our young hearts out and the program ended, we black teachers and students were invited to tour the Spring Brooks High School's two story building, while the white folk ate. The guest performers and our adult chaperones were invited to eat after the tour ended. Oh yes, we had a guide on the tour. Because you know, Negroes steal. I had never felt so insulted and like a second class person before a tour of the Spring Brook library was a slap in the face when we saw a large library room stacked with books, science and laboratory rooms, cafeteria and other

amenities. I felt depleted. I later recovered and I decided I would not let these disparities defeat me. During that time, Franklin D. and Eleanor Roosevelt were United States president and first lady who did a lot of social work and put into action many projects with the money or pay to benefit young people and the poor. I was 16 years old at the time, and I became a Democrat. But by vow, not by vote, and worked diligently for the party during the Martin Luther King era, and ever since that time, ... thereby began my political activism.

DJ: Wow. That was like a trip down history lane.

MN: You know, when I was listening to you, I kept thinking of the women in Hidden Figures who came out of segregated institutions and changed the world and had to break barriers to do it. And I feel like I'm in the presence of another pioneer who came out of that history which now many young people are discovering for the first time in this great Black Lives Matter movement spreading around the country. So I think some people are going to want to listen to your story. Because I think it makes a very powerful impression of where we came from and why we cannot go backwards.

IC: Yes.

MN: So one of the things I wanted to ask you is, you know, given your experiences, how do you connect with the younger people in this chapter, who have never experienced the segregated south in the way you do? Do they ask you ... Is this something you talk to them about?

IC: Not really no. You see, this generation has not had the kind of insults that my generation had, you see, segregation is not as prevalent, especially in New York. It's not as prevalent as it is in the south. So I have not had an opportunity to talk with the youngsters about this subject. And thanks I don't like to talk about it. It's there, it should be recognized, but I just don't like to talk about it.

MN: Well, I'm glad you talked to us about it because I think you know some people need to hear what you just said.

DJ: I think it's I think it's powerful to hear how one part of the story you were saying that you were, like, offended at the treatment and how you were able to overcome and become so successful have a ... be first in your family to graduate from college, be successful, retire, and still to this day, give back to different communities. I think that's well you know, so, you know, we love you, and it's always a blessing to be there. So, as a member of the sorority for over 75 years on this earth and you tell us your fondest and most impactful moment in life and as a member of the organization, oh, as a member of the organization.

IC: There have been many, and I think maybe becoming 100 years old, having become a diamond soror...a member of this sorority has impacted me so much love and and, and all of the consideration and all the beauty that has come out of this chapter has been overpowering. I just don't know how to express it. It's indescribable. So this has been my crowning moment, actually, these years with an omega omega chapter have been my crowning years.

DJ: And are there any specific members that have influenced you the most?

IC: You know, I don't want to name them. Someone asked me that before and there have been so many that it will take me all afternoon because we have a whole lot of members. So I'd rather not, but if I might, because all of you have been through, all of you have impacted my life and I'm so grateful.

DJ: I respect that totally. I know that and even in different stages, you have some people I know when you were reading one to one there was a reading one to one coalition. Right so I understand that name. Specific. Professor Naison, did you have one?

MN: How do you recruit new members because one of the things I'm thinking of is you know, there may be a number of students at Fordham who would be interested in this organization. If you know, where we're having a sort of wake up call at Fordham, many black students and students of color, you know, openly talking about how they felt uncomfortable at the university, and possibly an organization like this can give them a camaraderie, support, perspective. So it might be something worth exploring a connection with some of our Fordham students.

DJ: Right. So we do have a membership on a myriad of levels. So we do have undergraduate membership. Currently, we have an undergraduate chapter at Lehman College, and they've been there for over 30 years. The idea is there's not a chapter at Fordham University - are you a Lehman alum? There's not a chapter at Fordham University but like Miss Irma said earlier, they can, our community service events are open to the public and they can most certainly attend our events currently, we still do on programs of service virtually, they can absolutely attend and then because there's not a chapter at their school, when they graduate, they could always pursue graduate membership.

DJ: I have a few more questions from Miss Irma. That answered your question with the undergraduates, but I absolutely agree, because I became a member upstate, and there was a small percentage of minority students and so to get the camaraderie and support needed to withstand that education, that kind of leaned me towards Alpha Kappa Alpha. So I definitely understand that, so were there any specific fundraisers actually, I think you kind of shared that with us already, right, any specific program that the chapter did that you catered to, that you loved that was at the center of your joy?

IC: Yes, indeed. The boat rides were always exciting and inviting and well, and they were just fun. And the formal dances. I liked the formal dances.

MN: so Okay, so where were the boat rides? Were they on the Hudson?

IC: Yes. They were on the Hudson, around the Statue of Liberty. And so anyway, they were interesting, but it was still camaraderie and the folk on the boat that made the party

MN: okay. So when you would have a formal dance, where would it be held? In different locations, usually in the hall, a dance hall or some other location that lends itself to the dancing

MN: Were they in the Bronx, these the halls,

IC: they were all over, not necessarily in the Bronx. Some of the venues were in other places.

DJ: We've had a myriad of them. We've done the toy building in Manhattan. We've done Villa Villa Barone, we had lunch there. And then last year, most recently was the VIP on Country Club row in New Rochelle. And I know earlier you spoke about reading one to one. Do you want to tell us why you love reading one to one so much?

IC: Well, I liked it because I had a chance to read stories to the children and kind of get the association with the youngsters. But then I liked working with the adults because they just let us have leeway with their children and without any stipulations. And one thing that I liked about the one to one program, too, is that the children would go apple picking in the fall, and then they would bring the apples back to their homes and to the school. They would bring their apples to me and I would make apple pie.

MN: ooohh

IC: I would make apple pie for the pies for the students and the teachers. And that was always an annual thing for us. But I just enjoyed the program and the stories that we told them and the performances. We always had a performance at the end of the year, and the students always seemed so interested and delighted.

DJ: That is beautiful.

DJ: So do you remember how the chapter hosted or featured any dignitaries? I can remember dignitaries coming to the rites of passage program and we were always so interested in having them and they were so delighted to be there, and the rites of passage programs were always so interesting and colorful. That I remember vividly and it was impressive.

MN: Can you describe the program to people who are not in the organization, so we know what that involves?

IC: It is a kind of African African custom girls passing over from young, from youth, from youth to adulthood. That's as much as I can put it as well as I can put it,

MN: So young women involved in this, how do you recruit them and how do you you know, orient them to alright, they're, they're

IC: That's a good that's a good question. Because they go through a period of learning. They are given lessons and classes and manners and other aspects of living. So and they just are groomed they're groomed for life.

MN: Now, these programs are done in local public schools, or are these churches?

How do people find your organization and want their children to be part of this? How did the young women get this opportunity?

IC: Well, I don't know how they're recruited to tell you the truth.

DJ: I can. I can give you what I can give a little broad base so this is actually the 30th anniversary for rites of passage here in the Bronx. It started at Roosevelt High School.

MN: Oh at Roosevelt High School, right started at Roosevelt.

DJ: And so through the years it's moved it was at Lorraine Hansberry, it was at McKinley Community Center. And for the last few years, it's been at EastChester Community Heights Community Center. And so over the years, we've been building up connections in the Bronx. So,

you know, 20 years ago, 10 years ago, we would actually circulate to all of the high schools in the Bronx. Through the guidance counselor's now we have a Facebook page with the alum from rites of passage. This year, our final ceremony we couldn't do it - the the ceremony is always free. The program is free. It runs almost the school year from October to June. And like Irma said, they go through different lessons. So the lessons change according to the times. So etiquette is broad based. Like I said, they're groomed, but we've had workshops from college readiness, gang violence, history of our people, family history, so it really is a connector into what they perhaps might be missing in school but what what's needed in life. So our 30th anniversary looked different. We actually went on and we went live on YouTube. And so we changed with the times, they do ... they have a retreat. They have an etiquette dinner at the end and the ceremony that Irma was talking about is a final ceremony. It's free and open to the public in the park. And I'm sure Professor Naison is familiar with the movie "Roots." Kunta Kinte comes back to the village and he's gone through his rite of passage. The young ladies go through their rite of passage also so the ceremony begins with them coming into the village, partaking in African dance, we hear them give speeches about the experience. So it's really known now as our chapter signature program. So that's why Irma mentioned that and it's great because 30 years, some of these women, some of these young ladies that went through the program, it's for high school students, high school girls, some of the high school girls are now members of the organization and even in our chapter.

MN: Yeah, this is also something some of our students at Fordham will be very interested in learning about. Are there any other questions that you have?

DJ: Yes, I have a few more. Thank you for asking. What is your earliest and fondest memory of ETA Omega Omega? My earliest memory, Oh my earliest memory, was when I first attended a

meeting at ETA Omega chapter. Pauline, sorry, Pauline Monsanto a Knoxville college graduate made me feel welcome. Some of the others but Pauline especially because I was when I announced that I was from Knoxville and that my school was in Knoxville. That was my graduate from Knoxville College, Pauline immediately sat up and afterwards became my comrade.

MN: So the two Knoxville graduates are in the Bronx? Were there more now?

IC: We have another one. Yes. About three now, they're about three of us. Not to college.

DJ: What about the civil rights struggle? I know we spoke about segregation earlier. Did the civil rights struggle have an impact on the sororities programs, like what programs did the sorority do during that time period?

IC: During that time period, oh, civil rights. Oh we marched whenever, whenever we had a chance we marched with Martin Luther King every March. To draw attention to what was going on to the events. And anyway, I would like to talk about what I did during that period. Dr. King spoke in many ... Okay. When I lived in Detroit, Michigan before moving to New York Dr. King came to our church, our Plymouth Congregational Church and spoke after that we had a march down Woodward Avenue to the Riverside and there he gave his speech. And that is really the first time he gave the I Have a Dream speech in Detroit, Michigan.

MN: Wow,

IC: So anyway So whenever I could walk to the polls, whatever I could do civically during that time and now I try - I can't do too much now. In my community, we had community clubs, and we sponsored politicians and people who would come in and help us give us information about what is going on in the world and in the city and, and the country. And so we tried to stay above board by recognizing what was happening in the world.

MN: So I have a question. Based on what the young people are doing all over the country today. Are you optimistic about the future?

IC: Um, I am hesitating now? I really am because we have too many kinds of variety of racism, people who seem to be aware that some changes should be made. Folks have grumbled for a long time and you know we're tired. People get tired. So I think that there will be a change.

DJ: I think Fannie Lou Hamer stated she was sick and tired of being sick and tired, right so yeah, that's when that's when social movements take off

DJ: So we have here and based on your years in ETA omega omega, what do you feel is the most pressing issue today, which might have been

DJ: Professor Naison might have asked a question that I may answer for our chapter,

IC: I would say finding a place to meet. This is our most pressing that I feel is one of the most pressing problems that we have. Now. Okay. So maybe talking out of school, but so for DJ:

Professor Naison, I actually joined the ETA omega omega which are very close to when Irma came in. I came in in '99 And so our chapter had about 50 to 60 people run over the year. So currently we have 129 members.

MN: Wonderful.

DJ: So to Irma's point, finding a place to meet is challenging. So you know you normally met in apartments but it's too many people to do it that way. Well, the chapter was started, they met in apartments, but that was when they had 12 to 15 members but now we have to be in larger spaces, usually on college campuses. And now you know, we shifted into meeting virtually which is a new, yes, that's new. What impact do you think the sorority has had on the Bronx Community?

IC: Knowing that you are here, knowing that you are here, that you're available. Your projects have helped strengthen some of the organizations for instance the veterans ... you have a program that goes to the veterans and helps them to with the gift packages and card playing and bingo, and the the services that you give out in the community, shoes, you collect shoes, you collect clothing, to give to the indigent, all the things that you do that people do not – some folk who are not aware of and so that a lot of nice things, a lot of beneficial things that the sorority does, that goes unnoticed and unacclaimed.

DJ: agreed

LS: A great question. I wanted to backtrack a little bit. Did you during the Civil Rights era or maybe some years afterward did the did aka have any interaction with the Black Panther Party in New York City?

IC: They didn't have any interaction that I know of. So I'm not certain about Black Panther Party and its affiliation.

DJ: Yeah, because Irma was in Detroit at that time during the Black Panther. Party. You came to the Bronx in 1999. And during the Black Panther Party, I wasn't born yet. But I will say that in terms of supporting the Civil Rights Movement, Alpha Kappa Alpha has been at the forefront and even after Dr. King's demise. The sorority put together the money to purchase his house in Atlanta. And also Coretta Scott King was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha. So the organization is always at the forefront. Mississippi Health Project, Cleveland Job Corps, the civil rights movement, so members are always at the forefront even if it is current social movements for today. Whether it's a political figure, or maybe it's people that are actually marching, Alpha Kappa Alpha tends to be at the center. And I think that answered the next question in terms of programs that were successful. I think you mentioned that when you went over the different

programs, really one to one, to support the veterans, we give out scholarships. I think Spencer must have read my next question. Many of the initiatives of the 60s have resurfaced, actually, Professor Naison mentioned this earlier. They resurface with an electronic focus. So we had the Poor People's Campaign of the 60s, we had the March on Washington, etc. What would you say to today's generation, or specific to ETA omega omega sorors to continue the tradition of activism today

DJ: Any advice would you give younger members?

IC: Are you asking me? Yeah, I would just say stay focused, stay knowledgeable. Find out what is happening. Be interested, participate and do the best that you can to change whatever situation that needs to be changed. But it takes a lot of effort and it takes a whole lot of determination.

DJ: Absolutely, I think that's why it's powerful that we're doing this interview, so that this could be passed on from generation to generation. So I have a question. And I know what probably is based on your 20 years in the Bronx, but um, since you mentioned you were in college during World War II and we've had several wars since then, several presidents and significant events in history right I don't you probably you were born during the Spanish Influenza in 1919. And here we are with another pandemic. What do you think was the best time in your 100 years? The best time in 100 years? Yeah.

IC: Now, now is always the best time in anyone's years. Now is the best time. Bad times or good times, we make the best of whatever the times.

MN: WOW

DJ: if I could say I just thought that was so powerful when we started the year, I knew that Irma would be turning 100 And in our sorority we have but we can honor members of 75 years of service and we were able to do that together face to face and we had a whole production we had

a slideshow, she was presented with a chair, we were able to pin her with her diamond medallion, and that we knew her birthday was coming and we said we have time and little did we know we were going to go into shelter in place and be quarantined. But I agree with your last comment about now because it just forces us to become more creative. So Irma, can you share with Professor Naison and Mr. Spencer in case they didn't see it on the news how we surprised you for your 100th even though we were quarantined?

IC: Well it was a Sunday, June 14, and I was somewhere in the house and someone and I received a telephone call from Vivian, who lives nearby, to tell me to come to the window when I came to the window as sawed off 50 or 75 or so many sorors and some Alpha men, and all of these balloons and everything. I was overwhelmed. I was flabbergasted. I did not know how to react. I did not know what to say but all of those lovely people were at my window. Now they had gotten permission to come onto the grounds because No Trespassing is usually the slogan but they were there and they were in full force and it was just out of this world. It was beautiful.

DJ: So I just wanted you to share that because in the midst of pandemic and protests, we can still be positive so when they asked you that question, we've said that the best time is the best time is now we just make the best of our time, right?

IC: We do what we could do until we get back to whatever our norm is. And things don't always last, nothing lasts forever. Things change. So we just have to change. We change with them but yet we accept with dignity, whatever is thrown at us and move on and we move on.

DJ: Right right. So do you remember my saying we move with the cheese? That is for sure.

Whatever happens we move

MN: Wow. The chicken Yes.

DJ: Why? Because we wanted shelter in place. I was like we have to celebrate his birthday right but we just go and sing a happy birthday.

MN: Magnificent.

DJ: We have social media right? So people upload and then everyone loves it right in the midst of what we're going through. There are 1000s of people that are watching and commenting.

MN: And I also think this interview should be widely circulated, hopefully by your organization and then we'll put it up on our digital site because I think this is something that will inspire a whole generation of young people who are becoming activists. And my 16 year old granddaughter is becoming a leader in our school and Black Lives Matter movement and you know, I think having an opportunity here, someone who's lived through so much and still is energetic and optimistic and feisty inspires, but also people need organizations like this. Yes. That nobody can do this alone.

IC: That is for sure. Yeah.

MN: So I think that's one of the things: the solidarity, the camaraderie, the sisterhood, those keep you going to keep going and we need

LS: and we need the eldership

IC: Yeah. They're telling an experience that you have.

LS: You know, I'm 36 years old. I've never experienced what you experienced that gave you a strength that I will probably work a lot of time in my life to possess or to attain and having your wisdom, having your stories, having your knowledge, I think, helps us in ways that we can continue to move society forward in positive ways. So I definitely know, this is why I try my best to sit at the feet of my grandparents, because they just ... you and they have experiences that

we just will never have. We just will never have it. You know, and we need your stories desperately.

DJ: I'm reminded of Spencer. I'm reminded of a few years ago, four years ago, we went to Italy in Paris. It was a bunch of us turning 40, but you know 97 came along with us, and we were taking a train from one city to another. And we had a deck of cards but they were cards that asked questions. And one of the questions was, "if you could meet someone influential in history, who would it be?" and the choices were Coretta Scott King Rosa Parks, and Eleanor Roosevelt. So Irma, do you remember? Do you remember that?

IC: No, I don't.

DJ: Because I remember. I remember it was 10 of us. And we all huddled over because you said well, I don't have to think about meeting Eleanor Roosevelt because I met her already. We all said "Wait, what?" And we all ran over to her to get these jewels that you were just talking about Spencer

IC: and Mrs. Bethoone was with them and have met Mrs. Bethoone was with Mrs. Roosevelt.

IC: It was the Institute I went to a conference at Livingstone college when I was in school. And they were there. They came for a youth conference. They came for a youth conference and they spoke to us and with us.

MN: Was this the Southern Negro Youth Council?

IC: It was not a church council. It was a church. Yes, it was a Methodist Church Council.

MN: Wow.

IC: And when I was in college, I went to a Methodist Church. And so I went as a delegate, and I had a speech and I was second. I won second prize and a speech contest. But at the same time I met these notable ladies

DJ: That's like a lifeline there to Eleanor Roosevelt and Mary. Amazing. Yeah. Wow.

IC: Donna has a good memory.

MN: So, do you have any more questions?

MN: Actually was curious if there were any relatives, family members, children of yours, that have followed in your example and joined the sorority?

IC: Not yet, but I have prospects - my friend is going to join. I have two granddaughters and they're going to join

MN: Oh, great.

IC: They're going to finish college first because that is a stipulation, finish college, and maybe they could join undergrad at undergraduates. But nevertheless, we'll hope and hope well, we just hope okay.

MN: This was a really powerful, powerful interview. And, you know, we'll try to get it up on our site and also but I want to let some of my students know, we're going to there's a lot going on at Fordham now that's very disturbing, and people need to see positive examples of, of solidarity like this and so I'm going to encourage some of my students who are involved in the movement in Florida to, you know, to listen to this and, you know, get a positive energy because you are Miss Clement you are a source of joy, and trade, informative energy. It is so inspiring, to hear, to listen to you and to get your spirit. I feel privileged to have the opportunity, and Saudah, Thank you for nagging me to do this. Because it was worth the wait. Absolutely. And Saudah you have a question?

Saudah: Am I on mute? Oh, great. I don't know why my camera isn't working. But I wanted to also say, I live vicariously as we said before we stand on the shoulders of the elders of this chapter. And you had asked questions about the Civil Rights Movement, and what the chapter

was doing and there were so many initiatives led by the organization that the chapter participated in. And I think as you interview more of the elders, you'll learn different perspectives on various programs. Marietta Tanner is in her mid 90s and is right behind Irma Clement, so you'll get a different perspective from her. So this is wonderful.

MN: So you'll get a different perspective from her that she was heavily also rooted in the Bronx, but this is absolutely wonderful. Okay, so thank you for you know, setting this in motion. I will be back tomorrow at 430 excited for the next interview. And Irma, I owe you dinner. So maybe I can arrange with Saudah to have something delivered to your apartment. I will figure that out. Because we always feed people. Yes, you and I can - thank you so much. Take care everyone. Yes, Professor Cory Spencer, thank you so much. It was very nice to meet you, Donna. Okay, great. Thanks. Staying safe is right. Okay.

IC: Thank you, thank you, be blessed.