

Grace Pere

Alpha Iota and Tulsa Alumnae Chapter

During my collegiate experience, disaster struck in the form of a worldwide pandemic. It came at the worst time—I had just attended the Dunham Women of Character Institute the previous summer and stepped into a role on my college Panhellenic board. I finally felt I was becoming someone worthwhile and growing into myself.

When pandemic struck, I was despondent. Chapter meetings, Panhellenic meetings, dinners with my big, even classes, were canceled indefinitely. During this dark time in my life, my sisters became a bright spot. We met for Zoom lunches, held virtual chapter meetings, and sent emails to children at local hospitals. When I needed them most, my sisters showed up for me. They showed me what it means to shine a light of love and hope into someone's life.

This experience during isolation taught me several lessons I still apply to my everyday life. First, I learned that anyone has the power to help, no matter how small they may feel. Something as simple as a text or a phone call may be the only positive interaction a person has all day. Second, I learned that everyone is going through something I cannot see. Finally, I discovered that as a Tri Sigma woman, I am responsible for sharing the light I received with others.

As Foundation Chair in my chapter, I strove every day to help bring light to others. I helped organize fundraising events such as our “Root Beer Floats for Robbie” event to raise money and awareness for play therapy. I helped collect items on campus for my local NICU. I went out of my way to check in on my classmates and sisters. As New Member Educator, I strove to ensure a smooth Tri Sigma experience for our new members.

Post-graduation, I have continued to shine a light in my local community. I work at a non-profit children's museum where I help bring science education to all families regardless of social or economic status. I volunteer with my local Panhellenic alumnae chapter to support education for women and girls across the globe. I also serve on the board for Tri Sigma's Tulsa Alumnae Chapter and help support fellow alumnae sisters in the transition from college to alumnae life. Additionally, I continue to send letters to hospitalized children to provide light in their lives. In short, I try to show others in my community and sisterhood the same love and light my Tri Sigma sisters showed me several years ago when I needed it most.

I remember one of my favorite Tri Sigma songs, “One Little Candle.” The lyrics, “Take this light that we offer, Tri Sigma's candle, let it be a guiding spark,” have become a guiding force in my life. I hope to inspire other Tri Sigma women to continue our legacy of love, hope, wisdom, faith, and power through our everyday choices and actions.