

## Bridge Builder Award Presentation

(As presented by Brother Odell L. Brown, Funky 18, Spring 1972)

### Question:

Can you imagine what was said back in the fall of 1971 when there were already two (2) Black organizations on the predominantly white campus of Northwestern State University, and someone had the audacity to request that a Black fraternity be established as well?

Can you imagine the resistance experienced during this time, especially since Black fraternities and sororities were unheard of on some college campuses?

Due to the relentless energy and determination of Brother G. Stanley Lewis, in cooperation with the Fraternity's 9<sup>th</sup> District Representative, the Theta Delta Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. was formed and chartered on May 20, 1972.

Over the years, the Brothers of Theta Delta have been visible in the communities in which we live.

However, despite progress made, there is still much work to be done. We must continue to remind ourselves that Theta Delta is too young for any of us to declare retirement. For there are still some lessons to be learned, some truths to be told, and some myths to dispel. We must remember that there are still scores of young men who never dreamed of attending a college like Northwestern, who still need a church like First Baptist to worship at when they are away from home, and who still say, "I can't."

Today's college young men are the lifeblood of Theta Delta's continued existence; they are the innovators—they are the constructive agitators for change. They are the ones who must be prepared to step forward and continue the rich legacy of Theta Delta.

As Theta Delta Alums, we must continue to encourage our young Brothers to walk in our footsteps yet encourage them to leave their own imprints. In turn, our young Brothers must encourage each other to aspire to high levels of achievement and service, and each Brother must do his part to ensure that excellence is a goal in everything that he does.

All of us must continue to be visible in our homes, our schools, our churches, and our communities, because those are the arenas where other young men are, AND. who are watching us!

This weekend--50 years later—we, the Theta Delta Alumni Brothers, return to Northwestern to commemorate our chapter's 50-year existence and to honor our chapter advisor, mentor, and friend, Reverend Brother G. Stanley Lewis.

Brother G. Stanley Lewis was a bridge builder, a devoted family man, a servant leader, advisor, mentor, and friend. Brother Lewis built bridges, not walls. He was a person who connected or reconciled opposing parties regardless of age or status in life, and worked tirelessly in instilling good character in those he served.

As the Pastor of First Baptist Church, North Street, Brother Lewis followed Jesus' lead and became a bridge builder for God's Kingdom.

During the early years of Theta Delta's existence, First Baptist Church, North Street, became a haven for Sunday Worship Services for the men of Omega Psi Phi, as well as other college students who matriculated at Northwestern. We served in various roles in this church, including Sunday School, the choir, junior deacons, and ushers—simultaneously uplifting the community and ourselves.

Thus, it is fitting that we—the Alumni Brothers of the Theta Delta Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., present the inaugural **Reverend Brother G. Stanley Lewis Bridge Builder Award** to First Baptist Church, North Street.

The Bridge Builder award is given to a person or organization that:

- Is of unquestionable character and tremendous strength that gives unselfishly of time, talents, and resources to help others in the Natchitoches Community.
- Connects or reconciles opposing parties or serve multi generations in the Natchitoches Community.
- Demonstrates excellent performance, and,
- Possesses outstanding leadership qualities.

Will Pastor Brad Holden please come forward to accept this award?