

WINNIE MACKAY: A LEADER I ADMIRE

Bruce C. Clayton
Operation Enterprise
Final Paper
Professor Keating
January 24, 1989

During her twenty four years of experience in cooking for the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity at Colgate University, Winnifred "Winnie" Mackay has witnessed numerous changes in the membership and history of Phi Delt. She has seen the Chapter go through good times and bad times, years when Phi Delt was the top house on the row and years when it was at the bottom. Yet, throughout these shifts, Winnie has provided a sense of stability and a common thread. In fact, the continued existence of Phi Delta Theta at Colgate can in many ways be attributed to the leadership she has provided over the years. As a brother of Phi Delta Theta and an employee of Winnie, I have had the privilege of getting to know something about who she is and what she stands for. This paper will attempt to focus on the interesting leadership and management style of Winnie Mackay.

The word leadership has different meanings for people. To me, leadership contains five elements: commitment, authority, direction, example and fairness. By commitment, leadership entails years of dedicated service to an organization. Winnie's commitment to Phi Delt is evident in her two dozen years of service. She drives in from Oriskany Falls twice a day during the week to cook our meals. During vacations, she visits the house regularly to make sure everything is all right. Also, she works as a door monitor for all of Phi Delt's social events, often working at the door until 3:00 A.M. and then coming in to cook breakfast at 7:00. Further, she acts as a link between the undergraduate chapter and the Phi Delta Theta Alumni Corporation, which owns the Chapter House.

A leader has authority when he/she has the power to act and command. As the Phi Delt cook, Winnie is in charge of the House Kitchen and Dining Room. She purchases all the food and cleaning supplies for the house at her own discretion and she is in charge of hiring a Kitchen Crew to work with her in the Kitchen. Additionally, she has the power to close the Kitchen if the brothers don't keep it cleaned up to her standards.

Direction for a leader involves knowing what is in the best interest for an organization and acting in those interests. It is having a long-term vision of where the organization is going and acting to follow that vision, regardless of the short-term consequences. Winnie's sense of direction for Phi Delt is for its continued existence at Colgate, as this is a pre-requisite for her job. There are many instances over the years where poor financial management on the part of the undergraduate chapter led Winnie to deliberately reduce the quality and quantity of the supplies she purchased in an effort to save money. Although she didn't like to serve cheaper meals, the money she saved was used to cover the excesses of the undergraduate chapter. This preserved the continued existence of Phi Delt by keeping the house financially sound.

A leader is someone who should set an example for others to follow. People look up to a leader for advice, direction and support. A leader is experienced and acts in a way that reflects that experience. Winnie sets high moral and ethical standards for herself and acts on them. She is an experienced mother. In many ways, she is the House Mother for Phi Delt.

