

# What Beta Sigma Phi Means to Me

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One word can describe the meaning of Beta Sigma Phi to me: **LIFEJACKET**.

I attended my rushing party and Preferential tea in early 1986. At that time my husband Kevin, our two girls and I lived in Thompson, Manitoba. Thompson is a northern, isolated, rugged, mining community. Sorority sounded just like what I needed, a social network and a place to learn. In this mining community most everyone came from somewhere else and often lived far from extended family. Sorority sisters became my extended family. They were the friends we spent family type occasions with, like holidays and were who helped when help was needed. I recall many great memories of surprise breakfasts, the pot luck that absolutely everyone brought meat balls, family Christmas sleigh rides, couples' Murder Mystery nights and scavenger hunts.

In 1991 my family moved to Sussex, New Brunswick. The family settled into work, school and I located a local Beta Sigma Phi. There I found exactly what I needed - a LIFEJACKET. My new sorority sisters helped me locate what a newcomer to the Sussex area would need. They made recommendations for activities for the girls, hair stylists, dentists, grocery and retail places, but most of all they were an accepting social network. Memories of service programs to help young mothers and those "shop till you drop" weekends in Moncton will never be forgotten.

In 1998 Kevin's wanderlust and career moved our family to Goderich, Ontario. With Kevin off to work and the girls settled in school I was on the hunt for a sorority chapter. Once again the LIFEJACKET was there. Sorority sisters helped me find the places and things my family and I needed to adjust to the move. My Laureate chapter's bi-monthly programs for learning and socials for having fun continue to be a necessary part of my life.

In December, 2008 I had a ski accident that required surgery that at the same time Kevin re-



quired to be away to assist his ill mother. Times like that are when you really find out who cares about you. Out came that LIFEJACKET. While Kevin was away my sorority sisters were there with meals, visits, books, flowers, movies and just checking that I had everything I needed before bed. Even though I required a walker to move about they were there to help me attend our dinner and movie night out. All an ultimate display of the true meaning of Sisterhood.

Our eldest daughter is now living in Toronto and eager to find a Beta Sigma Phi to join. I hope this means she noticed that Beta Sigma Phi has been a significant part of my life. Our second daughter recently joined the Canadian Navy and I quickly shared with her an article that was in the Torch a few years back that described how the Canadian Navy delivered items that were collected by a Nova Scotia Beta Sigma Phi chapter to the victims of Katrina.

When Kevin's wanderlust surfaces I quickly remind him I am only moving where they have a LIFEJACKET for me "Beta Sigma Phi".

This article is written as a Thank You to my many past and present sorority sisters for being the thread in my LIFEJACKET.