

collegiate profile

Anything is Possible

by Kellsey Miller



When **Kelly Barrett** entered the Iota Delta chapter room at Edinboro University (Edinboro, Pennsylvania) during recruitment, the first thing she noticed were the pink and green colors. Something clicked and Kelly knew Delta Zeta was the sorority for her. She remembers thinking that

in addition to the great women she met in Delta Zeta, pink and green were also her favorite colors, which would make the Sorority an even better fit.

Before participating in recruitment, Kelly struggled with the decision to join a sorority but now cannot imagine her life without Delta Zeta. Her favorite part of being in the Sorority is the people she has met. Kelly says she has grown in many ways with the support of her sisters and her experience has improved her self confidence. "My sisters also helped me realize that people will accept you for who you are," she says. One of Kelly's favorite memories is representing her chapter in the Make-a-Wish Date Auction at Edinboro, shortly after her initiation. Because there are not many people with disabilities who participate in fraternal life, she thinks the opportunity showed that anything was possible. Kelly has also participated in many other philanthropic events on campus, including Relay for Life.

Kelly has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair, but does not see herself as disabled. She goes about her day and only stops to think about the wheelchair when she is forced to, such as when a building has no stairs. However Kelly feels responsible to disprove the stigmas associated with having a disability by taking an active role on her campus.

During the past year, Kelly planned Founders Day and Parents Weekend for the Iota Delta Chapter. As one of the largest responsibilities she has in the chapter, Kelly is proud to have led these events. Planning Founders Day provided her with an opportunity to learn more about our ritual and how it relates to her daily life. In addition to the ceremony, the Founders Day celebration included a catered dinner from Olive Garden and a presentation of how other chapters were living the ritual. Kelly thinks both events were "incredibly successful, although the planning was a stressful at times."

The Painted Turtle camp, one of Delta's Zeta's national philanthropies, holds a special place for Kelly. "I realize the advantages of attending a camp where you can relate to the



other campers and having the opportunity to participate in the activities," she says. She is glad that Delta Zeta supports an important cause that raises awareness on a national level for children with chronic or terminal illnesses. "I am constantly proving people wrong by doing things they say I can't," says Kelly. She does not let her lack of physical mobility limit her. "My biggest struggle is adapting to things I can't do, because I hate telling myself I can't do something," she says. "I try to participate fully, and Delta Zeta has given me so many opportunities." Kelly prides herself on having the courage to continuously pursue her dreams.

It is sometimes difficult to balance everything because she does not want special treatment, but she believes that her Delta Zeta sisters have helped make it possible to balance school, involvement in other organizations, and a social life. Kelly says she "works hard, but still gets enjoyment out of life."

Kelly is also actively involved in several other campus organizations. She served as second vice-president for Edinboro's Panhellenic Council and was the co-chair of the university's Greek Week. "It was interesting to be on the other side and learn the ins and outs of Greek life from another perspective," says Kelly. She also served as president of Adapted Intramural and Recreational Sports (AIRS), a group for all persons with physical challenges. AIRS provides recreational opportunities, including bowling, game nights and sports. Kelly has also received an award from the Order of Omega; is a member of Delta Alpha Pi, an academic honors society for students with disabilities; and is a member of Rho Lambda, the national sorority leadership recognition society.

A senior honor student studying psychology, Kelly plans to return home to Maryland after graduation and then return to Edinboro University for graduate school in the spring.