Ritual of Sisterhood

NHBW, Inc. Chapters
Atlanta, GA
Birmingham, AL
Camden, NJ
Cherry Hill, NJ
Chicago, IL
Gadsden County FL
Greater Metropolitan Capital Area
Joliet, IL
Huntsville, AL
Louisville, KY
Milwaukee, WI
Mid Cities TX
Nashville, TN
North Central TX
Northwest, IN
Orlando, FL
Queen City, NC
Spartanburg, NC
Tallahassee, FL
Volusia County, FL
Washington, DC

Revised: January 2023
Ritual of Sisterhood Chair: Mrs. Sandra Betts

National Headquarters

"Improving the lives of women and their families through support of the arts, culture, education, health wellness, and human service programs."
National Organizational History

Dr. Arnita Young Boswell and 13 other spirited women founded the National Hookup of Black Women, Inc. in 1974 during the Fourth Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Weekend. These spirited Black Women met in a hotel room and organized a national forum to articulate the needs and concerns of Black women and children.

Historically, NHBW, Inc.’s agenda has been to impact public policy and legislation for the betterment of the minority community in general and the economic and political status of Women. The goals of the founding sisters were:

• To support the Congressional Black Caucus in its efforts to utilize the legislative process to bring about full equality of opportunity in our society.
• To work toward the formation and implementation of the Black Women’s Agenda that would speak to the needs of a broad spectrum of women, cutting across economic, educational and social barriers.
• To create a mechanism for highlighting the achievements of Black Women and for making more visible our many significant contributions to our communities and their country.
• To monitor and participate in the process of the Equal Rights Amendments.
• To provide a national support base for all Black Women, especially in elective or appointive offices who serve in positions of organizational leadership, and those who are seeking to improve their status through education and career goals.

NHBW Membership

NHBW membership is open to anyone who embraces the mission and goals of the organization. NHBW members reflect a rich diversity of dedicated women from varied business professional, and community disciplines, representing a broad constituency that crosses all economic, social and educational backgrounds.

Installation of Board Members:
Leader:
You hold a position of trust and responsibility. Confidence in your ability has been expressed and you are called to serve as an administrator of NHBW, Inc. Please insert your name and repeat after me.

“I __________________hereby solemnly promise that I will carry out the duties of the office to which I hold to the best of my ability in loyalty to NHBW, Inc. and in harmony with the bylaws. I promise to provide the leadership, inspiration, recognition, and initiative necessary to elevate and maintain NHBW, Inc. in its proper position in the community for which we serve. I affirm that I will faithfully execute my office.”

On behalf of the authority vested in me by NHBW, Inc. I am happy to declare you duly installed to your respective offices.
Initiation Service for New Members

Modify as needed for Collegiate/Associates

Materials needed
- A small table with white cover
- A white candle placed in the center of the table
- Candle for chair of Sisterhood Ritual and each new member
- Protective sleeve or candle holders for each candle
- History of the NHBW, Inc. – page 8
- History of Local Chapter – each chapter shall supply

Set Up
- Form a Circle of Love around a small table
- New members stand in front of the table
- Local Board Members on the other side of table
- LEADER: Let us pray.
- A designated member will lead group in prayer

Share
- History of the National Hook-Up of Black Women, Inc. – page 8
- History of Local Chapter – read by a designated member

Presentation of New Members
- The sponsor introduces the new member.
- A mentor is provided.

Ritual of Sisterhood Attire:
- Ceremonial white for membership/officer installations and Fannie Lou Hamer Breakfast
- Dress White, Black with Pearls, or Dress Brown/Beige for Memorial Service of Departed Members

Memorial Service - Departed Members

Materials Needed
- A small table with white cover
- A white candle placed in the center of the table
- Candleholder for candle

Set Up: Circle of Love – Members wear white

Ceremony
Form Circle of Love to symbolize: (No beginning and no ending) just as God’s love is infinite.

Leader
Light the candle which will continue to burn throughout the ceremony. Leader will briefly elaborate on the life accomplishments of the deceased sister. "I am humbled to have this opportunity to lead this gathering here today as we celebrate our beloved Sister __________’s life and honor her memory...........

Next: "Let us first light a candle to signify her spiritual presence and eternal light that shines. And secondly acknowledge the green plant that we respectfully will present to the family to represent life."

Reading - Prayer
23rd Psalms (Reader should be designated before the service)
“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the path of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for though are with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; though anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Amen.

Leader
“Sisters, we will now put a word in our circle for Sister (last name). love, peace, joy, happiness, and so on.
"Members may be seated. Please extinguish your candles."
Rededication

Ceremony should be conducted by a ranking officer or the Parliamentarian. A table with a white tablecloth and large candle in middle can be used.

Dedication means to commit oneself to a particular course of thought or action, and it is usually done with a special ceremony. Let us prepare our hearts and minds to this rededication of our support of all the women that are part of this sisterhood - the National Hook-Up of Black Women, Inc. everywhere.

Let us as SISTERS be:

R  Responsible to each other and willing to respond when asked.
E  Enthusiastic sisters who embrace assignments with zeal.
D  Dependable sisters who will not let our sisterhood fail because we could not depend on each other for support.
E  Eager sisters who will not lose the strong desires and interests that made us become a part of this sisterhood.
D  Devoted sisters by keeping the faith, and maintaining strong affection and loyalty to all of the causes that pertain to women.
I  Involved sisters that don’t wait to be asked to participate - volunteer.
C  Concerned sisters, call each other in time of need or just because, take an interest in the entire organization.
A  Accommodative sisters, who are always willing to help and adjust to the changing needs of ourselves and our community.
T  Trustworthy and faithful sisters. If one is falling each will lend a hand to help each other up.
I  Industrious sisters, diligently active with our works of helping other women and their families.
O  Open-minded to the ideas of each other. Be slow to judge. Be agreeable once a decision is made.
N  Noble sisters by showing greatness in character and appearance as we represent the National Hook-Up of Black Women, Inc. in all our endeavors.

And if we are dedicated to the purpose of this organization as, “advocates for women and their families,” we cannot help but believe in our Motto.

Pledging Ceremony

Leader

Each new member lights her candle from the Leader’s candle and repeats the pledge for new members.

New Member Pledge

I,_________________________ accept the challenge of Sisterhood in the National Hook-Up of Black Women, Inc. I promise to initiate, support and promote the activities of our Sisterhood, and all Humankind.

Leader:

Commitment to the Organization: “Do you commit to establish a liaison with those individuals, organizations and institutions whose goal is to foster and promote economic, educational, and social development of women and diverse communities to maintain a communications network among them?”

New Members: “We do.”

Leader:

The National Hook-Up of Black Women, Inc. will work to achieve the goal of full equality of opportunity in our society through organizational, educational, social and charitable activities.

Do you also commit to promote programs of equal educational opportunity, social justice, and economic justice for all women by promoting their achievements and by making more visible their significant contributions to society?”

New Members: “We do.”

Leader

Please extinguish your candles, and step forward for your pinning. You may now join the circle as we complete our “Circle of Love Ritual.”

Follow with the “Sister’s Keeper” pledge, and welcome the new members to the National Hook-Up of Black Women.
Sister Circle

“Am I My Sister’s Keeper”

Am I My Sister’s Keeper?
And we will answer yes, again, again and again.
But we will never be all that we can be, until our sister is all that she can be.

Am I My Sister’s Keeper?
And we will answer yes, again, again and again.
But I cannot be whole until my sister is healed. The divine birthright is our providence.

Am I My Sister’s Keeper?
And we will answer yes, again, again and again.
But as long as my sister is in the valley and I am on the mountain top, we are not equally yoked.

Am I My Sister’s Keeper?
And I will answer yes, again, again and again.
But My Sister is my keeper. When we come together we can do anything but fail.

Am I My Sister’s Keeper?
And I will answer yes, again, again and again. Until we come together, neither one of us will tunnel through.

Am I My Sister’s Keeper?
And we will answer yes, again, again and again. But with my sister, together, we can do the impossible.
We can keep climbing to the top.

And when we come together at the top as Women we can uplift Families and our goal is to serve and to save.
Are we our Sister’s Keeper? And we will say yes, again and again...

As Revised 2/14/2020 - WAFrazier

Circle of Love Ritual

This Ritual of Sisterhood can be done at the close of the following:
• Installation Service
• Memorial Service
• Local Chapter Meetings
• National Annual Meeting

Leader
• Ask members present to form a circle
• The circle symbolizes “A Circle of Love” with no beginning and no ending, just as God’s love is infinite.

Members
• Members form circle
• Each member will then repeat a word of “love” to be placed in the circle.