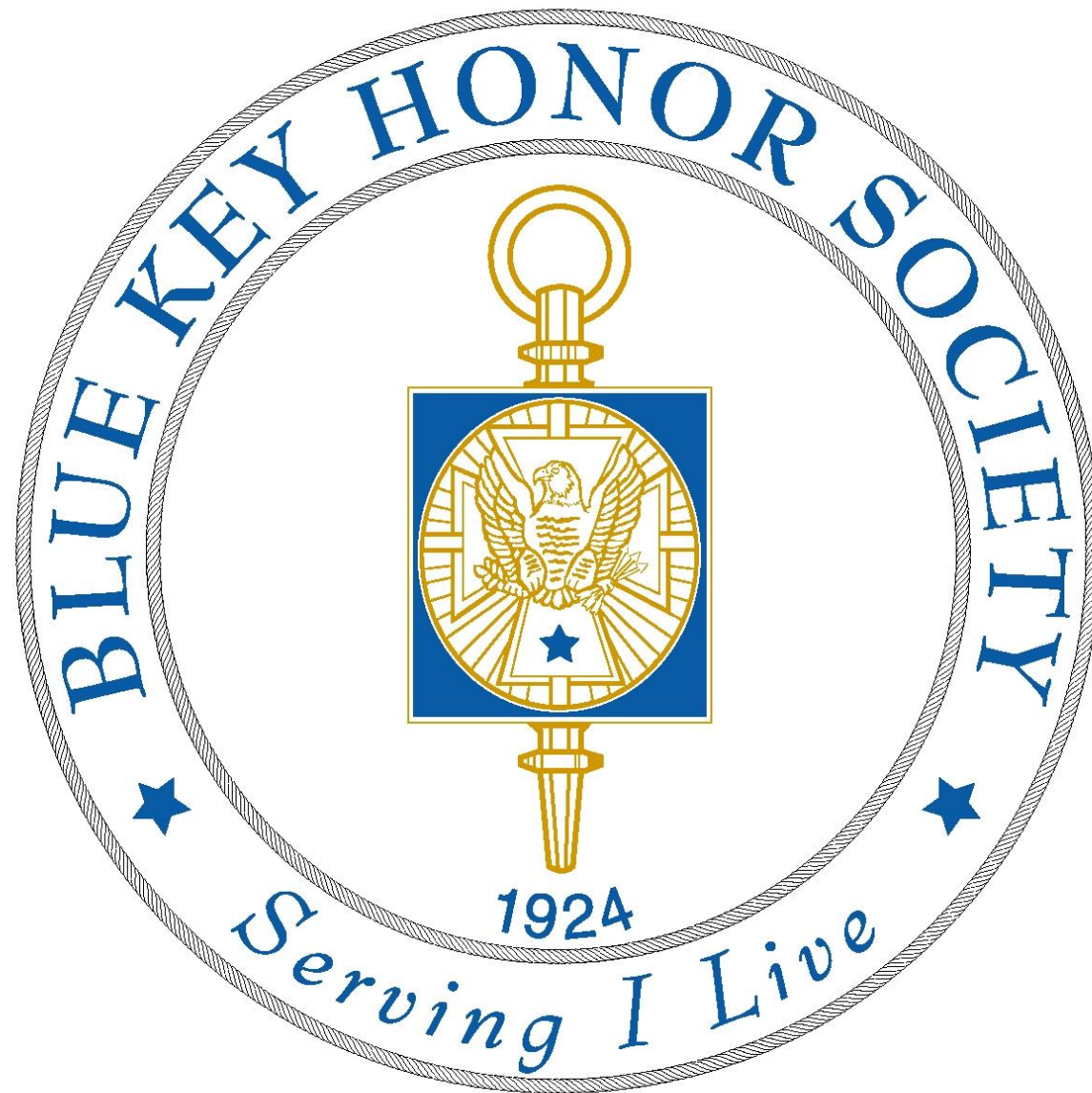


Highlights of
Blue Key's
100 Years
1924-2024



WHAT IS BLUE KEY?

Blue Key Honor Society is a premier honor society that recognizes college students at senior institutions of higher education for balanced and all-around excellence in scholarship, leadership, and service.

This Constitution ordains and establishes for Blue Key the guidelines and procedures to enable individual collegiate chapters, through an organized effort, to recognize the accomplishments of exceptional student leaders at colleges and universities.

Blue Key Honor Society

“Serving, I
Live”

The founder, Major Bert Clair Riley, noted that Blue Key evolved from a faith in the sincerity and ability of college students.

In the fall of 1924 at the University of Florida, he built the foundation for an honor fraternity dedicated to service.

Blue Key was founded
by Major B.C Riley on
November 27, 1924, at
the University of Florida.



4

Major Bert Clair Riley

Where did it happen?



West and South Facades of
Language Hall, circa 1924
(Renamed Anderson Hall in 1949)



Re-dedication of Anderson Hall
(Formerly Language Hall) on April 5,
2002 following an extensive renovation

1934 – The First Blue Key Convention

December 28-29, 1934, at the LaSalle Hotel in Chicago.

The Host Chapters were Loyola University in New Orleans and DePaul University in Chicago. Delegates arrived by bus, train, and automobile.

Passage of a Blue Key National Honor Fraternity Constitution and Code for Duties and Procedures. 74 delegates from Blue Key chapters throughout the nation.

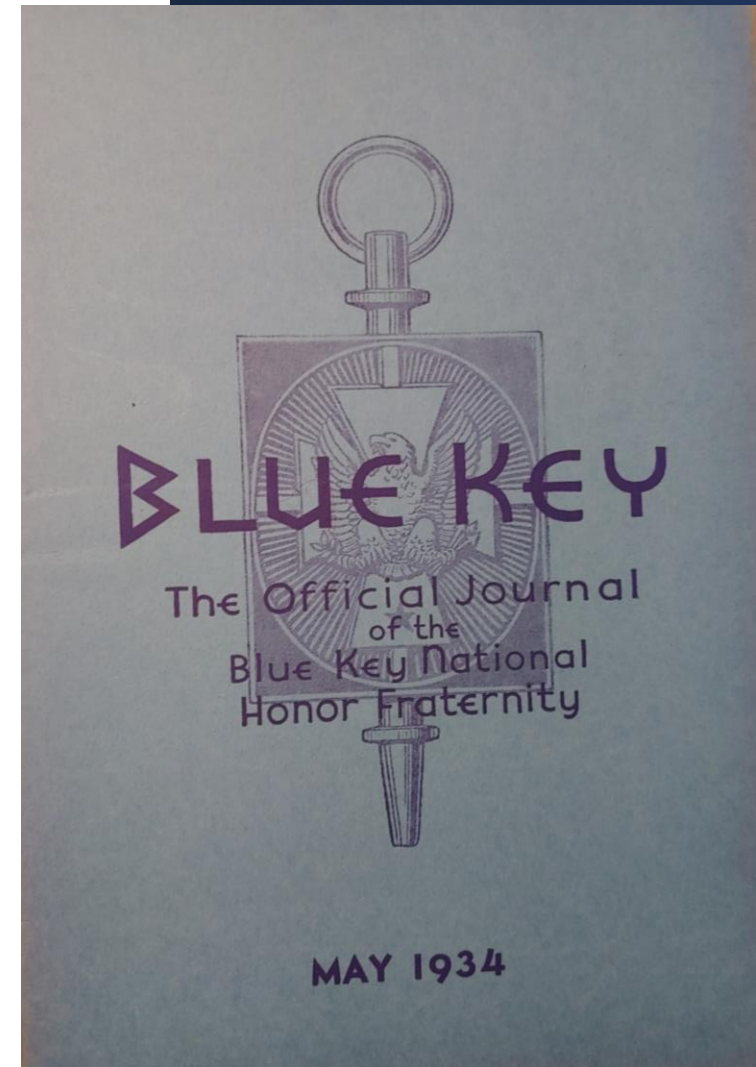
Can you believe, they agreed on a Blue Key Purpose to uphold principals we know today. The focus was on faith, leadership, scholarship, and service to resolve campus issues.

Riley Built Blue Key's Quality Reputation

Riley led the charge to make Blue Key a truly respected, major national honor society.

The strength of the organization was the quality of advising at the chapter level and careful selection of members.

The Blue Key Journal was published in May 1934.



The Early Days of Conventions

Only the most elite hotels could accommodate groups of 100 plus participants.

Biennial Conventions were held at the most prestigious hotels in major U.S. cities.

Room rates were \$6.50 to \$10.00 per night depending on amenities such as toilet and bath facilities.



Riley Founded Cardinal Key

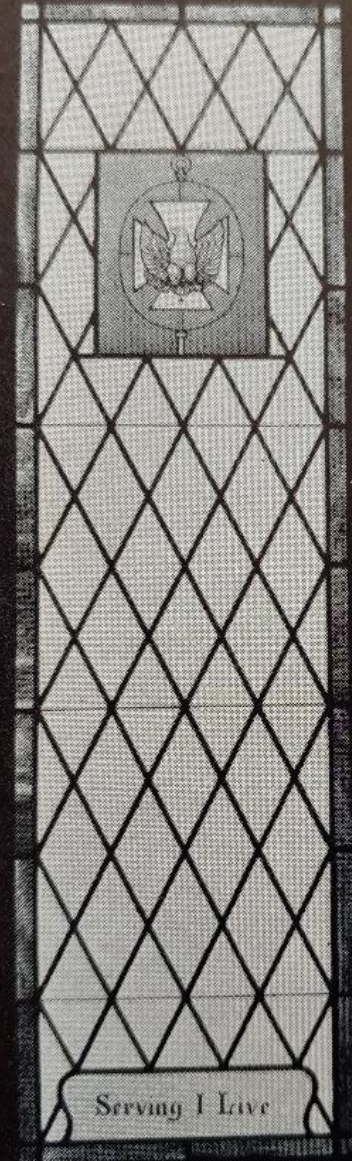
- Cardinal Key National Honor Sorority was organized on May 6, 1932.
- Provide for a nationwide honor sorority for college or university women of at least junior standing.
- The founder and sponsor for a number of years was the Major Bert Clair Riley with his wife playing a strong role.
- Their key is very similar to the Blue Key Waldemar Key.

Stained Glass Blue Key Window

Blue Key occupies a place of distinguished importance on the Loyola University campus.

Located at the landing of the Grand Staircase in the Main Building on the campus of the Loyola University-New Orleans commemorates the presence of Blue Key Loyola chapter.

It is where Blue Key members held meetings with their advisor, Dean Henry J. Engler, Jr., Ph.D. (Source: Blue Key Journal, February 1937, Volume 3, Number 2, page 2).



Blue Key in the 1930s and 1940s

In the 1930s Blue Key was concerned about organization of this confederation of chapters nationally.

- A Blue Key Administrative Council was formed with B.C. Riley at the helm.
- He was selected as National President.
- They faced the Great Depression.

Then came World War II and whole chapters had their members leave for military service.

- Many state-supported or Land-grant schools hosted ROTC programs as part of the curriculum.
- Sons left when fathers were killed or disabled. Families with these losses needed additional wage earners.

Continuing into the 1950s

- The Blue Key Council continued sponsoring Blue Key Conventions at large hotels in major cities in 1946 and 1948.
- Expanding the number of Blue Key chapters was top priority.
- Race began to be a point of concern. Blue Key was a white male organization. The Council and membership was white.

Big Question at the 1948 Convention in St Louis

Big Question: How much did and should Blue Key reflect society in terms of race and ethnicity.

Impetus for greater openness in Blue Key to ethnic minorities came from Blue Key chapters in the far west.

The far west was opposed to discrimination against Asian people since WWII. These Blue Key chapter delegates were very opposed to discrimination based on ethnicity.

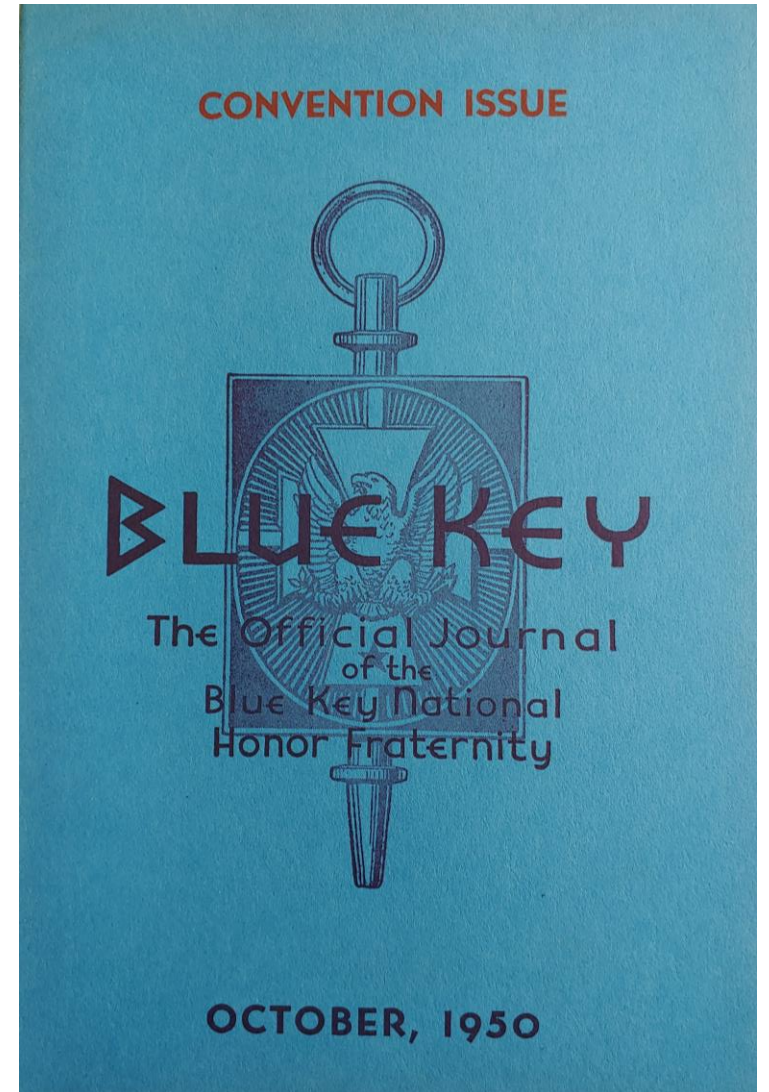
Resistance to this change was mostly south of the Mason-Dixon Line in 1948.

Reaching Consensus about Race and Ethnicity

The Council held that prejudice and discrimination were not just a geographic or sectional issue in the United States; it was a national issue. Blue Key took it on.

Blue Key said it would abide by the principles stated in the United States Constitution regarding equality and equal opportunity.

Blue Key promoted equal treatment for all human beings (Source: National Administrative Council Meeting Transcript, 1948, Pages 2-3).



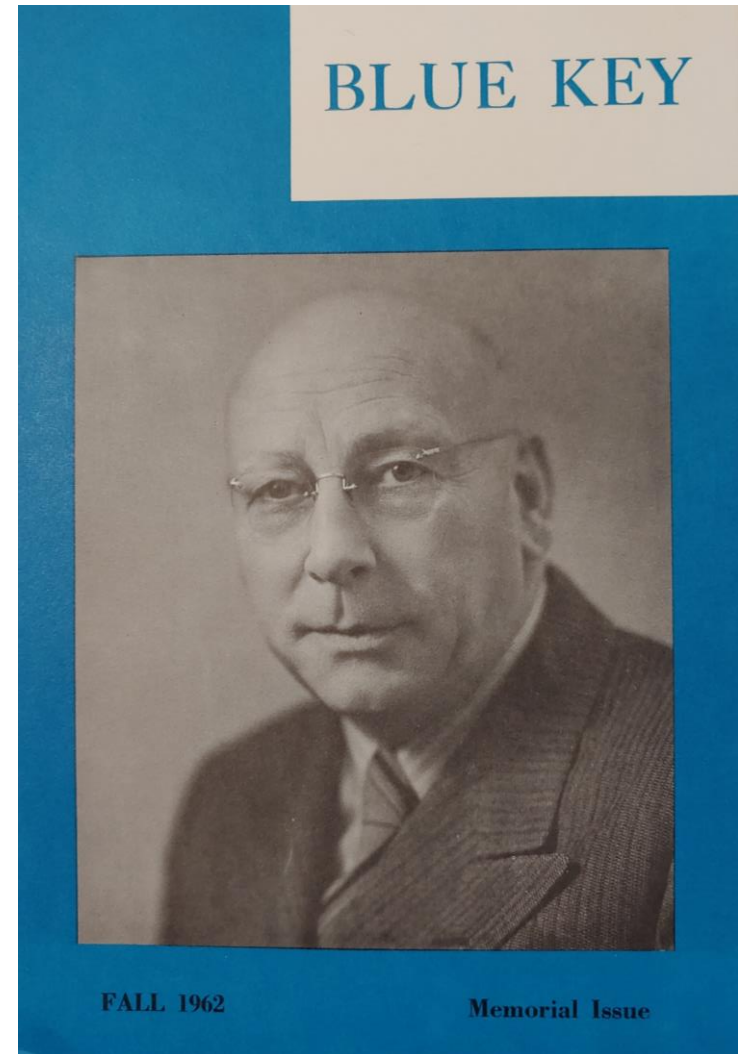
B.C. Riley Leads Blue Key Into the 60s

Riley gave a speech that summarized Blue Key. He started with “What is a Fraternity?” His answer was: “It Is a Laboratory for Understanding and Cooperation.”

In his address he said that Blue Key should focus was on leadership, team building, trust, integrity, and credibility.

He used military concepts to discuss leadership, courage, effective planning and bonds of friendship and service that develop over time to improve human performance in teams.

Leadership, intelligence, service, and strong character among members produce high performance and success in small groups.



B.C. Riley Believed in Student Engagement and Team Building

Members in Blue Key chapters should engage in service activities that create memories and bonds for life.

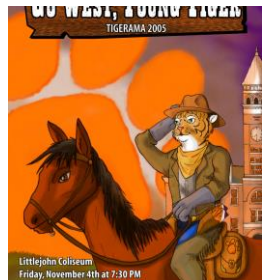
He was proud to announce that Blue Key chapter total reached 113 chapters in Fall 1960.



Program is at 7:30 pm Advance Ticket Locations:

Tickets in Advance \$5.00 Handle Bookstore

As Also \$10.00 \$5.00





Blue Key Chapters

1962: A Watershed Year

Blue Key National Honor Fraternity founder and National Executive Officer, Major Bert Clair Riley, age 70, died on the evening of June 28, 1962 in Gainesville, Florida. Dr. Riley was born on November 12, 1891, in Rockford, Illinois.

Stability at the nation level of Blue Key National Honor Fraternity became something of a challenge with the passing of B.C. Riley.

Blue Key selected a new National Administrative Director, Dr. Henry J. Engler, Jr. at Loyola University in New Orleans.

The National Office resides with the Executive Director by policy.

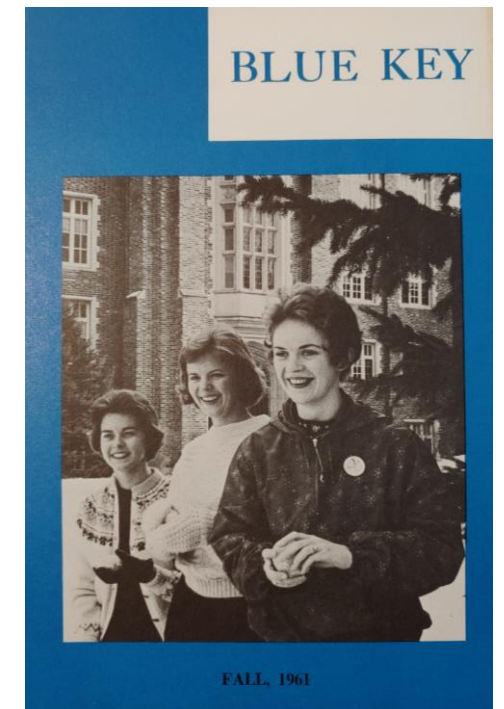
Blue Key in the 70s: Female Members

A constitutional change was approved in 1973 to admit females for membership in Blue Key.

This was a significant departure from tradition.

The first female inducted was Louise Held in the Loyola University of the South Blue Key chapter in New Orleans.

Chapters began to process female memberships from this point on.



A Bold Re-organization of Blue Key

In 1981, Engler and the Council divided the Chapters into 9 Regions.

Soon after Richard F. Reicherter became the Blue Key Administrative Secretary.

Reicherter began a steady track of official titles with Blue Key from 1967 to 1986.

- He started as Council Secretary, then National Secretary, National President, and eventually President and CEO when Engler moved on.

More administrative change to come at the top of Blue Key.



A Decade of Mystery

- The Blue Key Journal was discontinued.
- Dates and Proceedings of Conventions are not reported and thus unknown today.
- It was claimed that meetings were held every three years, but no record is available to substantiate that claim.
- The missing years are the 1990s and into 2000.
- No IRS or other financial records have been recovered.
- Blue Key became a 501c(4) nonprofit organization according to the Kansas Secretary of State.

Reorganization of Blue Key in 2000 with a New Administration

- Dr. Sieverdes drove to Topeka, Kansas in his 1997 Thunderbird to obtain Dr. Reicherter's immediate resignation as Executive Officer.



- Retrieve the Blue Key National Office records and chapter archives.
- Re-start Blue Key with a new administration.
- Working with a select advisors and chapter presidents, Chris and Ron Herington, the Blue Key printer, we re-constructed nominee rosters due year 1999 and 2000 certificates.



Blue Key Files Located and Secured

- Late in the summer of 2006, Blue Key received a tip from a relative about Blue Key National Office files stored in a garage next to a parish church in Lillis, Kansas. This was a rural area not too far from Topeka.
- Dr. Sieverdes made a one-way airline flight to Manhattan, Kansas on October 26, 2006, during his fall semester break, spent that night in Manhattan, rented a large U-Haul truck the next day and proceeded to the “shed” next to a small, rural church in rural Lillis, Kansas.

Blue Key Files Located and Secured (Con't)



Chris met a relative of the family and a son of another relative who provided access to the storage structure. Inside he discovered at least fifteen file cabinets and some 25 plus storage boxes of Blue Key files and materials under a heavy layer of dust, grime, and debris. It was fortunate to obtain these files in a timely manner, because they were abandoned in a dirty, unheated building.



Blue Key Files Located and Secured (Con't)

Sieverdes drove the truck load of Blue Key files on October 27-28, 2006 to his property in Millersburg, Ohio.

After unloading on October 29 and placing the files in his clean, safe, and secure residence, he dropped off the rental truck and took a one-way flight back to Clemson the next day.

Date Change of the Annual Blue Key Conference

The Blue Key Leadership Conference was scheduled for the first time on January 20-22, 2006, Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend.

All previous conferences under the new administration since 2000 were held in June.

The only obstacle with winter meetings is unpredictable weather.

The blessing is that northern states know how to deal with snow.

Clarifying IRS and State Non-profit Status

Blue Key National Honor Fraternity, Inc. officially converts to new name, Blue Key Honor Society, in the state of Kansas in 2014.

The National Office files did not contain any hint of paperwork regarding Blue Key's status as a 501c4 organization or its associated nonprofit organization registration.

Blue Key filed all documents including annual reports going back three years as was required, specifically December 2011, December 2012, and December 2013.

On December 20, 2013, Blue Key paid the penalty for the three previous years since 1995 when no annual reports were filed, and no registration fees were paid.

Blue Key National Honor Fraternity, Inc (dba Blue Key Honor Society) was fully reinstated as an active and officially registered 501c4 organization.

Registration from Kansas to Ohio to Alabama

- ✓ This transfer was activated in the Kansas Secretary of State's office on December 28, 2015. Registration of Blue Key in the state of Ohio with the Secretary of State was completed with an effective date of January 25, 2016.
- ✓ The new National Office officially opened at The University of West Alabama on January 1st, 2017.
- ✓ Danny Buckalew became the new Executive Director.
- ✓ Jeremy Sheffield became the Director of Operations and staffed the office.
- ✓ Byron Thetford, Director of Chapter Expansion.
- ✓ In 2020 Mr. Buckalew retired as Executive Director and Dr. Jeremy Sheffield was selected as the new Executive Director.
- ✓ Dr. Sheffield accepted a position with the University of South Alabama.



BLUE KEY HONOR SOCIETY

— *Serving I Live* —

Thank you for your continuing service
to Blue Key Honor Society