

Designing a Dream

Alyssa Hendrie (Gamma Beta-UC Santa Barbara) emailed us with some news for the *Quarterly*. She included lots of exclamation marks and a few all-capital words. She was clearly excited and, as we soon realized, she had good reason. Alyssa and her sister, Tessa Hendrie, run Bitchin' Digs, a design and real estate company in Malibu, Calif. They had transformed a rundown, double-wide trailer into an elegant, homey, ocean-view rental in Malibu, and it had been featured on the front cover of the *Los Angeles Times*. "We could not be more thrilled!!!" Alyssa had written in her email. We were equally thrilled and decided to find out more about this Alpha Phi designing dynamo.

What do you love about what you do?

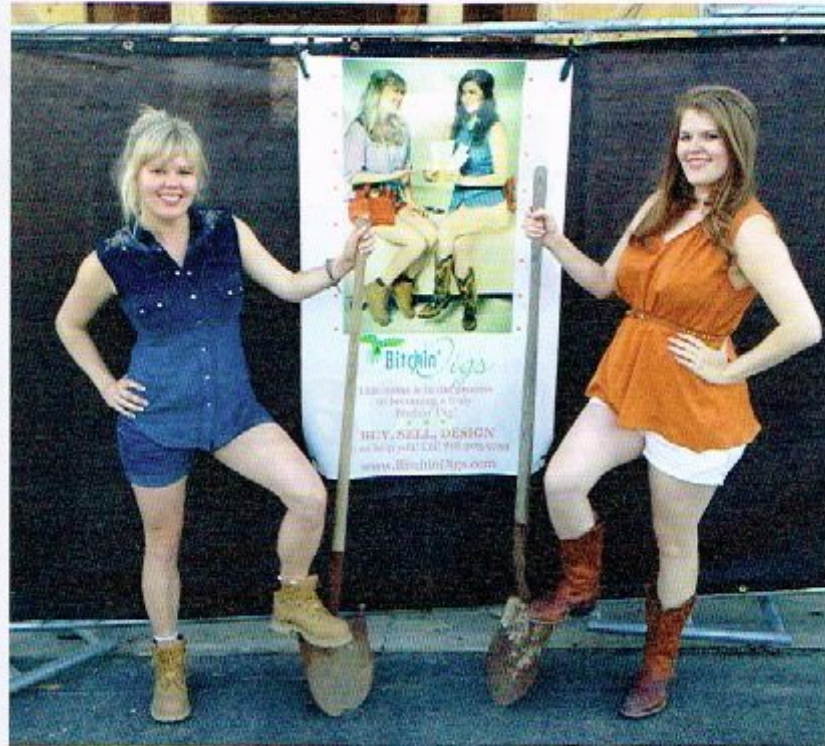
We get so much joy out of people falling in love with the spaces we create. We've had people from around the world celebrate life events in spaces we designed. Plus, it's exciting to be entrepreneurs. The thrill of having an idea, working diligently and creatively to make it happen, seeing it come to life and make a positive impact, is the best.

What makes something "bitchin'" to you?

A "Bitchin'" property is an environment that not only *looks* good but *feels* good. An ambiance, a vibe, that makes you exhale, relax, enjoy and celebrate life with the people you love. The whole concept should be to enhance the beautiful, hide the not-so-beautiful and play to the environment.

How has being an Alpha Phi impacted you?

Joining Alpha Phi was one of the best decisions I have ever made. Being surrounded by interesting, smart, creative, talented, fun, hilarious, wonderful women was inspiring and instilled values that I will carry with me throughout my entire life. It's important for women to support each other in life and in business, and celebrate each other's accomplishments.



Alyssa Hendrie (Gamma Beta-UC Santa Barbara), pictured on the left, owns Bitchin' Digs with her sister Tessa Hendrie (pictured on right)

What advice would you give budding entrepreneurs?

If you're passionate about something and have always wanted to do it, just start. I had an entirely different career, political consulting, when we started Bitchin' Digs. I saved for years, putting the money I made from consulting aside to buy our first property. Bitchin' Digs continued to grow as a side business, until we had so many client projects that I "retired" from my political career. Then, through working hard, thinking creatively and following our instincts, the next steps fell into place.

What are you working on now?

The past few years have been quite a whirlwind. We are now working on several homes throughout southern California and ready for our next big project. ★

Alyssa Hendrie poses (on the right) with sister and business partner Tessa Hendrie