

Alpha Chi Sigma Fraternity

Professional in the Chemical Sciences

Office of the
**GRAND
COLLEGIATE ALCHEMIST**



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Overview

I took on the role of Grand Collegiate Alchemist partway through the year after Howard Mayne stepped down due to personal reasons. GMA Helen Webster asked if I would be willing and able to serve the rest of the term and appointed me in April. I was installed in July at the summer Supreme Council meeting. This report primarily covers the summer and fall semester of 2019.

State of the Collegiate Branch

The Collegiate Branch is strong, but has experienced a slow-down in growth, both in terms of expansion and existing chapter membership. One thing that may have had an effect is the added Risk Management Surcharge on both the Pledge and Lifetime Membership Fees. This increase of \$100 total brought the total fees paid by pledges from \$220 to \$320. Combined with a decline in college enrollment nationally, several of our chapters have seen a decline in the number of pledges. In response, we established a New Member Assistance Fund to aid potential new brothers. We have also encouraged chapters to look into local opportunities for fundraising or other assistance in paying the Pledge and Lifetime Membership Fees for their new members. I am continuing to field questions and concerns about the increase in fees and the impact it has been having on our chapters.

Expansion

Expansion of the Collegiate Branch has slowed significantly this year. The York College of Pennsylvania Colony of Gamma Kappa was installed as Delta Pi Chapter in October. The Oregon State University Colony of Sigma is doing well and has been given permission to petition. The High Point Collegiate Group of Gamma Iota is continuing to grow and build their presence on campus.

Contraction

This year Gamma Omicron Chapter at Lehigh University went inactive at their request. The few brothers remaining on campus graduated, leaving no activity on campus. Similarly, the UC Santa Barbara Collegiate Group of Gamma Zeta and Westminster College Collegiate Group of Delta are no longer viable due to lack of interest in those locations. Winthrop University Colony of Rho was also dissolved at their own request.

District Counselors

The District Counselors, as a group, have done an excellent job this year. Participation on monthly chats, chapter visits, overseeing their committees, District Conclaves, have demonstrated their commitment to the Fraternity and willingness to work with the GCA and

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Supreme Council to improve the Fraternity. The District Counselors have been working hard this year to grow and work better with their district committees. All of the districts have committees

with members who visit chapters. With larger districts, there has been a strain on the District Counselors to visit and keep up with all of their chapters. Their district committees have stepped up and really helped with this. Four of the District Counselors (ACDC Jeff Moore, PCDC Emily Bloom, NDC Lauren Giarmo, and NEDC Howard McLean) have stepped down this year for a variety of personal reasons. Stephanie Bates (ACDC), Charlie Cox (PCDC), Geoff Giarmo (NDC), and Kelly Allen (NEDC) have stepped in to fill these positions. Having stronger district committees has helped in identifying who could step in to fill the role.

Health and Safety – 3P2E

This year has seen the rollout of the Health and Safety Philosophy and Policy to replace the Risk Management Policy. We also have asked chapters to add a Health and Safety Officer at all of the collegiate chapters. The next steps are to rollout planning guides and procedures, education brothers on the Health and Safety program, and be sure the policies are enforced. This has been a significant effort on the part of the entire Supreme Council in consultation with Holmes Murphy. The District Counselors have done a great job helping to distribute the information to their chapters and help the collegiate branch understand the new Health and Safety Philosophy and Policy while still learning it themselves.

Chapter Advisor and Faculty Recruiting and Education

Many of our chapters have had difficulty in recruiting faculty members, sometimes being left in the position where a new person has to be initiated in order to replace a chapter advisor who desires to step down from the role. At times, some of our chapters have been left without a chapter advisor because of the lack of faculty brothers. We formed a committee to create recruitment material that chapters might be able to use to help recruit faculty members. So far, a survey was sent to professional members, with a targeted email to chapter advisors specifically. We received over 200 responses to the survey. The next steps are to use the data to create recruiting materials, provide information to the chapters on best practices for recruiting faculty, and then to add educational materials for chapter advisors related to their role in the chapter and the fraternity.

Chemical Demonstration and Outreach Safety Committee

In response to the ban on chemical demonstrations after the last Conclave, a committee has been working on safety rules and procedures for improving the safety of chemical demonstration or outreach activities. At this point, the committee decided on following the American Chemical

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Society Safety Guidelines for Chemical Demonstrations.

They have also drafted a planning guide for chapters to think through and plan for possible safety issues at an outreach event.

Summary and Final Thoughts

It has been an eventful year, or part of a year, to be the Grand Collegiate Alchemist. I look forward to continuing the projects that have been started this year, adding DC Resources, the continued implementation of the Health and Safety program, and continuing to interact with brothers at a variety of events.

It has been an honor to serve as the Grand Collegiate Alchemist this year, and I look forward to continuing to serve in 2020.

Yours in the Double Bond,



Dr. Merryn Cole, Alpha Theta 2003
Grand Collegiate Alchemist
Alpha Chi Sigma Fraternity