

Alpha Chi Sigma Fraternity

Professional in the Chemical Sciences

Office of the

**GRAND
COLLEGIATE ALCHEMIST**



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Grand Collegiate Alchemist Annual Report 2023

District Counselors

The District Counselors joined the in-person SC meeting over the summer to participate in two days of training including Health and Safety; working with Professional Members in the District; DC Visits and reporting; Collegiate Chapter Finances; Copyrights, Ritual, Regalia, and Reporting; House Chapters; DEI: LGBTQIA+ Identities, Recognizing Privilege, and AXSigma specific examples; District Conclaves; and a presentation from Holmes-Murphy on Insurance and Risk Management. GHSO Merryn Cole also provided a number of team building activities and a number of Case Studies for Health and Safety issues that the group worked through. Overall the weekend provided an excellent opportunity for the DCs to get to know each other and the SC and to have both formal and informal discussions and training opportunities to strengthen their understanding of their roles.

Two District Counselors stepped down prior to the summer meeting due to personal commitments: GDC Matthew Senter and NDC Rebecca Marsnik. The newly appointed GDC Derek Dillinger was able to attend the summer meeting and participate in the training. NDC Cassandra Watson was not appointed until later in the fall semester, so she was not able to attend the training.

NWDC Laura Howard returned from her leave of absence; SWDC Don Cole had helped cover her chapters during her leave. SEDC Kate Cavanaugh had some periodic absences over the summer and fall semester for medical reasons, and I helped watch emails during those times.

The DCs as a group are starting to gain confidence and experience. We continue to have monthly chats led by DC Chair Hannah Bowman covering various topics and featuring guests from throughout the Fraternity. Many of the DCs are building successful communication channels with their various chapters, though there are still a few chapters where the communication has been sparse. Most of the DCs are still struggling to identify and recruit District Committees, except in a few areas where there were already existing committees that had weathered the pandemic successfully.

Virtual District Committee

The Virtual District Committee has been primarily engaged in helping with Chapter Bylaws Reviews, especially Alex Herbert who not only reviewed a number of chapter bylaws but also drafted a generic Chapter Bylaws example that we plan to use for existing and new chapters looking for a guidance document. I continue to work with the DCs in finding additional avenues for these brothers to be able to be engaged.

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Chapters

We continue to see quite a lot of variance in how the chapters are recovering from the pandemic era. Several chapters are initiating very large pledge classes each semester, and some are only able to recruit low single-digit pledge classes. We are seeing greater compliance with paperwork and fee due dates, especially with increased and improved communication. Jen Showerman has been very proactive in sending out due dates for specific initiation dates, and working with the chapters to make sure that they understand the timelines needed.

Delta Theta and Gamma Psi chapters were both declared inactive this year. In both cases, the chapters had sustained loss of membership and activity during the pandemic, and despite efforts of the remaining students, the Chapter Advisors, and the District Counselor, these chapters were not able to be revived.

Alpha Epsilon remains on probation and continues to work with their new Chapter Advisor to try to rebuild the chapter after sustaining loss of membership. Delta Alpha, Beta Iota, and Alpha Theta were all placed on probation due to paperwork issues and are all doing well to correct the issues of concern. Alpha Kappa and Zeta Chapters were placed on probation at the summer SC meeting due to Health and Safety Violations, and both chapters are working closely with their District Counselors and are being responsive to the requirements of their probations. Rho Chapter was suspended in the late fall due to a report of Health and Safety Violations. An investigation by GHSO found that the severity of the claim was unsubstantiated, but that there were ongoing issues with the chapter that needed to be dealt with. The chapter was placed on probation just before the end of 2023.

Expansion efforts

The possible expansion efforts at Arizona State and St. John's University (Queens, NY) seem to have closed with no progress.

At the University of Delaware, the collegiate group is doing very well. They held initiation this fall and had a very successful and well-planned event, and the group is now moving to independent status. They continue to work closely with their parent chapters and with local professionals, and have been taking advantage of every opportunity to learn from these other brothers.

New Member Assistance Fund

Modifications were made to the New Member Assistance Fund to help ensure that the money is going to those potential members with the greatest need. There has been an increased focus on the pledges working with the chapter to see if a payment plan can be set up, since in most cases the issue is not the total amount of money that must be paid, but that paying it all at once is a financial burden. Applicants are also encouraged to share relevant factors that affect their financial need.

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It has still been necessary to close the NMAF before the end of each semester due to the depletion of funds, but a total of 51 pledges received assistance from the fund in 2023.

Chrome and Blue

The Chrome and Blue continues to be published each month, and the biennial schedule of topics has been working well. We have had a variety of guest articles from the various committees of the Fraternity.

Resources for Chapter Advisors

A short document outlining the expectations of Chapter Advisors has been created and has been sent out to a limited number of Advisors. I plan to expand this into an updated Manual of Procedure and share it more widely, and work with the CAs to see what other resources would be helpful

Yours in the Double Bond,

Sarah Pickett, Gamma Theta 2000
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