

Alpha Chi Sigma Fraternity

Professional in the Chemical Sciences

Office of the
GRAND
MASTER ALCHEMIST



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2025 Annual Report

It has been an honor to work with this biennium's Supreme Council and Grand Chapter officers. I encourage you to read their reports, as they contain a lot of good information.

Activities

I have been working with the Supreme Council and volunteers to reconsider how we do expansion. During the past several years we have seen quite a few chapters go inactive. While the pandemic can be blamed as the final straw for many of these, the chapters were already struggling. We also noted that many of the chapters lost were some of our newer chapters. So, we have engaged in discussions on how to better support our future and fledgling chapters and are hoping the new expansion path will help. We still have the collegiate group at University of Delaware but have now added collegiate groups at Delta Delta (SE Missouri) and Slippery Rock University (in Pennsylvania) and have a few more potential interested students at other universities.

I have continued to work with the Volunteer Coordinator to improve how we solicit volunteers to staff committees. This process has been improved over the past, but will continue to evolve. We are always looking for more volunteers for committees and other positions within the fraternity. Any interested brother can reach out to volunteers@alphachisigma.org to volunteer. We have openings for both collegiate and professional brothers, and we would love to increase the number of brothers who are working with the fraternity at the national level.

Other activities relate to a promise I made at Conclave: to visit (or at least attempt to visit) all of the chapters during my biennium as Grand Master Alchemist. In 2025 I was able to visit several more chapters and attended a couple of District Conclaves. It has been wonderful to interact with and hear from many brothers, collegiate and professional, and I look forward to interacting with additional chapters in the near future.

In 2025 we also updated our database and website. This has been an improvement in functionality and our National Office Staff (Erin Goodwin and Jen Showerman) deserve much credit and thanks for making this transition to a new system to better serve the Fraternity without noticeable disruptions.

Finances

In general, the Fraternity has been financially fairly steady recently, though we could offer additional services with additional funds – this is likely the wish of all organizations. Unfortunately, steady is not helpful long term as costs for services and supplies continue to rise. Our solicitation this year has increased a bit over past years, but not significantly. Our pledge and initiate numbers have increased compared to our pandemic lows, but have leveled off a bit. As these are the two major sources of income for our Fraternity, finding ways to increase both of these would be ideal. In particular, we need to continue discussions on how to provide more value to our members and drive more donations. It would be great if we could shift the income

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streams so that the bulk of our income is not dependent on pledge and initiation numbers. Additional income from professionals or other sources would also help us lower costs for new members.

Financial health of the Fraternity is something that future Supreme Councils will need to think about creatively. Over the past several years, many efforts have been made to cut costs. However, there is a limit to how many things in the budget can be reduced. We are now at a point where serious discussions on what we can afford, including Conclave, need to happen. Additional details on finances can be found in the GR report, which I encourage you to read to learn more.

Conclave

Conclave is one of the most significant opportunities for us to build brother-to-brother networks and to carry out important tasks to keep the Fraternity moving forward. What we have done in the past was good, but our Fraternity and our Brothers change with time, and Conclave should, too. We are actively discussing what Conclave should look like and how much it costs. Conclave is a huge cost to us and as the cost of things in the world are increasing, Conclave is quickly becoming unaffordable for us. We need to think creatively about how we can accomplish our goals for Conclave without causing a burden to Fraternity finances. For the 2026 Conclave, you can look forward to a different schedule and some new activities.

Conclusions

It has been a delight to serve the Fraternity as the Grand Master Alchemist for these past several months, and I look forward to the rest of the biennium. I especially look forward to interacting with more Brothers as I continue in this role. If any of you have recommendations about how the Fraternity can serve you better in the future, please let me know! Email me at gma@alphachisigma.org or contact another member of the Supreme Council. If your chapter has a special event or a particular date on which they would like me to visit (usually via Zoom), I would like to know that, as well. Finally, once again, I invite any Brothers interested in serving on a committee or volunteering in any capacity to contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alphachisigma.org. We can work together to improve the future for the Fraternity and our Brothers.

Yours in the Double Bond,



Dr. Merryn Cole, *Alpha Theta 2003*
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