David A. Harrington

Alpha Kappa ‘85

*Education*:

University of Virginia, Chemistry, May 1987; University of Virginia School of Law, J.D., May 1994

*Work Experience (Technical)*:

Research Assistant (chemical syntheses for development of monoclonal antibody-based cancer imaging and treatment), Cytogen Corporation (1988-90); Analytical Chemistry, Department of Physiology, University of Virginia (1987-88); Computer Programmer, Naval Research Laboratory, Department of the Navy (1985-86)

*Work Experience (Legal)*:

Assistant Chief, Environment & Natural Resources, Division, U.S. Department of Justice, supervises 12 trial attorneys engaged in high-stakes complex litigation (2016-24); Senior Trial Counsel, Civil Division, U.S. Department of Justice, trial and appellate counsel in federal court litigation involving contract and Constitutional claims (2002-16); Associate, Ross, Dixon & Bell, multifaceted litigation practice, including representation of insurers in coverage disputes (1997-2001); Associate, Pierson, Semmes & Bemis, trial and appellate litigation (1994-1997).

*Fraternal Involvement*:

Alpha Kappa Housing Corporation, President (1998-2024). I have served as President of the Alpha Kappa chapter’s housing corporation for more than 20 years. During that time, I spearheaded a major expansion of the house that involved obtaining city zoning approval, securing financing, and monitoring construction work.

Alpha Kappa Alumni Foundation, Member and Treasurer (2015-24). I helped found the Alpha Kappa Alumni Foundation – a charitable organization focused on aiding collegiate brothers in the Alpha Kappa chapter. In that capacity, I oversaw the AKAF’s brother-in-need program (which provides grants to brothers in need of financial assistance), assisted with its annual fundraising, and helped organize career counseling and guidance. Most recently, the AKAF organized a campout for brothers that included a professional induction ceremony for graduating seniors.

Alpha Kappa Chapter. As a brother in Alpha Chi Sigma’s AK chapter at the University of Virginia, I have been active in fraternal activities every year since the 1980s, first as an undergraduate chemistry major (VMA 1986-87), next during my years as a law school, and finally as a professional brother.

Other Connections: AKHC Representative on AXS Ad Hoc Committee on Health & Safety Policy; AXS Conclave Attendee; Washington Professional Chapter.

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I was nominated by a collegiate chapter – not my own – to run for Grand Master Alchemist at the just-completed Conclave. It was not without some trepidation that I accepted that nomination. And although I was not elected, I am glad I ran. I met numerous wonderful brothers, acquiring in the process a greater appreciation of our national organization. Many of the brothers I met – even brothers who told me they would be not be voting for me – suggested my ideas and experience could be of benefit to the Fraternity. They encouraged me to find ways to stay involved at the national level; I assured them I would.

The position of Professional Representative is one of the Fraternity’s most flexible. It has been said that PRs should do whatever they want so long as it would suit the position and reflect well on the Fraternity. That makes PR the right fit for me, providing an opportunity to apply my legal knowledge and experience – skills that are rare among our brotherhood.

As a PR, I would pursue two principal goals. First, I would explore novel ways to address the perennial challenge of keeping brothers engaged after college. My chapter has a deep bench of professional brothers. Nearly 250 Alpha Kappa brothers are part of the alumni foundation’s Facebook group. Our chapter-specific fundraising often reaches $10,000 per year. Our brothers volunteer to provide professional counselling, organize periodic in-person career days, sponsor a robust aid program to help keep collegiate brothers active, and conduct the chapter’s professional induction ceremonies. Replicating these successes to bring a similar level interest, energy, and breadth to the professional brotherhood of other chapters has untold potential.

Second, I would find opportunities to apply my legal acumen in ways that benefit the Fraternity. With over 30 years of experience, including work on insurance issues, I possess the skills and judgment that enable me to provide advice and develop prudent policies. What can be done to facilitate chemistry shows in a safe way with reduced insurance costs? What chapter activities would create an unacceptable risk of legal liability? And equally important, what activities do not? How can we create a demarcation between fraternal and individual activities to protect the Fraternity? I would relish the opportunity to help the Fraternity solve these and other challenging questions.