

NGLA

2021 AWARDS



NORTHEAST GREEK
LEADERSHIP ASSOCIATION

Amy Vojta Impact Awards

Academic Achievement

Theta Chi at Rider University

At the end of Spring 2020, the chapter realized their cumulative GPA was lower than the previous semester. Despite COVID-19, and most operations moving remotely, the chapter implemented a new study group called, "Study with the Chi's." This group met weekly and it was a time for brothers to get together, do homework, ask questions or for help, and hang out from afar. The new scholarship chair also created group chats with brothers in the same or similar majors. All of the changes that were implemented resulted in the chapter improving their GPA and earning the highest GPA among IFC groups on their campus. The chapter found a way to continue to support each other despite being fully virtual, which allowed the strong bonds to continue to grow and the GPA to improve.

Panhellenic Council at Carnegie Mellon University

The Panhellenic Council created an annual Panhellenic Scholarship Program, consisting of five scholarships, totalling \$2,500, which provides assistance with an individual's tuition needs, academic endeavors, and chapter dues. These scholarships provided opportunities for general members, new members, and recruitment counselors. With the cost of tuition, books, and chapter dues, the council wanted to provide financial assistance to encourage potential new members to join sororities without the stress of additional costs, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Chapter members have witnessed the excitement the scholarships bring and have seen a reduction in the amount of new members terminating their membership due to a financial burden.

Chapter Development and Leadership

Alpha Xi Delta at Temple University

With operations moving virtually due to COVID-19 during the Spring 2020 semester, the chapter worked to find new ways to engage members. One initiative that was started was “Wellness Wednesdays,” a weekly effort to promote positive health and wellness strategies. Some weeks the program focused on movement, e.g. yoga, while other weeks focused on mind and self-care, e.g. guided meditation sessions. The program was created after sisters expressed feeling extremely disconnected, anxious, and nervous about current circumstances, and the chapter wanted to provide opportunities to support members during the pandemic. As the program grew in success, Alpha Xi Delta began to open up sessions to the entire Panhellenic community, with women from all six chapters attending throughout the semester.

Panhellenic Council at Drexel University

The Panhellenic Council restructured the entire council to create better leadership opportunities for women wanting to be involved. This effort included the removal or restructure of some positions and the creation of new positions that better encapsulated the needs of the council. This process allowed for better, more structured, and more focused leadership development and clearer direction for each position. The council was able to shift from simply checking boxes and doing the bare minimum to collaboration within the council and strategic thinking to better the future of the Panhellenic community on campus.

Greek Community at Gettysburg College

As a deferred recruitment campus, the community found itself with the qualm of new members stepping into leadership roles that they were sometimes ill-prepared for. To help better support the transition from new member to emerging leader, the community introduced the Greek Emerging Leaders (GEL) Program. This program is open to all members who joined their chapter during the previous semester. The program uses a cohort-based model, which allows participants to engage in meaningful conversations and truly form relationships. Sessions include personal and career development lessons and meetings with other emerging leaders in the community and professionals across campus who can support them in their roles. The campus has seen students finish the GEL program and move into chapter and council leadership roles. This new reality has led to a betterment of the community and a reduction of brand new members leading organizations.

Honorable Mention

Interfraternity Council at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

At the beginning of the 2020 calendar year, the Interfraternity Council outlined 10 key goals and initiatives that were discussed with senior administrators at MIT. Once the pandemic hit and operations shifted to remote, the IFC worked with the Panhellenic council, FSILG office, and other campus partners to understand the best way to move the FSILG community forward during a pandemic. Much of the focus was related to providing the best opportunity for first-year students to virtually engage with IFC chapters, supporting a virtual recruitment, and continuing to ensure the IFC community was healthy, strong, and resilient. The IFC worked closely with administration to create a reopening plan for Spring 2021, which included specific details for fraternity and sorority housing. The council also worked closely with the Panhellenic council and FSILG office to create open forums to ensure closure and eventual facility reopening plans were clearly communicated and included student input.

Civic Engagement

Alpha Delta Phi at Rutgers University

During the month of November, Alpha Delta Phi sponsored a virtual fundraiser to raise awareness in the community and local networks about the challenges military veterans face and to collect donations for Stop Soldier Suicide (SSS). Members of the chapter utilized social media and contacted family and friends to ask for financial support. The main focus of the fundraiser was raising awareness about this important issue. After a 72 hour online donation collection, the chapter raised \$2,046.00 and the proceeds were sent directly to Stop Soldier Suicide. The chapter also reached out to Amazon and was able to secure a \$25,000 gift from Amazon for Stop Soldier Suicide. This gift will make a difference in the lives of at-risk veterans and their families. The SSS program was able to provide nearly 1,000 hours of personalized care and support for heroes who sacrificed for our nation.

Greek Community at University of Rhode Island

During the month of November 2020, the URI Greek Life community held a virtual Philanthropy Week and set a fundraising goal of \$10,000. The community chose not to select a single benefactor for the funds raised but instead chose to encourage each fraternity and sorority pairing to pick a charity they were passionate about. Programs during the week included virtual bingo, a brand new Charcuterie Board Contest (design your cheese board in relation to the charity you chose), Instagram Live posts, and a Give Away Day. By the end of the week the community had surpassed all expectations and raised a total of \$40,000, which was donated to 11 different charities!

Membership Recruitment/Intake

Interfraternity Council at Quinnipiac University

Due to COVID-19, the Fall 2020 recruitment and intake process was forced to evolve so guidelines mandated by the university and the state of Connecticut were followed. IFC took the lead and created a mass email list of potential new members for fraternities to contact as well as handled all space reservations. IFC Recruitment was one of the first in-person events for the campus, which prompted the council to require an IFC e-board member to be present at each fraternity event. This was done to ensure proper social distancing guidelines were followed and to collect a list of all persons in attendance for contact-tracing purposes. Prior to the start of recruitment, the IFC Vice President for Recruitment hosted three virtual workshops for potential new members to set the tone for the PNMs, to help them understand the real reasons fraternities exist, and to dispel stereotypes. Chapters also offered virtual recruitment opportunities to ensure everyone who wanted to participate felt safe doing so.

Panhellenic Council at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

The Panhellenic Council worked closely with all stakeholders to plan for its first ever virtual recruitment, which included taking into account accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion within the recruitment process. All sorority members were able to provide feedback, concerns, and ideas to create a seamless formal recruitment process. The most notable change impacted the timeline of recruitment. The recruitment process shifted from a few long intense days to occurring over a few weekends. The change also included the implementation of a Continuous Engagement Plan. The intent of this plan is to encourage engagement with the recruitment process and sustain a higher level of retention. Potential new members were allowed to set their own schedule to ensure they did not feel overwhelmed. All of the collaboration among chapters and the council and the inclusion of all member voices allowed for a record-breaking recruitment, which led to an improved process on nearly every metric calculated since their 2016 recruitment.

Honorable Mention

Panhellenic Council at Temple University

With many campuses shifting to a virtual recruitment, Temple Panhellenic Council collaborated with the Panhellenic councils of The College of New Jersey and Stockton to create a Recruitment Bootcamp. Each chapter was paired with another chapter from the participating campuses to practice recruitment technology in the virtual setting. During the practice, each chapter was able to act as the recruiting chapter for one round and as the potential new members for another round. This format allowed for everyone to benefit from the practice run. Planning and implementing this program required constant communication among all three campuses and the largest challenge was the coordination of the program logistics. To combat this challenge, each council selected a point person to be the central communicator. Program organizers also created an open Zoom room with professional staff members and council leaders to help with technical difficulties and concerns. During the practice run, anyone from the three campuses could utilize the Zoom room for support.

Multicultural Initiatives/Programming

Greek Community at University of Rhode Island

Following the nationwide protests of the death of George Floyd, the Greek community at the University of Rhode Island established a Diversity and Inclusion Task Force to address issues within their community. The task force consisted of members from the two Greek councils on campus, members of the various multicultural organizations, and several faculty and staff members. The task force made a decision to delay recruitment to allow members time to complete a newly created training program developed in collaboration with Diversity Dialogues. This training provided chapter members with information regarding microaggressions, implicit bias, and other areas of concern. The community is already working to implement changes based on feedback from the initial rollout.

Honorable Mention

Coalition for Women of Color at Rutgers University

The Coalition for Women of Color (CWC) aims to uplift the voices of the women of color within the Panhellenic community by promoting the core values of awareness, celebration, and sisterhood. This group of women felt it essential to take action to further inclusivity in a space that was historically exclusive and discriminatory against women of color. The CWC has worked to provide education and opportunities for the Panhellenic community to enable its members to better grasp the influence that racial and ethnic identity has in the professional experience.

Public Relations

Panhellenic Council at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Over the past year, the MIT Panhellenic had “externalizing the internal” as the public relations goal and pursued a variety of marketing efforts to align actions with values. The council previously struggled with the misconception that they were a cold-hearted, authoritative ruling body despite their efforts to serve as a genuine, supportive network. When examining this misconception further and talking with a variety of stakeholders, the council realized that the root of the problem was a gap between the wide range of work committed behind the scenes and what was seen by the MIT community at large. The focus of “externalizing the internal” was to provide more frequent updates of committee progress on social media and in digest newsletters. When COVID pushed activity to a virtual setting, the Panhellenic council allowed members from each chapter to take over the Panhellenic Instagram to showcase a day in their life and cover topics ranging from newly developed quarantine details and helpful interview tips to use during recruitment. The council utilized their social media platforms to amplify member voices and to showcase who they are and how they live their values.

Risk Reduction

Delta Phi Epsilon at Temple University

After a hazing investigation found the chapter not responsible yet resulted in a social suspension, Delta Phi Epsilon worked to revamp an event that would keep the tradition without the issues and risk. In consultation with their headquarters and campus advisor, the chapter was able to redefine the event to incorporate and welcome the new members. During the revised event, called 3 Courses of DPhiE, new members were split into three groups and traveled to different locations where sisters lived to mingle and enjoy food and non-alcoholic drinks. The event is a great way for everyone to have fun and strengthen the bonds of sisterhood without the inclusion of alcohol, which made it a safer event.

Interfraternity Council at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

One of the strongest assets of the MIT Interfraternity Council is their Risk Management program, which is a three-part education-based program. Part one involves the IFC Risk Manager hosting a risk management roundtable with the chapters at the beginning of the semester to go over all of the risk management policies, share common best practices, and exchange valuable insight to best prepare the chapters to maintain a safe environment. Part two deals with accountability. During this part of the program, the IFC hires two members from each chapter to serve as Risk Manager Consultants (RMC). The role of the RMCs is to check in with chapters anytime they host an event with alcohol. The final part is about response. When an issue arises involving a chapter, the IFC will usually conduct a hearing with the Judicial Committee. Any serious concerns are escalated up to the MIT Office of Student Conduct.

Greek Community at University of Rhode Island

Greek 101 serves as a prerequisite to joining the URI Greek Community. The program consists of 4 classes held once a week over the course of a month. Topics include risk management, general expectations of new members, team building, hazing prevention education, alcohol management, violence and bystander prevention, and diversity and inclusion. The classes are peer-led by Greek leaders who participate in a three-credit academic course. Despite COVID-19 forcing operations to go virtual, the course continued in a virtual format with pre-recorded lesson modules and separate live breakout sessions for the new members.. Greek 101 is a longstanding program at URI and it undergoes constant evaluation from participants and the community. The program is updated regularly as changes occur.

Honorable Mention

Panhellenic Council at University of Vermont

After experiencing changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic and learning of the controversies across the nation connecting various Greek communities with COVID-19 outbreaks, UVM Panhellenic decided to draft a governing document that would reflect and expand COVID-19 related guidelines and university regulations. The UVM CPH COVID-19 Sorority Operations Guidelines outlined how the newly created UVM guidelines and regulations would impact sorority operations and provided instructions for how to plan and implement various types of programming to comply with all school, city, and state guidelines. The council worked closely with UVM Student Conduct and the UVM Office of Student and Community Relations to uphold the guidelines and regulations and to hold the Panhellenic community members accountable. The Panhellenic executive board and chapter leaders met regularly to update and address concerns related to the guidelines and ensure that the Panhellenic community had a voice and was holding each other accountable.

Individual Awards

Greek Leaders of Distinction

Victoria Dey, Sigma Delta Tau, University of Rochester

As the President of her Sigma Delta Tau chapter, Victoria hit the ground running by meeting with her on-campus advisor frequently and sharing ideas for making her chapter and the community more diverse and inclusive. Her nominator wrote that she is “unafraid to challenge others whose actions are incongruent with our community values, but does so in a way that is calm and approachable.” Victoria took that calm and approachable mindset when encouraging the Panhellenic community to make some much needed changes and do so in a way that was non-confrontational and allowed for collaboration across the council.

Kristin Haugen, Sigma Sigma Sigma, Gettysburg College

As the Panhellenic President at Gettysburg College, Kristin had the challenge of leading and working with over 660 women during the pandemic. Despite the challenges of working together virtually, Kristin made sure to learn from her peers and executive board and collaborated with them to motivate the community to adapt and meet their goals. One of her first initiatives was a partnership with the Director of Title IX and Sexual Respect to plan a Sexual Misconduct Prevention Fair, where information about violence prevention was shared with the campus community. During the virtual nature of the semester, Kristin worked hard to change the role of chapter delegates. She sought to engage these delegates more and to make them feel more included in their roles. She also created the Panhellenic Pledge, which was a formalizing effort for Panhellenic to take a stance to agree with Gettysburg College’s decisions and expectations and to be committed to holding one another accountable to these expectations.

Denise Navarrete, Sigma Psi Zeta Sorority, Inc., University of Rochester

As the President of the Multicultural Greek Council, Denise constantly demonstrated mature leadership qualities by being proactive, forward-thinking, and inclusive of the thoughts and opinions of her entire council. Thinking about the council as a whole, Denise constantly questioned how to allocate efforts and resources to best support the entire council and ensure its future success. Upon being elected, she started to review and revise the governing documents for the council and worked to build and strengthen the relationship between all three councils on campus. As her presidency began to wind down, Denise focused on making the transition to the new leaders as seamless as possible.

Aislinn Noble, Kappa Delta, University of New Hampshire

As a Kappa Delta woman and Vice President of Panhellenic, Aislinn has worked to advance the UNH community as a whole. She dedicated her time to challenging the system, supporting her peers, and taking every opportunity to advance herself as a leader and as a human. She spent time promoting the right to vote and increasing voter registration within New Hampshire. Additionally, she noticed explicit privileges within the UNH Fraternity and Sorority Life community and was able to propose new bylaws to address these concerns and created leadership opportunities that moved the Panhellenic community towards anti-racism. Her peers within the Panhellenic and Interfraternity councils wrote that “her impact can be seen everywhere in the community, from big policy changes and event planning to the small interactions and help she offers to members of the community on a daily basis.”

Greek Leaders of Distinction (cont.)

Kathryn Vu, Sigma Sigma Rho Sorority, Inc., New York Institute of Technology

One of Kathryn's biggest accomplishments as Chapter President was working with the chapter to achieve national status for her organization, which is a process that takes a lot of time, commitment, and dedication. After accomplishing this effort, Kathryn served as the President of NYIT's Inter-Fraternity Sorority Council (IFSC). She served as president during a time of major transition in leadership of school administration. She worked hard with her advisor to identify new opportunities to provide education, challenge the status quo related to hazing and sexual assault, and hold members accountable. One of her nominators wrote that "Kathryn is a distinctive individual and leader - she is strong in her leadership, committed to her studies and growth, open to new challenges and perspectives, but most importantly, she is continuously supportive of her sisters and of the community."

Haley Wong, Gamma Phi Beta, Quinnipiac University

Haley served as the Panhellenic Vice President of Scholarship and in this role implemented a Diversity and Inclusion bylaw for the community. She met with sorority presidents, diversity and inclusion chairs, faculty members, and members of other organizations to ensure that the bylaw was more than just words being agreed on. This effort was outside the scope of her role, and one in which she felt so passionate about that she knew she had to take it on and put her all into it. In addition to her role on the Panhellenic Council, Haley held leadership positions within her chapter of Gamma Phi Beta and served as the inaugural President of the Rho Lambda National Sorority Leadership Recognition Society. One of her nominators wrote that "Haley's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts paved the way for further positive change in the community and inspired many Greek organizations to appoint an individual responsible for ensuring inclusiveness within their own chapter."

Bonnie Wunsch Volunteer Service Award

Elana Levy, Sigma Gamma Phi, Michigan State University

Elana has been an incredible member of the NGLA family for quite some time. As Educational Programs Chair, she directed her team towards a vision that enhanced our organization's efforts to educate members about relevant topics impacting not just fraternities and sororities but society as a whole. Along with NGLA's commitment against racism, Elana saw an opportunity to create more meaningful education that could bring impactful change to many communities in our network. Her ability to identify an opportunity and creativity to execute a vision allowed NGLA's newest program, Lectorials on R.A.C.E., to be a success. Like so many of our volunteers, Elana is a driver of NGLA's mission and our educational opportunities would not have the same impact without her.

Guenzler Award

Tara Leigh Sands, Gamma Phi Beta, Lycoming College

Tara has worked to restructure the Panhellenic recruitment process since the beginning of her time at Lycoming. Last summer, Tara hosted town halls with students and advisors to detail what the year would look like. This town hall approach was new for the community and something that had not been done in the past. Additionally, there was not any hazing prevention education offered for students. Since Tara's arrival, they have begun providing this education and last year, in collaboration with the councils, offered events for hazing prevention week. Last fall boasted some of the highest program attendance rates for the community. Her goal was to keep the community going during the year and remaining positive as plans were being developed. Tara is proud that in a remote setting the community remained intact, and is also proud of the programming the campus community members received. Students feel as if Tara is a calming force for them. She counts the commitment to continue as a big accomplishment for her as well. Tara is working to develop alumni relations, and she sees this work emerging as a significant accomplishment.

Hank Nuwer Award for Hazing Prevention

Panhellenic Council at Quinnipiac University

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the constant changing and shifting guidelines placed on students, the Panhellenic Council worked together to ensure that all Panhellenic members understood the importance of hazing prevention. The council decided to host a different initiative or activity for each day of National Hazing Prevention Week. The week was kicked off with the "Love, Mom and Dad: Turning Tragedy into Progress" program hosted by the Anti-Hazing Coalition. Each organization within the council was charged with creating their own unique anti-hazing slogan, accompanied by a graphic, to post on social media. Members had the opportunity to grab a free donut to demonstrate how "Bobcats Donut Haze" on social media as well as the chance to sign a pledge to end hazing.

Josette Kaufman Award

Interfraternity Council at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

The Interfraternity Council partnered with the MIT's Office for Violence, Prevention, and Response and PLEASURE, a student group that promotes safe sex and healthy relationships, to revamp a previous collaboration. The collaboration, Sexual Assault Prevention Program (SAPP), encourages fraternities to host and attend workshops with brothers to promote a healthy culture and to be proactive with sexual assault prevention efforts. The intent of the program is that members engage in consistent conversations with one another and not just attend one workshop. The workshops were revamped to be more relevant to the fraternity experience and allowed chapters to critically evaluate all aspects of their own culture. In response to the program changes, many fraternity brothers chose to become peer educators, furthering the importance of the program and partnerships.

Phillipi Award

Sara Lowery, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., University of Delaware

Sara currently serves as the Assistant Director of Fraternity and Sorority Leadership & Learning at the University of Delaware. In her role, Sara designs and implements leadership education for the student leaders, advises two student governing boards, oversees behavioral conduct, coordinates large scale programs, and much more. Sara has adapted her strategy of advising two different councils by meeting the needs of the students and organizations she works with and not taking a one size fits all approach. Her nominator wrote that she "is a fierce advocate for all students and she does not allow politics nor tradition to hold her back from advocating for what she thinks is right."

