

THE FRATERNITY & SORORITY ALUMNI CONNECTION

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MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANKATO
Fraternity & Sorority Life

 MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO
FRATERNITY & SORORITY LIFE

SPRING 2020

FRATERNITY & SORORITY ADVISOR'S CORNER



A Changing World...Reflecting on Spring 2020

As I sit down to provide our Fraternity & Sorority Life (FSL) alumni and friends with a reflection on the Spring 2020 semester, I am resigned to the fact that this is not going to be a typical update, so please bear with me.

Where do I start? In my 12 years at Minnesota State Mankato, we've never experienced anything like we're experiencing now. Spring 2020 started as Spring semesters normally do. New officers were excited to start their roles. Plans were beginning to take shape for Greek Week. Chapters were already planning key events for Fall. Key community leaders made the annual journey to Indianapolis for the Association of Fraternal Leadership & Values (AFLV—Formerly MGCA/MIFCA/MAPCA) conference.

In late February/early March, people were talking about the Coronavirus/COVID-19, but the extent to which it would impact each and every one of us was unknown. After classes ended on March 6, Spring Break began. Less than a week later, students were notified that Spring Break would be extended by a week and that all classes would be moved to a totally online or alternative format. Students who could do so were encouraged to move back home for the remainder of the semester.

For a brief time, almost all activity for our fraternity and sorority chapters paused. We needed to figure out what things were going to look like. Gradually, most chapters embraced technology and continued to meet and function virtually. I continued to meet with the governing councils and with chapter leadership via Zoom meetings, phone calls, Group Me messages, and Facebook Instant Messenger chats. I have not seen most of these folks in person since early March, but we've stayed connected.

I am extremely proud of the student groups, their ability to adapt, and their willingness to trust that we're in this together. I shared with them that we're all learning things as we go and that uncertainty is something to accept right now. These leaders are to be commended for the work they put in. I have to remind myself, sometimes, that they're students, too! Not only were they adapting to a new way of keeping their councils and chapters functioning, but they were also trying to survive academically in what was, for many, a totally different and uncomfortable way of learning.

We made it through the semester, and at the end of it, approximately 80 of our FSL community members celebrated by graduating with their degrees.

Roughly two weeks into the Summer break, our state and our nation found itself experiencing, grieving, and processing the death of George Floyd. For many associated with the university, this hit hard, as his killing took place within a short drive of where we live. We're once again confronted with graphic and tragic evidence that systemic racism still exists in our society. Some people reacted instantly, and others continue to process internally, determining how to react. Some know exactly what they want to say and how to say it. Others are challenged by this and are working through a time of discovery during which they are examining their beliefs and worldview.

So what? What's next?

When Fall semester begins, our university, our students, and the experience will be different. We do not know, fully, what this means, yet, but we can be certain of the following:

- Fraternities and sororities will continue to be organizations that provide some of the greatest leadership and personal growth opportunities students can find while in college. Our groups will continue to be a vital part of campus life. This being said, they will need help. Alumni advisors and mentors can make connections with students and work to enhance the network we proudly promote.
- Fraternity and sorority recruitment will look different. Groups will need to focus on developing relationships in new ways and in different settings. We are currently working through the details of what recruitment processes will look like.
- Group gatherings will look different, both in size and scope. "Physical distancing" (I despise the term "social distancing") guidelines will likely exist, and university groups will be expected to adhere to them. For personal safety reasons, some students may choose to not be physically present and/or to engage virtually. Our organizations will need to prepare for these realities.
- Classes will look different, both in size and scope. While we are anticipating some in-person courses, their sizes will likely be smaller due to physical distancing guidelines and reduced classroom occupancy rates. Online and alternative course delivery will continue to be significant through Fall.
- We will work as a university and FSL community to ensure that our Black students and students of color continue to feel safe and to find a welcoming environment in which they can succeed and thrive—developmentally, educationally, and socially.
- We will work as a university community and FSL community to continue to educate students and chapter members about systems of oppression and bias, and we will attempt to equip them with knowledge and skills that will enable them to be allies for those who face racism and other forms of injustice.

In many conversations I've had with student leaders, I've tried to encourage maintaining some sense of normalcy and familiarity for members. Being able to find some comfort is important. Often times, the relationships we find in fraternities and sororities can be a source of that comfort. Fraternities and sororities have been a part of the college and university landscape for more than 200 years. Part of the reason for that is our ability to adapt to change and to persist through difficulty. We are certainly witnessing that now. It's time to step up.

It's a pleasure and honor to be working with these students and with you. I look forward to connecting in some meaningful way in the near future!

Fraternally,
John Bulcock
Assistant Director of Student Activities

SPRING 2020 HIGHLIGHTS: A quick recap of some of the goings-on with our organizations and community

- Phi Delta Theta celebrated their 55th Anniversary with a large gathering of alumni and friends in February.
- Minnesota State University, Mankato's Dance Marathon, known Organization among the recipients of the 2020 Spirit of Youth Awards. The Spirit of Youth Awards is an annual recognition initiative sponsored by Mankato Area Public Schools' Community Education and Recreation Advisory Council, which honors outstanding youth, youth organizations, community volunteers, educators, businesses and coaches/advisors for their work in youth asset building.

Dance Marathon is a national program of Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, with each local campus-based program raising funds for the CMN Hospital nearest the campus. Minnesota State Mankato's organization and event benefit Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, which is based in Saint Paul, but which has a facility in Mankato. Student teams

spend a year raising funds and celebrate the effort at the actual Mavathon event each February. Minnesota State Mankato's Dance Marathon is the largest in the state of Minnesota, and for the past three years, it has been the largest student-run philanthropic event on campus. Since 2010, Minnesota State Mankato's students have raised approximately \$175,000 for Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare.

- In May, the Sigma Phi Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. became the first chartered chapter of a historically Black Greek letter sorority at Minnesota State Mankato. The new chapter will become an associate member of the Panhellenic Council. Be on the lookout for a feature story about the chapter in a future edition of this newsletter.
- Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, a historically Black fraternity continues to work towards achieving an independent charter for a chapter on campus.

AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

This year's awards ceremony was held via video broadcast on Sunday, April 19. The following awards were presented:

John and Kristy Buck Leadership Scholarship

Hunter Kelsey, Phi Kappa Psi
Lynsey Rohlfing, Alpha Chi Omega

Reichert Family Leadership Scholarship

Tyler Guggisberg, Phi Delta Theta
Greysen Higbe-Harrah, Phi Delta Theta
Casey Parnell, Phi Delta Theta

Stephen C. Jensen Scholarship

Andrew Bravo, Phi Delta Theta
Patrick Norris, Phi Delta Theta

Order of Omega Outstanding Faculty/Staff Member of the Year

Mark Constantine, Director of the Centennial Student Union

Public Relations & Marketing Award

Alpha Sigma Alpha

Scholar of the Year

Reece Podgorski, Phi Kappa Psi

Vawracz Award for Community Service

Natalie Turkowski, Gamma Phi Beta

Outstanding Alumnus Volunteer Award

Keaton Collas, Sigma Nu

Gea Stanger Memorial Woman of Influence Award

Dr. Brenda Flannery, Dean of the College of Business

Panhellenic Council Chapter President of the Year

Jordan Schindler, Gamma Phi Beta

Interfraternity Council Chapter President of the Year

Zach Wickman, Phi Kappa Psi

Rissa Amen-Reif Award for Advocacy and Awareness

Natalie Turkowski, Gamma Phi Beta
Seth Nilsen, Phi Delta Theta

Panhellenic Council Executive Officer of the Year

Sara Swan, VP of Risk Management

Interfraternity Council Executive Officer of the Year

Reece Podgorski, VP of Member Education & Development

Outstanding Fraternity New Member

Steven Tyson, Sigma Nu

Outstanding Sorority New Member

Alison Bloom, Sigma Sigma Sigma

Marie Bruce Fraternity Man of the Year

Walle Sunden, Sigma Nu

Marie Bruce Sorority Woman of the Year

Cat Nelson, Alpha Chi Omega

Brotherhood & Sisterhood Awards

Tau Kappa Epsilon & Gamma Phi Beta

Most Improved Chapter

Gamma Phi Beta

Chapters of the Year

Sigma Nu
Sigma Sigma Sigma

SPRING 2020 ACADEMIC AND MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

CHAPTER	Chapter Total	SP20 GPA
Alpha Chi Omega	67	3.53
Alpha Sigma Alpha	31	3.34
Gamma Phi Beta	74	3.60
Kappa Alpha Psi	8	2.99
Lambda Chi Alpha	40	3.00
Phi Delta Theta	31	3.25
Phi Kappa Psi	23	3.45
Sigma Chi	22	3.04
Sigma Nu	53	3.33
Sigma Sigma Sigma	74	3.61
Tau Kappa Epsilon	22	3.22
ALL IFC FRATERNITY AVERAGE	199	3.21
PHC SORORITY AVERAGE	246	3.55
ALL FRATERNITY/SORORITY AVERAGE	445	3.41
ALL MEN'S UNDERGRAD AVG	4,486	3.25
ALL WOMEN'S UNDERGRAD AVERAGE	4,813	3.46
UNIVERSITY UNDERGRAD AVERAGE	9,318	3.36

*The university numbers used for this report reflect full-time, on-campus (not taking only online courses) undergraduates.

HELP SUPPORT THE MARIE BRUCE AWARD

Previously, we have put out calls for support of the Marie Bruce Award. We are immensely thankful to the alumni and friends who have made gifts to further support this award, ensuring that it will be awarded for at least the next three years.

This award, the highest honor a member of our community can receive, is named after Marie Bruce, our university's former Dean of Women. She was instrumental in developing Fraternity & Sorority Life here. Recipients of this award have been benefitting from an endowment that was established at the time of Ms. Bruce's death.

Additional support is needed in order to continue awarding the scholarship beyond the next three years. If you are interested in honoring Marie Bruce's legacy and helping us continue to honor the best our Fraternity & Sorority Community has to offer, please consider a gift to the Marie Bruce fund, which is administered by the Minnesota State University, Mankato Foundation. Gifts may be made online at www.mnsu.edu/giving, or they may be sent to:

Minnesota State University, Mankato Foundation
126 Alumni Foundation Center
Mankato, MN 56001

Please reference "Marie Bruce-335020" when making your gift. There is an immediate need for contributions that can be awarded from the fund annually for the next 3-5 years.

As college costs have risen, the small award we provide may not cover even the cost of a student's books for a semester. We would love to be able to increase this award to \$1000-1500 and be able to present it to one man and one woman perpetually. In order to reach that level, the scholarship endowment must increase by \$40,000-65,000. If you are interested in discussing a larger gift or pledge that would bolster the endowment and allow us to increase the scholarship award and ensure its long-term sustainability, please contact John Bulcock, Assistant Director of Student Activities for Fraternity & Sorority Life, at john.bulcock@mnsu.edu or 507-389-6076.

Fraternity & Sorority Community Mission Statement

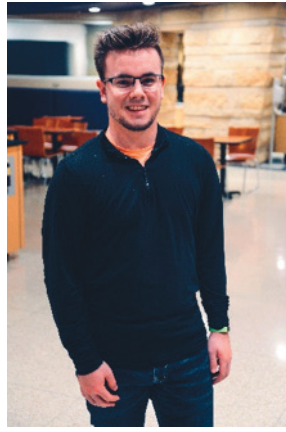
The Fraternities and Sororities at Minnesota State University, Mankato take pride in serving the University and the greater Mankato area. We are a community of campus leaders committed to excellence in scholarship and to promoting dynamic personal growth of members, focusing on the development of experiential leadership and the fostering of lasting relationships.

Fraternity & Sorority Community Core Values

- Leadership
- Friendship
- Scholarship
- Service



YOUR GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE



Membership in Phi Delta Theta and the Minnesota State Fraternity and Sorority Community, completely changed my life. I built lifelong relationships with my brothers and community members that I will cherish forever. Various positions within my chapter, as well as on the Interfraternity Council, helped me apply knowledge and skills acquired from classes right into the real world – something not many other organizations on campus can provide. Being a fraternity man has helped me grow as a leader and an individual. I've been able to learn about myself and challenge myself in ways I would've never thought possible.

Being named a recipient of the Marie Bruce Fraternity Man of the Year Award was a huge honor. Not only did the scholarship provide additional support to furthering myself academically, it also provided motivation for me to continue to working toward becoming the greatest version of myself – both in the classroom and in the fraternity.

Brett Marshall, 2019 Graduate and Marie Bruce Fraternity Man of the Year Award and Scholarship Recipient

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