

**THE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION  
OF THE  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
TO THE  
176<sup>TH</sup> PSI UPSILON CONVENTION**

Chicago, IL

On July 26, 2019, under the auspices of the Omega chapter, Psi Upsilon will meet in continuation of our tradition of annual Conventions. In so doing, we celebrate the Omega's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding in 1869. This is a tremendous accomplishment, and a testament to the lasting value of the fraternal experience, and to the energy and dedication of the generations of Brothers who have made this possible.

We meet at the Palmer House Hilton, a hotel that first opened in 1871 shortly after the founding of the Omega chapter. For those aware of the area's history, the timing of the hotel's opening was unfortunate. The Great Chicago Fire of October 1871 completely destroyed the area known today as "The Loop", and made 30% of the area's population homeless.

Despite this early setback, the Palmer House Hilton and the City of Chicago were rebuilt; the current Palmer House is the 3<sup>rd</sup> such hotel located in downtown Chicago. This phoenix-like death and rebirth of the downtown core is, in some ways, similar to the experience of some of our chapters; every organization is eventually forced to review its operations and to decide what of the past is still useful and appropriate, and what evolution and innovation is necessary for the future.

It is therefore fitting to use the time we set aside each year at our Convention to reflect on the past, to renew our bonds of Brotherhood, and to pause as we look forward to the future. This is a time for celebration of our Fraternity, for creating new memories, and for reminiscing about times past. It is also a time for the yearly rebirth of our members' enthusiasm and optimism about the upcoming academic year.

This year, the reflection on the past is particularly difficult. This past April, we lost a valued Brother, a beloved father and a dear friend in Brother Lewis R. Finkelstein, Omicron '83. Brother Finkelstein served on the Executive Council and Foundation Boards since 1999. As a CPA, his accounting and audit expertise was particularly helpful to the Fraternity, and he worked diligently with both the Fraternity and Foundation to streamline operations, improve our accounting procedures, and ensure both organizations were audited properly. But he was also a Brother and a friend. Always one for a little mischief, and well known for enjoying our gatherings, he was often the driving force behind our post-meeting social events. He had discerning taste regarding food and drink, and he made his preferences known. His passing was sudden and unexpected, and his absence leaves us missing his expertise and talent, his wit and humor, and his love for the Brotherhood and the Fraternity. His loss reminds us of the need for all of us to face each day with a positive attitude, to do good and meaningful work, and to make the most of the time we have with our Brothers. We miss him dearly.

Overall, the state of the Fraternity remains strong. Our membership numbers are healthy, and we continue to evaluate the possibilities for reactivating dormant chapters and for expansion to new campuses. Our members continue to distinguish themselves in class, on their campuses, and in their communities, reinforcing our commitment to the highest moral, intellectual and social excellence.

In 2018-19, our chapters demonstrated a commitment to excellence.

- the Delta Nu had 80% of their membership on the Dean's List and has been the top ranked fraternity academically the last 2 years at Keene State University.
- the Epsilon Iota invited faculty to dinner and hosted six dinner lectures
- the Delta, Gamma Tau, Chi Delta, Phi Delta, Lambda Sigma, Alpha Omicron, Delta Nu, Phi Nu Chapters and the Delta Omicron Provisional Chapter all participated in Out of Darkness Walks for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, one of our philanthropic partners.
- the Beta Beta organized a blood drive with the Red Cross
- the Zeta Chapter raised over \$60,000 for the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth, NH, and overall our chapters raised over \$150,000 for philanthropic causes and volunteered over 11,000 hours in their local communities
- the Delta, Xi, Upsilon, Eta, Omicron, Theta Theta, Chi Delta, Phi Delta, Sigma Phi, Delta Nu, and Phi Nu chapters all held alumni events to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood

We must also consider the challenges we face as on our campuses and ensure that we are modernizing our view of fraternity as our environment changes around us. We are seeing systemwide trends in how colleges and universities are engaging with Greek organizations, and these changes, while not in place on every campus, may come to affect the way our chapters operate.

Many institutions, such as Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, are deferring recruitment, leading to challenges with maintaining chapters of appropriate size. Some city governments, such as at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, are linking fraternity house zoning regulations to official recognition from campus authorities. Lawsuits at Harvard and Yale have at their heart a challenge to the mere existence of traditional fraternal organizations, and they reinforce a need for better organization and oversight of our chapter activities. And there is an increasingly disturbing trend of colleges banning fraternities and sororities outright, such as at the University of Buffalo and Swarthmore College. There can be no doubt that the Greek system is under increasing societal pressure and changing norms in college life.

And this pressure is not unwarranted. In recent years, fraternities have come under increased scrutiny for action, and inaction, that have caused real harm and cut against the purpose for which fraternities were created. Hazing is a felony in every state in which Psi Upsilon has a chapter, and we're seeing increased transparency and scrutiny with regards to how hazing allegations are being investigated. In addition, new laws are now in place in Pennsylvania, Texas, and Louisiana that call colleges and universities to be much more public in their investigation of hazing allegations. These previously existing and new laws reinforce Psi U's prohibition on hazing in all its forms and provide for real penalties for those who engage in it.

Embedded in these new laws is a clear expectation that each fraternity member will discharge their responsibility to act in the best interests of our members, guests, and friends.

This year the Executive Council and the rest of the fraternal world have responded to these challenges. The NIC has adopted a resolution which bans the possession of liquor in chapter houses, which significantly lessens the risk of accidental alcohol poisoning. The majority of incidents where injury and death occur involve liquor; restricting access to it will help prevent future tragedies. In addition, Psi U has adopted a “Good Samaritan” policy to encourage our members to look out for our members’ safety. In many of the recent cases of on-campus deaths, a timely call for medical assistance would have avoided death, and this policy encourages Brothers to “do the right thing” and take appropriate action when they encounter someone who clearly needs medical attention.

But that isn’t enough. It is incumbent upon all our members to act in a way that reflects our goal of exemplifying excellence in all that we do. We must all continue to look for ways to make our fraternal experience the force for good that we know it can be. We must eliminate the opportunities for hazing, such as embracing a policy of single tier membership, and work responsibly to keep our social events from turning into tragedy.

Our chapters would not be successful, however, without assistance. I want to recognize our alumni for the work they do in keeping our organization strong. Our alumni make significant contributions to the life of the Fraternity, from operating local housing corporations and alumni associations, to providing financial support to Psi U for everything that we do. At this time, I would like to thank the many generous donors who have supported the Foundation and the Fraternity with their financial contributions so that we can bring educational programming and support to our membership.

In addition, a select number of alumni contribute their time to the Fraternity by serving on the Executive Council and Foundation Boards. The members of these boards are volunteers who pay their own expenses to support Psi U, and who support the Fraternity and Foundation through recurring leadership gifts.

First, please join me in appreciation of the all the hard work and generosity of the members of the Executive Council: Jeremy McKeon, Eta ’08, Vice President; Jay LaPanne, Delta Nu ’89, Secretary; Matthew J. Eckenrode, Epsilon Nu ’04; Patrick J. Gilrane, Psi ’83; David Hollis, Gamma Tau ’11, Gregory P. Rupp, Phi ’81; and Samuel J. Tinaglia, Omega ’88. In addition to these alumni term members of the Council, I would also like to thank David Elms, Tau Epsilon ’19, and Sean Sifford, Sigma Phi ’20, for their contributions as undergraduate members of the Executive Council over the past academic year.

I also want to thank the ongoing involvement of our Honorary Life Members: Bradley R. Corner, Omicron ’72; Murray L. Eskenazi, Lambda ’56; Charles A. Werner, Omega ’55; and William N. Wishard III, Delta Delta ’64, and the Life Members of the Executive Council for their continued guidance: Thomas T. Allan IV, Theta Theta ’89; Mark D. Bauer, Omega ’83; David A.B. Brown, Epsilon Phi ’66; Charles M. Hall, Nu Alpha 71; Richard A. Rasmussen, Upsilon ’72; and James A. Swanke, Jr., Rho ’80.

I also want to thank the officers and directors of the Psi Upsilon Foundation for their support of the mission of Psi Upsilon Fraternity: Alexander C. Senchak, Eta '06, Chairman; Timothy D. Zepp, Chi Delta '08, Treasurer; Jessica A. Frame, Gamma Tau '07, Secretary; Martin Brayboy, Gamma '84; Matthew J. Eckenrode, Epsilon Nu '04; and Gary G. Pan, Eta '86. Bethann Taylor also serves the Foundation as the Director of Administration and I would like to thank her for her continued support.

I would also like to recognize the work of our Executive Director, Thomas J. Fox, Omicron '00. As many of you know, Brother Fox heads the professional staff of the Fraternity and works throughout the year to keep our chapters strong and to maintain our relationships with our host institutions.

In addition to Brother Fox, I am also grateful for the ongoing work of Cathy Lefebvre, Gamma Tau '18, who in her new role of Director of Chapter Services will be adding to her responsibilities in working with our chapters and colleges.

I would also like to thank our departing Leadership Consultant, Nicholas Ng, Lambda Sigma '18 (Pepperdine University), for his service over the past academic year. The Fraternity is grateful for his contribution to the ongoing health and stability of our chapters.

In closing, we stand in gratitude for the past, and for the contribution of our Brothers to our Fraternity. We are aware of the present and the challenges we face and are striving to meet them. And finally, we look to the future, and stand ready to make the necessary changes and evolve to ensure our Fraternity continues to thrive.

Yours in the bonds,

Evan W. Terry, Epsilon Phi '93  
President, Executive Council  
July 12, 2018