

## Taking Aim at Capitol Hill

Each spring, Pi Phis join together with dozens of other fraternities and sororities to lobby Capitol Hill for issues important to Greek organizations. Topping the list is the Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act (CHIA), which would provide parity in the tax code by allowing donations made to Greek housing to be tax deductible. The Fraternal Government Relations Coalition — an umbrella organization of the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) and the Fraternity and Sorority Political Action Committee (FSPAC) — organizes the annual lobbying day in Washington, D.C. to discuss legislative issues important to the fraternity world.

This year, Pi Phi was pleased to sponsor three outstanding collegiate lobbyists who joined more than 100 other Greek collegians and alumnae to educate Members of Congress and their staffs about the need for CHIA and other critical issues. Joining the Pi Phi collegians was Pi Beta Phi NPC Delegate **ANA MANCEBO MILLER**, Texas Beta, and Pi Beta Phi Government Relations Representative, **SHEILA CONSAUL**, Illinois Theta. Pi Phi's collegiate lobbyists share their thoughts about the experience with *The Arrow* below.

**PEYTON HOWARD, COLORADO ALPHA** As a recent graduate, I can strongly say lobbying in D.C. is one of my favorite experiences as a member of Pi Beta Phi. It was exciting, invigorating and exponentially rewarding every time a Representative or Senator agreed to support CHIA. Before this trip, I previously interned for two congressional offices. During my internships, I was able to understand the influence lobbying has on the relationship between the American people and the government. It was wonderful to see and experience the other side of that relationship by becoming a member of the lobbying team. Having the opportunity to act as a liaison between Greek Life as a representative of Pi Beta Phi and the United States Government was an opportunity that I will never forget.

**BAILEY-MARIE SCHMID, ILLINOIS IOTA** Being able to go on this visit to D.C. was an incredible experience. I was nervous because it was my first time in our nation's capital, but I was excited to meet new Pi Phi sisters. During training, it was wonderful to finally meet my lobbying team and gain experience talking with people with political perspectives differing from my own. We spent all day on Capitol Hill and it was different than I anticipated. It was very easy to talk with the Congressional staff members, especially when we met with a staffer in



Above: In April, Pi Beta Phi collegians and alumnae traveled to Washington, D.C. to lobby Members of Congress on issues of importance to fraternity and sorority life.

Senator Duckworth's office who ended up being a Pi Phi. The best feeling of the day was when an office wanted to be a part of CHIA. It was so rewarding! I learned so much about our nation's legislative process, and the inside look I got while lobbying was truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

**MIA BERMAN, MARYLAND GAMMA** I have had an interest in government and politics for a long time. When the opportunity to represent Pi Phi as a student lobbyist came along, I knew I needed to apply. Though I already had some Capitol Hill work experience, I marveled at being on the other side and lobbying for issues that I'm passionate about and will ultimately lead to a better Greek and collegiate experience for those coming after me.

It certainly was a busy day crisscrossing the Hill several times for meetings on both the House and Senate sides. I was surprised to see how eager the Members of Congress and their staff members were to hear about CHIA and issues of importance to Greeks. They also wanted to hear about the current climate on my campus and current student challenges such as the high rate of student debt and campus safety. The experience lobbying for Pi Phi opened my eyes to the way our government works and further cemented my interest in continuing in this field and striving to make a difference. ◀

## WHY DOES THE Sorority Experience STILL MATTER?

By California Delta **CONSTANCE DILLON GIBBS**



Fraternity and sorority members are doing amazing work every day. They are leaders academically, in their careers and in their volunteer service to their communities.

But, as soon as most people hear the word "sorority," they think of the negative stereotype. It is no secret — this is a challenging time for the fraternity and sorority community. However, we want the world to recognize all the positive accomplishments of our brothers and sisters. We cannot let our critics' viewpoint or the misguided choices of a few overshadow what we know to be true: sorority matters. And sorority matters today to the 21st-century woman more than ever before.





“Sororities are relevant today because women are relevant and community is relevant,” said Nicki Meneley, Chief Executive Officer for the Fraternity Executives Association. “A lot of things have changed since sororities were founded, but the need for a community and women supporting one another still exists.”

Yes, it’s hard to explain a sorority to someone who has never had a personal experience or involvement with fraternity and sorority life. If you’ve never experienced sisterhood, it’s almost too difficult to describe, like trying to define love, liberty or patriotism. It can be even more intimidating to talk about sisterhood when the stereotypes and misconceptions are stacked against us.

When we speak about sorority, we’re really speaking about what we get out of being a member. We’re describing the benefits of our membership and how our life is richer, deeper and better because of Pi Beta Phi.

“Sisterhood is unconditional friendship that remains regardless of life’s twists and turns, our distance and time apart, our mood on any given day or our personality differences,” said New Mexico Alpha **ALEX ROARK**, Assistant Director of Extension. “This type of relationship gives us a feeling of support, love, connection, fun and authenticity. We find mentors among these sisters. They bring out our leadership qualities, fine tune our strengths and motivate us to become the best versions of ourselves.”

The many benefits of sorority may seem obvious to you because you have personally experienced them. But it’s our job to speak up and explain those benefits to individuals who may have preconceived notions. Being in a sorority is not just a social experience and it is more than the academic education we receive at college. Being in a sorority is an education on becoming a well-rounded person.

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For decades, research has linked sorority membership with multiple positive educational and psychological outcomes as well as increased benefits to higher education institutions. In a 2014 study, the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), the premier advocacy and support organization for the advancement of the sorority experience, found that sorority women have stronger educational outcomes and retention rates than non-sorority women. The study found that sorority women were three times more likely to be retained from freshman to sophomore year, were two and half times more likely to graduate from college and two times more likely to graduate in four years.

These numbers are powerful when you consider only 81 percent of full-time students seeking a bachelor’s degree at a 4-year institution are retained from freshman to sophomore year. Furthermore, only 59 percent of those same students will graduate within six years with their bachelor’s degree. That means the Greek experience helps retain our college students and supports them all four years so they can successfully graduate.

Additionally, graduates who belonged to a fraternity or sorority were much more likely to have been extremely active in extracurricular activities, more likely to have participated in student

clubs and more likely to have participated in intramural sports, according to the Gallup-Purdue Index.

Greek graduates are more likely to be engaged in the areas where they live and have pride in their communities compared to other graduates. In addition, more fraternity and sorority members are thriving socially, physically and financially than other graduates, factors that help them fulfill their potential and lead healthier and happier lives.

Last year, Forbes released a series of articles discussing private companies owned by fraternity men and sorority women. Forbes found these companies, some of which are valued at more than \$1 billion, have at least one founder who is a member of a sorority or fraternity. It also found that those business owners who participated in fraternity and sorority life were more apt to start their own businesses than those who hadn’t. The entrepreneurs behind companies such as Dropbox, Stitch Fix, Blue Apron and Warby Parker all pledged fraternities and sororities in college. So, too, did the founders of Fortune 500 companies like Nike, Walmart and Home Depot.



One of the most important questions a parent may ask when sending his or her daughter off to college is whether living in the sorority house is relevant to today's college experience. Indiana Gamma **TAYLOR VITI** certainly thinks so. She enjoys the experience so much that she has lived in the house for multiple years. Moreover, when Taylor lived in a campus apartment, she missed the Pi Phi house so much that she decided to move back in as quickly as she could at the semester break.

As more students attend college each year, there is a growing need for safe and secure housing in close proximity to campus. Sororities and fraternities provide affordable housing for more than 370,000 college students across the United States. Nearly half of all Pi Beta Phi chapters have housing facilities that sleep members, with a total of 4,400 women sleeping in those facilities. While not everyone can live in a Pi Phi chapter house, the opportunity to gather within four walls and build sisterhood that lasts is as relevant today as it was in the second-story bedroom of Major Holt's house in 1867.

Living in the house has provided Taylor with the opportunity to interact with many different types of people on a daily basis. And in today's world of technology, where there are fewer and fewer opportunities for young people to develop interpersonal skills, this experience is invaluable. The living environment offered through the sorority experience prepares students, like Taylor, to learn how to effectively communicate and develop relationships built on trust and mutual respect, skills needed in students' personal and professional lives after college.

Fraternity and sorority members also play a powerful role in philanthropy. Our core values guide our work and our members. Like Pi Phi's core value of Philanthropic Service to Others, many other fraternities and sororities have a similar value as one of their main areas of focus. In fact, many students join a fraternity

or sorority largely because of the opportunities for service. These students come to college wanting to join an organization with strong, clearly defined values and choose the organization that most closely aligns with their already established values.

We often think of fundraising as an important part of philanthropic efforts. In the 2015-2016 academic year, reporting NPC member organizations, both collegiate and alumnae members, raised \$36,460,505 for philanthropies. It's important to note this number is not inclusive of the true impact being made by the overall sorority community, as collection and reporting varies among member organizations. Moreover, these numbers don't capture the additional impact made through advocacy, lobbying, education awareness and social media marketing on behalf of the various causes.

Philanthropy is more than just percentages and dollar signs. Volunteer service is also at the heart of the sorority membership experience. In 2015-2016, reporting NPC member organizations gave 3,232,643 hours of service to philanthropic causes.

As Pi Phis, we have demonstrated our commitment to philanthropy since 1867, when our founders created I.C. Sorosis and drafted the Constitution with the goal to "promote the happiness of humanity." Since those words

were written, Pi Phis have dedicated their lives to the service of others.

Pi Beta Phi was a pioneer among fraternities and sororities when the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School was founded in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, in 1912. Through the power of education and literacy, Pi Beta Phi brought economic development to the mountain community of Gatlinburg.

Today, Pi Phis make the world a better place through our Read > Lead > Achieve initiatives.

Pi Beta Phi believes readers become leaders, and reading is the foundation of all that one can achieve in life. Over the past several years, Pi Phi members have donated more than \$2.2 million to The Literacy Fund at Pi Beta Phi Foundation to be used for Read > Lead > Achieve efforts, provided well over one million books to children in need and impacted one million lives through literacy service. Pi Beta Phi membership data shows that our members are more satisfied with the Fraternity's philanthropy efforts than any other Fraternity effort.

Philanthropy has come alive for the Vermont Beta Chapter at the University of Vermont, who, for more than 10 years, has facilitated the Champions are Readers (CAR) program at John F. Kennedy Elementary School in Winooski, Vermont. The Pi Phis started the CAR program to encourage the school's underprivileged students, of which 87 percent are living below the poverty line, to develop a love of reading and learning.

Vermont Beta Chapter members visit the school every week during the school year, helping students with multiple different subjects. The women are especially involved in the school's Six Celebrations of Learning, an interactive, six-part project throughout the year that includes plays, reports and fairs.

Many teachers have praised the Pi Phis for their dedication. Not only are the Pi Phi women interacting with the children and providing them with much-needed attention, but they are modeling the way and encouraging going to college and earning a degree. "We don't see it as





extraordinary,” said Vermont Beta **LINDSAY SWEET**. “For us, understanding the importance of literacy and making a difference in the lives of others is just a natural part of being a Pi Beta Phi.”

Pi Phis are also changing the world through their support of Pi Beta Phi Foundation. In fiscal year 2015–2016, the Foundation invested more than \$2 million in scholarships, leadership, emergency grants, literacy, heritage and housing. These numbers are remarkable because they show the power of our members and their desire to give back. Every donor is making a difference and every gift is making a difference — no matter if it’s \$5 or \$5 million. By supporting Pi Beta Phi Foundation, we continue to change the world through one book, one hour, one dollar and one compassionate sister at a time.

Most importantly, fraternities and sororities provide our members with the opportunity to make a direct impact on the communities in which they live, work and play. For example, let’s examine the leadership shown by the Indiana Theta Chapter at Valparaiso University following a fatal car accident that killed a Chi Omega woman and injured three other sorority women, including a member of Indiana Theta.

When the Indiana Theta Pi Phis learned of the accident, they immediately sprang into action, organizing a dinner for the Chi Omega chapter, making the food themselves or securing donations from local businesses including arrow and owl-shaped sugar cookies for dessert.

The Pi Phis also made handmade, red and blue fleece tie blankets for the three injured women to use while they recovered. Each member of Indiana Theta tied one of the knots, and then the chapter presented the blankets during dinner.

Both Chi Omega and Pi Beta Phi members said they were appreciative for the opportunity to come together to grieve and support one another in a tangible way and were instrumental in the on-campus candlelight vigil honoring the lost Chi Omega sister. The women shared sisterhood stories and sang songs throughout the night, wearing their Greek letters to show solidarity with the entire fraternity and sorority community.

A second Pi Phi chapter that recently made an important impact in its community was Kentucky Alpha at the University of Louisville. A local Pi Phi alumna, Kentucky Alpha **MEGAN ZOELLER CHLOPEK**, had a major cardiac event while 26 weeks pregnant with twins,

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and coded for more than 40 minutes which caused the twins to be delivered by emergency cesarean section. Unfortunately, the newborn girl did not survive, but Megan and her baby boy continued to fight.

During Megan’s stay at the hospital, her family requested friends help by donating blood in Megan’s honor. When the Kentucky Alpha Chapter’s Executive Council heard about Megan’s story and without any prompting, they organized a blood drive on campus and started sharing Megan’s story. At the end of the day, Kentucky Alpha donated 95 units of blood in honor of Megan. Most poignantly, perhaps, was that Megan’s husband was so touched by the effort, he left Megan’s side to come and donate blood at the drive as well. Megan’s family shared how proud, touched and impressed they were with the chapter’s dedication to a Pi Phi sister in her time of need.

Collegiate membership in Pi Beta Phi helps members adjust to college life by providing a sense of belonging and mutual support. But, finding a

place to belong on campus is only the beginning. As an alumna, Pi Phi members are part of a network of nearly 300,000 sisters ever initiated worldwide. Pi Beta Phi’s many programs offer a variety of benefits to members including a lifetime of sisterhood, personal development, philanthropic service, leadership opportunities and mentor relationships.

“The friendships and opportunities through Pi Beta Phi continually build on one another,” Alex said. “Old friends introduce you to new friends who have similar values and interests. Your friends are now everywhere, and you have a network of people who understand your core values and who you are.”








The next time you are asked about being a sorority woman, we hope you feel the confidence to explain the value of your experiences. Let’s ensure our granddaughters and their granddaughters and many women yet to come will someday benefit from their sorority membership. Embrace the legacy of our founders and commit to living our core values every day. Only then can we be the change we wish to see in the world. ◀


















# National Panhellenic Conference Groups

## Dedicated to Service

Advocacy, collaboration and support are the core values of the mission and vision of the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC). Our NPC sisters across North America advocate for a variety of causes, including their own foundations. In the spirit of collaboration, here's a small glimpse into what each NPC group does to make the world a better place.

GROUP	PHILANTHROPY	LOGO	DESCRIPTION
Alpha Chi Omega	Domestic Violence Awareness		Alpha Chi Omega works to fight against unhealthy relationships and build healthy relationships. Members serve individuals and families impacted by domestic violence through fundraising and sharing gifts of time and talent with shelters and other service-providing organizations.
Alpha Delta Pi	Ronald McDonald House Charities®		Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) is an American independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to create, find and support programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children. Alpha Delta Pi began a partnership with RMHC in 1979 and has since contributed more than \$12 million to this worthwhile organization.
Alpha Gamma Delta	Hunger		Alpha Gamma Delta's philanthropic focus is fighting hunger. They charge their members with working locally to fight hunger in their community and make their impact through volunteering their time and fundraising through the Alpha Gamma Delta Foundation.
Alpha Epsilon Phi	Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation		Alpha Epsilon Phi chapters hold events to raise money for the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation and to educate their communities about the unique issues facing young people living with HIV and AIDS. Elizabeth Glaser, an Alpha Epsilon Phi alumna, and her children were infected with the AIDS virus as a result of a blood transfusion.
Alpha Omicron Pi	Arthritis		Alpha Omicron Pi's international philanthropy is arthritis, and its partner is the Arthritis Foundation. Through fundraising events like Strike Out Arthritis!, Walk to Cure Arthritis and Jingle Bell Run, Alpha Omicron Pi's financial contributions to the Arthritis Foundation support arthritis research, juvenile arthritis Power Packs and juvenile arthritis camps and conferences.
Alpha Phi	Alpha Phi Foundation		Alpha Phi Foundation's mission is to advance women's lives through the power of philanthropy. The foundation raises and awards funds for programs that advance leadership development, encourage academic excellence, improve women's heart health, support sisters in need, preserve heritage and educate about the value of philanthropy.
Alpha Sigma Alpha	Girls on the Run		Girls on the Run is a transformational physical activity based positive youth development program for girls in third-eighth grade. The program culminates with the girls being physically and emotionally prepared to complete a celebratory 5k running event. The goal of the program is to unleash confidence through accomplishment while establishing a lifetime appreciation of health and fitness.
Alpha Sigma Tau	Women's Wellness Initiative®		The Women's Wellness Initiative empowers Alpha Sigma Tau members to improve women's wellness by working directly with National Service Partners like Dress for Success®. Members conduct hands-on service and philanthropy that benefit women where members live, work and go to school.
Alpha Xi Delta	Autism Speaks		Autism Speaks is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the lifespan, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families through advocacy and support; increasing understanding and acceptance of autism spectrum disorder; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions.
Chi Omega	Make-A-Wish Foundation		Since 2001, Chi Omega's alliance with Make-A-Wish has raised more than \$19 million and members have volunteered more than 1,000,000 hours to grant wishes for children with life-threatening medical conditions.
Delta Delta Delta	St. Jude Children's Research Hospital		Tri Deltas demonstrate their passion for serving others through their national philanthropic partnership with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, and live out Tri Delta's Purpose as they fundraise toward their \$60 million goal by helping children live, scientists learn and St. Jude lead in finding cures for childhood cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

Delta Gamma	Service for Sight		The Delta Gamma Foundation fosters lifetime enrichment for members, promotes Service for Sight and partners with the Fraternity to ensure the future of its sisterhood. Service for Sight supports the four schools founded by Delta Gammas for the visually impaired and other North American organizations that promote sight preservation and conservation.
Delta Zeta	Speech and Hearing		Delta Zeta members volunteer many hours for speech and hearing organizations in their communities, such as tutoring children with hearing challenges, spearheading fundraising initiatives, collecting donations to assist with speech programs and providing equipment and devices to those with hearing challenges and supporting programs aimed at hearing loss prevention.
Delta Phi Epsilon	Cystic Fibrosis Foundation		The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's mission is to cure Cystic Fibrosis and to provide all people with the disease the opportunity to lead full, productive lives. Delta Phi Epsilon also supports the National Association for Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders to help alleviate suffering and provide support for those afflicted with eating disorders.
Gamma Phi Beta	Moonball		Gamma Phi Beta's signature philanthropy event, Moonball, supports their national philanthropic partner, Girls on the Run. Each collegiate chapter hosts Moonball as a kickball, volleyball or basketball tournament to support their philanthropic focus of Building Strong Girls.
Kappa Alpha Theta	Court Appointed Special Advocates		Each year, more than 600,000 children in the U.S. experience foster care, and more than 700,000 children experience abuse or neglect. With a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or guardian ad litem (GAL) volunteer dedicated to their case, America's most vulnerable children will have someone speaking up for their best interests.
Kappa Delta	Building Confidence		Kappa Delta strives to positively impact the lives of women and children by building their confidence and inspiring action through our support of Prevent Child Abuse America and Girl Scouts of the USA at the national and local levels.
Kappa Kappa Gamma	Reading is Fundamental		The national philanthropy of Kappa Kappa Gamma is Reading Is Fundamental, which helps underserved children discover the joys of reading and books. During their 12-year partnership, Kappa Kappa Gamma sisters have donated more than 260,000 books.
Phi Mu	Children's Miracle Network Hospitals		Phi Mu has raised more than \$15 million for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals (CMNH). All funds raised stay in the local community for patient care, new equipment and research into children's diseases, illnesses and injuries. Chapters are encouraged to visit their local CMNHs and participate in local philanthropic opportunities.
Phi Sigma Sigma	Phi Sigma Sigma Foundation		Phi Sigma Sigma members are committed to supporting the Phi Sigma Sigma Foundation through financial contributions. Key programming enables the Foundation to positively impact leadership achievement, scholarships/educational grants and helping students succeed in their education with the Fraternity's new endeavor: school and college readiness.
Pi Beta Phi	Read > Lead > Achieve		Pi Beta Phi believes in the power of reading and through its philanthropy, Read > Lead > Achieve, promotes a lifelong love of reading that can unlock true potential creating a more literate and productive society.
Sigma Delta Tau	Prevent Child Abuse America		Prevent Child Abuse America works to promote the healthy development of children and prevent child abuse before it can occur through its chapter network and signature Healthy Families America program that provides in-home services, equipping new parents with the tools and resources they need to raise healthy and happy children.
Sigma Kappa	Alzheimer's Association		In 1984, Sigma Kappa selected Alzheimer's disease as a philanthropic focus. Recently, Sigma Kappa committed the lead gift of \$1 million to the Women's Alzheimer's Research Initiative and raise more than \$1 million annually through the Walk to End Alzheimer's.
Sigma Sigma Sigma	March of Dimes		With prematurity being the No. 1 killer of babies in the United States, Sigma Sigma Sigma stands with March of Dimes in the fight to help more moms have full-term pregnancies and healthy babies. Our partnership impacts the sorority's mission of Sigmas Serving Children.
Theta Phi Alpha	Theta Phi Alpha Foundation		Through the Theta Phi Alpha Foundation, Theta Phi Alpha supports Glenmary Home Missioners, Camp Friendship and The House That Theta Phi Alpha Built. Established in 1993, the goal of The House is to improve the plight of the homeless. Members provide assistance to organizations that help the homeless, shelters, home building or neighborhood revitalization projects.
Zeta Tau Alpha	Breast cancer education and awareness		Zeta Tau Alpha collegiate and alumnae chapters Think Pink® through more than 500 annual events to increase awareness of breast cancer. Nationally, Zeta Tau Alpha partners with the American Cancer Society® Making Strides Against Breast Cancer® walks, the NFL A Crucial Catch® games and Bright Pink® for its Brighten Up® Workshops.