



Scholarship Funds Provide Support for Chapter Members

By Dan Dennhardt, Phi Kappa Psi

During the 2007-2008 academic year, several members of the Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity chapter at Case were proud recipients of locally and nationally sponsored scholarships. Members Michael Barrie and Joseph Friedman were each awarded \$1000 as part of the Solon E. Summerfield scholarship program during the fall semester. At their local Founder's Day celebration in February, members Chris Carach, Greg Cooperman, Remington Davenport, Dan Dennhardt, and Joseph Friedman were presented with cash awards totaling \$4600 made possible through a local endowment fund. During the summer, Greek member John Witkowski was fortunate enough to receive a fellowship to cover expenses for the Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute (UIFI) made possible through the Phi Kappa Psi National Endowment Fund.

The selection of local scholarship recipients is based on a variety of criteria including overall GPA, most improved GPA, chapter leadership, campus involvement, and service to one's community. The selection process helps bridge the gap between undergraduates and alumni by bringing together the chapter scholarship chair, president, and alumni members of the local house corporation in order to discuss the applicants' qualifications.

Chapters which do not have a local endowment fund, particularly those with strong alumni relations programs, should consider working with their alumni to establish one. Support for such an endeavor is readily available from many chapters' national headquarters. Such a program offers many tangible benefits to Greek students aside from the obvious financial incentive it provides.

Academics in Recruitment

By Mitchell Cooper, Zeta Psi

During rush and formal recruitment, a chapter's academic standing is used in two ways. Either as a tool, if grades are good or, if grades are bad, it is kept a secret. The thing that most chapters fail to remember though is that recruitment can be a critical time in your chapter's academic life. It is a time for you to totally re-vamp your chapter's academic standing from the bottom up. It is hard to change your chapter from the inside; it takes a lot of work to get that unmotivated member to go to class. You can start improving chapter scholarship though by taking academics into mind during rush. In a friendly way, get a feel for where the potential new member stands on academics. Are they doing well in their classes, do they go to class, are they on academic probation? Commend them if they are doing well, talk to them about your chapter's scholarship program and how they will be a good fit. If they are not doing well though, then talk to them about their academics and suggest resources on campus. During a bid-season it may be important to discuss not giving the potential new member a bid, based on their grades. It is beneficial both for the organization and the potential new member; the chapter keeps its scholarship program up, and the potential new member has a semester to focus on grades. If you really want the person as a member, take the semester to work with them on bringing up their grades, and let them know why they were not given a bid. This will develop a bond that will continue to grow as the member brings up their grades and then joins your organization.

Pointers for Graduate School Tests

By Brian Nelson, Phi Kappa Tau

Whether it's the MCAT, LSAT, GRE, GMAT, or any other standardized test for graduate school, two fundamental keys to success are preparation and stress management. As many students are well aware, these tests cover large amounts of material that bring new meaning to the word "study." The large amount of preparation required to master all of this material adds even more stress to a test that already carries the weight of affecting acceptance to graduate school, so clearly preparation and stress are very much interconnected. Unfortunately preparation only goes so far and eventually those test day nerves will have to be dealt with, so it's also important to consider that aspect in advance.

The most important aspect of preparing for one of these tests is making sure to set aside enough time to review the material and practice the test. Creating and sticking to a study schedule will make studying manageable without infringing too greatly on schoolwork and extracurricular activities. For those who have a harder time studying in advance, the courses available through Kaplan, Princeton Review, and others incorporate a comprehensive study schedule into the classes, so it is necessary to keep to the schedule in order to stay with the class. These classes can be very helpful for that reason as well as their expertise on the test itself, but they are only a simply another resource for the test that may not be appropriate for everyone.

After deciding how to fit in all of the preparation, the next step is to practice the test over and over. It's obviously important to know what to expect on test day, but practicing the test can also help make studying more effective. One or two practice tests can be enough to identify strong and weak areas, and this knowledge can be used to reallocate study time to improving those weak areas. Another important reason to practice the test is to get used to dealing with the time restraints on the different sections. In all likelihood, some passages or parts of sections will cause problems on the actual test, so in order to make a good choice about when to move on, it is definitely an advantage to have a good idea of how long the rest of the section will take.

One final preparation tip is that it is advantageous to understand how the scoring system works for a particular test. Some tests, like the LSAT, GRE and GMAT, are adaptive tests that ask different sets of questions later on in the test depending on the performance on the earlier sections. For this kind of test, it is important to do well on the initial sections to get to the harder sections later on because harder sections lead to higher scores. Another advantage of knowing the scoring system is that it can help make strategic decisions during the test when students are unsure of the right answer. For example, if a right answer is worth two points and a wrong answer takes a point away, it doesn't make sense to guess between three different answers. This is because the odds show that points will be lost too often to justify the times that the 2 points are gained. However, if a right answer is worth four points, then the added value to the correct answer makes it worthwhile to guess.

Since execution is required in addition to preparation to receive a good score, the key during the actual test is to stay calm and positive. The ability to put mistakes and frustrations aside for a few hours is a very vital skill because these tests are not easy and some passages are harder than others to comprehend. When mistakes happen, the best way to handle them is to take a deep breath and move on with a clear head. Allowing a small mishap to create a negative outlook is a huge waste of all that preparation time, and letting errors go immediately will help with the stress of the test.

Thanks to the active and alumni members of Phi Kappa Tau for sharing their insight to help create this article.