

THE PHOTA



The Phota (the Greek word for lights) is a publication of the Valparaiso University Panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils



New Officers Focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In response to the country’s heightened awareness of the racial and social inequalities present in our society, a few chapters have chosen to respond by creating a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) officer position. Two participating organizations, Gamma Phi Beta and Kappa Delta, share more about what this officer position will have responsibility for within their chapters.

Gamma Phi Beta President Nell Riordan wants to ensure that the position of DEI Chairwoman is not simply a title, but is “implemented into the very fabric of our organization.” Riordan continues, “In addition to creating and approving the addition of a DEI Chairwoman and Committee to our officer structure, we have created a DEI action plan with specific items that each executive board officer will work into her position.”

Katelyn Shouse, President of Kappa Delta, says that her chapter’s DEI Chair will lead in educating and opening up honest discussion for her sisters. She hopes to continue the beneficial relationship the chapter has with Valpo’s staff and faculty to provide advice and guidance on how to enhance equity within our community. She writes, “our DEI chair is focused on educating members on the barriers that keep fraternity and sorority life from being an inclusive environment and the ways in which we can promote diversity and inclusion in our organization and on our campus.”

Gamma Phi Beta, Kappa Delta and Sigma Phi Epsilon have recently appointed new DEI Chairs and will soon hold elections for the position. It is the hope that these chapters can inspire other fraternities and sororities at Valpo to take similar steps toward creating a more inclusive community!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October 3: *The Amazing FSL Race*
- October 6: *Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Founder’s Day*
- October 6: *Sorority Recruitment Preview*
- October 10: *Kappa Kappa Gamma Kappa Kahoot*
- October 13: *Kappa Kappa Gamma Founder’s Day*
- October 17: *Kappa Delta Shamrock Event*
- October 21: *Chi Omega Wings for Wishes*
- October 23: *Kappa Delta Founder’s Day*
- October 24: *Lambda Chi Alpha 5K for RAINN*
- October 26-31: *Phi Psi 500 Week of Service*

Chapter Spotlight:

Sigma Pi

Over the summer, members of Sigma Pi wondered how students, faculty, and staff would stay safe while returning to campus. These members knew that hand sanitization would play a big role in protecting the Valpo community, and they wanted to help. At first, the group thought it would be helpful to hand out hand sanitizer, said Sigma Pi President, Frankie Vazquez, but decided to spend more money on something that would have a more lasting impact.

The men of Sigma Pi ultimately decided that a hand sanitizing station would be a great contribution to the campus community. “We knew that purchasing so many hand sanitizer dispensers would be a large expense for the university, and we wanted to help,” said Vazquez.

The sanitizing station proved to be more expensive than the group originally thought. However, donations by generous alumni helped to accomplish their goal. “A bunch of alumni stepped up right away and they thought it was a great idea,” said Vazquez.

This project was done as a Sigma Pi ACE (Altruistic Campus Experience) Project, which is an initiative that began in 2002 and focuses on giving back to the campus community.



Alpha Gamma Delta Hosts Inaugural Chapter Philanthropy Event



Alpha Gamma Delta held their first annual philanthropy event. “Alpha Gam Bags Hunger” in early September. The event, a cornhole tournament benefitting the Alpha Gamma Delta Foundation which supports the Fighting Hunger initiative, was held on the West Lawn. The event was very well attended, while also following the new COVID-19 event guidelines set forth by the university.

Event registration was closed after 40 teams registered to participate. Alpha Gamma Delta’s Vice President of Philanthropy, Julia Kneusel said it was “amazing to have so many people be there and wanting to be a part of this event.” The event raised \$210 just from registration fees! Alpha Gamma Delta also sold t-shirts to raise money for Fighting Hunger. The winners of the tournament were Lambda Chi Alpha’s Casey and Matt and the runner ups were Phi Sigma Kappa’s Collin and Tyler. Congratulations to the winners, all of the teams, and especially Alpha Gamma Delta for the amazing philanthropy event that brought the community together!

Have a story to share in the next issue of *The Phota*?

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