

THE PHOTA



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



Welcoming Students to Campus

Valparaiso University happily welcomed students, returning and new, back to campus in August, even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. After the Spring 2020 semester concluded virtually, many students were thrilled to see familiar faces and places after more than five months.

While many students are excited to be back, some have just begun their time as Valpo students. Valpo welcomed more than 750 new students to campus on August 12. Fraternity and sorority members volunteered alongside others to carry students' belongings to their new rooms.

The University has adopted many new measures to keep students, faculty, and staff safe during these challenging times. Among these are a new event policy, altered class schedule, and additional policies and guidelines for everyone on campus to follow. Each of these elements work together to keep gatherings small, allow for physical distancing, and require the use of masks or face-coverings when on campus.

To keep students safe, many events have been moved outside to allow for more physical distancing. Events such as the FSL Meet and Greet, Student Activities Fair, and Valpo After Dark were great successes even within the new requirements. The adaptations of these events serve as a reminder to students that many activities and programs can still take place safely.

Fraternity and sorority leaders are playing a large role in encouraging students to abide by the new guidelines in order to keep our community safe. Many have been featured wearing masks on social media as part of the #MaskUpValpo initiative. Students are working together to follow the guidelines put in place to protect the entire Valpo community.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- September 4: *Alpha Gamma Delta Philanthropy Event*
- September 8: *Fraternity Grand Chapter*
- September 10: *Sorority Grand Chapter*
- September 11: *Sigma Pi Ace Project*
- September 18: *Pi Beta Phi Philanthropy Event*
- September 20: *Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia CPMF*
- September 21-25: *National Hazing Prevention Week*
- September 26: *Dance Marathon FT5K*
- September 26: *Sigma Phi Epsilon "SigEp Splash!"*

Chapter Spotlight:

Gamma Phi Beta

Through uncertain times, Gamma Phi Beta attempted to unify the Valpo fraternity and sorority community in the fight against racism. June 3-11, Gamma Phi Beta organized a fundraiser for the Chicago Freedom School (CFS). CFS is a nonprofit organization that aims to empower youth through civic engagement and movement building.

The Chicago Freedom School is responsible for organizing numerous peaceful protests and also donating money to help people of color grow their businesses. Gamma Phi Beta chose this organization for their fundraiser because it is a group very close to home at Valpo. The goal of this fundraiser was to unite the fraternity and sorority community in the dialogue around racial injustice and inequality. In total, more than \$3,000 was raised through this important effort.



Welcome to the New Coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life



Last month, Valparaiso University welcomed Trenton Holloway, the new Coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life! Trenton will work under the direction of Dr. Carrie Whittier, Associate Dean of Students, and will advise the Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils, Order of Omega, and GUARDS, as well as oversee the operations of the Sorority Housing Complex.

Trenton received a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Union University. As an undergraduate, he was very involved in various work and organizations around campus including New Student Programs, Student Government, and Lambda Chi Alpha. These experiences led him to pursue a career in Higher Education. He graduated with a Master's Degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs from Baylor University in May 2020.

Trenton was drawn to Valpo by its close community and faith-based values. Even virtually, he said, he was amazed at the passion of the student leaders and how quickly they came together in this time of crisis. At Valpo, Trenton hopes to be a resource to all members of the community. He hopes to make the best of the COVID-19 situation and ensure the Valpo experience remains strong. Following the success of the Fraternity and Sorority Meet and Greet outside of the Harre Union, he was pleased with how the community was able to come together and thrive despite challenges. He said "while COVID-19 brought us outside, it was successful and it felt natural. I heard a lot of positive feedback. Hopefully, we can keep this momentum up throughout the semester." Trenton says he is excited to work with such an outstanding community.

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

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