

Establishing an alumnae chapter

The alumnae chapter program contributes immeasurably to the strength of Alpha Sigma Alpha. An alumna can organize a new alumnae chapter by working with the director of alumnae and volunteer services at national headquarters.

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE

OUTREACH

1. Contact five or more alumnae who are interested in organizing an alumnae chapter. National headquarters can provide an area alumnae list. Call or email the director of alumnae and volunteer services to request an area alumnae list and provide zip codes for the city and surrounding area.
2. After the list is compiled, determine how it is best to contact every woman on the list. Every member living in the area should be invited. To reach every interested alumna, plan publicity that describes the time and place of the first organizational meeting and invite all alumnae to attend. Invite women personally when possible.

FIRST ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

3. At the organizational meeting, make certain all who attend are initiated members of Alpha Sigma Alpha from any collegiate chapter, including alumna initiates. Keep in mind that all lists received from national headquarters will only include initiated members of Alpha Sigma Alpha.
4. Discuss plans for meetings and elect officers.
5. Decide upon the name by which the alumnae chapter will be known. This is usually the name or recognizable nickname of the city or locality in which the chapter is located. Alumnae chapters that are completely virtual will be named with "virtual" to indicate their status.

ESTABLISHING THE ALUMNAE CHAPTER

7. Fill out the petition for a charter at www.alphasigmaalpha.org. All names that appear on this petition will become the charter members of the alumnae chapter. In accordance with the bylaws of Alpha Sigma Alpha, the petition must be signed by at least five (5) fully initiated alumnae members.
8. Attach the "Chapter Officer and Meeting Report" to the petition form. Keep one copy for the chapter file. Submit the petition to national headquarters on the website.
9. While the "Petition for an Alumnae Chapter" form is being processed, the new group may use the name "alumnae chapter" and may hold regular meetings.

NATIONAL AFFILIATION

There are some groups of alumnae who get together as an informal alumnae organization without establishing a recognized alumnae chapter. Alpha Sigma Alpha encourages these groups to affiliate with the national organization.

Recognized chapters have these advantages:

- ◆ The national organization provides assistance to an alumnae chapter by helping with organizational procedures; it makes suggestions for a variety of programs and then follows through by providing continuous support through the director of alumnae engagement and the region volunteers.
- ◆ National recognition will enable the chapter to increase membership since alumnae who move into the area can receive contact names from national headquarters.
- ◆ National headquarters provides and distributes pertinent information to alumnae chapter leaders and chapter members through the $\Delta\Sigma\text{A}$ national web site and alumnae chapter e-newsletters.

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- ◆ *The national organization provides opportunities for the exchange of ideas, programs and philanthropies. This is not only through the Internet and sorority correspondence, but also through the region leadership, The Academy and the national convention, which is held every two years. Alumnae chapters in good standing can receive financial assistance from the national organization to cover some expenses for their designated delegate to attend national convention.*
- ◆ *The alumnae chapter has the opportunity to win the Palm, Star or Crown Awards. In addition, the Crown of Excellence award is also given to the most outstanding alumnae chapter each year.*
- ◆ *Alumnae chapter membership can be used as a way to volunteer in the community or for Alpha Sigma Alpha's national philanthropic partners.*

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Sororities are volunteer-based organizations and they are only as strong as the volunteers. A strong volunteer base is essential for the sorority to meet its future needs. Along with the national organization, alumnae chapters have a responsibility to market membership benefits to other Alpha Sigma Alphas. Alumnae must recognize and communicate the benefits of alumnae participation to other alumnae and to the general population. It is the goal of the national organization to work to develop programming that will assist alumnae chapters in increasing and retaining membership.

YOUNG ALUMNAE MEMBERSHIP

Alpha Sigma Alpha believes that alumnae chapters play a vital role in promoting lifetime membership to all alumnae. Especially in relation to recent graduates, alumnae chapters should strive to market themselves as an important and relevant group that can support young alumnae.

ALUMNAE INITIATION

A golden opportunity for increasing membership is to initiate women who have already graduated from college, or professional women who did not attend a university.

Examples of women likely to participate in alumna initiation include women who were interested in Alpha Sigma Alpha in college but never had the opportunity to be initiated because they left school, graduated before an emerging chapter was installed, or attended a university with no greek-life opportunities. Another example would be a professional woman who did not attend college, but is well-respected and engaged in her community.

When an initiated member finds a woman who would make a great Alpha Sigma Alpha, she should be invited to attend alumnae chapter meetings. This will allow the entire membership to have an opportunity to get to know her.

The chapter may request permission to initiate a woman as an alumna by contacting the director of alumnae engagement at national headquarters. The chapter may also download additional information on the Alpha Sigma Alpha web site, www.alphasigmaalpha.org, under Alumnae Initiation on the Alumnae tab.

CHAPTER OPERATIONS

CHAPTER OFFICERS

Each alumnae chapter should have a president and secretary/treasurer. The following officer positions are optional: vice president, secretary, treasurer, and panhellenic delegate. As the chapter's needs grow, various

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standing committee chairmen may be added to the officers.

DUTIES OF CHAPTER OFFICERS

The **alumnae chapter president** presides at all chapter meetings and board meetings. She acts as the liaison officer between the chapter and the national organization. She completes such reports and materials as requested by the national vice president of membership. She shall appoint chairmen as needed. She shall exercise a general supervision over the work of the chapter. The president is usually the delegate to the biennial national convention.

The **alumnae vice president** assumes the responsibilities of the alumnae president when necessary. She may have delegated to her such responsibilities as the chapter may deem appropriate. If the chapter prefers, she may coordinate the alumnae chapter philanthropic projects for the Alpha Sigma Alpha Foundation, Girls on the Run and Special Olympics. She is also responsible for publicizing Alpha Sigma Alpha scholarships.

The **alumnae secretary** keeps a complete record of all chapter and board meetings. She will also handle any necessary correspondence and keep an accurate up-to-date membership list, complete with addresses and phone numbers. In addition, she will be responsible for any special gifts or cards as authorized by the chapter.

The **alumnae treasurer** is responsible for collection of all local monies set forth by the local organization and national monies to be donated to the Alpha Sigma Alpha Foundation or the national philanthropies. She shall keep a careful account of all receipts and expenditures. She shall prepare an annual budget for her chapter, which shall be presented to the chapter for adoption.

The **alumnae panhellenic delegate** represents Alpha Sigma Alpha at the alumnae panhellenic meetings. She shall report all important information from the meetings to the Alpha Sigma Alpha alumnae chapter.

ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

It is recommended that the alumnae president appoint a nominating committee to present a slate of officers in the spring of the election year. Chapters may choose to elect officers for one or two-year terms.

Election and installation of officers should be completed by June 1 of each election year. Election results will be reported to national headquarters through a change of officer form.

Whenever an office is vacated, the alumnae president can appoint an interim officer until the regular election.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

THE *PHOENIX* MAGAZINE

Members initiated after 1969 received a life subscription to the Phoenix magazine upon payment of their initiation fee. If a member is having difficulty receiving the Phoenix she should contact national headquarters. Any member initiated prior to 1969 may contact national headquarters to receive the Phoenix magazine at no cost.

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LOCAL DUES

Local dues are determined by the alumnae chapter. Each chapter should set dues greater than \$1 per year.

CHECKING ACCOUNTS

Alumnae chapters are recognized by the IRS as a subsidiary group, and therefore, must have a tax identification number for banking purposes. National headquarters will establish your tax identification number on behalf of the chapter, and it is the chapter's responsibility to maintain the number with the IRS. Chapter's must also notify the IRS if they need to change the contact information for the chapter.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Alumnae chapters that wish to be recognized by the national headquarters must continue to submit reports after the chapter is successfully installed or reorganized. These reports should be submitted completely, accurately and in a timely manner before the deadline. Chapters are notified about report submission via email reminders, and receive their annual directory report in the mail. Additional chapter reports are available at www.alphasigmaalpha.org on the Alumnae Chapter Resources page. Finally, alumnae chapters are invited to submit information, articles, or pictures for any issue of the Phoenix magazine.

NATIONAL EVENTS

All alumnae are invited to attend The Academy and national convention and leadership conference, or to apply to facilitate leadership training at the Emma Coleman Frost Leadership Development Institute (LDI). All three events represent unique opportunities for an alumna to network and strengthen her relationship with Alpha Sigma Alpha.

RITUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRIDE

Alpha Sigma Alpha believes in the profound impact of our Ritual on the lives of our members. We support alumnae chapters celebrating ritual through formal ceremonies, and through representing positive lifetime membership to collegiate women and the community. In particular, we support alumnae participating in the celebration of Founders' Day and promote alumnae chapter assistance to collegiate chapters in their operations including rituals, recruitment or other activities. We also ask that alumnae chapters make an annual unrestricted donation to the Alpha Sigma Alpha Foundation, to support leadership and scholarship for collegiate and alumnae members.

Alumnae chapters are also encouraged to be relevant in their greek communities and the cities in which they operate. Electing or appointing a panhellenic delegate to the cities alumnae panhellenic council is important to strengthening Alpha Sigma Alpha's relationship with fellow sororities. Many alumnae chapters also participate in community activities or philanthropies, adding unique opportunities for members to be involved in the chapter.

ALPHA SIGMA ALPHA NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Alpha Sigma Alpha National Headquarters, located in Indianapolis, IN, is the administrative center for the sorority. Headquarters is where records are kept, mailings are prepared, supplies are shipped and questions answered. Sorority archives, items of historical significance from our early years, furniture and memorabilia from the estate of Wilma Wilson Sharp are on display in the museum. There is also a board room which functions as meeting space when national council or special committees meet at national headquarters.

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SERVICES OFFERED

The most important resources offered by national headquarters are member records and support to develop strong chapters. Alumnae addresses may be requested for certain zip codes by alumnae chapters or by collegiate chapters, and are valuable for planning events. National headquarters is an information center. If a member has a question regarding sorority history, officers, report forms or dates for national events, the question either will be answered by a national headquarters staff member or directed to the national volunteer who can best assist in answering the question.

HOW TO CONTACT NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

National headquarters is there for you. The next time you wish to look up a long-lost sorority sister, move to a new city, want to attend a national event to see Alpha Sigma Alpha sisters, contact:

*Alpha Sigma Alpha National Headquarters
9002 Vincennes Circle
Indianapolis, IN 46268
Phone: (317) 871-2920
Fax: (317) 871-2924
Email: asa@alphasigmaalpha.org
Web site: www.alphasigmaalpha.org*