

# Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity, Inc.

## Unity Committee

### *Report to the 54<sup>th</sup> Grand Council Convention on Fraternal Unity*

The Unity Committee conducted a survey to gather information on issues that have a negative effect on Fraternity unity at the chapter, province, and international levels. The survey also provided an opportunity for the Committee to collect thoughts on what has been and could be done to improve Kappa Psi unity. The Committee also compiled resources for use by all levels within the Fraternity that can be utilized to create cohesiveness and improve unity.

Issues that have been identified as barriers to Fraternal unity at the chapter level include the initiation of new brothers who do not contribute to the Fraternity. This may be attributed to a weak pledging process that allows pledges to be initiated without knowing the history and traditions of Kappa Psi and their respective chapters. In addition, many chapters encourage the perception of Kappa Psi as a club instead of a Fraternal Brotherhood by their weak pledging process. Another barrier to Fraternal unity at the chapter level is the lack of communication between the executive board and the rest of the chapter. This is imperative in regards to staying connected with Brothers currently in school, on rotation, or who have graduated. Without communication between Brothers at the collegiate and graduate level, Brothers will forget the importance of being involved and chapters will suffer the loss of valuable resources and mentors due to the absence of Graduate Brothers. The lack of communication between Brothers does not allow for the realization that each Brother in Kappa Psi has a different set of priorities, which can directly impact the level of involvement and the quality of performance in Fraternal activities.

At the Province level, unity is negatively impacted by a wide range of factors that are rooted at the chapter level and continue on into higher organizational structures of the Fraternity. The presence of a weak pledge process at the chapter level affects communication, teamwork, and the willingness of brothers to act for the betterment of the Fraternity. Rivalries between chapters in a province and even at the international level can become an obstacle to Fraternal unity. When competing against chapters for province and/or international rankings, the efforts to gain the competitive edge may lead to a lack of communication and fellowship within the province.

Upon surveying Brothers throughout the Fraternity, a few observations were made concerning unity at the international level. Again, the lack of communication is a hindrance to national Fraternal unity, which leads to the formation of cliques and an unclear vision of common Fraternal goals. The politics at the upper level of the Fraternity may cause cliques to form at the chapter and provincial levels during conventions in order to accomplish specific regional agendas. Lastly, the reputation of Kappa Psi among the Brothers and throughout the pharmacy profession is vital to the strength and resilience of our fraternity's unity. The perception of Kappa Psi as a professional and service organization directly influences the bond and pride a Brother takes in the Brotherhood.

The Unity Committee utilized this survey of Brothers throughout the Fraternity to not only identify obstacles that stand in the way of a strong sense of unity, but to also identify what can be done to resolve these issues. Communication is vital to resolving current issues and improving the quality of our Brotherhood. Communication between

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leaders within the Fraternity at any level is crucial when creating positive reachable goals, determining a plan of action and setting dates for completion of these goals. Having this clearly defined understanding of goals and how to complete them will make the Brotherhood more effective in pursuing a vision; resulting in Brothers becoming more unified within the Fraternity. At the chapter level, communication will drastically improve fellowship, success in reaching goals, and will build trust among its members.

The province level of Kappa Psi can provide a primary foundation for open communication and opportunities for chapters to interact with each other, thus creating stronger bonds at the regional level that will translate to the international level. Chapters need to be willing to share ideas at the province level in order for effective and diverse leadership to unify the Brotherhood in the region. Fellowship and trust built at the province level need to be expanded upon at the international level, with more opportunities for chapters to intermingle with other provinces, especially those located a great distance from their region. The Grand Council Convention is a good example of the type of opportunity that can serve to unify the Fraternity and, if possible, it would be beneficial to create additional occasions for the Fraternity to congregate as an international Brotherhood.

The pledge process is vital to introducing new Brothers to the importance and value of Fraternal unity. Chapters should focus heavily on recruiting brothers that will encourage the vision of Kappa Psi. Bringing a balance of intelligent pharmacy students with different backgrounds who are service-oriented, academic, and/or personable will help improve unity within the chapter. This selectivity will avoid recruiting Brothers who will only propagate the party-fraternity reputation, thus hindering the pursuit of Kappa Psi's vision. The pledge process brings pledge-brothers together and will eventually promote unity among all Brothers of a chapter. Every chapter is unique and cannot follow the same process in order to produce good Brothers, but the process should keep pledges working hard and strengthen their foundation of trust in fellow pledge mates. It was suggested that smaller pledge-classes could promote a closer brotherhood and discourage the formation of cliques. As a note of precaution, Brothers need to understand that new members will and do have limitations on their time and have prior responsibilities that may include not only a pharmacy education but also family, marriage, work, and financial hardships.

A resourceful tool to encourage Fraternal unity is the creation of an exchange program between chapters, especially, newly chartered or idle chapters. Two chapters could trade a few Brothers for a weekend to witness some events and to get an idea of how other chapters operate. This program could be initiated first within provinces and then expanded to involve the Fraternity at the international level.

Brothers surveyed were also asked to identify what Kappa Psi has currently done to help promote unity. Social events serve to promote unity at all levels of the Fraternity especially at the chapter and province levels. There has been an increase in the number of social opportunities that branch outside of the traditional drinking events, such as Brotherhood-only weekend trips, dinners, and Kappa Psi receptions at conferences. Unity has been promoted throughout the Fraternity by the public display of Kappa Psi chapter jerseys. Striving to learn our history and tradition has strengthened the foundation within chapters. It was noted that there was an increase in communication that is leading to more Brothers attending province events outside of their prospective regions.

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The committee has selected the following resources as a good guide to create solid cohesiveness within an organization (1), and unity through diversity, commitment, and leadership (2).

- 1.) Mason D. How to Build a Cohesive Organization. *Nonprofit World*. 2004; Vol. 22 (6): 26-27.
- 2.) Johnson B, Harper G. *Becoming a Leader the Annapolis Way*. New York: McGraw-Hill Professional; 2004.

## **10 Ways to Improve Fraternal Unity**

1. Improvement of communication at all levels of the Fraternity.
2. Sharing honest thoughts develops trust, since without trust you have no unity.
3. The vision and success of the Fraternity as a whole should be a communicated priority of individual Brothers.
4. Create a atmosphere of sharing ideas in order to encourage and highlight the success of Chapters, Provinces and the Fraternity as a whole.
5. The pledge process should be designed in a way that keeps pledges working hard and strengthens their foundation within the Fraternity.
6. Incorporate unity-building activities into the pledge process, such as group initiatives that will build friendship and trust.
7. Implementation of our ideals, history, and tradition should occur at all times.
8. Inter-chapter and Inter-Province relationships could be improved by promoting open-invitations to various social and service events.
9. Create opportunities for the inclusion of individual Brother's families.
10. At all levels of the Fraternity we should spend time as a family to strengthen the bonds of our Brotherhood.