



**A Commitment to Organizational Values
NPC Passes Legislation in Support of Values-Based Recruitment
By Elizabeth Wright, Alpha Delta Pi, Adelphean Editor
on behalf of NPC Recruitment Committee**

For a number of years, the National Panhellenic Conference has reinforced the need for a values-based recruitment experience for collegiate members and potential new members. With resolutions in 1991 and 2003, NPC laid the groundwork for College Panhellenic recruitment processes that focus on conversation and the benefits of membership rather than “frills” and entertainment. At the annual meeting in October 2015, NPC took a step further with values-based recruitment legislation.

After a two-year study of recruitment practices on campuses of all sizes, the NPC Recruitment Committee proposed legislation that further clarifies how a values-based recruitment should be structured. “We spoke to many individuals who shape the Panhellenic recruitment process,” remarked Phyllis Davis, 2013-15 NPC Recruitment Committee chairman. She continued, “New members, sorority collegians, fraternity/sorority advisors and our leadership on local campuses all agreed — recruitment skits and frilly processes do not accurately reflect the true sorority experience.”

Three campuses were selected to share data and feedback as well as their implementation of values-based recruitment, including eliminating skits: the University of Georgia, the University of Illinois and the University of Tennessee. Each College Panhellenic took a unique approach. The University of Georgia produced a video to share with other College Panhellenics to assist them in addressing their fears and to reassure them that the effort was worth it in the end. This video was shown at an NPC board of directors meeting and as part of the area advisor training at the NPC annual meeting. A link to the video will be available this spring on the NPC website .

Case studies at the University of Illinois and University of Tennessee found that conversations — not skits — serve as the primary influence on potential new members as they make recruitment decisions. G. Andrew Hohn, associate director of fraternity and sorority affairs at the University of Illinois, reported that more than 90 percent of the university’s Panhellenic new members ranked personal conversations as a “very important element” in their decision-making process. That same survey revealed that only 20 percent indicated videos and skits as very important, and just over 10 percent chose decorations and songs.

The University of Tennessee College Panhellenic participated in a two-year case study that collected feedback from collegiate members and potential new members. Jennifer Pierce, the University of Tennessee's assistant director of sorority and fraternity life, shared that most of the new members from 2014 who resigned stated that they felt unprepared for membership because recruitment did not include conversations about membership obligations. In 2015, the Tennessee College Panhellenic eliminated skits and replaced them with a sisterhood round focused on values-based conversation, and the 2015 new member class reported a far better understanding of financial expectations and time commitments than their 2014 counterparts. Consequently, chapters reported an increase in new member retention for 2015 classes.

The 2015 values-based recruitment policy empowers College Panhellenics to set very clear recruitment guidelines that eliminate skits and minimize decorations, putting the focus on positive conversations based on organizational values and the membership experience.

Values-based recruitment (2015)

All College Panhellenics and their member chapters shall incorporate the following policies into their membership recruitment programs:

- Focus on conversations between chapter members and potential new members about organizational values and member organizations.
- Establish guidelines for membership recruitment budgets and set a cap on membership recruitment expenses, including the value of all donated goods and services.
- Keep decorations to a minimum and confined to the interior space used for recruitment rounds.
- Determine recruitment event attire for chapter members that reduces individual financial burden and eliminates costuming.
- Eliminate gifts, favors, letters and notes for potential new members.
- Eliminate recruitment skits.

"We are excited for the future of Panhellenic recruitment," Davis noted. "In providing a framework for our chapters to focus on conversation and organizational values, we will be cultivating skills in our members that will extend beyond the sorority experience and into their leadership and professional development."