



## **IFC ACADEMY DEFINES HIGH-PERFORMANCE INTERFRATERNITY COUNCIL OPERATIONS FOR 34 CAMPUSES**

Hailing from 34 U.S. colleges and universities, more than 150 Interfraternity Council (IFC) officers, advisors, chapter presidents, chapter delegates, and graduate advisors participated in the 2010 IFC Academy, hosted Jan. 30 in Indianapolis by the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC).

The one-day, 14-hour program, focused participants on their role in developing high-performing IFCs – specifically the role of the IFC in serving the needs of its member fraternities, and the role the NIC Standards play in supporting high performance.

“The fraternities of the NIC operate by an agreed-upon set of standards,” said Peter D. Smithhisler, president and CEO of the NIC. “Developed by the membership with the goal of helping younger members clearly understand what membership means, and helping older members understand their responsibility in teaching and modeling, the Standards provide an excellent co-curricular education for every member,” he said.

On campus, the IFC’s role is to understand and promote the Standards to the leadership of their member fraternities. Individual chapter leaders hold responsibility for interpreting the Standards to their chapter members, explaining how they apply to the chapter’s individual mission and values. While NIC standards encourage and support academic achievement; campus involvement and leadership; risk management on topics such as alcohol use, fire safety, hazing, and sexual abuse; the value of ritual; and the importance of communicating the value of education, career preparation, civic engagement, leadership development, values, and ethics, each chapter applies them differently to accommodate their individual fraternity’s mission and values.

At the Academy, participants renewed their sense of commitment to the interfraternal community. Each completed a personalized assessment of their own council effectiveness, and each developed a task list to work through once they return to campus. Because open (year-round) recruitment of members and open (to any interested fraternity) expansion of chapters on a campus continue to be issues IFCs have difficulty understanding and explaining to their members, attendees also learned how to identify restrictive clauses in their polices and, along with NIC professional staff, discussed ways to work with campus advisors and administrators to remove restrictive policies.

The Academy offered two tracks, one for officers responsible for marketing and public/member relations, and another for executive officers responsible for operation and stewardship. Sessions included: The role/purpose of your IFC; Assessing your current IFC reality; the NIC Standards; Dynamic recruitment; The role of the IFC in member accountability; National legal update; a case study on “The IFC as the campus fraternity advocate”; “Collaboration - Our partners / Where we can work together”; “Education - It’s Job number ONE”; general sessions covering “Marketing Your Fraternity Community” and “Integrity as a Council”; and an executive session on IFC strategic planning. The Academy closed with a general session entitled “Taking it Home - What will it Take?”

Presenters included Josh Orendi, CEO of Phired UP Productions, who led the marketing and communication track; Ben Pendry, NIC vice president for advancement, who led the executives track; Marc Katz, past chairman of the NIC, who provided a legal update for council officers; Bob Marchesani, current NIC chairman, who focused on the importance of interfraternalism; and NIC Chairman and CEO Pete Smithhisler, who led the session on the value and importance NIC Standards hold for IFC operation.

The Academy is timed to reach the majority of IFC officers at the beginning of their terms, allowing them to return to campus with time to launch important conversations and implement changes. Indianapolis was selected as the locale because it is home to the largest concentration of fraternity/sorority headquarters in the U.S., and the Academy involves those staff, executive directors and industry leaders in the day's programming. Indianapolis also provides IFC officers with the opportunity to visit their headquarters and talk with the staff from many of their individual fraternities.

Founded in 1909, the NIC is the trade association representing 73 international and national men's fraternities. Through advocacy, collaboration, and education, the NIC works to ensure that fraternities can operate in an environment conducive to their success.