



NEW NIC WEBSITE FOCUSES ON FRATERNITY RIGHTS

INDIANAPOLIS (5/6/10) – The North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) is joining member fraternities and fellow Greek life advocates in promoting research findings from the University Learning Outcomes Assessment (UniLOA) by launching a new web site at <http://nicindy.org/fraternityrights/>. The independent research findings support the positive impact fraternity membership has on student growth and performance.

Based upon the UniLOA research, the NIC's case for open recruitment and for protecting the rights of freedom of association has new meaning and relevance. "Often, arguments both for and against the fraternity experience focus on personal experience and anecdotal information," said Peter D. Smithhisler, NIC President and CEO. "The UniLOA research, conducted by The Center for Learning Outcomes Assessment, places compelling, objective data into the conversation."

The UniLOA research focused on the seven areas of behavior regarded as "most critical" by employers, academics, managers, and researchers. Those areas are critical thinking, self-awareness, communication, diversity, citizenship, membership and leadership, and relationships. The data clearly show that fraternity men scored higher, and experienced higher net gains in growth over their academic lifespan, than the national mean of all students in each of the seven areas measured.

Common themes from the extensive research support the NIC's opposition to deferred recruitment and address many ongoing points of contention between NIC-member fraternities and those who discount the importance and positive impact of fraternity life on both students and campus communities.

"NIC Standards are clear about the fraternity community's strong support for open, year-round recruitment of members," Smithhisler said. "The 73 NIC-member fraternities understand that different communities have different agendas, but to delay or deny a student the opportunity to join a fraternity when he wants to violates his Constitutional rights to freedom of association. Being able to join any group, when we want to join it, is a freedom we enjoy; it's unfortunate that this sometimes needs to be highlighted, and it's good to have independent research that supports the broader benefits of fraternal association. It is not a surprise to fraternity alumni, or to current fraternity chapter leaders on more than 800 U.S. campuses, that joining, participating in and leading a fraternity chapter provides genuine growth in members' critical thinking, self-awareness, communication, diversity-appreciation, citizenship, followership, leadership, and relationship-building skills."

The new site provides NIC members with an easier way to educate their own members about the importance and benefits of open, year-round recruitment, as well as a relevant and effective vehicle to accomplish that with today's college men. The site also allows Greek advisors – both local alumni who work with chapters, as well as inter/national headquarters staff – to promote the open recruitment Standard to staff at colleges and universities with fraternity chapters.

The new site was created to promote the independent UniLOA research results. “As with the NICStandards.com site, the goal is to create a destination that will provide education on the Standards in a language all can understand,” Smithhisler said. “The NIC membership already has agreed that the Standards outline how we, as a fraternal community, will do business moving forward.”

The NIC Standards were created to elevate the fraternity experience through partnership between fraternities and campus communities. Created by the member fraternities of the NIC, the Standards were designed to compel fraternities to be who they say they are.

Founded in 1909, the NIC, through advocacy, collaboration and education, works to ensure that fraternities can operate in an environment conducive to their success.