

Delta Award Application

2014-2015



Sigma Alpha – *Virginia Tech*



To our Brothers: The Judges and Staff of Delta Kappa Epsilon,

In order to bring the changes Sigma Alpha has made into context, a backstory of the history of our chapter is needed. In 2011 we were given a five year suspension from Virginia Tech due to many alcohol violations and a culture that did not align with the view of the school. The following year 23 new members joined a recently suspended fraternity with the goal of restoring it to its once known glory on the Virginia Tech campus. We knew the journey would face hardship. It was no easy task and we knew we would not be the ones to reap the benefit from our hard work. We would not be the ones to return the chapter back to the Virginia Tech campus. However, we would lay the crucial and unwavering foundation that the Sigma Alpha Chapter would build on forever. This application is a result from the hard work of those strong-willed individuals and the leaders and innovators who came after.

In the Bonds,

Sigma Alpha

Delta Kappa Epsilon

Virginia Polytechnic and State University



Introduction

Sigma Alpha History

The Sigma Alpha Chapter roots date back to 1941, when the Delta Kappa Sigma fraternity was founded at Virginia Tech by 4 students. This makes the DKS-DKE fraternity, the oldest continually operating fraternity at Virginia Tech with a rich and proud history. Delta Kappa Sigma (known as “DEEKS”) petitioned and became a DKE chapter on April 22, 1971. The fraternity was also the first fraternity at Virginia Tech to purchase a house. In 1967 the DKS members acquired the property at 302 East Roanoke Street which remains the DKE House to this day. This house is located in the historic district of Blacksburg. The DKE house is 100 years old and also represents the longest continuously used fraternity property in the Virginia Tech area. DKS/DKE was a founding member of the IFC at Virginia Tech. Likewise, we have an alumni group with over 700 living alumni, and our alumni organization is actively involved with the chapter. Our best days are still ahead of us.



Alumni Relations

The fall of 2014 kicked off with the premier alumni events, the beloved football tailgates within earshot of the Virginia Tech football stadium. Tailgates have grown exponentially over the past years especially due to the prime parking spot that is donated to the Chapter by alumni Mickey Hayes '64. In 2014, **the alumni association invested in a large 20'x40' tent** in which the Chapter now sets up for tailgates which will subdue to cost of tent rental. The added tent space also coincided with the addition of a **guest sign-in booth** which now keeps track of all brothers, alumni, parents, and guests at the tailgates. In doing so, **several hundred different alumni and guests attended at least one tailgate this year**. Food provided by the alumni and our first ever tailgate themes, such as our "South Beach" theme for our home game against Miami, provided a spectacular time for alumni and brothers. The purchase of a gas generator this semester will aid in the future lighting of night game tailgates and save the Chapter the rental cost endured this past season. The purchase of the generator and the new tent came from efforts from existing DKE Tailgate Club run by our alumni. The new sign-in booth is now directly able to help fund the DKE Tailgate Club and lead to the further growth of the tailgates. Whether or not the Virginia Tech Hokies are having a good season, the DKE tailgates are always something to look forward to for brothers and alumni alike.

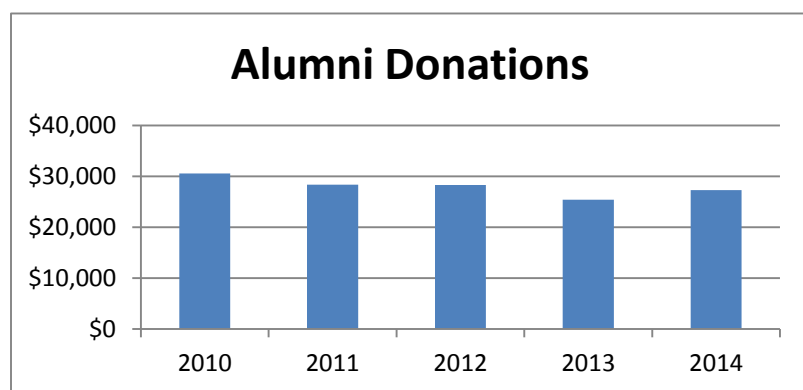
In the fall of 2013, local DKS alumni Mickey Hayes made his first guest appearance during a weekly chapter meeting to provide inspiring words of hard work and share his beloved experience as a DEEK. This past fall, Mickey Hayes and **over 50 other active Delta Kappa Sigma alumni were presented DKE pins and scrolls** at our DKS to DKE initiation event. This ceremony took place on a football gameday weekend at Mickey Hayes' home in Blacksburg. The ceremony was attended in mass by the active chapter, and was a fantastic outreach for the "Old DEEKS" who have always been considered Dekes by us. The active chapter has been able to keep in regular contact with Mickey and a new initiative was instituted this year to hold a chapter meeting at his house once a semester. Food and drinks, courtesy of Mickey, made the two meetings quite the event. Mickey Hayes' esteemed standing in the Virginia Tech community and his interesting stories make it a valuable experience for the brotherhood. In addition, we think Mickey really enjoys seeing our

progress and success as a growing Chapter. A guest appearance by Billy Vinyard, a '60s Deke, at the spring event made for quite a surprise and connected the brothers to valuable Sigma Alpha history. Billy Vinyard's father loaning the Deeks in 1968 the \$20,000 used as a down payment to buy our beloved chapter house. Billy only lives 45 minutes from Blacksburg and we hope to improve our newly found relationship with him.

Our Sigma Alpha alumni also continue to take pride in the DKE House. The yearly "Habitat for Inhumanity" alumni work weekend was a success last summer. The installation of a new hot water heater and updates to the first floor bathroom were accomplished by alumni volunteers. This summer's "Habitat for Inhumanity" is scheduled for June 6th and 7th. The focus will be on aiding the current renovation of the house's kitchen. Through an alumni fundraising campaign, plans are intact to **invest over \$30,000 in a full kitchen remodel** this summer including new floor plans, cabinets, tile floors, appliances, and granite counter tops.

The Chapter's Executive Board keeps in regular contact with the Alumni Board via **monthly or bi-monthly conference calls**. The active Chapter has continued to provide updated chapter summaries and reports through the tri-annual newsletter that is sent out to over 700 living DKS/DKE alumni (examples attached). Additionally, the newsletter was sent to the parents of the active Chapter for the first time ever this year. This spring, the Chapter made significant steps to fill in the gaps of our alumni database. The Chapter found 123 alumni names missing from our database. The additional names bring our living alumni base up to **790 members**. The Chapter is now taking steps to update the current addresses of the newly found names.

Our 700+ living alumni are quite generous in their gifts back to DKE. We have, what we think, the highest and most consistent level of giving of any fraternity at Tech. This past year we had



\$26,300 donated to the DKE alumni association. These donations help us maintain and renovate the Chapter House and aid events for the brothers and alumni. This year the alumni instituted a third annual scholarship: **The Peyton**

Winfree '88 Scholarship. Scholarships are named after alumni upon reaching financial support in excess of \$25K donated. The annual scholarship was in the form of a \$500 donation to chapter in

support for the Chapter's Movember team. A targeted award will be established after further discussions with the Alumni and Brother Winfree.

Our Sigma Alpha alumni have continued to do us proud. During the Virginia Tech Commencement, Dave Calhoun '79 was just presented the **Distinguished Alumni Award**. He was greeted by the 2015 DKE grads with a DKE Cheer upon the announcement and taking stage. We are also pleased to announce that Brother Charlie Phlegar '78 has been appointed **Vice President for Advancement** at Virginia Tech. This is essentially the lead position for overseeing alumni relations, development and university relations. The Chapter looks forward to reaching out to Brother Phlegar as he returns home to Blacksburg this summer.



Scholarship and Academics

To begin this section I should note that because of Sigma Alpha's lack of affiliation with Virginia Tech currently, member GPAs and fraternity averages are not provided to the chapter. Also, due to the absence of school affiliation we previously had no minimum GPA requirement for members. The school sets a 2.5 minimum GPA for all Greek Life members and allows chapters to set stricter standards if they so choose. We plan to reapply for IFC membership in a year's time, spring 2016, following the commencement of our five year suspension.

Academic standards were put at an all-time high standard this past year. Previously there was no "minimum GPA requirement" for a brother to be active. There were no incentives or repercussions for excelling or falling below what should be expected. As fraternity men we should hold ourselves to high standards in many aspects of fraternal life, but especially academic excellence. Much of what we set out to accomplish this year focused on the structure, administration, and management of the chapter. One of these focuses dealt with minimum requirements for active member, more of which will be discussed throughout the application. We proposed to set a GPA minimum standard of 2.5 per semester in alignment with Virginia Tech's Greek Life requirement, with plans to increase the minimum requirement in the future. Through some hashing of the details it was passed by the general brotherhood.

Through due diligence Evan Miller collected nearly every brothers' Fall 2014 semester GPAs and calculated a fraternity GPA. This task will continued to be handled by the Vice President until the school provides us GPAs. Sigma Alpha's average GPA was a 2.89 for the 2014 fall semester, which we believe to be just below the Virginia Tech undergraduate average and middle of the row for Virginia Tech IFC fraternities. We are in the process of accumulating spring 2015 semester GPAs. The main reason behind us establishing an average fraternity GPA, beyond comparing to other fraternities, was to create a basis to build off of in the coming semesters. The plan is to show improvement in brothers' GPAs throughout the subsequent three semesters until IFC reapplication by means of incentive and repercussion systems.

If at the end of the semester a brother has below a 2.5 GPA, he will be required to **attend study hours** with the pledges twice per week for two hours each session. This requirement must be fulfilled for the entirety of the semester until his next semester's GPA is above a 2.5. If the brother can successfully show after midterms that he will have well above the GPA requirement then he can appeal to the Executive Council for pardon for the remaining of the semester. Any absences from study hours will be handled by the Judicial Board. There is not an academic incentive program beyond chapter scholarships in place currently but there are plans to implement a reduction of dues system for brothers who go above and beyond in the coming semester.

Another main proponent of enacting this requirement now, instead of later, was to build the foundation for recognition now as opposed to next year. The GPA requirement will come in a year's time, so why not institute it sooner rather than later. The group of brothers leading the fraternity now, Juniors and Seniors, have faced enough hardship at this point with being off campus their entire active membership. However, we willingly accepted and joined a fraternity off campus with the opportunity and potential to build it into something great, something we created. So in our eyes, it made sense to lay the ground work now and have the fraternity ready to soar to new heights upon school recognition, as opposed to having to start from the ground up at that time. We have room to make mistakes, learn, and grow now with the school's eye at a distance. I believed it better to take one step back now and potentially two steps forward in the future. Once we're back on campus, a false step could result in five steps back. Laying the groundwork has been our biggest task and goal the past two years and it will continue next year. This requirement will hopefully push brothers to be better than what they are and to what they aspire to be.

There are **three scholarships**, each \$500, within the fraternity offered to brothers. After an alumni reaches off \$25,000 in donations to the chapter and/or Sigma Alpha Alumni Association a

scholarship is created in his name. The first is the **Dan Johnson Leadership Scholarship** which is only two years old. The scholarship is named after Dan Johnson, President of the Sigma Alpha Board of Directors, DKE International Board of Directors member, and without a doubt the man that has put more hard-work, effort, and time into Sigma Alpha than anyone else. The scholarship is awarded to members that show leadership potential within the fraternity and was proudly awarded to Will Adams, Charlie Cubberly, and Joey Loss last summer to help offset the costs of attending the DKE International Convention.

The second scholarship is **the Dave Calhoun Academic Scholarship** awarded to the brother living in the DKE House with the highest fall semester GPA. The scholarship was created to commend brothers who can pursue academic excellence while living in a rambunctious environment like the DKE House. It shows that nothing can and should stand in your way from something you want to achieve. Dave Calhoun, for whom the scholarship is named after, is one of Sigma Alpha's most prominent alumni and gracious donors. He was once the CEO of General Electric Infrastructure and CEO of Nielsen. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Boeing and Caterpillar, as the global head of Blackstone, and as the Executive Chairman of Nielsen. This prestigious scholarship was awarded to Mark Lenzi this past year. **Mark sported a 3.81 GPA as a Senior double majoring in Chemistry and Biochemistry.**

The final scholarship, the **Peyton Winfree '88 Scholarship**, was instituted this past fall semester. In fall 2014 the alumni chose to extend this \$500 scholarship to support the chapter's cause in the Movember Charity. By fall 2015 the alumni and Winfree family hope to establish a more specific target and qualification for the award.



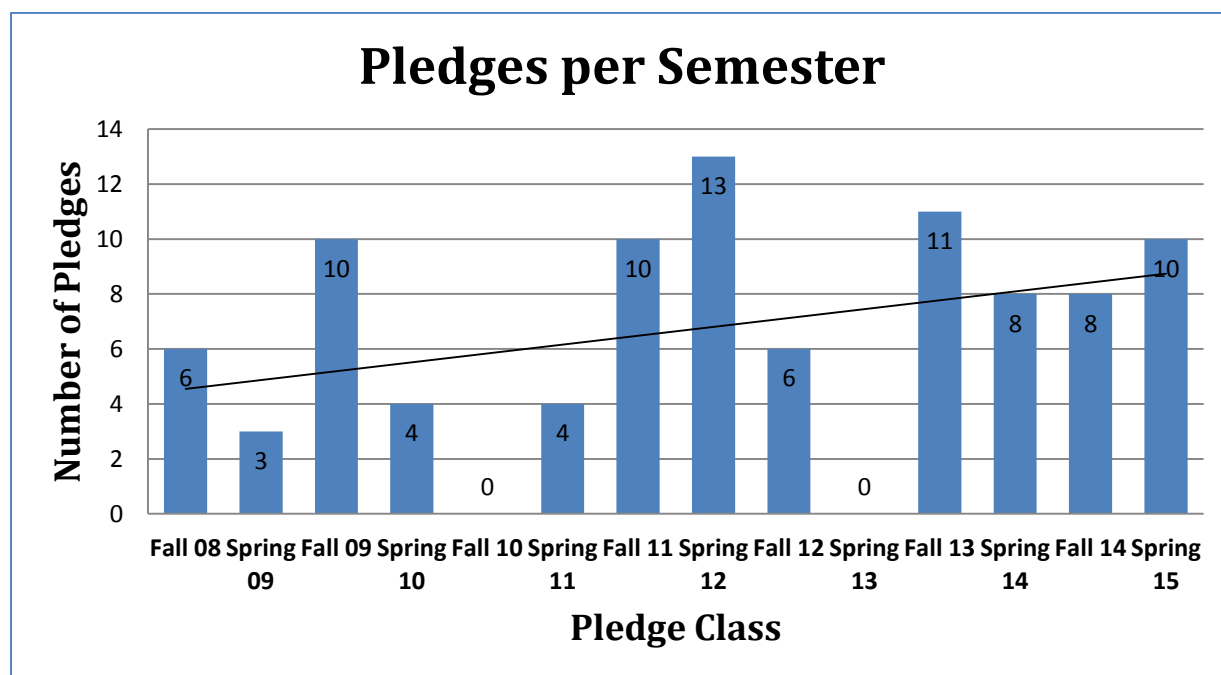
Recruitment

Not being recognized by the Virginia Tech IFC presents a whole different array of problems for recruitment. It does, in a sense, present us with a speed bump consistently every year. We start behind the rest of the pack because we are not allowed to advertise on campus, participate in Greek

101 (the school's informational event for rushes), or have our name mentioned in any of the IFC's websites. However, we do not allow these sanctions to keep us down or hinder our recruitment efforts. I can proudly say that we have overcome the odds and accomplished **four continuously successful recruitment semesters**. I say continuous because Sigma Alpha has an ebb and flow history of yearly recruitment depicted in the graph below. A successful recruitment year would be followed by a semester with no new initiates, or a strong fall recruitment would be followed by a mediocre spring recruitment at best.

Over the past two years, recruitment hasn't started at the beginning of the fall semester. It actually starts a month or two before when the Rush Chairmen send **interest letters** to over 200 randomly selected incoming freshmen. The letters help introduce them to DKE and also help to put them in a mindset which would allow them to even consider joining a fraternity in the first place (interest letter attached). The Rush Chairmen, Cameron Longmire '17 and Garrett Godshall '17, created an excellent rush schedule which brought prospective members to the house to fun and entertaining events such as our Monday Night Football Taco Event.

Of the **18 pledges this past year**, many of them were involved in other extracurricular activities aside from DKE. There were multiple Eagle Scouts, multiple Ultimate Frisbee Team Members, an Army ROTC pledge, and several pledges who worked a full or part time job. JT Doran '17 managed to work a full time job at Buffalo Wild Wings, take 15 credits, and still pledge DKE in the fall of 2014.



From the chart above one can see that Sigma Alpha has initiated 37 members in the past two years. Since that time only one has gone inactive due to financial reasons. A chapter that had 20 brothers in the fall of 2011, 25 brothers in fall of 2013, and 32 brothers in fall of 2014 can now proudly boast a membership of 46 active brothers. This size of **membership is the second largest Sigma Alpha has ever had in our 70 year history** and the largest membership since 1989 from our records. The Sigma Alpha chapter will return in the fall of 2015 with 43 members looking to expand well above 50 for the first time in our chapter's history.



New Member Education

Through conversation with past alumni we have deduced that not much, if any, has changed from the pledge process since the 1970s. Today this remains fairly true, however small aspects of the pledge process needed to be updated to meet today's standards. The history section of the Sigma Alpha pledge manual had not been updated since 2005 until this year. That is nearly a decade's worth of tribulations and enhancements unrecorded and untaught to new members. This section of the pledge manual contains information ranging from intramural athletic achievements, chapter house improvements, suspensions, and any pertinent history worth teaching to new members. Over the past few years we realized that the same old song and dance wasn't working to the extent it should. So this year we added a few things. In addition to having the pledges interview each brother, the brother would now teach the pledges something valuable to them. For instance: how to tie a Windsor Knot or how to properly interact in a job interview setting.

Furthermore, a crucial piece of knowledge about DKE International was never taught to pledges. **The Objects of DKE** was never a valuable piece of information that all pledges should learn before this past year. The question was raised, what sort of moral beliefs and life guidance are we teaching our malleable, young pledges to abide by without aligning them with those of Dekes across the globe? This question was answered through the teaching of the Objects of DKE.

Also, the **big brother/little brother process was improved**. Prior to this year a big brother would be chosen at bid acceptance night. This system allowed brothers, hopefully at least, a few weeks to fully get to know potential pledges through formal and informal recruitment. The chosen big brother, through seniority, would place the pledge pin across his little brother's heart at bid acceptance with nothing more than a "hey I'm your big brother" dialogue. This year a big brother had to be within a pledges "top three brothers" list, circumstances permitting, and then chosen by seniority. The selection occurred after three weeks in the pledge process to allow for more interaction between brothers and pledges. The little brothers were chosen the night of the pledge class party, an event solely organized by the pledges, and a short ritual ensued prior to the kickoff of the party. In the week after selection big brothers were required to take their little brothers out for an event that shared a common interest. This process shall remain intact and improved upon in the coming years.



Philanthropy & Community Service

Philanthropy and community service was a strong initiative this past year. The theme, in a sense, this year was to let our **positive interactions with nonmembers flourish into something beneficial** to us all. We always knew we were great, fun-loving, genuine guys but had always struggled with getting people to see past our outer shell as to who and what we really are. Through personal interactions and philanthropy events this goal was achieved.

Sigma Alpha participated in more other organizations' philanthropies this academic year than the previous three combined. Also, we recorded more service hours this past year than any of the other previous three years. In the 2014-2015 school year Sigma Alpha participated in the Kappa Delta Fall Festival benefitting the Childrens' Hospital of Richmond, Pi Beta Phi's Dodge the Arrow (Illiteracy), Alpha Delta Pi's Preppy Olympics (Ronald McDonald Foundation), and the Kappa Kappa Gamma Hit the Fleur (again for Illiteracy). Across the board we raised roughly **\$400 for these organizations**. Mainly however we improved relations with many on-

campus organizations, relationships that had been nonexistent. These types of improved organizations relations again led us to host more one-on-one sorority social events than the previous three years.

Community service had taken an ebb and flow pattern as well through the past few years. Sometimes our biannual Roanoke Street Cleanup would be a priority for the current officers, and other times it wouldn't. Four years ago the initiative was instituted into the fraternity but in the past three years it may have happened once. These past two semesters the Roanoke Street Cleanup was participated in full force with over 75% brother participation. Roanoke Street and its neighboring streets is where six fraternities with off campus housing call home, among many other students. This event is in place so Sigma Alpha can produce a positive impact on the community and change our interaction with those directly surrounding us.

Additionally, Sigma Alpha helped out the local **New River Valley Shelter for Battered Women**. One of these homes is located directly behind the DKE house, a mere 50 feet. This year we reached out to see if they needed any help with any large scale projects. Again, we wanted to help out those directly surrounding us and the ones we mostly likely have the largest negative impact on. We set out on a two day, ten hour project giving the property a face lift. Brothers pressure washed and painted the property's white picket fence, as well as trimmed back bushes and overgrowth.

Relay for Life at Virginia Tech is the largest school organized Relay event in the country and DKE remained an avid supporter of the fight against cancer. Two years ago we revamped the Relay for Life campaign and changed our main fundraising tool from a baked goods sell, which only raised a few hundred dollars, to a "Color for Life" event. During the Relay event we set up a booth for other fundraisers and supporters to tie dye t-shirts. This event raised **over \$700 for Relay for Life** through the efforts of the entire brotherhood.

Our largest and most proud philanthropic effort was achieved through Movember. In 2013 Sigma Alpha set out to raise at least \$1,000 in our first sole philanthropy. By the end of Movember we gathered \$1201 in donations for Movember and were a top three DKE Chapter contributor. In 2014 we raised the bar and set our goal at \$2,000 in



donations for Movember. We shattered that goal through the unrelenting efforts of our brotherhood and Philanthropy Chair Ben Brisley, an emerging leader in the fraternity. Ben was a godsend for a chapter president. He rose above and beyond anything asked of him and took Movember to new heights. Ben brought a new fundraising tactic to add to our arsenal. During the month of November Ben established four different “profit share nights” with local Blacksburg businesses, one for each week. During the profit sharing night a local restaurant would graciously donate a predetermined percentage of their profits to our Movember cause. Through the hard work of the brotherhood and innovative ideas of Ben, Sigma Alpha raised **\$2,841 for Movember** and can proudly call themselves the **largest donating DKE Chapter of 2014**.



Chapter Management Practices

Administrative practices were fine-tuned and improved this year. Significant improvements included a change in Executive Council position terms, upgraded leadership transition period, created incentive programs, and ample chapter planning with the help of Byron Hughes, the Director of Greek Life at Virginia Tech.

Previously the Brother Beta shouldered most of the work load around the chapter. Whether it was setting up for tailgates or scheduling social events and philanthropies, nothing seemed to happen unless the president did it himself. Handling all the activities of the chapter is an impossible and borderline insanity driving task. Improved delegation of chapter duties and assumption of executive member role responsibilities proved key in maintaining more fluid chapter management.

The increased responsibility from chapter officers led to the Philanthropy Chair position changing from a presidentially appointed position to an elected nonvoting Executive Council Member. With an increase in philanthropy participation with other organizations and growing magnitude of Movember, it seemed necessary to add the Philanthropy Chair position to the Executive Council. This change will hopefully continue to bring talent to the position and serve as a stepping stone for members who plan to pursue further leadership roles in the fraternity.

A main administrative issue brought to light this year was the **serving terms of Executive positions**. Previously Executive members served an academic year term from May to May. We were one of the few fraternities with academic year terms at Virginia Tech. Most others held terms for a calendar year. Switching terms from academic year to calendar year, serving December to December, provided many incentives and few, if any, disadvantages. This change allows for a period of a whole spring semester for new leaders to be **mentored** by past position holders. With previous Executive Council members still close by, new leaders have access to ample guidance, mentorship, and assistance as they take on new responsibilities. The change does provide a transition semester in fall of 2015 as elected members will only serve a one semester term. As a young, emerging fraternity this is seen as a positive as new leaders have a chance to learn and prove themselves for potential reelection for the next term.

This past semester changes to the transition period in which new officials begin to assume their role. Typically one meeting is held with both old and new officials so that new position holders can learn their responsibilities. This year the transitions period was extended to two weeks. During the first meeting previous officials would provide new ones with an overview of their duties. At the subsequent Executive Council meeting the new officials would return with questions and concerns they add. Further, the previous officials would provide explanation as to why he believes the new official will excel in his job and improvements that he should make. This extensive transition period should result in improved Executive Council output.

An incentive program was created this past year to boost participation, attendance, and chapter morale throughout the year. As people respond better to praise rather than punishment we felt it key to reward members for going above and beyond rather than solely punish the ones who don't do what is expected. Simple gifts, such as DKE koozies, were given to members at unsuspecting times to praise them for their hard work. Movember participants gathering over \$100 in donations were awarded a koozie. Other occasions such as first brothers to a house cleanup, arriving to a General Chapter Meeting early, or going above and beyond what is expected deemed necessary times to receive the small reward. This program will hopefully continue to keep brothers on their toes and working hard.

Meeting with the Office of Greek Life Director Byron Hughes was an initiative started by past Brother Beta Joey Loss in 2013. This directive was continued this year as Sigma Alpha continues to build rapport with the Greek Life Office and works back towards on campus recognition in the spring of 2016. Meetings with Byron Hughes detailed various school affiliation

constraints concerning philanthropy and recruitment. Mr. Hughes provided the chapter with many tools and “food for thought” regarding recruiting the right men. The main point drawn detailed how to build a fraternity through recruitment rather than just recruit men, as recruitment is the life blood of a fraternity. Sigma Alpha looks to maintain and build on the relationship we have with the school as a disregard for the importance of this relationship ultimately led to our five year suspension.



Judicial Board Practices

A judicial board of sorts was created in the fall of 2013. Its structure and governing influence was shaky at best which led to its gradual disappearance from common practice shortly thereafter. Also, its configuration and details of operation were never put into writing and amended into the Sigma Alpha By-Laws. Previously, all punishments and reprimand were decided upon by the Executive Council which led to resentment of the Council. The Executive Council was beginning to be seen as the all-powerful, untouchable body of the fraternity where general members’ opinions were unrecognized. A stable and inclusive Judicial Board was created, with the help of Chapter Consultant Alex Hurley, to provide a separation of power between The Council and judicial body. The Judicial Board, coupled with a list of standing rules, allowed for fluid governance and the ability for any member to have his voice heard. The **Judicial Board Amendment was passed unanimously** and is attached below to provide insight into its structure.

The judicial board is in its beginning, baby stages and will continue to define and decide what actions are deemed appropriate for punishment. Although it is somewhat new to our chapter its practice showed great success and authority this year. Many actions were established to have predetermined sanctions so brothers knew the consequences of their decisions. These preset punishments were mainly used for missing important events like initiation, important rituals, and community service events. The Judicial Board and standing rules will continue to be built upon and amended in the near future.



Risk Management

Risk management has been and will continue to be a **major focus for the Sigma Alpha chapter**. A large number of alcohol violations coupled with minimal, if any, risk management ultimately led to a one year IFC suspension in 2009 and a five year suspension in 2011. Simple acknowledgement of the rules and standards for Greek organizations could have prevented or minimized those repercussions. Early in the spring semester of 2011, shortly after coming off of a year suspension and probation, Sigma Alpha received six alcohol violations and was prosecuted on three of those charges. Virginia Tech's Student Conduct Office deemed that the DKE chapter had not taken the appropriate steps to right their wrongs and make necessary internal changes to the chapter to meet the standards of the IFC. Thereafter the school revoked our Virginia Tech affiliation and we have been battling uphill ever since.

I am pleased to announce that this past academic year Sigma **Alpha did not receive one alcohol violation, noise complaint, or a single encounter with the Blacksburg Police Department**. We did have a warning from the Town of Blacksburg due to trash build up on the side of the house, but that matter was handled quickly the following day. In the 2013-2014 school year we received one alcohol violation and past president, Joey Loss, attacked it head on with the Greek Life Office. This encounter led to the inception of our relationship with Byron Hughes, the Director of Greek Life, and an open dialogue was established between Mr. Hughes, Doug Lanpher, and the Sigma Alpha Chapter. Since that time we have met regularly with Mr. Hughes to discuss various topics of chapter operations including management of risk.

Our parties run more smoothly now as different party shifts have been added to keep a watchful eye on guests. During our parties we have continued to check College Identifications. We no longer allowed anyone in with a backpack that may contain liquor or be used to steal personal property. We also continued to mark underage guests with X's on their hands. We also have sober designated drivers for each social function to ensure that all guests and brothers arrive home safely. The Vice President also aids in the Risk Management Process by creating a **"Designated Sober Driver"** list. The list provides the days and number of drivers needed corresponding with DKE events or any day Thursday-Saturday. The least senior brothers sign up to drive based on what day or event suits them best. A free designated driver supplied by the fraternity

has drastically cut down on any drunk driving or drunk walking. Having a “DD” has cut down on the Risk the Chapter takes, but also has spurred the off-campus brotherhood to come to the house more often. We all agree that having one DD shift per semester is an asset and also an incentive to stay active.

In the public eye, fraternities across the country have taken a substantial popularity hit due to accounts of sexual assault and disrespect for other’s views. To prevent a potential accusation, whether true or false, a detailed journal of all our parties was kept this year by our Vice President of Risk Management (Member at Large). After every social function any brother’s report or rumor concerning an altercation amongst guests or brothers and anything that happened that could potentially be spun in the wrong light was written down in the journal. Also, a list and receipts of alcohol purchases was kept in the journal. The journal should provide proof against accusations of guests claiming they drank a specific type of alcohol provided to them at our house. This specific type of claim occurred during the 2009-2011 era, which in the minds of brothers was false. For these various reasons we do not provide hard liquor for guests at our social events to hopefully prevent guests from reaching levels of dangerous intoxication.



Financial Management and Stability

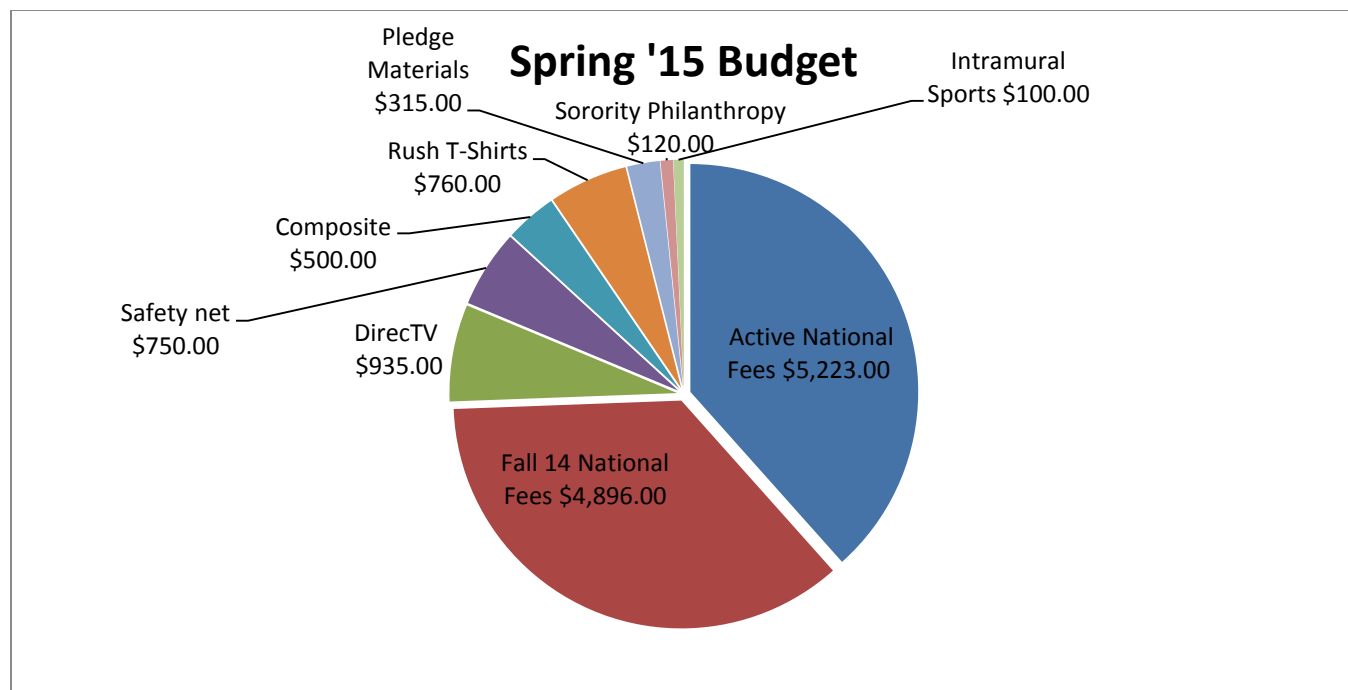
In the fall of 2013 the newly elected treasurer, Charlie Cubberly, stepped into office with **between \$1,500 and \$2,000 in debt to DKE International**. After the fall semester of 2014, again under the guidance of a reelected Charlie Cubberly, we carried a **treasury surplus of \$3,500** heading into the spring semester. We are more financially stable now and had the **largest budget (\$20,100) this past semester than ever in recent memory**.

Dues were raised to \$500 per semester to help accommodate for the rise in international risk management and insurance costs. Of that past semester’s dues, **over 97% has been collected**. Our financial status with DKE International is good and we plan to receive the \$1400 refund of our billing fee. The initiation fees of the spring ’15 pledge class are in our bank account and are waiting

to be withdrawn. Risk management and insurance for the new initiates is planned to be paid this coming fall.

To maintain financial stability of the chapter a few changes in utility payments for the house and dues for new members were made. The burden of paying for the chapter house's utilities previously fell on the shoulders of the active treasury. The alumni graciously inclined to step in and help relieve this expense, ultimately freeing up a large portion of the budget. Brothers living in the house now pay a \$50 surcharge for utilities each month. Before this year first semester brothers' dues were roughly \$800 which included the International Initiation fee and local chapter dues. This hefty expense for new brothers was **subsidized by the active treasury down to \$575** to keep brothers active. The reform paid off. The treasury also bought Spring Rush t-shirts for the entire fraternity and had a **\$2,000 budget for Spring Formals**, expenses previously paid out of pocket by brothers.

A chart of anticipated Spring semester expenses (depicted below) was presented to the entire brotherhood at the beginning of the semester for the first time in the three years I have been active. This allowed for expenses to be tracked more easily and a structure on where money was spent to be followed. It answered the question from many brothers "Where do my dues pay for?"





Other Chapter Improvements

Chapter Morale

With all the new and exciting changes happening at Deke this year chapter morale was at an all-time high. I can say that I've seen it at its lowest, during a semester with no pledges, and its highest. An impromptu "Deke Summer Camp" formed when we first came back to school in the fall. Rejuvenated with new house brothers and new rookies, the chapter house felt like summer camp. We would count the days since the beginning of the semester and one could hear "Deke Summer Camp Day X" being shouted throughout the house. The "summer camp" in a sense came to have actual scheduled events with football Saturdays in the living room when the Hokies were playing away and movie nights on Sundays after chapter meetings with ice cream and drinks. Deke Summer Camp eventually faded as exams started kicking up but was a crucial morale booster at the beginning of the semester as formal and informal rush was underway.

DKE International

The Sigma Alpha Chapter has taken major steps this year to become a leader/partner with International. President Will Adams '16 has accepted the offer to intern for DKE International this summer in Ann Arbor. Charles Cubberly '15 has also accepted the job of chapter consultant. Both brothers will begin their work for International this June. Over the past years we have continually sent representative from the Sigma Alpha Chapter to the International Convention and the Leadership Summit. In 2013, Joey Loss '14, Kyle Blevins '16, and Evan Miller '16 attended the first DKE Leadership Summit. In 2014, Joey Loss '14, Charles Cubberly '15, and Will Adams '16 attended the 2014 Convention at Centre College. This year we have five accepted representatives to the 2015 DKE Leadership Summit: Evan Miller '16, Will Adams '16, Garrett Godshall '17, Christian Daly '17, and Ben Brisley '17.

House Appreciation Day

House Appreciation Day is one of most important events we participate in biannually. One Saturday per semester is scheduled for brothers to come work on the chapter house for four to six hours. Almost always this includes an abundance of cleaning, painting, and repairing damaged drywall. This past semester however we went above and beyond and **expensed \$800 of the active treasury on capital improvements**. These improvements included a complete refurbishing of our veranda doors, reconstruction of garage doors, patching of concrete driveway, and planting of evergreen trees.

Throughout pledging we are continually taught to have the utmost respect for the chapter house. Every year we continue to say that the pledges will have to complete a pledge project by the end of the pledge process. Every year it tends to be put off and disregarded and eventually forgotten about until it's too late. This spring however we were on top of it. During our biannual **House Appreciation Day** we had the pledges complete their project. The pledges **repainted the basement ceiling white**. Mold, mildew and other stains marred the white floor joists that supported the first floor. The pledges spent over 5 hours repainting the ceiling and walls white, making a huge difference to the atmosphere of the basement. They came out of the project having a newfound respect and appreciation for our 100 year old chapter house. These sorts of projects and appreciation days will keep the DKE House standing for many more generations to come. In addition to our biannual House Appreciation Day, a new initiative was taken on by our Vice President, Evan Miller, to start a summer fundraising campaign for capital improvements to the house. The fundraiser gathered **donations in excess of \$2,100** from alumni and active's parents. The fundraiser was able to buy the chapter new barstools and bar table, 30 new chapter room chairs, a 55" flat screen TV, a 32" flat screen TV, and new light fixtures for the chapter room. Also, in-kind donations of brand new couches and tile for the kitchen floor were made by the parents of Christian Daly and Evan Miller. Any donation of \$250 would be remembered by the name of the contributor on a plaque in the chapter room. This year there were over **eight donations over \$250**. The plaque is a new addition to our chapter room and will continue to be filled out for years to come as the **yearly Active Chapter Fundraiser** continues.

Parents Weekend

For the second year ever we hosted a Parents Weekend, coinciding with the Virginia Tech Spring Football Game, to assimilate parents into our Greek family. The events and formality of the program were enhanced this year. Invitations and reminders to RSVP were sent out months ahead of time to maximize attendance. In the year prior a single invitation was sent two weeks before the event. Our budget for the event also increased from \$200 to \$600 and included catered lunch, beverages, and dinner grilled by brothers. **Attendance this past semester nearly doubled to over two dozen parents** who were eager to learn more about the organization their son is a part of. The highlight of the day was a ten minute presentation given by chapter president Will Adams discussing the history of the chapter, DKE International, and the drastic changes we have made because of their support. This was the first year a formal presentation was conducted for the parents and will continue to be a focus of the event, much to their delight.

Collegiate Times-School Newspaper

The proactive changes and substantial chapter improvements we have made the past two years have not gone unnoticed in the community. This past fall a reporter for the Collegiate Times, Virginia Tech's student run newspaper, reached out to Chapter President Will Adams about doing an article about the off campus status of DKE and to share with the community the progress the chapter was making. The article titled **"DKE Works to Regain University Recognition"** provided pertinent facts about what DKE is becoming and the school's opinion of the chapter. This article was published right before fall rush created a positive buzz about DKE around campus. For the Judges' consideration I have attached the newspaper article to the application.

5/28/2015

DKE works to regain university recognition - Collegiate Times : News

DKE works to regain university recognition

Lewis Millholland, news reporter | Posted: Thursday, September 11, 2014 8:46 pm

Three and half years ago, Delta Kappa Epsilon ceased to be a recognized fraternity at Tech. The suspension will be lifted in spring 2016, at which point the university will reevaluate their relationship with the organization.

"DKE lost their recognition in 2011 as a result of actions stemming from several incidents related to alcohol use and risk management," said Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life Byron Hughes.

The Greek organization has used the 5-year suspension as an opportunity to redefine itself.



Fraternity remodels their house and image



Four short years ago I couldn't imagine our Chapter's progress would lead us to this point. Now, at this point I cannot imagine what the next four years will bring. I look towards the younger Dekes with jealousy, jealous of the time they have left and jealous of their most certain success. My only redemption is the ability to look back on my four years and see the pride and conviction that myself and others brought to this Chapter and to our Fraternity.

To close, I would like to thank the Judges for their consideration of the Sigma Alpha Chapter for the Delta Award. We have come a long way from what we used to be, but are not yet what we will be. It is without a doubt in my mind that this trend of constant improvement and never

being satisfied will push the Sigma Alpha Chapter to become the greatest fraternity at Virginia Tech once again. I will leave you with a final quote by 2013-2014 Brother Beta Joey Loss from the Collegiate Times article that exemplifies the new culture change and driving force of the Sigma Alpha Chapter. “The ship’s built. Where do you want to take it?”

We attest to the truthfulness of this application.

A stylized, cursive signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will Adams".

Will Adams
Brother Beta

A cursive signature in black ink, appearing to read "Evan J. Miller".

Evan Miller
Brother Sigma