

April 2006

Dear Greek Alumnus/ Alumna,

Nearly two years ago, we wrote you about concerns we had with the Greek community at Rensselaer. Our reasons for writing to you at that time were to inform you of issues we were facing with the Greek community, and to ask for your help -- indeed, your partnership -- in dealing with them. You did respond, and a positive outcome was a reconnection of alumni and alumnae to their chapters, resulting in a reasonable discussion within the Greek community.

Unfortunately, over the course of this academic year, several chapters are again facing significant disciplinary actions due to high-risk alcohol consumption, which prompts us once again to ask for your assistance and support. In asking for your help, we want to underscore Dean Mark Smith's statement that the Institute has no intention, *now or in the future*, to reduce either the size or the importance of Rensselaer's Greek community. On the contrary, it is the Institute's aim to elevate Greek life to the forefront of student life. We want to work with you to overcome obstacles that have led to a declining membership, lower academic performance, and a rising number of incidents related to high-risk alcohol consumption

We are seeking a lasting solution to assure the safety and welfare of our students and to restore a sustainable Greek life community. But this solution cannot be achieved unless the Institute, the Inter-Fraternity Council, and chapter leadership commit together to making a difference. As we work toward this solution, Rensselaer, in collaboration with actives, alumni, alumnae, house corporations, and faculty and staff, is taking three important, interrelated steps to help each chapter return to the founding values of brotherhood and sisterhood, scholarship, leadership, service, and philanthropy:

- ? First, effective July 1, 2006, we will extend the Institute's current campus alcohol policy to include Greek chapters.
- ? Second, we plan to engage the campus, alumni, and other interested parties in the creation and implementation of a new member recruitment process that better aligns with Rensselaer's undergraduate plan, first-year experience, and student life initiatives. The new recruitment process will take effect in the fall of 2007.
- ? Third, we will assure a live-in house director for every chapter with its own residence, whether on or off campus, beginning in the fall of 2007.

We acknowledge that these steps are only the beginning of proactive strategies that we must adopt and implement together if we are to succeed in our goals. We believe that you share the values instilled by your experience with Greek life at Rensselaer, and invite you to continue this tradition. Please contact Dean of Students Mark Smith directly at smithm@rpi.edu or (518) 276-6266 so that we may begin a dialogue that will enable all of us to achieve the goals of strengthening the Greek community at Rensselaer. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Eddie Ade Knowles, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Life

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