

May 8, 2006

### **An Open Letter to the Greek Community:**

This letter is being written to acknowledge Rensselaer's recognition that it did not introduce and discuss the creation of the "Greek Life: New Directions" initiatives in a manner that was conducive to adequate participation by our community. If we had to do it over again, the Dean of Students Office (DOSO) and the Division of Student Life would have followed more closely the Relationship Statement and involved the Greek leadership, both undergraduate and alumni/ae, in the process.

Clearly, Rensselaer's Division of Student Life was reacting to yet another dramatic upswing in the number of dangerous infractions (alcohol and other) committed by Greek organizations. To underscore this, for the first time in our history, two fraternity houses have been ordered to vacate by the Rensselaer Student Judicial System. It would have been irresponsible for Rensselaer to ignore these ongoing situations as irrelevant to the future. In the past, Rensselaer has asked for Greek cooperation in dealing with this problem - the last critical time was a mere two years ago. This recent increase indicates that the collective attempts of this community to date have not succeeded.

As Rensselaer has repeatedly said, it will not sit idly by while someone becomes a fatal victim due to irresponsible behavior, whether on the part of individuals or organizations. Furthermore, Rensselaer's leadership has consistently maintained that Rensselaer will not allow Greek life to disappear from this campus.

Changes must be made. No one wants the demise of the historic Greek system at Rensselaer. In the spirit of good faith, those co-signing this letter urge you to support our efforts as we work together to make these changes. In the spirit of cooperation, the previously announced initiative implementation date of July 1, 2006 has been rescinded by Rensselaer as we together engage in the process to correct the problems we face and try to ensure a vibrant future for our Greek community.

By taking this step, we are acting in good faith, and in the end, we will need everyone's cooperation to implement changes we ultimately agree upon.

This is the format agreed upon by the signatories of this letter:

1. DOSO, representatives from the RAA Board of Trustees, and a representative from the Fraternity Executives Association (FEA) will join with the existing working groups established by the AIGC, IFC, and Panhel to review the "Greek Life: New Directions" initiatives, as well as the input from focus groups representing 21 Rensselaer Greek lettered organizations. These people will then develop recommendations for review by the Dean of Students and Student Life.
2. In order to facilitate the work of this group, they will have the benefit of national consultants as warranted. Funding to support external consultation and related expenses will be provided by Rensselaer and the RAA.
3. In an effort to ensure that all members of the Rensselaer community are able to stay abreast of and provide feedback to the various working groups, extensive use of technology will be utilized.

We look forward to the work ahead and are optimistic about our ability to succeed in preserving an important Rensselaer student asset.

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Rensselaer Alumni Association

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

Mark Anderson '79, President  
Alumni Inter-Greek Council

Mark Smith  
Dean of Students