

Greeks offer opportunities to get involved

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There are 24 fraternities at UNL and 15 sororities to choose from – each unique in its own way, but each united in the purpose to give college students friendships, activities and life-long memories. Twenty-one of the fraternities and 13 of the sororities have live-in houses.

More 3,000 students are members of greek organizations, but it's the impact of what the chapters do that makes the system strong.

Both fraternities and sororities help serve their members in achieving academic excellence. The all-greek GPA of 3.167 is higher than the all-university GPA of 3.018. This is a direct result of the emphasis that the chapters put on academic achievement.

"Joining a greek chapter means being a member and maybe living with upperclassmen, not just other freshmen," Schwartzkopf said. "You will have mentors and role models that will help you out in your studies, which will benefit you immensely in getting off on the right foot academically."

Members of sorority or fraternity houses also flourish on the UNL campus with their involvement in student organizations. More than half of the members of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, the students' governing body, are sorority or fraternity members.

Leadership opportunities also abound within each chapter. Part of joining a greek organization is learning how to be a part of an organization – how to interact with people and operate an organization successfully. One learns how to work for leaders and then eventually become a leader, which will serve a student well once he or she enters the business world.

For evidence of how helpful an experience joining a fraternity or sorority house is, one need only look at what members make of themselves. All but three U.S. presidents since 1825 were in greek organizations, and 75 percent of today's congressional member were members of a fraternity or sorority. Forty-three chief executive officers of the top 50 companies in the United States were, as were 85 percent of the Supreme Court's justices.

Fraternities and sororities also give back to the community. Fraternity and sorority members volunteer 850,000 hours a year

"Quite simply, they are here to give college students a better college experience and make them better people when they leave the university."

Linda Schwartzkopf
director of Greek Affairs

nationally, and \$7 million is raised nationally for charities by those members.

At UNL, both fraternities and sororities are actively involved in volunteer causes such as Habitat for Humanity and March of Dimes and hold their own philanthropy events such as the Hot-Tub-a-Thon, Pancake and French toast feeds, and a Fight Night to raise money for charity organizations.

And, of course, joining a greek house will give one countless opportunities to have fun. Dinner exchanges with other houses, parties, intramurals and road trips to fellow chapters of one's fraternity or sorority across the country are just some of the many ways to partake in that fun.

But the most important concept in joining a greek organization is the experiences and memories one gains throughout colleges with one's "brothers" and "sisters."

"Living in a greek house just gives a student a much better family-like, home atmosphere that you don't get anywhere else," Schwartzkopf said. "It's a unique chance to live with people you want live and spend your college years with, and you just simply feel more at home in that kind of environment."

Although there are plenty of benefits a student can get out of living in a greek house, the stereotypes and supposed negatives of greek members and life still linger.

For example, some think chapter houses are not diverse, are exclusive and are only open to "one kind of person." Schwartzkopf said that contrary to this belief, a wide variety of students of ethnic and social backgrounds join greek houses, not to mention a wide variety of students from different geographical regions and college majors.

Another myth: It's too expensive to live in a fraternity or sorority – it's only for "rich kids." Schwartzkopf said that the room-

and-board costs of living in a fraternity or sorority house are comparable and similar to the cost of living in the residence halls. Yes, members must pay dues to the national organizations, but those dues include the social benefits that come with being in a fraternity or sorority, not to mention priceless experiences and memories.

Drinking and hazing have become far too much of a focus in greek life, from what we learn in the media, through countless incidents at college campuses throughout the nation. Schwartzkopf said that as much as possible has been done at UNL to combat drinking and hazing, especially in the last five years. Some of those things have included several alcohol education programs and speakers that are specifically designed for greek students and strict anti-hazing policies and penalties enforced by the university's code of conduct.

"It's important to us that our members become leaders and respectable people when they leave college," Schwartzkopf said. "One of the advantages of the greek system is educating the members about high-risk drinking and rules so they will become that."

The greek system, Schwartzkopf said, is just another of the many options a strong university such as UNL provides its students. If one is interested in exploring this option, fill out a fraternity or sorority rush application and one can then begin to see which greek house is the right one.

"Rush," or recruitment of new members, is done year-round, but the main rush period for fraternities is in the summer and is in the beginning of the school year for sororities. If you think greek life is for you, give it a rush!

For more information, call Greek Affairs at (402) 472-2582 or visit the office on the third floor of the Nebraska Union.

Theaters cater to students

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on the grassy space located north of Kimball Recital Hall.

Students and residents alike are invited to picnic on the grass while watching cinematic classics. While the films showcased on Movies on the Green aren't independent films, they are movies students would be otherwise unable to see on the big screen. Ladely said it was a fun change of pace for everyone.

"This summer we got a huge donation of 550 films, and we're going to show off that collection with seven of the best films," he said, listing "African Queen," "Bridge on the River Qui" and "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" as some of the featured films.

The series will start on June 14th and will show once a week for the following two weeks and then in one week during July and August.



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