

THE KEY

of Phi Sigma Rho

SPRING 2021



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Arizona - Alpha Kappa chapter



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Submission Deadlines*

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Phi Sigma Rho's National Convention

JULY 14 – 18, 2021

It doesn't matter whether you'll be in Beijing, London, Chicago, or Alaska - you'll be able to attend Convention this summer! All Convention programming will again be virtual. All programming will either occur during evening hours on the weeknights or over the weekend, so you won't have to worry as much about work or school obligations.



MEET OUR *Keynote Speakers*

After receiving rave reviews for her sessions during Conference 2018, Lindsay Boccardo is returning to present her curated talk "You Are MADE to Face the Unknown." During this session, Lindsay will talk with participants about the Hero's Journey as outlined by Joseph Campbell (hint: you're on it right now!), the role we play in each other's lives as highly social creatures who need connection, and the human psyche and the ability to persevere, stay resilient and get stronger in the face of adversity.



In her first time speaking for Phi Sigma Rho, neuroscientist Dr. Sarah Yu will be presenting "Gender Bias and Advancement of Women in the Workplace," a one-hour interactive workshop, using a neuroscience lens to uncover how gender biases manifest in our lives.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

Your registration gets you access to both keynote speeches, all LEAP programming, legislative sessions, and awards ceremony. All registrants will receive a special Convention themed swag bag in the mail.

RATES:

- Chapter: \$100
- Collegians: Free!
- Alumnae: \$50
- Special: \$30.16 if you're an active, dues-paying alumna!



SCAN ME

SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER TODAY!

Social Events

Interested in the fun and social aspects of Convention? Look no further than our two prime entertainment options! If you're unable to attend the rest of Convention, you're still able to join us for one of these social events, just select the "Non-Convention Attendee" ticket! Tickets can be purchased through the registration link above.

Trivia Night

Grab a team and test your general trivia knowledge through questions written by Drew Cranisky of Drew's Clues Trivia.

Cost (per participant)
\$7 (Convention Attendee)
\$12 (Non-Convention Attendee)



Pasta Making Class

Pasta Pietro will be joining us live from Italy to demonstrate how to make tagliatelle with bolognese sauce.

Cost (per household or screen)
\$10 (Convention Attendee)
\$20 (Non-Convention Attendee)

REFLECTIONS; AS THEIR TERM COMES TO A CLOSE,

Kellan Ponikewicz President

“This is my third time serving on the national board and what consistently surprises me is how much I learn by volunteering with the sorority as an alum. Our organization is incredibly diverse; it is inspiring and fulfilling to learn so much about others, their careers, passions, and experiences. Volunteering on the board, or in any position nationally, is a chance to do things you don’t get to do in your day-to-day career. For me personally, I am able to immerse myself in human rights and constitutional issues like gender equality and Title IX. These experiences give me a chance to grow as a person and as an attorney.”



Helen Lu VP of Standards

“While I joined National Board mid-term, It’s crazy to think that our time is coming to an end. Being a part of National Board has afforded me so many opportunities to finesse my leadership skills and contribute to the work Nationals does behind the scenes to run our sorority smoothly. I’ve been honored to serve as your Vice President of Standards and I’m excited to share with you at National Convention the culmination of all the hard work I and our fellow sisters have put into eligible majors and our governing documents to name a few. I’ve been fortunate to work with so many wonderful passionate women, and I cannot wait to meet more of my incredible sisters at Convention!”



Stephanie Donahue VP of Communications

“It’s hard to believe two years has passed already! I am thankful to Kathleen Vijawergiya for asking if I would consider running for National Board. To be honest, it wasn’t something that was even on my radar at the time, but once I got involved I found myself settling right in as though I wasn’t ever gone. This community of strong, confident, and intelligent women reminds me every day of the reasons I first joined Phi Sigma Rho. It’s like home for me – to feel that I have something to contribute and yet at the same time I can continue to grow and learn from others. It’s been a challenging year for all of us and I feel honored to have been a part of the conversations, decisions, and communications around the very heart of who we are as a sorority and where we are headed in the future. Two years in, I feel like I have my arms around what still needs to be accomplished and I am running again so I can continue to execute on that plan. It’s been so fun getting to know so many of you and I’m looking forward to hopefully seeing you all -in person- again soon!”



Mary Beth White VP of Alumnae Engagement

“Stepping onto the National Board mid-term and during a pandemic has been both a rewarding and challenging experience. The friendships I have formed with the sisters I have had the pleasure of serving with have been key to getting through everything this past year. It has reminded me how amazing and supportive this whole sisterhood is and why I joined in the first place. The sorority as a whole has adapted this past year and it has been rewarding to see alumnae groups and chapters finding new ways to be in sisterhood together.”



members of the 17TH National Board reflect on the past two years...

Sharon Snyder VP of Collegiate Affairs

"When I accepted my nomination for VPCA and put together my platform a little over two years ago, I honestly had no idea what I was getting myself into or signing up for. Fortunately, I've had the opportunity of a lifetime to get to know the incredible group of women that serve on the 17th National Board and an incredible group of alumnae in two different RFD cohorts. I've seen the highest of highs from our active chapters but have also helped them and their RFDs through some pretty low lows - it's been two years of roller coaster emotions and stress! But in the end, seeing the creativity, strength, and resiliency of our chapters and the compassion, dedication, and spirit of sisterhood from our alumnae has made a tumultuous experience as VP of Collegiate Affairs worth it. I look forward to serving the Sorority in many different capacities in the years to come - if you're full of Phi Rho Love, you have to share it with your sisters!"



Jenna Daghestani VP of Expansion

"These last two years serving on the National Board have been challenging and rewarding in ways I couldn't have imagined. It has been such a fun time to grow close to my other board members and develop new friendships. It has been so amazing to work with my fellow board members and learn how a variety of talents and perspectives can come together and find a cohesive way to move forward. I've enjoyed learning and growing in my own experience, and taking cues from my fellow board members on new ways to manage and serve our sorority. While I never expected to be serving the National Board during a global pandemic, I'm glad I was able to be a part of it. It was so rewarding to face the challenge of suddenly supporting our sisterhood in an entirely new way, and seeing so many Actives not only survive, but thrive and grow in this new environment. That has been the really gratifying part about all of this - watching how my actions can help give women in engineering a chance to interact and flourish with our sororities help. These last two years have only wetted my appetite for continuing to help grow and move our sisterhood forward!"



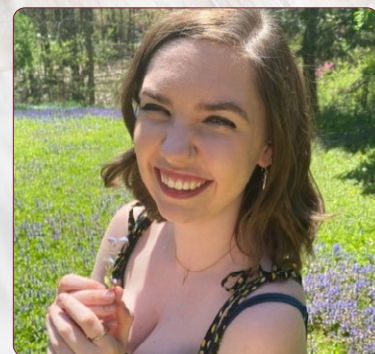
Kathleen Vijaywergiya VP of Programming

"Reflecting on this term I think the biggest thing that stands out to me is that I never would have imagined trying to serve as VP of Programming while also managing home, work, kids etc during a pandemic. I think it's been incredibly hard to not be able to meet in person as it's one of the most rewarding things of serving on the board. Putting in so much effort as a volunteer, the regular teamwork and collaboration can all be successfully completed virtually but not being able to meet, relax and bond with sisters has been hard. On the other hand, being able to "meet" and work closely with sisters I didn't previously know has been the best experience of serving as a volunteer for Phi Sigma Rho. It is amazing to me how our sisterhood can really bond folks who didn't grow up together, didn't attend the same school and have various points of view. I have amazingly close friendships from my time at OSU in Phi Rho but now I have new close friends that wouldn't have been possible without serving as a volunteer and for that I am so thankful."



Melanie Larson VP of Membership

"While I've only served on the board since last summer, I've definitely learned a lot in a short amount of time. It's been great to work with and hear from different chapters, but it also opened my eyes to how different all of our chapters are. I loved getting to meet and work with so many different sisters from all over and also actives and alumni of all different ages. I also learned how difficult it can be to balance such a large volunteer role with work and your personal life. I definitely gained a lot of respect for our national volunteers and am hopeful for the future with all the up and coming volunteers and their ideas for the sorority!"



Alumna Spotlight: *Apriel Hodari*, PhD

While an undergraduate, Apriel held a unique role in the athletic department. She helped the football coach recruit by spending time with the recruits' mothers, sisters, and family members so they would feel comfortable about their children going to Purdue.

Apriel graduated with a BS in Electrical Engineering from Purdue

"My parents really wanted me to go to Northwestern, and I really didn't want to still be in Chicago because it felt like my parents' domain. And my mom was like 'We're not buying any California tickets back and forth, so if you go [to Berkeley] you're going to be there and you're not going to be able to come home very much.' Which sounded kind of daunting at 17. Purdue was our compromise[...]."

"I had been around engineering programs all through high school. In addition to the program I did at Purdue, I did a whole summer of research at Argonne National Lab. I was in several programs where they kind of pushed kids who did well in math and science toward engineering. To be honest, I probably would have been happy in physics as well, but it didn't seem practical to my parents. So that's where I ended up in electrical, which was closest to the things I liked in physics in high school."

"I moved to Virginia [...] to see if I could get a job and ended up meeting socially the graduate dean at Hampton who recruited me for a project they were working on with NASA. I wasn't even particularly focused on graduate school at the time - just circumstance and good luck."



"My graduate school experience was very different because I was on a much smaller private university campus and a historically black campus. In my department at that time the graduate students were about half women, which is unusual, but very common for HBCU science departments, even in physics. Physics usually has sort of the worst gender balance. But most black colleges are pretty close to parity, which is what it was when I was there."



"I think part of what you learn, especially in the graduate school process, is that at some point you reach the point where you know more about your work than anybody else. And that gives a certain level of confidence."

Apriel received a MS and a PhD in Physics from Hampton University

"[My experience] was probably pretty standard. We took all the same things that graduate students are tortured by everywhere. If you talk to other people and ask them what tortured them in graduate school if they were physics majors, they probably will mention that almost everybody learns electricity and magnetism out of JD Jackson's book, who I understand is very nice man, although I guess he's no longer alive, but his book is torture. So I just remember working hard. I remember I got to do a lot of really great stuff because it was a much smaller department. I built my whole lab from the ground up and purchased everything from every screwdriver to a half million dollar laser system. So in terms of the work, it was fantastic. But it's graduate school, so it's not all super fun. And that was my twenties."



Alumna Spotlight: *Apriel Hodari*, PhD

After graduating, Apriel went on to complete a post-doctoral program on physics education research, via a NSF sponsored program for people with traditional PhDs to do a discipline specific education research project. This Congressional Fellowship led her to a job in policy and later to Eureka Scientific. Working at Eureka allows her to focus on the content of her work instead of worrying about the financial management. Apriel was also a Fulbright scholar in 2016-17. Currently, Apriel is a Principal Investigator on the Centering Women of Color in STEM (CWCS) project. *“CWCS is a research project funded by the National Science Foundation, designed to address the underrepresentation of women of color in physics, computer science, math and related fields.”*

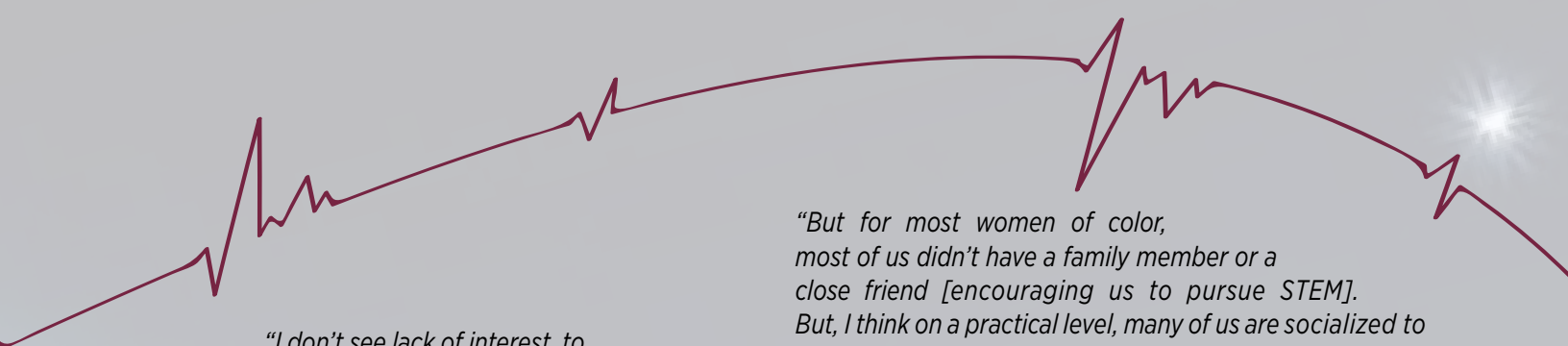
“We have three things we’re focusing on across all of my teams.

(1) One is a partnership with colleagues in the UK. Later this year we are launching our portal, which anybody will be able to access. You’ll be able to look at every institution in the US and the UK that offers degrees in physics, math, and computer science, and you’ll be able to look at a representation of how inclusive they are (or aren’t) for all women and for women of color. We expect that this will be useful for researchers and faculty who want to see how they’re doing, for policymakers who are looking to see the departments that are doing well, and for women and students who are considering where they want to work or study.

(2) And then we’re currently working on expanding that to Canada, Germany, and New Zealand. We’re also going to be doing a lot of field work, more qualitative work, focused on indigenous women largely in the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

(3) And then a third piece of work we have done is an interview study. Since the majority of faculty and people who get PhDs by a long shot are white men, we’ve done an interview study where we hired white men to interview other white men to talk about what they know and believe about race and gender in the context of physics. We’ve already given our first talk on that, and we’re starting to write about that more. We’re thinking about how we want to expand that work in the next phase.”

“I had been to several conferences on women in physics in different places around the world, and so I had a few friends that had done it. There were both some policy and people that I wanted to work with in the UK, and the Fulbright was a good vehicle for that. For me, it was a gateway to looking at race and gender on a broader scale and to be able to access both policy and colleagues outside the US context [...] and it was a good opportunity to network and represent the US on the IUPAP Working Group5: Women in Physics. It was just a good way to build relationships with other women.”



"I don't see lack of interest, to be honest. I see that in these disciplines it's more about what happens to people once they're there, and I think there is a lot of societal mythology about who should and can. But for the women that I have predominantly studied in my work and the ones that I know personally, not none of us had to be convinced to be interested."

"I think what we need to do is to work harder to make the cultures of STEM disciplines more equitable, more safe. And just build better places where women can thrive, and a lot of this will be fixed."

"Most, if not all, of my partnerships have been built around people who I met at conferences whose work I appreciated and who came to sessions where I presented. In a field like mine, which is a really small collection of people that focus on women of color specifically in STEM, you end up seeing the same faces over and over again, and so you get a feel for how people work, what things you have in common, and whether you want to work together."

"At this point in my life [...] it's really just thinking about what's the best strategy, what's the right funding vehicle, who do I want to work with. They are good colleagues and easy to get along with because the last thing I'm willing to put up with at this point in my life is people who may be brilliant, but are just difficult. It's not how I want to spend my energy."

"But for most women of color, most of us didn't have a family member or a close friend [encouraging us to pursue STEM]. But, I think on a practical level, many of us are socialized to expect to have a career of some kind. And, while I may have gotten teased by my dad that I got all these fancy degrees and I still can't fix his TV, ultimately he didn't have a whole lot of investment in what my choice was as long as I could take care of myself."

"I think there is outstanding research to be done because although women, and especially women of color, are quite underrepresented in these fields, for whatever reason, no one really has figured out why Black women seem to be more represented in electrical engineering than among the other engineering fields. It's unclear why that is."

"I think the biggest barriers are really what happens once you get there. For me, and what I've heard from many of my research participants, their identity is as scientists or engineers. They consider that so central to who they are in their life that when they then encounter a space where they think 'Finally, I found my people' and then they are treated as if they don't belong. It's almost like you feel like a part of yourself is being ripped away and what do you do with that? And so then it's not surprising that so many leave."

IN CONVERSATION

with

DR. AMY A. TELERON-KHORSHAD

Amy, a Phi Rho alumna who studied Computer Science and Engineering while an undergraduate at Ohio State but who is now a practicing physician and medical director talks about her unique educational and professional background, her goals for the future, and how COVID has impacted her life and her career.

Name: Amy Rachelle A. Teleron-Khorshad, M.D. (**Maiden Name:** Amy Rachelle A. Teleron) (**Nickname:** Michelle)

Chapter/School: Beta Chapter, Ohio State University

Degrees:

High School: The Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, Class of 1994, High School Diploma

College: Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, Class of 2000, Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Engineering, Minor in Life Sciences

Medical School: Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine, Class of 2010, Medical Degree

Graduate Medical Education: Case Western Reserve University – MetroHealth Medical Center General Pediatrics Residency Program, Class of 2013

Current job/career: Medical Director/Physician Lead at American Health Network, an Optum Company, American Health Network - Knox Pediatrics offices in two locations: Mount Vernon, OH, and Centerburg, OH

Why do you love your job/career? Do you have any specialties or specific expertise within pediatrics?

Loving my career comes naturally. I feel joy in caring for my patients, fulfillment witnessing children improve their health, and satisfaction contributing to the community. As physicians, people's lives are in our hands. It is a great honor for me when my patients and their respective families trust me to take care of their health. An added blessing is having a thoughtful and caring staff who treat each other like family. My career is one of my greatest achievements because it was an investment in myself. I completed my B.S. in Computer Science and Engineering with a minor in Life Sciences, then trained an additional seven years in medical school and Graduate Medical Education (also called Residency) before practicing independently. I am grateful for my high school education at

a prestigious boarding school The Lawrenceville School, medical education at Marshall University School of Medicine, and residency training at three hospitals: Case-Western University MetroHealth Medical Center, Cleveland Clinic, and University Hospitals Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital. Phi Sigma Rho helped me develop my leadership skills by balancing academics, extracurricular activities, jobs (three of them at once!), and of course, a social life too. The depth of my education and rigor of my training fostered my resilience to persevere during this pandemic. My specialty is in General Pediatrics, managing the physical, behavioral, and mental health of patients from birth until young adulthood. I practice primary care and preventative medicine, diagnosing and treating a broad range of childhood illnesses, from minor health problems to serious diseases. I do not practice in a subspecialty of Pediatrics; however, in my role, it is critical for me to have the expertise and experience to recognize conditions, particularly rare or complex ones, which need evaluation by a subspecialist.

I reached out because I thought you had a really interesting career path that others would want to hear about - I don't know too many people that received a degree in Computer Science Engineering and then go to Med School! Can you talk a little bit about that decision? Was there an "ah ha" moment or anything significant that impacted that career move or was this planned from the beginning?

Throughout my school age years, Mathematics was my favorite subject, but my ambition was always to become a doctor. My father is a physician, a retired Hematologist/Oncologist. When I was a little girl, I followed him around the hospital. It was my dream to be like him. During my junior year in boarding school at The Lawrenceville School, my extraordinary College Counselor Mr. Arthur Thomas met with me to discuss my academic



performance and future goals. While praising my exceptional math skills, he advised me to major in Engineering and began to eagerly write out a list of Engineering colleges and universities I should apply to. I loved the idea, but in my mind, I felt this didn't align with my calling to become a physician. He recognized my hesitance and asked me what major I planned to pursue. My answer was Biology, and my objective was to attend medical school. Mr. Thomas suddenly stopped scribbling notes down, looked up at me with excitement and said, "There's no reason you can't use Engineering as your pre-med major." With one simple sentence, he changed my life. He inspired me to pursue both Engineering and Medicine. It was a tough road, but now I have a deep sense of accomplishment and fulfillment, making a difference in people's lives. I am forever grateful to the people who supported my endeavors, especially Mr. Thomas and other professors at The Lawrenceville School (Ms. Megan Maxwell, I must mention you too!) who believed in me, and many other special teachers who encouraged me along the way.

Have there been any instances where you've felt like your comp sci/engineering background has directly contributed to your success in the medical field?

Absolutely! Engineering taught me the power of teamwork. In Engineering, our higher-level courses often required us to form teams. Grades were determined based on our peers' evaluations of us combined with the performance and success of our group project. The Engineering program nurtured a healthy competitive environment, like Electric car racing, or Solar car racing. One could deduce this approach would breed cut-throat

type of engineers; however, instead, projects fueled innovation, exchange of new ideas, and advancements in our field. Students evolved as they realized not only a strong work ethic, but also teamwork and collaboration were keys to success. Outside of class, Phi Sigma Rho taught me the importance of teamwork among Women in Engineering. At that time, there were hardly any females majoring in Engineering. I remember a class where I was one of only three females in a lecture room of about 150 students. Women in Engineering, especially Phi Rho sisters, genuinely supported each other. I have applied this team approach at every stage of my training up to the present day. Every day I walk into our clinic, I strive to strengthen our team, encourage optimism, and show my teammates they could rely on me. At the same time, I convey my appreciation for their talent and contribution. I could not successfully lead our clinics without my solid partnership with our Office Manager and the sincere dedication of our exceptional crew of Medical Assistants, Nurses and my Practitioner colleagues. I am immensely grateful for our staff, who has truly come together during this challenging time.

What advice would you give to someone looking to pursue a medical degree?

Work hard and stay focused. Medical school admissions and Residency are increasingly competitive now more than ever. In general, to be a competitive applicant, one must have a strong academic profile with a curriculum vitae full of experiences in community service, research and/or publication(s), leadership roles, medical exposure (shadowing, volunteer, and/or work-related), and extracurricular activities. Medical school Admissions Committees rank grades and Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) scores as the most important elements in the application process. Next, they evaluate the applicant's background experiences, which should demonstrate their dedication to the field and altruistic character. One's experiences should be as colorful and unique as possible. When I applied to medical school, being an Engineer helped my application stand out. My jobs at the OSU Medical Center were Research Supervisor in Sleep Medicine and IT Support Technician for the implementation of electronic medical records at the hospital. To prove I was a well-rounded applicant, I also showcased my artwork – a sketch of a historic building at my boarding school, which was used as an official school

postcard by our Admissions Office. During my time with Phi Sigma Rho, I was fortunate to be chosen as the Philanthropy Chair. At that time, our focus was on a small group of Girl Scout Brownies in an underprivileged area of Columbus, OH. The beautiful, authentic smiles of the young girls I spent time with are still fresh in my memories. In many ways, I learned more from them than they learned from me. Their innocence and humor were infectious. This brings me to my next piece of advice. I would also encourage applicants to find what fuels their passion. In college, I was fortunate to experience medical missions with my family. My parents, my siblings, and I would travel with our cousins to the Philippines, my parents' birthplace. There I shadowed my father, observed him provide free healthcare to people in numerous villages. We brought with us medicines and basic needs like toiletries and vitamins, and we distributed them to the needy. We raised funds to build a school in one of the villages. We visited orphanages, where we not only donated basic supplies, but we also organized parties for them. The children joyfully welcomed us by performing Filipino folk songs and traditional dances. We also raised funds to feed 500 people in one town during one of their annual religious festivals. It was humbling to witness the life of people in the villages and the orphans in a developing country. I was moved by the impact our family made on those we helped. Watching my father as a physician helping others in need was inspiring. There were times in medical school and residency when it was overwhelmingly rigorous (To add to the stress, I was also pregnant with my first and then my second baby during residency). I would question if I made the right decision. When I felt discouraged, I reminisced about those medical missions in the Philippines. These memories propelled me through those challenging times and would reignite my passion to fulfill my calling to become a physician.

It's a challenging time to be in the medical field - what has life been like since the pandemic? How is your office dealing with COVID protocols and how have you had to pivot/get creative in order to continue to give amazing patient care while keeping everyone safe?

To say this is a challenging time to be in the medical field would sadly be an understatement. Firstly, I am eternally grateful for my staff and my family who have been my rock, especially my sister Amy Lynn

A. Teleron, M.D., who is a brilliant Internal Medicine Hospitalist Physician at Cleveland Clinic. I could not survive this without them. I am also thankful for my company, which has endured and continued to support our clinics, and provide their employees with necessary tools to shine during this challenging time.

As pretty much any physician can attest, the impact the pandemic has had on us, personally and professionally, is almost insurmountable. I am grateful Phi Sigma Rho has given me this platform as a voice for the medical professionals working tirelessly and risking their own lives behind the scenes.

On March 9, 2020, Ohio State University officially announced cessation of their in-person classes. Columbia and Princeton University had already shut down. Harvard University quickly followed. Major countries had closed. March 10, 2020 is the date I will always remember as the morning the pandemic directly affected our clinics. As the Medical Director of two Pediatric clinics, I heeded the announcements by these prestigious universities as a serious signal and followed their lead. At that time, we had not yet received guidance from healthcare leaders, but our office refused to compromise anyone's life. My crew and I did not need to wait for our country to shut down. We relied on science and compassion. Applying basic concepts of viral illnesses and communicable diseases, we took precautions to avoid unnecessary exposure to infectious conditions and to protect our patients and their families as well as our staff and their families. As a Director, I had to make tough decisions in uncharted territory. I felt an immense amount of stress and pressure. The first pivot I made was closure of our walk-in clinic and limitations of our in-person appointments to only well visits. While awaiting official recommendations from our government healthcare leaders and our corporation, I created a "COVID-19 Playbook" with the help of my sister, to provide some guidance for my staff. I spent countless hours on the phone with my sister, colleagues, my Office Manager, and my staff. The Chief Medical Officer of our company and I exchanged numerous emails deep into the nights. I joined several private Facebook groups for physicians and medical scientists, where I had access to expert opinions at my fingertips. They were a major collaborative resource and medical education lifeline for me. Weekly, I listened to 2-hour lectures provided to our Facebook Physician Mom Group (PMG) (>75,000 physician moms all

over the world) COVID-19 subgroup. Daily, I was obsessed with learning new information about combatting this novel virus.

The pandemic almost paralyzed our ability to provide healthcare to our patients safely. We pivoted weekly as new information about the virus was revealed. Limiting the number of staff working in-person and the number of patients, especially anyone with symptoms of potential COVID-19, physically in the office was essential for prevention of spread of this virus. We strictly screened patients' symptoms on three different occasions prior to their actual in-office visit. Parents of patients were required to call when they arrived in our parking lot. Our staff would check the temperatures of the patient and their parent prior to entering our building. Unfortunately, many parents were not completely honest with the symptoms of their child, and this further compounded the stress on our staff, my advanced practitioners, and me. We learned to adapt and remained vigilant. We incorporated telehealth visits, a means to conduct patient visits via audiovisual technology. With telemedicine, we could avoid direct physical contact, minimize the risk of viral transmission and continue to provide medical care to our patients. Many were hesitant, felt uncertain about this change. Many healthcare workers felt they were never trained to evaluate sick people this way. My background in Computer Engineering gave me the confidence to explore the technology, be innovative and creative. During the first two months of the pandemic, 100% of my patient visits were via telemedicine. My office converted to a hybrid version of itself, incorporating in-person and telehealth visits, as well as what we called "car visits" where we evaluated patients in their cars. "Car visits" were conducted outside in the smoldering heat during the hot months, and frigid air during the colder months. Administering a nebulized breathing treatment inside our office to a child struggling to breathe was stripped from us as well, because the nebulizer machine caused live viral particles to spread in the air throughout the clinic. To pivot, we purchased nebulizer machines which could be plugged into the car and utilized inside a patient's car. Another critical problem, which unfortunately continues to be a major issue, is our stock of personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies. N95 and procedure masks are the biggest protection we had against Sars-CoV-2. We worried daily about running out of supplies, which were too often

frighteningly low. How could we safeguard our patients if we could not even shield ourselves from the SARS-CoV-2 virus or clean our office? Pre-pandemic, a box of fifty procedure masks costed us less than \$3.00 per box. In March 2020, prices rose to about \$30.00 per box of fifty masks. N95 were almost non-existent. Companies from which we had previously purchased supplies refused to sell products to us if we had not purchased from them within the prior six months. With inflated prices and limited stock, our office could not afford or find available protective gear or proper disinfectants. Many times, one jar of cleaning agent and/or one box of fifty procedure masks would be left to supply two clinics without any incoming shipment for another month. This was not the fault of our corporation. Equipment and supplies were limited or out of stock all over the world. The masks are also meant to be "one time use"; however, because of limited stock available from the manufacturers, every clinical staff member could use only one N95 for months at a time, until the mask could physically not be used any longer, such as a visible defect. We were forced to prolong the use of every procedure mask. Driven to be innovative, our talented staff sewed masks with pockets in them to insert a procedure mask. They made cloth masks to cover and protect our N95s from being contaminated or soiled. To add to the challenges, masks cause ear pain when worn, especially when kept on for hours. The nurses created headbands with buttons fastened to the sides where our masks could attach to instead of our ears. Our staff graciously donated a large bulk of their handmade creations to employees at the local rural hospital. Fortunately, our corporation was eventually able to equip our offices with a solid supply of appropriate PPE. Many hospitals and clinics, including ours, still struggle to maintain a steady and reliable inventory of PPE. Thankfully, we have not run out so far. As we gradually learned more about the virus and how to combat it, we opened our office to more appointments, cautiously lifting limitations, reserving our morning hours for patients with non-COVID-19 symptoms.

On December 26, 2020, I received my first Moderna COVID-19 vaccine dose. About four weeks later, I completed my second dose without any health issues developing. I continue the same social distancing precautions and safety measures to protect those around me. Many others may not or still do not have adequate immune protection.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have not gone more than one minute in my offices without wearing a mask.

The pandemic has tested me professionally, and it has also been personally challenging. I have not been to a restaurant since February 2020. I have not physically been inside a grocery store for months. I have been separated from my family and friends during every holiday and birthday celebration, while daily, I look like I'm on the set of Back to the Future or Outbreak, sweating profusely under my yellow gown, gloves, double masks, glasses, and face shield.

There are countless physicians who have experienced immense trauma from the pandemic mentally, physically, and emotionally. Many physicians have stories more intense than mine, especially those in the Emergency Rooms and Inpatient Hospital Services, like my sister. The healthcare system was so overwhelmed many workers could not even take a sip of water or make time to use the restroom. Many physicians I know personally worked weeks straight for more than 12 hours per day without a day off. Too many of them sadly succumbed to COVID-19. To add salt to the wounds, many people did not share the opinions of the scientists and medical professionals. Many parents were offended, and still are, if we mention their child potentially has COVID-19. They have been demanding letters to return to school or work even if we advised them to test for COVID-19 and quarantine according to the CDC recommendations. The daily resistance has been exhausting for my staff and me. Then at the end of every workday, I retreat home where my children, especially my daughter who has Asthma, know they must refrain from running and hugging or kissing me as I enter the house. After my shower, I hug them so tightly, cherishing my moments with them.

Our message has been to protect each other so we can overcome this pandemic: Altruism. I chose to vaccinate myself so I could protect not only myself but also those around me, to be an advocate for those who cannot speak up for themselves, to protect those who cannot protect themselves. My mother, a great inspiration and hero in my life, taught me to always protect myself first so I can take care of others. She consistently used an analogy about the drop-down oxygen masks provided during an airplane emergency. She instructed me, "Always place the oxygen mask on yourself first when or if it ever came

time, God-forbid.” She emphasized, “You will not be able to help others if you do not help yourself first.” Her words of wisdom continue to resonate with me. My hope is others learn from this as well.

What impact has COVID had on your family life?

I am married to Amir Khorshad, PA-C, who is a Physician Assistant. We have been blessed with three beautiful children Michael (8 years old), Sofia (7 years old), and Rafael (4 years old). The pandemic has disrupted our daily lives, but I am happy and relieved to say, my children have not displayed any post-traumatic signs or behavior issues.

During a lecture I attended about Adverse Childhood Experiences (an extremely important topic affecting children and adults which I recommend everyone reads about), I learned about the importance of the child’s point of view. A child’s lasting impression from an experience greatly depends on how the parent portrays it to the child, how the adult allows the child to experience something. For example, if a mother went hiking with her children and they came upon a snake, the mother could choose to scream and frantically run off. Then the children would likely be traumatized from the experience, and as a result, be fearful of snakes and maybe even too frightened to go hiking again. If, however, the mother approached the situation calmly, took advantage of the situation as a wonderful teaching moment rather than a stressor, then the children would likely continue to enjoy exploration of nature. My husband and I have embraced this concept. We have tried to keep our children in good spirits, as though the life we have is normal and happy. Thankfully my husband’s parents have been living with us (only partially because their home is in WV) and have been watching our children. This in effect has allowed both my husband and I to continue working full time. The term to describe their love and support during this pandemic is “lifesaving.” Without them, we would have been overwhelmed, especially because my husband and I are both in the medical field. Because of their dedication and sacrifice, we have so far been able to prevent COVID-19 from affecting our household and our health and thus ultimately our careers, clinics, patients, and staff. Their love and attention have been one of the only sources for solace for our family. Another major reason why optimism and happiness has remained consistent in our family is because

of my sister and her family who we visit at least every other weekend. She and her husband are both physicians (both COVID-19 vaccinated) and have two beautiful toddlers. In sharing the same philosophies about staying safe, we have protected each other’s well-being. Relaxing and spending time with our children have been our priorities. During the end of summer 2020, when my sister moved to Cleveland, OH, my brother and I built for the children, an ultimate two-story fort, made from the empty, used moving boxes. It became the new furniture taking up almost the entire floor of my sister’s new living room. The kids applied stickers and scribbled all over the walls of it. The fort was a hit. We have done our best to keep our children as elated as possible while still maintaining appropriate boundaries, like bedtimes, school time, and extracurricular activities (through Zoom). My daughter continued ballet lessons online. Our two eldest children have progressed in their JiuJitsu online classes as well. During the pandemic, they have learned to ride their bikes, and most recently how to snowboard. Next on the list is ice-skating on synthetic ice tiles. Our kids are enrolled in full-time virtual learning which they consistently tell us they love. My husband and I have witnessed the nurturing character of the teachers as they interact with, and especially joke around with, our children. The teachers and classmates say a simple “hello” almost every day to Rafael. These simple gestures make a great difference in the rest of his day. The Principal, teachers, and staff have kept our children safe, optimistic, and cheerful during a challenging period in our lives, which we are grateful for. Remote schooling has been a blessing, and my children have continued to thrive, scoring higher than I ever did on their tests. The difficult decisions my husband and I have made and the sacrifice from our parents and extended family have helped us stay healthy so far, and it allowed us to continue our jobs as essential workers with a predictable personal schedule. Our clinics would have a hard time coordinating our schedules if our children were in and out of school because of possible COVID-19 infection or symptoms.

We know there are many sisters struggling to manage their career and family life during the pandemic - do you have any tips or tricks or share?

If they feel the struggle to manage their career and family life, especially during the pandemic, they are not alone. In retrospect,

the pandemic has taught me to adapt and pivot while trying to maintain the best course of action. Instead of fighting the facts of the pandemic, I embraced the challenges. Confront your problems head on, recognize your limitations and weaknesses, and learn from others who have been there before you. Enroll in Leadership conferences to enhance your management and communication skills. The concepts one learns from these conferences can be applied to both one’s career and personal life. Build trust with your team by fostering your relationships with each team member individually. Most importantly, prioritize self-care. Set boundaries and enforce them religiously. Surround yourself with supportive people who care about your well-being. I even avoided listening to mainstream media and followed only the experts I trusted. Protect your personal time. Reframe negative thoughts and train yourself to consistently have an optimistic approach. Avoid catastrophizing by taking a step back, recognizing the problem, breaking it down, then taking steps forward to manage your feelings and the dilemma at hand. I often tell my family, my friends, and my patients to establish with a “Life Coach.” There are coaches for every sport. Life is much more difficult than sports but why doesn’t every person have a “Life Coach”? If we have coaches for every sport, every person should have a “Life Coach.” It is not ever wrong to seek support, especially if you need it.

What is one thing you wish you would’ve known when you began your career?

In retrospect, I wish I had known of a better way to integrate my Engineering and Medical background, specifically at OSU. When I entered college, an undergraduate Engineering-Healthcare program officially bridging the two fields was simply non-existent. Medical charts were still paper charts in giant clumsy binders. Computer programming was transitioning from Fortran and punch cards to the Unix/Linux C/C++. Still, I wanted to be at OSU, in Columbus, Ohio, where my older brother was attending Columbus College of Art and Design. For high school, we left our home in Charleston, WV for boarding schools in New Jersey. We enrolled at separate schools, but only two miles apart. He went to the Hun School of Princeton while I attended The Lawrenceville School. We were both far from home, but as siblings, we remained close. When I graduated from high school, I followed him to Columbus and enrolled in the OSU

Engineering Program. My dream was always to become a physician, but I loved Math. So, I studied Engineering while also juggling medical school requirements. When I went to medical school, I took a break from my Engineer side. Upon entering the medical field, I didn't realize the enormous amount of responsibility I was taking on as well, let alone the shocking volume of information I was required to learn. My vision of a physician had always been a simple picture of myself caring for patients. When I graduated from residency training, I discovered physicians must wear many hats. I realized I must learn how to navigate the healthcare system as well as the legal system. Business administration and billing became a job requirement. My teaching skills had to be solid. Developing effective communication skills became integral, not only for my patients, but also their parents, with staff, colleagues, Specialists and Subspecialists at other facilities, our corporate administrators, and other medical professionals. Becoming a physician, and a mother and wife on top of this, I decided I needed to concentrate my efforts on one field - Medicine. I do not shut out my calculating, Engineering mind. I incorporate all I have learned from being an Engineer into daily activities, personally and professionally. I'm still hopeful one day I will bridge my Engineering and Medical background in my career without sacrificing the clinical work I am currently dedicated to.

What goals do you have for the future?

There is always a running list of endeavors in my mind, which involve leadership development, participating in scientific research (hopefully in the Engineering-Healthcare realm), training medical students, increasing my involvement in the community beyond healthcare, and providing direct support to physicians who didn't match into a Residency program.

A goal I hold dear to my heart is to engage in medical mission trips to underdeveloped countries. My family is passionate about philanthropy. We are eagerly waiting for the pandemic to subside, when we can comfortably travel internationally, and we could provide healthcare safely to those in need abroad, especially the Philippines, a country where both my husband and I share cultural roots (Amir's mom is Filipino, and is also a Family Medicine physician). Fortunately, the company I work for is dedicated to medical humanitarian care. They have a

program supporting physician employee efforts in underdeveloped countries, a noble cause I am looking forward to being a part of.

Residencies are physician graduate medical education programs funded by the U.S. government, which doctors are required to complete after graduating from medical school. Completion of Residency at an approved program is required for a physician to be eligible for a medical license to practice independently. Residency is at minimum three years. Many are seven years long, depending on the field the physician plans to pursue. As of March 1, 2021 there were more than 47,000 physician registrants applying to Residency in the U.S., but there were only 38,197 spots, according to National Residency Matching Program (NRMP). This means there are significantly more medical school graduates than residency spots allowed by our government, and this year, more than 8,800 very competent physicians did not get accepted into a residency program after investing several years into the premedical and medical school training. This is a healthcare crisis most Americans do not know about and a waste of precious, invaluable resources. This has been an ongoing problem for decades, and the government has not allowed an increase in residency spots. In fact, residency spots have been stripped away, even from well-established programs. Annually Resident Physicians have lost their jobs mid-Residency with nowhere to turn and financial aid debt which typically runs well into the \$300,000s. There are several reasons this is happening, but this would be another in depth conversation. It would be an honor if I could give back to my physician roots, help find a solution to this matter and advocate for my colleagues who did not make it into a residency program.

What do you do in your free time? Do you have any hobbies?

When I was eight years old, my mom enrolled me into classical piano lessons. Playing piano has since been a wonderful outlet and has been helpful for me during this challenging time. I started gardening, and successfully grew kale, broccoli, two types of mint, rosemary, thyme, oregano, and basil in our backyard. I have given fifteen spider plants to my office staff, and one to my sister. Riding our bikes, snowboarding, and hiking are essential activities for our family. My family and I have watched countless shows and movies. I try to spend as much time as possible with my family.

Favorite Phi Rho memory?

To choose a favorite Phi Rho memory feels impossible. There are too many. However, if I had to pick one, it would be the day I was accepted to the Phi Sigma Rho sisterhood. Being a college student juggling Pre-Medicine requirements and an Engineering major, a challenging field in and of itself, compounded by the fact there was hardly any female representation, the genuine elation and the sense of support I felt from my new sorority sisters was overwhelmingly uplifting. The Phi Sigma Rho mission aligned with all of my values and ambitions. I felt a genuine connection with other young ambitious and bright women, especially my Phi Rho big sister Christa Ferguson. We were all balancing several responsibilities with our challenging majors. We understood each other without saying. If I had to do college over again, I would have joined the sorority sooner. I would have joined the day I stepped foot on campus instead of years into college.

Is there anything else you want to share/promote/talk about that is exciting in your life?

Professionally, I feel I am at a point in my career where I could expand on my experiences and expertise. Our corporation is planning to make some technological advances, which I hope will give me the opportunity to merge and advance my background in Computer Science and Engineering with my expertise in Medicine.

I am also at a point where I am feeling more established in my career and family life and can initiate community service projects both personally and professionally. After all, social welfare has played a major role in inspiring and shaping my career. Prior to the pandemic, my staff and I had already made exciting plans, but unfortunately, the projects were forced to be on hold until after the pandemic. Our ideas allowed for our families to be involved as well. I can't wait to see all of my staff's families as well as mine together for a community event. At a young age, my parents ensured my siblings and I were exposed to volunteer activities contributing to society. I look forward to passing the same values onto my children.

I wish I could provide more details; however, because they involve our corporation, I will have to update you when these actual projects take fruition.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO *this Spring*

Phi Sigma Rho Wellness Campaign

Parenting During a Pandemic

PSR WELLNESS CAMPAIGN | MARCH 12

I'll start with a little bit of background, I'm a wife and mom to 2 teen boys (15 and 16yrs old). My sons both have special needs (autism, ODD, ADHD) and are very different people. For us there has been some benefits and some definite drawbacks to parenting during this pandemic.

My teens are at a point in their lives where they typically would be spending more time independently with activities and friends. This was all cut short a year ago during the pandemic. It's been my job as a parent to help them still learn those skills of independence and critical thinking/problem solving while they aren't getting nearly as many "at bats" during the pandemic. We've been able to continue to participate in our scouting activities which has helped a lot and my oldest even completed his Eagle Scout project and was awarded his Eagle Scout rank during this time. This has been one of the benefits, our family has spent more time together and has been working more as a team than we had in the past.

Another big focus for our family has been mental and emotional well being. Our city is small (~7000 residents) and our school district is small (~1000 kids) but sadly we have had 2 student suicides in the past year. This pandemic has really heightened the feelings of isolation many teens would feel, even under normal times. It's been a difficult tightrope to walk as a parent to ensure I'm involved "enough" to see that my sons are happy and healthy and becoming more independent and yet not being a helicopter parent and worrying too much or controlling too much when I need to let go.

For me through this all, I've found that I need a few sets of close friends to help me manage. I have my closest sorority sisters that I talk to regularly for my sanity (more for support for ME as a person). I have a group of neighbor parents that I talk to regularly for me to best be able to support my teens and also support their teens (it really does "take a village"). And lastly I have my mom and my sister that I talk to daily. I think it's been important that I have also helped my teens find their "support groups". They each have close friends that they talk to and meet. Some are local that they interact with via school or scouts but others are friends they've met by playing their online games (my teens both still love minecraft and have been playing for about 10 years with some of the same friends).

If not for the pandemic, I don't know that I would have been so intentional in making sure my sons have multi-layered support and I hope that this support is something that will benefit them through their high school careers and beyond.



Do you have ideas for community-focused programs or campaigns you'd like to see?
How can we better serve you as our members? Let us know via email.
We'd love to hear from you!
✉ executivedirector@phisigmarho.org

Sometime near the start of the year, articles about the difficulties of parenting during the pandemic made the rounds on the internet and found an audience with some of our National Board members. After an informal conversation about the articles, we realized that as a sisterhood with many mothers, many of our members were probably feeling the same as the mothers from the article. Thus, we decided to start an email-based wellness campaign as a way to connect with one another over our shared experiences and to create opportunities to provide advice and allow for community conversations.

While the original email covered parenting during the pandemic, we knew that the topic didn't apply to everyone, so we worked to build a schedule that centered on other themes that may be of interest to our members including dating during the pandemic, time management skills, and making big life changes.

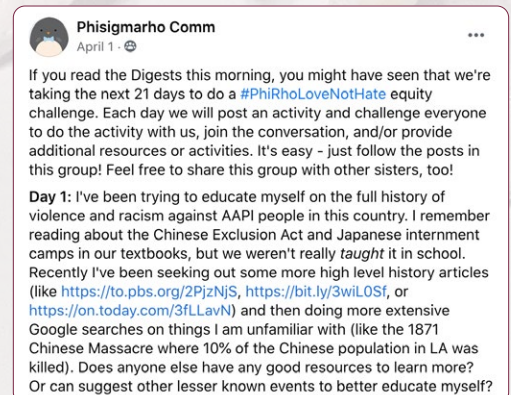
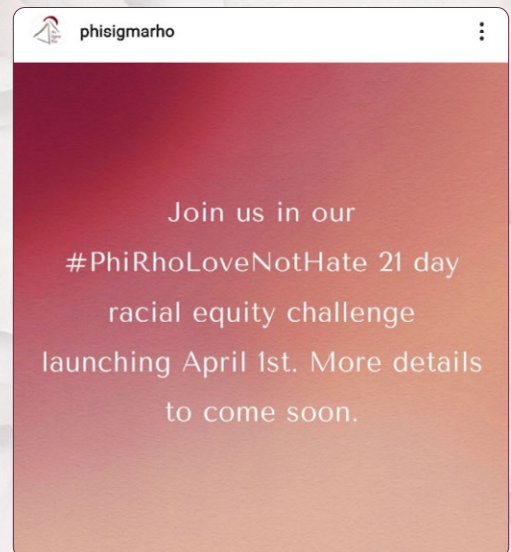
We're happy with the feedback we've received from you, our members, which only confirms our belief that community and support is something that people look to Phi Sigma Rho for.

21 Day Equity Habit Building Challenge

During the first 21 days of April we hosted an Equity Habit Building Challenge in our Facebook D&I group. Playing off our much beloved tagline, Phi Rho Love, we named it the #PhiRhoLoveNotHate Challenge. The challenge was based on Eddie Moore Jr's 21 Day Racial Equity Challenge (eddiemoorejr.com/21daychallenge) but was expanded to support more initiatives beyond race.

Each day someone presented a new action for the group to do and discuss. Throughout the challenge we had several different people proposing actions for us to take and many more people chiming into the conversation to either recommend other items or to share their own personal experiences on the subject matter. A productive, healthy, and informative discussion was fostered by our community, which was what we had intended for this challenge to do.

If you're on our email mailing list or follow us on social media, you may have seen a couple of the community building campaigns we are sponsoring this spring.



Volunteer with PHI SIGMA RHO!

Did you know that there is a whole team of behind-the-scenes volunteers who help Phi Sigma Rho run on a daily basis? Behind every email, direct message response, programming, or social media post there is likely a human on the other side who has volunteered their time to serve our organization.

Let's meet two of our communications volunteers!

Jessica and Ivy have been working hand-in-hand with staff and the VP of Communications over the past year plus. Their focus has mainly been on social media, but they've also had a hand in Convention 2019 programming, magazine and blog content, and general media development. Read more about why they decided to volunteer and why they like it in their own words below.



Jessica Sofka (Arizona - Alpha Kappa)

Phi Sigma Rho has given me so many opportunities for growth and introduced me to a community of inspiring, strong women who I am so fortunate to call my sisters. When I graduated, I knew that I wanted to stay involved and continue to make these connections. I was surprised at how easy it was to reach out to leadership to find a volunteer position that I was interested in.

Being on volunteer committees has given me a glimpse of how the sorority functions on a national level and motivates me to know that I have influence on the future of the sorority. I am so excited to continue to be involved throughout my career as an alumna and I encourage everyone to consider volunteering with this amazing organization.



Ivy Kwok (UCLA - Nu)

For me, one of the hardest things about graduating college (whether in the middle of a pandemic or not) was bidding a bittersweet farewell to my student organizations, which brought me my truest friends, fuel for my passions, development for my character, and excitement for my every day. I was not quite ready to let go of my youth, but knowing that Phi Sigma Rho is a lifelong

sisterhood brought me a lot of comfort and joy. I absolutely loved my experience as an undergrad and sought to volunteer on a national level around the end of my junior year, and I am endlessly thankful that my position with the national social media committee has allowed me to stay connected with Phi Rho in new, refreshing ways. Moving from active to alumnae status as someone with a leadership position within our organization has shifted my perspective slightly – before, it was more about bright-eyed spirit, whereas now, it has been more about how to selflessly give back to a community that has given me so much and paving the way for younger generations of sisters. Overall, a truly grounding experience that has continually reminded me why I have always loved Phi Rho! :')

WE'RE LOOKING TO
GROW
OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM!

*Do any of the following
areas interest you?*

Social Media

LEAP Programming

Governing Documents

Membership Education

Recruitment

Expansion

Investments

Audits

Ritual

Diversity and Inclusion

Conference/Convention Planning

Blogging

Digital Magazines

Volunteer Outreach



**If so, scan the QR code to fill out the
volunteer interest form.**

Someone will be in touch shortly!



Alpha Chapter (Purdue)

The Alpha Chapter actives kicked off the spring semester with several new activities for alums to engage with actives. These include a virtual brunch with storytelling in a TED talk format as well as trivia nights. These have been great for connecting with alumni, and are now planning to make it a monthly event in the future! Thank you to the Alumnae and Chapter Relationship Committee for these new events!

Sigma Chapter (Oregon State)

Being remote is tough, but we at the Sigma chapter have made the best of it through fun socials, including planting seeds for Earth Day! Last term for our philanthropy, we raised \$260 for the Equal Justice Initiative through our second annual Phi Rho Live. This philanthropy is an all-day Instagram live session of members executing their favorite interactive hobbies, like painting, Zumba, and making charcuterie boards (as pictured). It was also our first ever all-campus philanthropy!



Flyer for Phi Rho Live



Charcuterie board (made by Alex Saccente)

Alpha Pi Chapter (Wyoming)

In the Fall 2020 Semester our chapter was able to hold our first virtual philanthropy event called "Phi Rho Cookie Dho". We were able to raise over \$1580 for LLS not only by involving our current members, but many alumni and families of Phi Sigma Rho. With the success of our virtual philanthropy, we were able to win "Outstanding Philanthropic Endeavor" for 2020 through our Fraternity and Sorority Life Program. We are looking to double that number this year!

Alpha Tau Chapter (Northeastern)

The Alpha Tau Chapter at Northeastern has been active this Spring through online Chapter, Service, Philanthropy, and Service events. We enjoyed having some optional, in-person aspects like Bid Day Buddy meetups and a super fun Formal photoshoot. This Spring, we have a large graduating class for the first time, so we'll be growing our alums from four to eighteen. We are so excited to have more opportunities to get together this upcoming fall!



Congratulations

to our **Alpha Upsilon** chapter at **Cleveland State University** for being recognized as the **Diane Dillard Student Organization of the Year** during the University's 48th Annual Student Affairs Awards.

Diane Dillard Student Organization of the Year Award



Sigma Alumnae Association (Oregon State)

Sigma Chapter AA had a Virtual Baking social in December, where alumnae proposed and then voted on a recipe to bake together during a Google Meet event. The winning recipe was provided ahead of time (Gingerbread Bars!), and we had eight participants. In April, the new Communication Chairs spearheaded new email listservs, a Sigma Chapter alumnae directory, and set up a Google Drive to host resources and information for all Sigma alumnae.

PHI RHO FOUNDED

Businesses and Side Hustles

If you're interested in having your business featured in a future edition, email us at executivedirector@phisigmarho.org

CHECK OUT WHAT SOME OF OUR PHI RHO ENTREPRENEURS ARE UP TO AND LEARN HOW TO SUPPORT THEM!



Name: Alex Allamon
Chapter: Kentucky - Epsilon
Business Name: Lex Food Guide
Website: www.lexfoodguide.com
Instagram: [@lexfoodguide](https://www.instagram.com/lexfoodguide)

I am a food blogger. I focus on local (Lexington, Kentucky) businesses and small businesses, but definitely work in larger campaigns periodically. My site is www.lexfoodguide.com but I am most active on instagram at [@lexfoodguide](https://www.instagram.com/lexfoodguide).

I've always really liked sharing food. I used to do it a ton on my normal profile but felt kind of weird so I decided to make a whole different account for it so that people could choose to follow along or not!

The most challenging thing is most definitely balancing all of the things to do and staying scheduled. I go through periods where I don't have a lot of sponsored stuff and my schedule is very laid back, then it feels like I get 100 campaigns at a time and I'll spend my entire weekend baking with different products and doing photoshoots and feel like I'll never get it all done by my deadlines. So time management is definitely my top difficulty.

I think the best thing has just been getting to discover so many new people/places/foods! There's so much out there so it's so cool to get to be the one trying it all and letting others know about it. Also getting to help small businesses is awesome. Having a business tell me that they got tons of orders or visits after I post about them and knowing that I'm helping this small business make it is the coolest thing.



Name: Katie Shesko
Chapter: Pittsburgh - Zeta
Business Name: Katie Shesko LLC
Website: www.katieshesko.com

I'm a recording artist, flute teacher, and Twitch streamer. Links to all my music and everything about me is at www.KatieShesko.com.

Even though I studied Industrial Engineering in school, flute playing has always been a passion of mine. My husband is also a musician, which is how we met in high school (even though he works as a chemical engineer). However, because I studied engineering and have 2 kids, going back to school to focus on flute performance in hopes of landing an orchestra job just wasn't an option. So I learned how to do home recording and how to film music videos and here we are! I've released all my music on Spotify, Pandora, iTunes, etc. My music is flute covers of video game, film, and anime music!

The most challenging thing is pushing through the hard times. Growing my audience has been slow and with the pandemic, it's been really difficult recruiting new students and teaching virtually. But the best thing is I'm running this with my husband. He does a lot of arranging, mixing, as well as recording all the videos. We'd love for me to make enough with my music so that he can work with me full time, but that is our long term plan!





Name: Randee Newsom
Chapter: Purdue - Alpha
Business Name: Sustain and Able Coffee Company
Website: www.sustain-and-able.com

Sustain and Able Coffee Company will be an environmentally sustainable and vegan coffee van! It will be located throughout the Denver area in Colorado starting in October.

I majored in environmental and ecological engineering because I wanted to help the world be a better place. I always believed that the biggest threat to the environment was the lack of knowledge people had about their impact on the earth. As a result, I wanted to use the coffee community to teach people how to be sustainable in their daily lives.

The most challenging thing so far in starting this business is that I have a degree in engineering, not business or coffee. Being in a whole new industry, I feel like a student again! There is a huge learning curve in figuring out licensing, permitting, and local regulations. However, I love learning, so even though this is a challenge, I still love it!

My favorite thing about having my own business is creating relationships with people. I worked in coffee for about three years while getting my degree, but never felt like a coffee snob. I've been drawn to the coffee community and how coffee brings people together. Meeting people, sharing stories, and having a meaningful impact on people's lives is what keeps me going through the toughest parts of having a business.



Name: Christine Jackson
Chapter: Purdue University - Alpha
Business Name: Mary Kay (Independent Beauty Consultant)
Website: www.marykay.com/jackson

I am an Independent Beauty Consultant for Mary Kay. I have been in the business for about 22 years! I became a Sales Director at one point, but was more enthusiastic about becoming a teacher to continue my path promoting math and science careers to African-American kids, especially girls because I had so few role models! I knew I couldn't keep up being a Director AND a teacher, so I chose teaching full-time.

Being a Mary Kay consultant allowed me to supplement my teacher income. The most challenging thing about starting my business was being proactive in finding customers. I really do not wear makeup, so this was tough for me initially. I became a consultant because of their skincare line; I was a walking testimony for it. Eventually, I became very successful. I didn't want a pink or red car; they allow you to take the money and put it toward your choice of car. Direct sales are tough. I didn't care for the constant hustle acquiring consultants and customers as a Director, I lost the freedom of time I'd grown to love as a consultant, and it was tough maintaining an inventory. Now I primarily operate from my website, have a steady customer pool, do club/organization fundraisers and I love making customers happy supplying their skincare and makeup needs!

Name: Gaby McInnes
Chapter: VCU - Omega
Business Name: The Cosmetic Engineer
Etsy Shop: www.etsy.com/shop/TheCosmeticEngineer

I started an Etsy shop back in August 2020 called The Cosmetic Engineer. I have eczema and rosacea so my skin is really sensitive to a lot of ingredients in cosmetics and I wanted to create bath and beauty products with as few as ingredients as possible in order to create products that most everyone could use. The most challenging thing about starting it, and something I am currently still struggling with, is being able to balance my time between Phi Rho, school, and my shop. I do really enjoy it when people leave nice reviews or messages.



Name: Lara Kimberly

Chapter: Purdue - Alpha

Business Name: HEAL Integrative Veterinary Center

Website: www.heal-veterinary.com/

Contact Email: beautifulday168@gmail.com

I am on my 3rd version of my business. The first one I had was a sole proprietorship and I really didn't know what I was doing. My second, I had a business partner and we were incorporated (S-corp). Now I have an LLC and am the sole owner. I am a veterinarian who specializes in Pain Management - I do Physical Rehabilitation (using Physical therapy techniques on companion animals, as the words PT are protected by practice acts to only be used on people, so we had to come up with our own term), and acupuncture/Chinese Medicine. My business is called HEAL Integrative Veterinary Center and I have a website and FB page: <https://www.heal-veterinary.com/>

I started my first business, Beautiful Day Pet Pain Management (fb page still active), after the birth of my first daughter. I wanted to mostly stay at home, but I wanted my skills to stay current and I had patients I started seeing at my husband's clinic (he owned a veterinary specialty and emergency clinic). I just went to the homes of my patients, and provided my services. I just used word of mouth, and my sister designed a logo and business cards. I did this on Fridays and Saturdays when my husband was home from work. This was in the Louisville KY area. He ended up selling his business for improved family life, and we moved to WI (madison area) and he became an employee of a veterinary emergency and specialty clinic. I had a second child before we moved, so I was home with my 3.5 and 1.5 year olds, and decided to restart Beautiful Day Pet Pain Management up here. I made brochures and went to local vet association meetings. I got to know the area vets, and they sent their patients to me, and word of mouth spread. I started talking to my husband's boss about adding Rehabilitation (he didn't want acupuncture), and we were discussing how to do this. Then a local colleague who did acupuncture called me to ask if I would take over her clients as she was moving to CO. She would do some patients in the clinic she had worked at and some at their homes, so she suggested I speak to the clinic she had worked at. I contacted them, and they asked if I would cover the maternity leave of their Rehab person. That way I got to know Marcy who was not a veterinarian but a PT who had become certified in animal rehabilitation as well. PTs are able to work on animals as long as they work in conjunction with a veterinarian (this is state law, so just discussing WI). I got to know Marcy before she went on maternity leave and her vet tech, Beth, who was certified in rehab as well. There are still not many of us certified in rehab, so it was pretty amazing to meet two others. Marcy and Beth were not happy at the clinic they were at, and Marcy was in discussions with a veterinary surgeon about opening up a rehab practice in his clinic (but she needed veterinary oversight, so they weren't sure how this would work). When she finally got pregnant on her last ditch IVF, she decided not to open a clinic. However, I took over the idea, and talked her into being partners. And we started

Veterinary Rehabilitation Center of Wisconsin together, despite her being home with her baby. I agreed to her only working one day/week for 5 years but we would be 50/50 partners. (Live and learn from that mistake). Business was instantly successful, partnership was not. Marcy surprisingly got pregnant with her second 1.5 years after the first (not so uncommon, we call these BOGO babies after IVC). She was stressed about working as her husband was not supportive, and I resented her not doing anything but acting like an employee while I had to manage the business by myself yet share the proceeds.

It all came to a head just before COVID hit, and in February 2020, Marcy sent me the legal paperwork to dissolve the business. We started the legal discussions on whether I would buy the business out right, but what we had in place, would give her more money than I thought she deserved for basically being an employee for 4 years. Plus we had the uncertainty of COVID and how it would affect the business. As we couldn't agree on a fair price, our option was to completely close and dismantle the business and we did this in May 2020. I had to take the bulk of trying to sell our assets because Marcy wasn't allowed in the building due to her exposure to her husband who worked directly with COVID patients. I immediately started HEAL, and stayed in the same location, with the same clientele and employees. Starting a new business in the middle of COVID was interesting, but as an essential business, we were able to continue on, and almost 1 year after our start we are more successful than Veterinary Rehabilitation Center of Wisconsin, as I am not chained by a very conservative business partner, who was scared to take any risks.



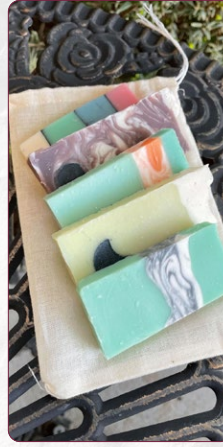
Name: Melissa Baker
Chapter: Purdue - Alpha
Business Name: Style with Mel
Website: www.style-with-mel.com
Instagram: @style_with_mel

I'm a Body Positive Style Coach. I help women gain confidence and get dressed with ease by helping them define their own personal style. This includes helping them with their closets, styling outfits and personal shopping as well as helping shift mindset around body image issues or anything that is holding them back from being their true authentic self.



I started my business in October 2020. I had taken a fashion stylist certification course earlier in 2020 because I have always been great at styling myself and my friends. I saw it as an opportunity to make an impact for women to help them feel more confident in their own skin. There is so much negative noise in the world around what women look like and how they need to change themselves. Helping a woman feel more confident in being the person she was made to be is a way in which we can change the world.

The most challenging thing about starting and running a business is really digging in on the mindset work on yourself. Healing the negative thoughts you have about yourself is key to really building a thriving business. I never realized just how much of myself I would need to work on to make my business thrive. It is challenging but at the end of the day, I wouldn't change it and I'm happier for it.



Name: Lexi Heironimus Ganger
Chapter: Wright State - Alpha Zeta
Business Name: Soappa Ganger Style
Website: www.soappagangerstyle.com
Facebook: Soppa Ganger Style, LLC
Instagram: @soppagangerstyle

I make handmade small batch artisan soap! Mainly inspired by Dayton Ohio, my current hometown! The name of our business is a play on words of one of my wedding hashtags #OppaGangerStyle which was inspired by the song "Gangnam Style".

I started cold-process soap making as a hobby during the COVID-19 pandemic. I am a big fan of silly de-bunking videos on youtube of "life-hacks". One day in the suggestions, there was a video of a professional soap maker reacting to soap hacks (Katie Carson from Royalty Soaps). I checked out the rest of her channel and she released a series in June 2020 on the cold-process soap making technique. I gave my soap away to family and friends before I started posting about it on Instagram and that's when I started getting interest for purchases. Within a month I developed a brand, created a website, and started business social media accounts!

The most challenging thing about running a small business is time management. I do have a full-time job and I volunteer as a Board of Directors with the Phi Sigma Rho Foundation. I don't have any plans to expand the business to more than an occasion street fair, making soaps for my enjoyment or commissions for large orders such as wedding soap favors. This process purely brings me joy and that is why I do it!

I have even made a soap inspired by Phi Rho. It is called Friendship, colored silver and wine red, and is orchid scented!!



Updates from THE PHI SIGMA RHO FOUNDATION

WAYS TO GIVE

Now more than ever, the Foundation needs your support for the sisters of Phi Sigma Rho. You can give back through charitable donation or by volunteering your time! Financial gifts can be made to the **Phi Sigma Rho Foundation** using our new **Classy donation page** through our website. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the Foundation, sign into the **Phi Rho Portal** and fill out the Volunteer Interest Form.

What does my money support?

General Fund: Supports the areas of greatest need and operational costs.

Educational Funds:

- LEAP: Leadership Education and Programming for Conference and Convention
- EDGE: Fosters teamwork and collaboration on engineering teams and projects.
- DreamGirls: Active and Alumnae financial support for DreamGirls programming.

Paid Staff and Professional Services Fund: For professional services, such as lawyers, auditors, and the future goal of Foundation staff.

Scholarship Funds: These funds support the collective and individual scholarships that are offered.

- General Scholarships
- Sarah Rogers McClure Memorial Scholarship
- Francis J. Monigan Memorial Scholarship
- Anne Louise Roach Legacy Scholarship

Chapter Funds: Support your local chapter's educational needs by setting up a chapter fund. These funds can be used for desks, computers, wifi for chapter housing, costs associated with professional, diversity, and health programming, and more.

Visit our website to learn more about how to give, programs and more at www.phisigmarhofoundation.org.

How to Set Up Your Amazon Smile Account

Do you want to give back to the Foundation, but are unable to make a financial contribution? AmazonSmile is your solution! For every purchase you make, AmazonSmile donates 0.5% on qualified purchases to the nonprofit of your choice, at no extra cost to you. Be sure to spread the word to your family and friends so you can make an even bigger impact on the Foundation!

Use AmazonSmile While Shopping on your Mobile Device

If you aren't an AmazonSmile member, sign up at smile.amazon.com on your web browser and then select Phi Sigma Rho Foundation to begin generating donations.

Download the Amazon app on your iPhone or Android device via the App Store or Google Play.



Open the app, find "Settings," then click "AmazonSmile" and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone.

FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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SECRETARY: Lexi Heironimus, *Wright State Alpha Zeta*
TREASURER: Rosalie Krob, *Purdue Alpha*
VICE PRESIDENT OF STRATEGY: *Vacant*
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VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLICITY: Kendall Murphy, *Kentucky Epsilon*
VICE PRESIDENT OF PROGRAMMING: Victoria Platt, *Ohio State Beta*
EX-OFFICIO: Kathleen Vijaywergya, *Ohio State Beta*

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ASSISTANT TREASURER: Christine Jackson
DREAMGIRLS CHAIR: Jennifer Dodaro-Barman
GRANT REVIEW CHAIR: Lisa Courtneery
HR MANAGER: Belle Riehemann
PHILANTHROPY CHAIRS: Devine Stanke, Nicole Graf
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SERVICE CHAIR: Amelia Cecchini
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PUBLICITY COMMITTEE: Hannah Stone, Tara Zahnke, Mackenzie Dorrington
SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE: Helen Lu, Anita Jain, Kristin Bell

Volunteers Needed!

The Phi Sigma Rho Foundation is in search of several alumnae who are interested in developing and executing fundraising campaigns under the guidance of the Vice President of Donor Relations. If you would like further information regarding this volunteer opportunity, please email contact@phisigmarhofoundation.org.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the Foundation, sign into the Phi Rho Portal and fill out the Volunteer Interest Form.

DreamGirls “DREAMING VIRTUALLY” EVENT RECAP

The first all-Phi Rho DreamGirls event was held virtually on March 20, 2021 where five chapters and two alumnae-hosted groups of middle school girls in Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio. Thank you to alumnae from across the country who helped identify schools and organizations for some of the chapters to work with. Recorded presentations from this event will also be used in April by the Texas A&M chapter. During the Dreaming Virtually event, over 120 Participants logged into Zoom and were greeted by music including Ava Max singing “it’s okay to be different, cuz baby so am I” while they waited for the event to start.

Five presenters, all Phi Rho alumnae, spoke about their careers, how they got there, and what they love about what they do. Each presentation was followed by a hands-on activity directly related to the career presented.

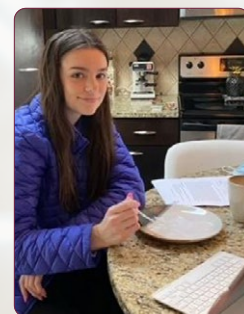
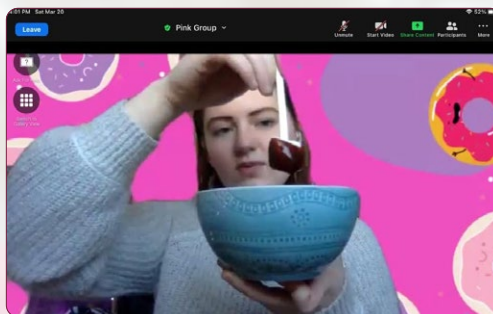
- Devin Stanke (Eta) showed how her role as a Production Planning Analyst at SC Johnson allows soap production to run more efficiently. The participants were then led by their location group leaders in an activity to learn how soap reduces surface tension.
- Juliet Vickio (Upsilon) discussed tools that allow computer engineers to make sense of large amounts of data. Her activity creating Zoo Animal cards allowed all participants to interact with a Jamboard, which was a new tool to many.
- Kendall Murphy (Epsilon) showcased her research into controlled release drug delivery and then participants created their own prototypes to release Kool-Aid from wiffle balls.
- Rebecca Palmer (Alpha) shared her role with General Motors Future Electric Vehicles and her journey to discovering engineering. The participants then created their own motor with magnets and batteries.
- Katie Lennon (Alpha) delighted participants with her job for Nestle Ice Cream. Having Katie follow Rebecca inadvertently highlighted the versatility of engineering – two mechanical engineers from the same university can go on to pursue two very different careers.

Reactions from parents and participants were overwhelmingly positive. One parent wrote, “Thank you so very much for sharing The DreamGirls virtual experience with us today. Both my 7th grade daughter and I were inspired by the speakers. The use of technology combined with hands on experiments was fantastic! We hope to be able to participate next year too. We will definitely invite other girls to join us!”

Further, participants reported a 56% increase in pursuing an engineering career.

This inspiring joint effort by chapters, alumnae, and the Foundation proves once again that “Together we build the future”.

This Dreaming Virtually event was made possible through a grant from DiscoverE, as part of their Introduce a Girl to Engineering campaign, in which the grant was used to purchase supplies and ship them to the various locations. Thank you DiscoverE! If you would like to donate to be able to help fund events like these in the future, consider donating through the Phi Sigma Rho Foundation’s DreamGirls fund, which will be utilized for chapters hosting these events! Please email any questions to Jennifer at dreamgirls@phisigmarhofoundation.org.



SARAH ROGERS McCLURE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT

Call to Action



The Sarah Rogers McClure Memorial Scholarship was generously developed in honor of Sarah Rogers McClure, a beloved Purdue chapter alumnae who passed away with cancer in December 2010. Since 2013, eight sisters of Phi Sigma Rho have received this \$1,000 scholarship. It is the Foundation's goal for sisters to be able to receive this scholarship for years to come; therefore, we are aiming to raise \$11,000 in order to endow this scholarship in 2021.

Sarah Rogers McClure, from Newburgh, Indiana, joined Phi Sigma Rho in 1988 as part of the Alpha chapter's Epsilon pledge class. She was a caring and hard-working sister and friend. She was known, not only for her commitment and follow-through, but for her kindness, her respect for others, and for being there for others whenever and however she was needed. She had a relentlessly positive attitude and an infectious smile. Sarah graduated from Purdue University with a Chemical Engineering Degree in 1991 and went to work for the Department of Energy. In 1995, she took a position with Procter & Gamble as a Health, Safety, and Environmental professional. Sarah married Bill McClure in 2002 and adopted daughter Ann from China in 2004.

Sarah was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2002. She fought the disease while moving on with her life and also inspiring and educating others through her involvement with awareness and fundraising campaigns. As a dedicated runner, Sarah continued to run marathons throughout her years of treatment, even after chemotherapy and hip replacement surgery.

Sarah ultimately completed her journey, and sadly, passed away with cancer in December 2010. Not surprisingly, she continued to give by donating her body to medical science.

Upon her death, a variety of tributes were made in her honor. Notably, donations of over \$8,000 were made in her name to the Komen Tissue Bank, and a conference room as named in her honor at Procter & Gamble, with a plaque reading "In Celebration of Her Service to Others; Your faith, friendship, and courage inspire us and continue to lift us up. Thank you for touching our hearts and lives in such a special way."

The Phi Sigma Rho Foundation is proud to continue sharing Sarah's legacy through the Sarah Rogers McClure Memorial Scholarship and Fund. Through endowing this scholarship, Sarah will continue to be an inspiration for years to come for the Phi Sigma Rho sisterhood. Please consider helping us reach our goal and donating to the Sarah Rogers McClure Memorial Fund through our website, www.phisigmarhofoundation.org.



ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH EXPERIENCE (EDGE) GRANT

Summer Deadline

The Phi Sigma Rho Foundation is pleased to announce the development of the Engineering Development and Growth Experience (EDGE) grant. These grants of up to \$1,000 can be applied for by and awarded to members of Phi Sigma Rho for engineering projects that encourage hands-on building and learning. For example, this grant could be used to fund go-kart building teams, robotics, rocketry, hack-a-thon teams, and many more. Any project team with at least 1 Phi Rho is eligible to apply, as well as solo projects by Phi Rhos. This grant program will open this fall with the first round of grants announced during E-Week in February 2022. The grant application will be made available through the Phi Rho Portal. The Foundation would like to thank Rosie and Alex Krob for making this grant a reality!

Any questions can be sent to Victoria at
[programming@
phisigmarhofoundation.org](mailto:programming@phisigmarhofoundation.org)



GETTING STARTED

with the CHAPTER FUNDS PROGRAM

In an effort to address individual chapter needs, the Phi Sigma Rho Foundation has developed the Chapter Funds Program. This program was developed to support the wishes of members of local chapters to support the educational and leadership needs of their local chapter. The Chapter Funds Program is offering this service to all our chapters. The program will give potential donors the opportunity to make a significant gift to the educational programs of your chapter and a charitable tax deduction on your Federal income forms subject to the Federal Tax laws.

Your chapter can now establish its own Chapter Fund with the Phi Sigma Rho Foundation. All gifts to the Chapter Fund will be held by the Foundation as restricted gifts for the benefit of your chapter for any of the following educational purposes:

- Scholarship grants to members of your chapter.
- Educational grants to cover portions of the registration travel and accommodation expenses of members of your chapter attending leadership conferences of Phi Sigma Rho or another accredited leadership development program.
- Grants for educational resources in your sorority structure, such as desks, bookcases, books, computers and software in the educational areas and for the construction, renovation, maintenance and equipment of Designated Educational Areas of your chapter home.
- Educational grants to cover portions of the registration, travel and accommodation expenses of members of your chapter attending professional society meetings and education events.
- Educational grants to cover portions of the registration, travel, accommodations, supplies and equipment for academic competitions in which the chapter is participating.
- Educational grants to cover portions of a LEAP event the chapter is hosting, including professional development, diversity and inclusion, drug and alcohol awareness, and more.
- Educational grants to cover portions of DreamGirls Initiative programming the chapter is hosting.

The Chapter Fund will be broken into two portions - a ready-to-use (RTU) and endowed portion. Assets held by your Chapter Fund within the Foundation's individual account must reach \$10,000 in principal balance within five years from the date a fund agreement is executed.

How does my chapter establish a Chapter Fund?

- Determine the local advisory committee and send a letter to the Foundation stating the name of those involved and the chapter it will benefit. Letters can be sent to chapterfunds@phisigmarhofoundation.org.
- Execute Chapter Fund Agreement between the Phi Sigma Rho Foundation and the local advisory committee or donor(s).

What is the local advisory committee and what is its role?

A local advisory committee should be established to drive fundraising and determine use of the fund. This committee should be made of both collegiate and alumnae advisors, which may include chapter officer(s), chapter advisors, prominent alumnae or donors, and alumnae association officers. At least one member must be the designated point of contact for the Foundation.

The local advisory committee is responsible for submitting proposals for projects to the Foundation for final approval and funding. Final approval must remain with the Foundation Board as required by IRS regulations. The local advisory committee will also facilitate the fundraising efforts for the Chapter Fund with the local chapter and alumnae association.

This exciting program provides opportunities to fund the educational purposes of your chapter and the educational and leadership needs of its undergraduate sisters. The Foundation Directors look forward to hearing from you.



W Z O LAST Question

Gilmore Girls

Trudie & Makenzie

Falcon and Winter Soldier

Shukurat

NCIS

Ally

How to Get Away with Murder

Emily

Supernatural

Claire

Agents of Shield

Abby

One Tree Hill

Kelsey

Sister Sister

Anjali

Shadow and Bone

Catherine

**What's the last show
you binge watched?**

The Magicians

Tereese

The Blacklist

Rafia

Criminal Minds

Sierra

Younger

Grace

Bridgerton

Anna

Sex and the City

Kiara

Schitt's Creek

Madison & Sophie

Killing Eve

Charlotte

The Witcher

Paula

Outlander

Sharon

The Circle

Sofia, Yashna, Madison & Alison