

# AKA IN THE SIDE A



COVER ARTICLE

# 2018

PRESIDENTS' ACADEMY  
& OFFICER'S INSTITUTE

FEBRUARY 2018

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Brothers,

We started the new year with a Bang! As many of you know we introduced a new membership entry process. As expected it brought out a lot of passion amongst members. I won't argue the merits in this article but I will share what we have learned as we have moved forward.

First, our undergraduates are amazing. They are impacted most by the changes and yet they have been the most supportive, even if they don't completely agree with it. As you know change isn't easy and new processes take time to work out the kinks. These men have accepted the role of trail blazer and continue to make us proud on college campuses across the country.

Second, our volunteers are amazing. I have had 27 conference calls to date with various housing corporations and alumni advisory teams. We have gotten a lot of questions and a lot of suggestions. What has been most impressive though is the focus they have demonstrated on supporting whatever it takes to make sure our undergraduate experience is the safest and best experience it can be.

Finally we have a lot of alumni that keep track of what we do but don't necessarily engage with us or their chapter in a volunteer role. This is not surprising and isn't necessarily a bad thing. The reality though is that it is a wake up call for us all. Many asked "How did we get to this decision?" or suggested that this will completely change the Fraternity. What I think they didn't realize is the Fraternity has already changed from when they were undergraduates. We really do appreciate those who have reached out and had constructive conversations about the changes. I hope it has inspired those and others to reengage in Fraternity.

Change can be scary. Change can be difficult. Change can be stressful. Knowing this we have to accept that we have to change. The world has, college campuses have, the student population has. If we don't we will not have a Fraternity to celebrate in the near future. If you doubt this do a simple Google news search of "Fraternity". If that is not enough do one of Alpha Kappa Lambda. The recent news isn't something that Fraternities or we specifically should be proud of. For all the good we do it is overshadowed by the bad that has happened. We need to reverse this trend and the only way to do so is through change



Fraternally,

Jeremy Slivinski,  
Fraternity of Alpha Kappa Lambda, Executive Director



Inside AKL is a monthly, educational publication by the Fraternity of Alpha Kappa Lambda, for undergraduates and alumni. Brothers and friends are encouraged to submit news, articles and photographs of chapter events, philanthropy and service projects as well as other notable achievements. Correspondence can be submitted using the link below.

[Online Event/Article Submission Form](#)

#### ***Creative Director/Editor***

William "Trey" Nunnally III, Beta Nu at VCU

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Tom Healy, LaunchPoint CEO

Jeremy Slivinski, Beta Nu at VCU

Jeff Szumanski, Gamma Iota at EMU

Trae Venerable, Sigma at Central MO

#### ***Statistics***

Active Chapters & Colonies: 43

Undergraduates: 1,600+

Alumni: 25,149

Spring New Members: 257

Fall New Members: 554

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# 2018 Presidents' Academy

## & Officer's Institute

CLARK-THOMPSON  
PRESIDENTS' ACADEMY



& Officer's Institute

*Earlier this month, Alpha Kappa Lambda* started the new year with the annual Clark-Thompson Presidents' Academy & Officer's Institute. The 2018 Academy & Institute was hosted the weekend of January 12th through the 14th at the Renaissance Hotel in Carmel Indiana.

The program has seen tremendous growth over the past several years. Expanding from chapter Presidents only to adding a Treasurer's track in 2016, then adding more tracks for Recruitment Chairs and Risk Managers the past two years.

This year we had over 140 officers in attendance, a record breaking turnout for the Fraternity! Each track was tailored to the officers' specific needs, with multiple opportunities to come together as a whole brotherhood.

Presidents and Risk managers had focuses on what it means to be a "Man of Character," crisis management, and an NEC Open Forum, to name a few.

Tom Healy, LaunchPoint CEO, led another successful Recruitment Bootcamp with Jeremy Roberson, NHQ Coordinator of Growth. The two were extremely grateful to have such wonderful friends and alumni visit as facilitators during breakout sessions with Recruitment Chairs.

OmegaFi Account Managers were present to work with Treasurers. Detailing the ins-and-outs of the

Vault system used to manage chapter finances.

On the legislative side of events, the next NEC Undergraduate Representative was elected. Congratulations to Chris Beauchene of our Gamma Iota Chapter at Eastern Michigan University. "Being elected to this position is a great responsibility and a great honor." said Chris "It means I have to be aware of the undergraduate

feelings on a national level so I can accurately represent what my fellow brothers would want."

This year, the event hosted more guest speakers than in previous years. David Stollman was present all weekend where he delivered his keynote "Buy In or Get Out," calling for officers to hold their members accountable. A colleague and friend to the Fraternity, Sue Zarnowski, presented throughout the weekend discussing mental health, organization branding, and "Motivating Others to Elevate."

Tom Healy concluded a long Saturday with a rousing take on his "Limitless Leadership," leaving the officers motivated to bring back to their chapter the goals they set over the weekend.

The weekend concluded with a discussion and performance of Ritual where 18 neophytes were initiated. Thanks to everyone who helped make the weekend a success!



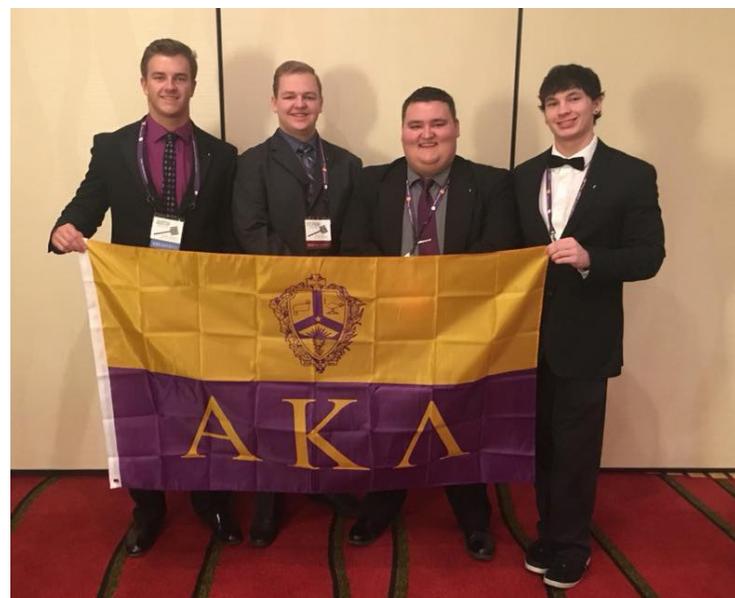
*Special thanks to our facilitators (left to right) Emma Mentley, Kelsie Hinders, Jessie Stinson, Katie Brady, Michael Hood, Jeremy Roberson, Tim Mallory, and Tom Healy!*

## PRESIDENTS' ACADEMY

*(Below) Gamma Sigma Chapter at Old Dominion University represented by Collin Nielson (Recruitment Chair,) Nick Cabellos (VP of Internal Affairs,) and Ethan Polk-Traumen (Treasurer.) Justin said his biggest takeaway from the weekend was "The drive to make a change. I was ready to get back to school and work to fix our problems."*



*(Above) Mu Colony at the Ohio State University represented by Nick Cedillo (Recruitment Chair,) Kyle Weddington (President,) Jon Meyers (Treasurer,) and Dan (Risk Manager.) When asked about the weekend, Kyle said "I had already fallen in love with my chapter. Coming to this conference made me realize we all share an unspoken bond as brothers. It made me fall in love with Alpha Kappa Lambda as a whole."*



*(Left) Saginaw Valley State University Colony represented by Austin Spaetzel (Treasurer,) Stephen Tolfree (Risk Manager,) Gabe Kasper (President,) and Jake Gaudinier (Recruitment.) Gabe "President's Academy was an awesome opportunity for us to learn how to run our positions well." said Gabe, "Our experience this year was even more special as we learned our chartering was accepted and were initiated in front of over 100 brothers from all over the country."*

# Trae Venerable

*Sigma Chapter at University of Central Missouri*



*Trae Venerable, Sigma alum from the University of Central Missouri has taken his self-description “Cowpoke” and turned it into a brand culminating from his past, present, and future business ventures. After being featured in [UCM’s Muleskinner](#), InsideAKL caught up with Trae.*

**It seems you have a wide variety of interests (including photography, design, writing,**

**etc.) What started you on this creative path and where did you find support?**

“I’ve had these interests for awhile but didn’t know how to expand and edify them. One inspiration was my grandma Sammie. She was a master seamstress and owned her own shop in the Garments District of Kansas City. In college I learned the tools and strategies to achieve my deepest dreams, and my great mentors who shaped the way I see business. The people who supported me the most was my sigma chapter of AKL. They really bought into the idea of everything I was doing. Also my family supported me in all my endeavors as well.”

**How were you involved within your chapter?**

“I was looked too as an older brother so I gave all sorts of guidance. Also when the career fair came around I was the one making sure people looked good also having their resume in top shape.”

**“You can do anything you want in this life. Don’t wait til your death bed to say ‘I should have tried this or did that.’”**

**You ran for Homecoming King, what was that experience like?**

“Being the homecoming king candidate for my chapter was one of the coolest feelings and honors. It was a lot of work but meant the world to me. Even though I didn’t win I made top five and that was neat in itself. The brothers helped me in every aspect from float building to getting ready for the pep rally, and cheering the loudest. I could not have done it without them.”

**How have previous business projects led to your current “Cowpoke” brand?**

“All my life experiences have led to the successful brand of CowPoke. As my dad always tells me, ‘everyone has to start somewhere. Mowing grass with my dad was my start into the business world and leading my own destiny. My biggest lesson was perseverance because things don’t always go your way but you need to bounce back. Also, learning how to understand contracts is a huge must.”

**What projects have you been working on post-graduation?**

“Life after graduation is very fast paced. More so than college but it has been fun. I started my new career with Whiting Turner Contracting Company that has been in business for over 100 years. Projects I’m working on now is perfecting the 2nd and 3rd book before they get out to market with my publisher. I’m also getting ready for a book tour and constantly coming out with new designs for CowPoke Brand. There’s been new art shows and having my work in new galleries.”

**Any final advice to share?**

“You can do anything you want in this life. Don’t wait till your death bead to say ‘I should of tried this or did that.’ That’s how I live my life.”

Keep up with Trae’s current and old projects at [www.traevenerable.com](http://www.traevenerable.com)

# CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

*(Right) Gamma Delta chapter members participating in the University of Montevallo's College Night. A homecoming tradition, the event is a student led production and included a pep rally for students.*



*(Far Right) Upsilon Chapter at University of Northern Colorado visiting the 2018 X-Games in Aspen, Colorado.*



*(Far Left) Gamma Sigma chapter's basketball team for Old Dominion University's intramural. Shoutout to Brother Nate Andrews for tying up the game and Brother Jack Mendes for scoring the game winner!*

*(Left) Gamma Sigma Chapter's sweethearts show support for our brothers at Old Dominion University with a clever sign supporting the chapter's intramural basketball game.*

## CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



*(Above Left) Lambda Chapter at Emporia State University celebrating the initiation of their newest members.*



*(Above Right) Mu Colony members of the Ohio State University volunteering at the LSS Champion Food Pantry.*



*(Right) Both undergraduate and alumni members of Alpha Kappa Lambda well represented from 5 different chapters at the Association of Fraternal Leadership & Values Conference (AFLV.)*

## Psychological Safety of Team Members

Originally published August 23rd, 2017  
at [www.launchpoint.org](http://www.launchpoint.org)

*I recently read this fascinating article in Inc. Magazine.* Google conducted a study of successful teams and found they had these 5 things in common. Most of the findings seemed common sense to me, but the final trait I think is the great difference between being a boss of a team and being a leader and it translates from corporations, non-profit groups, and even student organizations.

### 5 Traits of a Successful Team

- Dependability: team members meet expectations
- Structure & Clarity: defined roles and clear goals
- Meaning: team members are passionate about the work they do
- Impact: the group believes their work is significant
- Psychological Safety: team environment is safe for team members to take risks, question decisions, and voice opinions

What are you doing as a leader to create Psychological Safety for your team members? Being a leader and not a boss means being vulnerable, opening yourself up to your team members to build rapport and trust. Here are some easy ways you can create an environment of psychological safety for your team.

**Encourage the Free Flow of Ideas:** especially ideas that may be contradictory to your own! Thank your team for suggestions and thoughtfully consider them. Sometimes leaders attempt to placate team members by asking for suggestions, but they do so with no intention of using suggestions that are not in alignment with their own plans. Team members will see this type of response and will stop offering contributions, because they don't genuinely feel heard.

**Accept Constructive Feedback:** Yes, this is tough! As the boss you don't always want to hear that your approach to leadership isn't being well-received. But step back and thoughtfully listen to your teammates' concerns. This is your opportunity to improve the inner

**“An investment in the people of your organization is an investment in the organization itself.”**

workings of your team. Your leadership style may not be the best to elicit the intended outcomes of your team. You will be better served to adapt to the needs of your team to encourage them to be successful rather than to expect your entire team to adapt to your preferred leadership style.

**Fail Fast:** In the book, *The Confidence Code*, Kay and Shipman discuss the ideal of failing fast. Their research has found the fear of failure prevents people from taking risks. Their idea of failing fast encourages you to try lots of different ideas without fear of failure. Take that risk, because something miraculous could happen! Team members will often hold back on new initiatives and taking risk for fear of your response as their leader. Instead, encourage their creativity and innovation by making them feel safe to fail.

**Be Transparent:** Help your team members feel secure in the direction of your organization by being transparent about the state of the organization. This means sharing relevant information about budgets, policies, partnerships,

and future plans. Your members will have more clarity in their roles and potential accomplishments if they have a full and transparent understanding about what is going on within all aspects of the organization.

To be a leader rather than a boss means to invest in people. Think about who the people are on your team and their needs to help your organization grow and thrive. An investment in the people of your organization is an investment in the organization itself and their success will mean the group's success!

**- Tom Healy**

# 2018 National Conclave

Atlantis Paradise Island Resort: August 1–4, 2018



## ALPHA KAPPA LAMBDA

## CONCLAVE 2018

**REMEMBER  
YOUR**



**PASSPORT**

**[For more information, check out the  
National Conclave website here!](#)**

**[Don't forget your hotel!  
Reserve here!](#)**

**[Easily renew and apply  
for your Passport here!](#)**

### Registration Costs

<b>Undergraduate Delegate</b> per delegate (\$700 per chapter)	\$350.00
<b>Alumni Delegate</b>	\$300.00
<b>Non-Delegate or Guest</b>	\$225.00
<b>Children (Under 18)</b>	\$100.00
<b>Hotel</b> per night (plus tax & fees)	\$209.00

#### Registration Cost include:

- Access to all legislative and education sessions (for members)
- Access to Ritual Ceremony, Re-dedication Ceremony, and Omega Ceremony (for members)
- Access to all provided meals:
  - Friday: AKL Alumni, Friends, & Family Opening Reception
  - Saturday: AKL Education Foundation Luncheon
  - Sunday: Tasters Lunch Buffet, and Presidents' Honors Banquet
- Hotel and Travel costs not included