



Written by



Andy Huston

(Minnesota, '01), Executive Director



I must admit that this past summer, I was not certain that the fraternity would have been able to keep all chapters operating, retain all staff, and successfully maintain our austere budget. A great deal of planning from staff and volunteers, innovative resource development, and new chapter engagement strategies made us hopeful at this time last year. These exceptional plans were also met with an extraordinary investment in staff time and energy to sustain chapter operations. As a result, we were able to coach chapters to execute COVID-19 quarantine and isolation protocols, build confidence in virtual and hybrid operations, navigate anti-Greek Life campaigns on campuses, and virtually initiate hundreds of our newest fratres.

Sigma Alpha Mu currently has a presence on 46 campuses. We ended the 2019-2020 academic year with 2605 undergraduate fratres, but began the 2020-2021 academic year with 1580 undergraduate fratres. Recruitment efforts this academic year yielded 613 candidates, which is a 24.2% decrease in year-over-year performance compared to a forecasted reduction of 25%. A third of our chapters did as well or better with recruitment than the previous fall term. Half of the chapters could say the same this spring.

WE ADDED FOUR ACTIVE LOCATIONS TO OUR CHAPTER ROLL THIS ACADEMIC YEAR.

Spurred by our ΣAM 2030 strategic plan, we have continued to prioritize growth. We added four active locations to our chapter roll this academic year. We have chartered Mu Pi at Colorado-Boulder as a holdover from spring 2020 and successfully restarted Sigma Alpha at Oklahoma this fall. Spring 2021 growth efforts included restarts for Epsilon Theta at West Virginia and Omicron at Cincinnati. It is our vision to build our team to support up to eight expansion projects a year by 2030. We are actively communicating with more than 60 university administrators about our expansion prospects, which includes dormant and new locations.

A THIRD OF OUR CHAPTERS DID AS WELL OR BETTER WITH RECRUITMENT THAN THE PREVIOUS FALL TERM.

We have delivered a steady flow of virtual programming (including webinars, videos, and enhanced social media content) throughout the academic year thanks to the diligent and creative work by the education committee and staff. The virtual Chapter Leaders Day program reached 329 participants and facilitators. The advantage of the virtual CLD format was the ability to have breakouts with leaders of similar chapter size and institution type, rather than just those

SIGMA ALPHA MU HAS PERSEVERED.

in regional proximity. The chapter visitation program was transitioned to virtual, bi-weekly coaching calls with each chapter. Yes, we are all anxiously awaiting the return to normal times. Our future following the COVID-19 pandemic will likely look different from the international fraternity. We have evolved programs and services. Zoom meetings and reunions have their place. As do handshakes and hugs. We hope you let us know when you reconnect with your fellow fratres in person. We look forward to seeing those photos. In the meantime, the screenshots will do. Sigma Alpha Mu has persevered. We can continue to sing out with confidence, "everlasting, ever faithful, ever staunch and true stands the brotherhood we formed in Sigma Alpha Mu."