



# The Sig House

*A Newsletter from the Board of Grand Trustees*

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Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama Ph 662.494.2593

## Grand Trustee Alumni Engagement Initiative

The leaders of the Sigma Chi Fraternity have declared the biennium of 2017-19 under one joint banner of One Voice. The vision is to be the preeminent leadership and character development brotherhood benefitting our membership throughout life.

In the past, various Grand Consuls have tasked the Grand Trustees with many arduous assignments. Sigma Chi's mortgage loan entity, Constantine Capital, Inc., its insurance company Risk Management Foundation and charitable giving, leadership training and scholarship entity, Sigma Chi Foundation, were all conceived by the Grand Trustees.

With this long and worthy history of achievements, Grand Consul Tommy Geddings tasked the Grand Trustees to improve alumni engagement. In the past, efforts concentrated alumni involvement in chapter locations and bigger cities.

But in order to be more effective, we need to engage Sigma Chis from all corners of the world. Sigma Chi alumni groups are not an extension of any specific chapter, but can support both local and regional chapters in addition to building the commitment to friendship, justice and learning.

There are five phases of the alumni engagement plan:

**1. Established Alumni Groups.** We will mine established groups for best practices and showcase them as models for other alumni groups.

**2. Struggling Alumni Groups.** For

those alumni groups that are active but low in numbers, we will nurture them with support, education and marketing resources.

**3. Reactivate Former Alumni Groups.** Where a core group of brothers exist, we will help re-energize the group with support, education and marketing resources.

**4. In University Communities.** Provide resources to the chapters and house corporations and alumni support for new colonies.

**5. New Development Areas.** Merge alumni at central locations in areas that have 20 or more Sigma Chi alums.

These are several first steps:

A. Contact each active alumni group to explain the mission, in person if possible, and become a member of their group.

B. Contact each Grand Praetor for information about any informal alumni groups with the goal of growing them into formal groups.

C. Inform every house corporation of the alumni engagement plan, that we are going to build the alumni base and learn what participation they have already.

D. Scan social media for Sigma Chi alumni groups.

The alumni engagement challenge is in good hands with your Grand Trustees. What is needed is YOU to make it a resounding success.

*By Grand Trustees Bill Robinson and Rich Thompson IHSV*

## Sigma Chi Fraternity's



Affordable financing options up to \$250,000 for Sigma Chi house corporations that own chapter houses

- Chapter House Purchase
- Life & Fire Safety Upgrades
- New Construction
- Renovation



*Ritual Regalia Loans up to \$5000*



For more information, contact  
**Ed Rammrath**  
[eramrath@rammrathrealty.com](mailto:eramrath@rammrathrealty.com)  
Phone 832.483.8676

### **Sleeping Loft Liability**

Many chapter houses have sleeping "lofts" or "platforms" that were constructed by undergraduate residents. If not properly designed and installed, they present dangerous life safety issues.

Typical safety considerations include:

1. Distance to Ceiling. Lofts typically are constructed close to the ceiling. Fire code is typically 4 feet clearance to avoid a "smoke pocket" and to be visible and accessible to fire and rescue attempting to locate occupants.
2. Material Combustibility. Wood structures and privacy curtains are highly combustible.
3. Block Egress. Lofts often block access to windows and other fire egress.
4. Structural Capacity. The design may be inadequate for load and collapse.

There are simply too many things that

can go wrong. If these structures exist in your chapter house, consider removing and banning future installations. **IHSV**

### **CCI Corner**

Constantine Capital Inc. (CCI) is Sigma Chi's mortgage provider for qualified house corporations. It can finance a variety of renovation and upgrade projects up to \$250,000 such as:

- Chapter House Purchase
- Life & Safety Upgrades
- New Construction
- Renovation Projects, and
- Loan Guaranty

In the past two years, CCI has provided financing totaling \$1,123,635 for house corporations at Rensselaer Polytechnic, University of Southern California, University of Southern Alabama, Stephen F. Austin University, California State-Northridge, Denison University and University of Central Florida.

Does your house corporation have a

chapter house financing needs? Contact Ed Rammrath at Ph 832.483.8676 or [eramrath@rammrathrealty.com](mailto:eramrath@rammrathrealty.com) **IHSV**

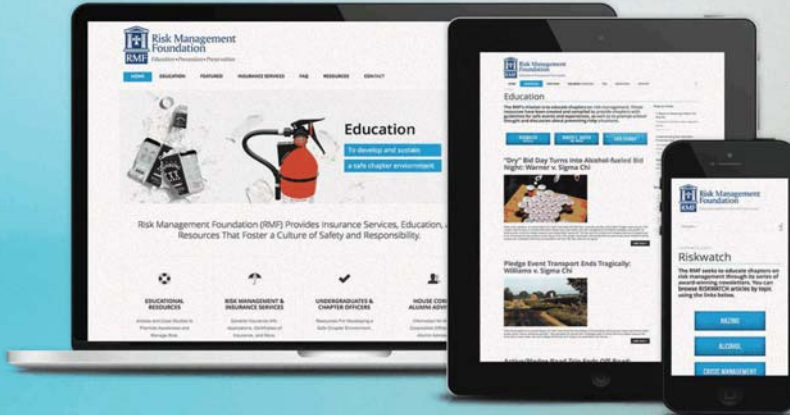
### **HCOTS 2017 Recap**

Each year, the Board of Grand Trustees host House Corporation Officers Training Seminar in conjunction with Balfour Leadership Training Seminar (BLTW). This year, the event was held at Bowling Green University.

Twenty eight attended the three day HCOTS to learn about organizational governance, standard operating procedures, risk management, fund raising, budgeting, effective communications, loan options from Constantine Capital Inc. and understanding today's undergraduate brother. The group was treated to a tour of the Bowling Green chapter house.

We extend heartfelt appreciation to these dedicated volunteers who give so freely of their time to Sigma Chi. **IHSV**

Announcing our new website...



RMFEducation.org

- ✦ Watch Risk Management Videos
- ✦ Read RISKWATCH Articles
- ✦ Download Checklists & Safety Tips
- ✦ Search RMF Archives

Know the Risks, Be Proactive, Develop a Plan



## Bylaws by Law

House corporations, like any corporation, need a legal basis and framework to work properly. The legal basis is established by filing Articles of Incorporation with your appropriate state or province department. This is usually a relatively simple and inexpensive procedure.

Every house corporation also needs “bylaws” which are the framework by which a corporation operates. Bylaws have been defined as “The document that contains the ground rules by which a corporation is run. Bylaws normally establish such matters as the titles and duties of officers, the timing and procedures for board meetings and the annual meeting.” Each house corporation should have a set of Bylaws which describes the house corporation’s scope of authority. The Grand Trustees have developed a sample set of Bylaws which can be adapted for your house corporation’s use. For a sample set, email [rich.thompson@sigmachi.com](mailto:rich.thompson@sigmachi.com) before enacting Bylaws of any kind, they should be reviewed by a knowledgeable attorney in your state or province.

**Board of Directors.** House corporations typically have three or more directors. (The number of directors should be an odd number so votes aren’t deadlocked.) Directors are usually elected for terms ranging typically from two to three years. The directors run the business of the house corporation and meet periodically to discuss issues and to enact and enforce policies and procedures. From the pool of directors, officers are appointed.

**Officers.** House corporations have a leadership structure. At minimum, there should be a President, Treasurer and Secretary. If the number of directors permits, a Vice President position can be added. Officers are typically appointed and ratified by the board majority with a term of office lasting until the next election. Officers can step down voluntarily or be removed by the board at any time.

**a. President.** The President is the highest office on the house corporation totem pole. The President has authority to speak and act on behalf of the board as long as those actions conform to the approved budget and established policies and procedures. If the issue

falls outside these boundaries, the President should hold a board meeting to determine the board majority’s wishes before proceeding. The President runs board meetings and usually has check and contract signing authority.

**b. Vice President.** This officer fills in for the President when he is unavailable. He can be called on by the President to assist in scheduling and organizing meetings, compiling meeting agendas and other executive tasks. The Vice President often takes over the President’s position if it becomes vacant between elections.

**c. Treasurer.** This officer is responsible for the financial aspects of the house corporation. The duties include reconciling bank accounts, producing financial reports, drafting the annual budget, paying bills and collecting rent and other money owed to the house corporation. The Treasurer usually has check signing authority.

**d. Secretary.** This officer is in charge of taking minutes at meetings and performing various house corporation communications which could include

letters, newsletters and website updates.

**Board Meetings.** The house corporation should meet at regular intervals to review financial reports, organize fund raising and deal with routine and special issues. When properly organized, quarterly meetings will usually suffice. Ideally, meetings should be face to face but can also be done effectively by teleconference. Teleconferencing allows the inclusion of directors who may not live locally or who are out of town.

Board meetings should always have a predetermined agenda and time frame. Meetings should generally not last longer than two hours (one is better). Properly organized meetings include providing the directors with agendas and related information in advance of the meeting for review.

All meetings should be *action driven*. Agenda items should have specific recommendations for voting and not simply be rambling discussions. Volunteers value their time and running effective and efficient meetings is an important way to respect that time. It's the President's job to ensure the agenda stays focused and moving forward. One way to do this is a *timed action agenda*. Here's a sample:

- a. Approve Minutes of Last Board Meeting. (Secretary) 5 minutes.
- b. Review Current Financial Statement (Treasurer) 5 minutes
- c. Committee Reports.
  1. Newsletter. 5 minutes
  2. Fund raiser. 15 minutes
- d. Old Business Items.
  1. Approve roof contract. 15 minutes
- f. New Business Items.
  1. Approve new bylaws. 30 minutes
  2. Others Items? 15 minutes
- e. Set Date of Next Meeting. 1 minute

The annual meeting agenda is similar but with the addition of Board Elections.

Bylaws provide the framework every house corporation needs. If your house corporation has not yet adopted bylaws, a sample has been developed by Grand Trustees Harvey Silverman and Rich Thompson which can be adapted for your use. It can be found at the end of this newsletter. As with any legal document, it should be reviewed by a

qualified attorney in your local jurisdiction to ensure that the necessary omissions and additions are made so it complies with all applicable statutes.

All house corporations which aren't incorporated should make arrangements *immediately* to have this done. For guidance, contact your province's Grand Trustee. A list with contact information is found on Page 1. **IHSV**

## House Corporation Resource Directory

### ARCHITECTURAL & PLANNING SERVICES

**Aynesworth Architects & Consultants** 512.328.2272  
G. Tim Aynesworth [tim@aynesworth.com](mailto:tim@aynesworth.com)  
PO Box 161434, Austin TX 78716 [www.aynesworth.com](http://www.aynesworth.com)  
Architectural design and construction management. Texas Registered Architect, Certified by National Council of Architectural Registration Board.

**Hug & Associates, LLC** 678.297.2929  
Mike Hug [mhug@HugArchitects.com](mailto:mhug@HugArchitects.com)  
5250 Avalon Blvd  
Alpharetta GA 30009 [www.HugArchitects.com](http://www.HugArchitects.com)  
Specializing in the design and renovation of fraternity housing.

**Reifsteck Reid & Company Architects** 217.351.7403  
Rod Reid [rod.reid@comcast.net](mailto:rod.reid@comcast.net)  
Chapter house renovation and construction design; collects data, analyzes project requirements, develops cost estimates; assists locating design and construction team members.

### CHAPTER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

**Pierce Education Properties, L.P.** 619.297.0400  
Matt Maruccia, VP for Acquisitions  
[www.PierceEducationProperties.com](http://www.PierceEducationProperties.com) National developers, buyers, owners and operators of student housing with specific expertise in Greek Housing acquisition, disposition, development, finance, etc.

### CHAPTER HOUSE FINANCING

**Constantine Capital, Inc.** 832.483.8676  
Ed Rammrath [eramrath@rammrathrealty.com](mailto:eramrath@rammrathrealty.com)  
Affordable financing to Sigma Chi house corporations for chapter house purchase, life & safety upgrades, new construction, renovation and loan guaranty

### CHAPTER HOUSE RENOVATION & DESIGN

**LAUNCH Interior Design** 916.660.9856  
David Leinberger C 916.769.2464  
[launch@starstream.net](mailto:launch@starstream.net) [www.launchinteriordesign.com](http://www.launchinteriordesign.com)  
New construction and renovation for cost effective and efficient design selections including paint colors, furniture, lighting, window & floor coverings and more.

### FINANCIAL & DATABASE MANAGEMENT

**GreekBill, Inc.** [www.greekbill.com](http://www.greekbill.com) 800.457.3816  
Web-based billing and financial management service enables billing, collecting, budgeting, reporting, online payment options

**OmegaFi** [www.omegafi.com](http://www.omegafi.com) 800.276.6342  
Chapter and alumni management tools to bill and collect dues and rent, manage rosters and records, pay bills and employees and file tax returns.

### FOOD SERVICES

**Campus Cooks** 847.309.1859  
William Reeder [wreeder@campuscooks.com](mailto:wreeder@campuscooks.com)  
Comprehensive program: on-site cook plus management of staffing, payroll, food and supply ordering, menu preparation. [www.campuscooks.com](http://www.campuscooks.com)

### College Chefs

Jordan Wigton [jwigton@collegechefs.com](mailto:jwigton@collegechefs.com) 217.369.7267  
[www.collegechefs.com](http://www.collegechefs.com) We provide trained professional chefs to prepare delicious meals and maintain a spotless kitchen.

### Culinary Consultants Purchasing Services

Stan Faulkner [Support@infoccps.com](mailto:Support@infoccps.com) 314.422.3407  
Brian Heider [www.infoccps.com](http://www.infoccps.com) 847.566.7533  
National buying program exclusively for fraternity chapters with food programs. Instant cost savings with no major changes to existing food program.

### Gill Grilling

Brian Gill [brian@gillgrilling.com](mailto:brian@gillgrilling.com) 443.822.0264  
[www.gillgrilling.com](http://www.gillgrilling.com) Equipment consultation & purchasing, Nutritional analysis, payroll, custom menus. Serving Maryland, Massachusetts & Alabama.

### Greek Kitchen Management

Justin Rolnick [info@greekkitchenmanagement.com](mailto:info@greekkitchenmanagement.com) 623.565.8289  
[www.greekkitchenmanagement.com](http://www.greekkitchenmanagement.com) Kitchen management program: staffing, ordering and food preparation. Cleaning products: cleaning chemicals, supplies & paper goods

### FLOORING

**The Carpet Company** 541.484.5373  
Daryl Egbert C 541.517.8820  
[daryle@thecarpetcompany.biz](mailto:daryle@thecarpetcompany.biz) [www.thecarpetcompany.biz](http://www.thecarpetcompany.biz)  
All major brands of commercial and residential flooring.

### FUNDRAISING & COMMUNICATION

**Affinity Connection** 814.237.0481 ext 131  
Greg Woodman [greg@affinityconnection.com](mailto:greg@affinityconnection.com)  
[www.affinityconnection.com](http://www.affinityconnection.com) Database management, website hosting/management, newsletter production, enewsletters, fundraising assistance, donation processing

### Member Planet

Patrick Terrian 888.298.8845  
C 310.590.4413  
[pterrian@memberplanet.com](mailto:pterrian@memberplanet.com) [www.memberplanet.com](http://www.memberplanet.com)  
Email newsletters and text messaging, chapter websites, member database, donation sites.

### Pennington & Associates

Patrick Alderdice 785.843.1661  
[palderdice@penningtonco.com](mailto:palderdice@penningtonco.com)  
[www.penningtonco.com](http://www.penningtonco.com) Capital campaign coordination, gift management, alumni relations programs, website development

### The Laurus Group

Bill Paris 770.903.3987  
[bparis@thelaurusgroup.net](mailto:bparis@thelaurusgroup.net) C 404.441.9630  
[www.thelaurusgroup.net](http://www.thelaurusgroup.net) Fundraising consulting specializing in capital campaigns, gift management, alumni communications, annual funds

### HOUSE DIRECTOR SEARCH & SCREENING

**Greek House Resource** 361.450.0818  
[greekhs@gmail.com](mailto:greekhs@gmail.com) [www.greekhouse.net](http://www.greekhouse.net)  
Screen, interview and placement for chapter house directors.

### INCORPORATION ASSISTANCE

**Grand Trustee Harvey Silverman** 703.319.8806  
[harveyas@aol.com](mailto:harveyas@aol.com)

*Do you offer a service for Sigma Chi house corporations? Email [rich.thompson@sigmachicago.com](mailto:rich.thompson@sigmachicago.com) with the details and get listed in the Service Directory.*



## Board of Grand Trustees

Front L to R: Nathan Neal, Joel Jensen, Joe Beers, Breck Grover, Kyle White, Tony Flores, Bill Robinson, Scott Ross, Rich Thompson  
Back L to R: Al Williams, Rich Hronek, Tom Samulski, Kelly Park, Gaurav Parikh, Bill Bringham Jr  
Missing: JB Allen, Jim Carroll, Jeff Murison

