



The Sig House

A Newsletter from the Board of Grand Trustees

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Christmas Break Precautions

Finals are coming to an end and it is time to go home for the holidays! Before you leave, be sure to prepare the chapter house for the extended break. Northern climate chapter houses need to be protected against cold weather. In addition, the absence of brothers increases the threat of vandalism or theft. The following list will help ensure that the chapter house is prepared to weather the storm.

Interior:

- Thoroughly clean the chapter house and remove all perishable foods.
- Inspect each room and unplug non-essential appliances and electronics.
- Store chapter and personal property in a secured area.
- Confirm that heat registers are not blocked and that combustible materials are safely stored (not next to or in the same room as the furnace or boiler).
- Set the thermostat at no less than 60°F/16°C and leave the furnace on.
- Leave indoor faucets slightly open to allow for a trickle of water--this may protect piping that is exposed or cannot be properly insulated.
- Leave open the doors to cabinets that contain water lines as this will allow heat to enter the area.
- Utilize the assistance of a qualified heating service company to inspect the furnace, hot water heater, exposed water lines and drain pipes for slow leaks.

- Repair any broken exterior doors or windows, which cause heat loss. Make sure they are properly insulated and that they close and latch completely.
- If a fireplace has been used, be sure to clean out the coals and close the flue. If it has not already been done, have the fireplace and chimney serviced and cleaned.

Exterior:

- Remove and store all hoses from exterior spigots and faucets.
- Inspect all gutters and drains for debris, which might interfere with runoff and proper drainage.
- Attach and secure downspouts with an extension away from the foundation in order to prevent water damage. Additionally, ensure that the water is not draining into the driveway, sidewalks or patios.
- Lock all windows and doors.

While Chapter House is Vacant:

- House corporation should inspect house twice a week making sure that the furnace is working, house is secure and walks clear of snow and ice.
- Arrange to have mail held
- Alert university or city police to the vacant house and request that they make regular patrols of the property to prevent vandalism and theft.

These items are a good start as you lock up the house for the holiday season.

From Sigma Chi's Risk Management Foundation IHSV

Taming the Energy Tiger

Winter weather will soon start spiking energy costs of many chapter houses. Heating chapter houses is always a major bite of the budget. With energy prices at an all time high, proper budgeting and better control of heating costs is essential before the energy tiger pounces on another victim.

In older housing, poor insulation and inefficient or poorly tuned HVAC equipment is often the tiger. In new facilities built to conserve energy, the tiger is the tenant who carelessly leaves doors and windows open.

Fortunately, many states offer energy conservation loans or rebates to help old housing become more energy efficient. These opportunities trigger an "energy audit" to determine where the building needs help. The energy audit is usually arranged through your local power, gas or oil provider. If available, do this first since it will provide a priority list to determine needed upgrades and cost. Most energy upgrades pay for themselves in less than ten years so upgrading is more of an investment than an expense. If your state offers assistance in energy audits, loans and/or rebates RUN don't walk to the phone and investigate the options today.

Here is a handy checklist of things to look for if you are in the self help mode:

- Check doors for proper weatherstripping. Add where needed.
- If windows are single pane, add aluminum storm windows or replace with thermopane windows.
- Close vents in storage areas and other rooms that do not require heat.
- Service the boiler, furnace, or heat pump to assure efficiency, understanding units in poor operation use more fuel and work harder. Replace air filters several times a year. If the heating or cooling equipment is old and inefficient, investigate modern replacements. The cost is often paid

back in a few years by the energy cost savings.

- Use less hot water by installing low flow shower heads. Wash clothes in cold water, Set the hot water heater at 120 degrees.
- Set daytime temperature at 68-70 degrees in the daytime and 62-66 degrees in the evenings. In no circumstance should heat be set lower than 55 during cold winter conditions since pipes can freeze.
- Install a humidistat that automatically controls bathroom ventilation fans based on room humidity. Once humidity is removed, it shuts off so that excess heated air isn't being unnecessarily exhausted as well.
- Keep all exterior doors and windows closed during extreme weather. Install automatic closers on doors to help the process.

Begin the energy conservation process when weather is moderate so that you can enjoy the savings when costs begin to ratchet up. Tame that energy eating tiger. [IHSV](#)

Board of Grand Trustees An Historical Prospective

Ever since its creation in 1903, the Board of Grand Trustees has been a well-respected and useful partner in Sigma Chi governance. Starting as a group of five senior Fraternity leaders, its mandate was to oversee the Endowment Funds, the precursor of the Sigma Chi Foundation. The Endowment Funds included programs of aid for chapter houses, scholarships, student aid and The Magazine.

As the Fraternity grew in size and importance, so did the Endowments and with them, the Board of Grand Trustees. In 1936, the Board was enlarged to nine members; in 1955 the number of Grand Trustees was increased to fifteen at the Centennial Grand Chapter and in 2011 increased to eighteen.

With the creation of the Sigma Chi Foundation in 1939, the Grand Trustees' continued to concentrate on Fraternity-related assets, with a tightening focus on housing and house corporations, the numbers of which grew at an ever-increasing rate, especially after World War II. However, as time passed, because the Board was loath to publicize its valuable work, they began to be criticized as "an elephant's graveyard for decrepit former Grand Praetors," and a "holding tank" for Grand Consuls-in-waiting.

The 1975 Governing Laws Committee attempted to reorganize the structure of the Fraternity. The draft presented for adoption at the 1975 Grand Chapter made no mention of the Grand Trustees. An appointed committee was created to oversee the Endowment and the question about who would deal with housing issues was not addressed. A Motion to Reconsider was proposed and the mission of the Grand Trustees clarified, focusing them on housing issues.

Almost immediately, the make-up of the Board began to change. Younger members were elected and functioning committees were organized. At one point, in the early 1980s, the ages of sitting Grand Trustees ranged from the early 30s to over 90. In 1985, the Board was given the responsibility of making mortgage loans from the Endowment and a Mortgage Credit Committee was created to undertake and manage this function. At the same time, Grand Trustees began a transformation into the Fraternity's "think tank".

Aware of the problems that active chapters and house corporations were experiencing in securing liability and property insurance at reasonable cost, Grand Trustees lead an Insurance Commission to tackle the problem. Three years later, the Risk Management Foundation was rolled out. Not long after, in order to modernize chapter property financing, the Board brought forth the concept of a Sigma Chi mortgage bank and Constantine Capital, Inc. was born. Both organizations, wholly-owned subsidiaries of the Sigma

Sigma Chi Fraternity's Constantine Capital, Inc.

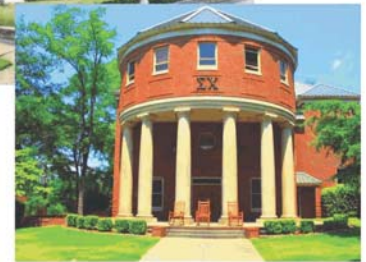


Affordable financing options up to \$250,000 for Sigma Chi house corporations that own chapter houses

Ask about CCI Express for loans up to \$25,000
Less paperwork;
Faster approval

Ritual Regalia Loans up to \$5000

For more information, contact
robert.schock.zo@sigmachi.com



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

Chi Corporation, and originally staffed by Grand Trustees, were innovative approaches to Fraternity insurance and mortgage lending concerns.

Today, the Board of Grand Trustees continues serving its mandate to provide liaison and expertise to active chapters and house corporations in all aspects of Fraternity housing management and financing. The 2003 Mission Statement:

The mission of the Board of Grand Trustees is to assist our house corporations in the acquisition, construction, renovation and maintenance of chapter houses that are appropriate residences for our brothers and worthy of the reputation of Sigma Chi. [IHVS](#)

Constantine Capital Q&A

One of the primary charges of the Grand Trustees is to improve chapter house conditions for livability and to address life/safety improvements like fire

sprinkler systems. Sigma Chi has an outstanding mortgage money source available known as Constantine Capital, Inc.(CCI) that can help make those goals a reality.

Q How much money can CCI lend?
A Up to \$250,000.

Q Is an appraisal necessary?
A Yes. But depending on the loan amount and the level of equity, a tax appraisal or Competitive Market Analysis provided by a local real estate agent might suffice in lieu of a paid appraisal.

Q What if the university owns the chapter house?
A CCI is looking for “tangible” collateral and can make a loan if the house corporation has a leasehold interest.

Q What are current loan interest rates?
A CCI's loan rates are competitive with the commercial mortgage market and the loan process is usually somewhat

less complicated.

Q What is the term of the loan?

A CCI loans can have up to a 30 year amortization schedule but the loan comes due in 5 years. If payments have been made as agreed and the house corporation is in good standing, CCI can consider renewing the note for another 5 years.

Q What collateral does CCI require?

A CCI needs a 1st or 2nd mortgage and normally requires local alums to personally guarantee a percentage of the loan.

Q So what's the first step in applying for a CCI loan?

A Contact CCI Chair Bob Schock robert.schock.zo@sigmachi.com who can help put together a loan application.

The Grand Trustees encourage house corporations in need of funding to take advantage of this “in-house” option. For more information, go to www.sigmachi.org/constantine-capital-inc [IHVS](#)

Giving = Happiness

It's a well known proverb that money can't buy happiness, but according to a recent study by scientists at the University of British Columbia, giving money away may be able to do so. They found a correlation between a person's happiness and the amount of money that they give to others. Psychologist Elizabeth Dunn stated "Regardless of how much income each person made, those who spent money on others reported greater happiness, while those who spent more on themselves did not."

Someone apparently doesn't need to donate thousands of dollars on others to reap a gleeful reward. Researchers gave college students a \$20 bill, asking them to spend the money by that evening. Half the participants were instructed to spend the money on themselves, and the remaining students to spend on others. Participants who spent the windfall on others reported feeling happier at the end of the day than those who spent the money on themselves.

If such small sums spent on others can produce a surge in happiness on a given day, why don't people make these changes? In a study of more than 100 college students, researchers found that most students thought personal spending would make them happier than spending on others. While it does cause momentarily happiness, the warm feelings are short-lived.

There are a number of benefits about giving:

- People feel good about themselves when they do it.
- It helps build social relationships.
- It helps a person express a certain identity.
- It provides a mean to life. Giving away money to a cause you believe in is a more effective purchase than buying a T-shirt that says "Save a Whale."

Every house corporation should engage in fund raising to maintain the chapter house, raise scholarship money, for team building, to unify alums and to attract

volunteers. Now you have one more reason: You are helping boost your brothers' happiness by giving them an opportunity to give. [IHSV](#)

House Corporation Resource Directory

ARCHITECTURAL & PLANNING SERVICES

Aynesworth Architects & Consultants 512.328.2272
G. Tim Aynesworth tim@aynesworth.com
PO Box 161434, Austin TX 78716 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
3010 Royal Boulevard South, Suite 250
Alpharetta GA 30022 www.HugArchitects.com
Specializing in the design and renovation of fraternity housing.

Reid Studio Architecture LLC 217.390.7403

Rod Reid 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 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. 816.300.0604
Bob Schock robert.schock.zo@sigmachi.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 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 800.457.3816
Web-based billing and financial management service enables billing, collecting, budgeting, reporting, online payment options

OmegaFi 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
Comprehensive program: on-site cook plus management of staffing, payroll, food and supply ordering, menu preparation. www.campuscooks.com

Culinary Consultants Purchasing Services
Stan Faulkner Support@infoccps.com 314.422.3407
Brian Heider 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.

FOOD SERVICES

Gill Grilling 443.822.0264
Brian Gill brian@gillgrilling.com
www.gillgrilling.com Equipment consultation & purchasing, Nutritional analysis, payroll, custom menus. Serving Maryland, Massachusetts & Alabama.

Greek Kitchen Management 623.565.8289
Justin Rolnick info@greekkitchenmanagement.com
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 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
www.affinityconnection.com Database management, website hosting/management, newsletter production, enewsletters, fundraising assistance, donation processing

Pennington & Associates 785.843.1661
Patrick Alderdice palderdice@penningtonco.com
www.penningtonco.com Capital campaign coordination, gift management, alumni relations programs, website development

The Laurus Group 770.903.3987
Bill Paris bparis@thelaurusgroup.net C 404.441.9630
www.thelaurusgroup.net Fundraising consulting specializing in capital campaigns, gift management, alumni communications, annual funds

HOUSE DIRECTOR SEARCH & SCREENING

Greek House Resource 512.836.7176
greekhs@gmail.com www.greekhouse.net
Screen, interview and placement for chapter house directors.

INCORPORATION ASSISTANCE

Grand Trustee Harvey Silverman 703.319.8806
harveyas@aol.com

Do you provide a product or service for Sigma Chi Fraternity chapter houses? Get listed in The Sig House Resource Directory! Email rich.thompson@sigmachi.com IHSV

Here to Serve

The Grand Trustees are available to assist house corporations in a myriad of ways. The eighteen Grand Trustees have over 700 years of combined professional expertise in areas like property management, project administration, politics, maintenance, renovation, insurance, tax planning, accounting, construction, fund raising, legal, education, housing, risk management and more. Give us a try. [IHSV](#)

May the
White Cross
guide your every
thought, word and deed.