



# The Sig House

*A Newsletter from the Board of Grand Trustees*

## BOARD OF GRAND TRUSTEES

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**Chairman** Ph 559.304.0686  
California

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**Vice Chairman** Ph 717.329.1324  
North Carolina, South Carolina

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**Treasurer** Ph 815.666.5742  
Kentucky, Tennessee

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**Secretary** Ph 440.934.4114  
Ohio, Indiana

**Steve Schuyler (2019)** [sgschuyler@sigmachi.com](mailto:sgschuyler@sigmachi.com)  
**Executive Committee Representative** Ph 520.745.6221  
Arizona, New Mexico, Utah

**Bill Robinson (2019)** [bill.robinson@sigmachi.com](mailto:bill.robinson@sigmachi.com)  
**Grand Praetor Liaison** Ph 239.293.5239

Florida, Georgia  
**JB Allen (2019)** [jballen@sig1855.com](mailto:jballen@sig1855.com)  
New York, Connecticut Ph 917.353.2730

**Bill Bringham, Jr. (2019)** [ECBFinl@att.net](mailto:ECBFinl@att.net)  
Illinois, Wisconsin Ph 847.710.5080

**Al Williams (2019)** [ajwilliams@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:ajwilliams@ns.sympatico.ca)  
Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Michigan Ph 902.483.1287

**John Bibo (2017)** [jbibo@austin.rr.com](mailto:jbibo@austin.rr.com)  
Texas, Oklahoma Ph 512.350.6170

**Tom Ely (2017)** [telytn@gmail.com](mailto:telytn@gmail.com)  
Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas Ph 931.358.4981

**Breck Grover (2019)** [dbgrover1@comcast.net](mailto:dbgrover1@comcast.net)  
Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming Ph 303.548.0378  
North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa

**Jim Carroll (2017)** [james.carroll@disney.com](mailto:james.carroll@disney.com)  
Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Ph 860.329.2918  
Maine, Vermont, Rhode Island

**Nathan Neal (2019)** [nastysig@aol.com](mailto:nastysig@aol.com)  
Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania Ph 202.427.4981

**Scott Ross (2019)** [hsross@bellsouth.net](mailto:hsross@bellsouth.net)  
Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama Ph 662.494.2593

**Harvey Silverman (2017)** [harveyas@aol.com](mailto:harveyas@aol.com)  
Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia Ph 703.319.8806

**Rich Thompson (2017)** [rich.thompson@sigmachi.com](mailto:rich.thompson@sigmachi.com)  
**Communications Czar** Ph 503.481.7974  
Oregon, Nevada, Montana, Minnesota, Alaska, Hawaii

**Clyde Dornier (2017)** [cdornier@hotmail.com](mailto:cdornier@hotmail.com)  
British Columbia, Washington, Idaho Ph 650.727.2533  
Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba

## Seven Successful Habits

House corporations are charged with providing safe and adequate chapter housing. To be successful at this, follow these Seven Successful Habits:

### 1. Operate Like a Business

- ◆ Incorporate.
- ◆ Conduct at least two meetings per year.
- ◆ Prepare and distribute minutes for all meetings.
- ◆ Prepare an annual budget based on historical expenses.
- ◆ Develop a well-balanced board of directors with a mix of ages, experience and skills.

### 2. Execute a Rental Agreement

- ◆ Specify the amount of rent for each period (monthly, semester or annually).
- ◆ Establish reasonable rules and policies (like alcohol/substance free and no smoking).
- ◆ Specify the right of the house corporation to terminate the agreement if tenants breach the agreement.
- ◆ Require written rental agreements signed by parents/guardians from all tenants.
- ◆ Require a security deposit from each tenant.
- ◆ Conduct regular property inspections for both cleanliness and maintenance.
- ◆ Have a check-in and check-out procedure.
- ◆ Provide professional cleaning of the bathroom and kitchen to ensure sanitary condition.
- ◆ Provide a landscape service (and snow removal service if applies) to maintain curb appeal.

### 3. Charge Fair Market Rent

- ◆ Charge fair and competitive market rent. If you are fortunate enough to collect more than you need, put it into a reserve fund. You'll need it.

### 4. Establish a Reserve Fund

- ◆ Establish a replacement reserve fund to pay for expense renovations like painting, roofing, carpeting, etc. plus a 30 year schedule for planning purposes.
- ◆ Update the reserve plan every year.
- ◆ Schedule projects during the summer or winter break to avoid disruption.

### 5. Reduce Debt

- ◆ Reduce interest on debt when possible by refinancing.
- ◆ Always charge a fair market rent even when debt is paid off to build reserves.

### 6. Fill the House

- ◆ Establish a fair market rent based on what is needed to pay house corporation expenses (insurance, utilities, maintenance, debt, and reserves).
- ◆ Close the chapter house in the summer unless it will raise more substantially more revenue than the maintenance and repair costs.
- ◆ Require that all undergraduates live in the chapter house at least four semesters if capacity allows it. To avoid the "I didn't know I had to" responses, have all pledges sign a contract which includes the requirement to live in the chapter house and pay parlor fees when living out.

### 7. Promote a Sense of Ownership

- ◆ Encourage undergraduate brothers to attend house corporation board meetings to promote "buy in".

◆ Solicit input from the undergraduates to provide a facility that will be competitive in amenities.

◆ Reacquaint the undergraduates every year with the purpose and functions of the house corporation.

Successful house corporations don't happen by accident. Like the personality traits of the Seven Founders that we hold in high esteem, follow these seven successful habits that every house corp should follow. [IHSV](#)

## Giving = Happiness

It's a well known proverb that money can't buy happiness, but according to a study 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 meaning 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](#)

## The Sprinkler Effect

One of the Grand Trustees' core charges is chapter house fire safety. While there are many relatively simple and inexpensive fire safety protocols that all house should have (like fire extinguishers, lighted EXIT signs, fire rated doors, etc.), the single best way to control a fire is a fire sprinkler system which is designed to automatically discharge water when the heat of a fire has been detected. So, if a fire breaks out in one area of the building, the system will put it out quickly before it spreads, limiting property damage, personal injury and loss of life.

A bit of history...Henry Parmelee created the first fire sprinkler system in 1864 to protect his piano factory. Parmelee patented his idea and had great success with it in the U.S. He then traveled to Europe to demonstrate his invention but did not get the reception he hoped for. Most simply could not afford the cost.

Parmelee turned his efforts to educating the insurance industry by demonstrating how the system would reduce claims. With reduced claims, the insurance companies could offer reduced premiums which would be an

inducement for the insureds to install fire sprinkler systems.

Parmelee was able to promote his invention to the Textile Manufacturers' Association which had a policy of encouraging risk improvement and the use of the most up-to-date apparatus for extinguishing fires. Even so, by 1883 only about 10 factories were protected by the Parmelee sprinkler.

Fredrick Grinnell designed a newer and better system known as the Grinnell sprinkler. He increased effectiveness by removing the fusible joint from all contact with the water. And by seating a valve in the center of a flexible diaphragm, the valve seat was forced against the valve by the water pressure, producing a self-closing action. The greater the water pressure, the tighter the valve. Grinnell got a patent and marketed it in Europe where it was a much bigger success than the Parmelee version. Eventually, the Parmelee system was withdrawn, which left an open path for Grinnell and his invention.

Residential fire sprinklers work automatically and operate at a predetermined temperature using either a fusible element which melts or a glass bulb containing liquid which breaks. When activated, a plug is pushed out by water pressure and the water stream impacts a deflector which produces a spray pattern. Ceiling sprinkler heads are designed to direct spray downwards while spray nozzles provide spray in various directions and patterns.

One of the biggest misconceptions propagated by Hollywood is that when a fire sprinkler system is activated, all the heads fire at once all over the building causing massive water damage. In fact, residential systems are designed to only activate and suppress the fire where it actually is. And while there is bound to be some water damage, it pales in comparison to the damage done by a fully deployed fire hose dragged into a burning building by

## 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 [robert.schock.zo@sigmachi.com](mailto:robert.schock.zo@sigmachi.com)

the fire department.

Does your chapter house have a fire sprinkler system? If not, it is only a matter of time before the local fire marshall makes it a requirement. Why not put one on your priority list of fire safety upgrades? [IHSV](#)

### 2017 Outstanding House Corporation Awards

Each year, the Board of Grand Trustees honors Sigma Chi house corporations that demonstrate superior business practices in these 15 areas:

1. Minimum of 3 board members
2. Minimum of 2 board meetings a year
3. Have written bylaws.
4. Current with state/province annual reporting requirements.
5. House corp funds are segregated from chapter funds.
6. Have a written rental agreement for each tenant.
7. Charge each tenant a security

deposit.

8. Have regular janitorial service.
9. Have and fund a plan for repairing/replacing major building components.
10. Have a fire sprinkler system.
11. Have a property manager.
12. Publish at least 2 newsletters per year.
13. Maintain an alumni database.
14. Maintain a website.
15. Have an active fund raising campaign.

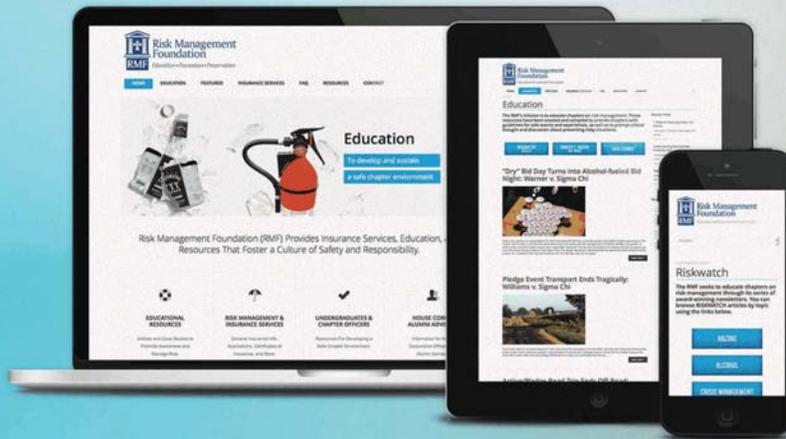
This year, a record 38 house corporations submitted applications for this prestigious award. The winners listed alphabetically are (drum roll please):

#### Gold Award (20-25 POINTS)

Bradley University  
Central Michigan University  
Clarkson University  
Embry-Riddle-Daytona Beach  
George Washington University  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Kettering University  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Missouri State University  
Oklahoma State University  
Pennsylvania State University  
Southern Methodist University  
Syracuse University  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
University of Alabama  
University of Arizona  
University of Arkansas  
University of California-Berkeley  
University of Central Florida  
University of Cincinnati  
University of Denver  
University of Maryland  
University of Michigan  
University of Minnesota  
University of Missouri  
University of Montana  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Texas-Arlington  
University of Texas-Austin  
University of Washington  
University of Wyoming  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute

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### Blue Award (15-19 POINTS)

Clemson University  
DePauw University  
Montana State University  
University of Memphis  
University of North Alabama  
University of St Thomas

Congratulations to these hard working and effective house corporations. [IHSV](#)

### 2017 House Corporation Annual Report

Each year, the Board of Grand Trustees request that each house corporation and submit a one page report so that we can verify the current chapter housing status (house corp owned, university owned, rented or none) and to update our house corp board member database. House corporations that do complete the Annual Report qualify to apply for the Outstanding House Corporation Award plus apply to attend House Corporation Officers Training Seminar (HCOTS). The 25 board officers selected for HCOTS attend at no cost.

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Food, travel and lodging is provided. That said, **the following house corporations have not yet responded** to our Annual Report request:

Albion College  
Alma College  
Beloit College  
Boise State University  
Brown University  
Colorado College  
Eastern Illinois University  
Eastern Kentucky University  
Fort Hayes State University  
Hanover College  
Illinois Wesleyan University  
McGill University  
New Mexico State University  
North Carolina State University  
Oregon State University  
Sam Houston State University  
Stanford University  
Texas A&M-College Station  
Texas Christian University  
Texas State University  
University of California-Irvine  
University of California-Los Angeles  
University of Idaho  
University of Kentucky  
University of Mississippi

University of Nebraska  
University of New Mexico  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of South Alabama  
University of Tennessee-Chattanooga  
University of Waterloo  
Wabash College  
Washington University  
Western Kentucky University  
Whitman College  
Willamette University  
Youngstown State University

To get an Annual Report form, email [rich.thompson@sigmachi.com](mailto:rich.thompson@sigmachi.com) If your chapter has no house corporation, simply email me with the chapter name and the message “no house corporation”. Grand Praetors and Chapter Advisors are encouraged to respond to this request. Thanks for your help. [IHSV](#)

### 2017 House Corporation Officers Training Seminar

HCOTS will be held at Bowling Green University on August 3-5, 2017 in conjunction with Balfour Leadership

SPRING 2017

Training Seminar. 25 house corporation board officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary) qualify to apply to attend this all expense paid training. You cannot have attended a previous HCOTS.

## HCOTS TOPICS

Chapter House Maintenance  
Budgeting  
Fund Raising  
Legal Issues & Governance  
Brainstorming

As of June 17, there are still four spaces available. If you are interested, email [rich.thompson@sigmachi.com](mailto:rich.thompson@sigmachi.com) by no later than June 30, 2017. **IHSV**

## Renovation Funding

Sigma Chi offers a great alternative for funding chapter house fire/life safety improvements and renovations. Constantine Capital, Inc. (CCI) has loan programs that can lend up to \$250,000 at competitive interest rates with up to a 30 year amortization schedule.

Also, if your house corporation is considering doing a major fund raiser, CCI can provide seed money to get architectural inspections and drawings done by providing short term funds to get the ball rolling.

For more information, email Bob Schock [fschock1855@gmail.com](mailto:fschock1855@gmail.com). **IHSV**

## We're Here to Help

Your Board of Grand Trustees is here to assist Sigma Chi house corporations in a myriad of ways. Besides many years of service to Sigma Chi in various capacities, there is over *700 years of combined professional expertise* in such things as real estate development, property management, project administration, politics, maintenance, renovation, insurance, tax planning, accounting, construction, fund raising, legal, education, housing, risk management and more.

While each Grand Trustee is assigned specific provinces to oversee, this combined expertise is available to all

house corporations. The key to tapping this gold mine is to contact your province's Grand Trustee with a specific request for assistance. If your request is out of your Grand Trustee's specific area of expertise, other Grand Trustees will assist in providing real solutions. Give us a try. Contact information is listed on Page One of The Sig House. **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. 816.300.0604**  
Bob Schock [robert.schock.zo@sigmachi.com](mailto: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](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 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](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 443.822.0264

Brian Gill [brian@gillgrilling.com](mailto:brian@gillgrilling.com)  
[www.gillgrilling.com](http://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](mailto:info@greekkitchenmanagement.com)  
[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 888.298.8845

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

### Pennington & Associates 785.843.1661

Patrick Alderdice [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 770.903.3987

Bill Paris [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@sigmachi.com](mailto:rich.thompson@sigmachi.com) with the details and get listed in the Service Directory.*



## Board of Grand Trustees

Front L to R: Tom Ely, Jeff Murison, Tony Flores, Breck Grover, Scott Ross, Al Williams, Rich Thompson, Bill Robinson

Back L to R: John Watson, Rick Hronek, Tom Samulski, JB Allen, Bill Bringham Jr., Harvey Silverman, John Bibo, Nathan Neal

Missing: James Carroll and Steve Schuyler  
(Effective March 2017 Clyde Dornier assumed John Watson's position)

