



The Sig House

A Newsletter from the Board of Grand Trustees

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RMF Property Conservation Initiative

Risk Management Foundation (RMF) member properties range from \$200,000 to \$7,000,000 in value at more than 100 campuses across the US and Canada. RMF's focus is to encourage safe conditions for members and guests while remaining committed to loss prevention and loss control. To that end, RMF is pleased to announce the **2015-16 Property Conservation Initiative (PCI)**.

The purpose of PCI is to provide baseline data to improve insurance underwriting and to develop short and long term maintenance plans and budgets. PCI will develop the data using Grecco Construction Consultants of Memphis TN for inspections. The data will be used for comparative analysis within the RMF program and the greater university housing market.

The focus areas for the Property Conservation Initiative:

- **Fire Sprinkler Systems.** Currently, one half of RMF chapter houses lack this critical life safety equipment.
- **Structural Conditions** (foundations, flooring, water seepage, etc.)
- **Mechanical & Electrical Systems** (capacity, age, usage)
- **Roofing** (type, materials, age, code)
- **Mechanical Equipment** (HVAC, boilers, etc.)
- **Housekeeping & General Maintenance**
- **Ordinance & Law Requirements** (campus, city, county)

The information collected through the PCI will provide house corporations with location specific recommendations

for maintenance and renovation along with time lines for completion and budgets. Advance information and inspection report templates will be provided to house corporations, risk managers, house managers, Chapter Advisors, Grand Praetors, and Grand Trustees for all scheduled locations.

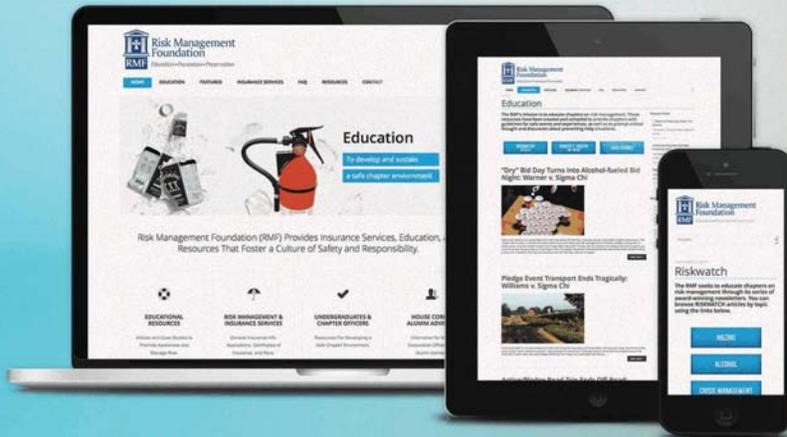
RMF has implemented an aggressive time line to create the baseline of data. During the first quarter of 2015, RMF completed 12 inspections despite weather challenges across the Southeast. 15-20 facilities will be inspected each quarter.

RMF will measure the success of the PCI using the following metrics:

- **360 Reporting Process** From consultant down to insured location and from consultant up to the Grand Trustees, Grand Praetors and RMF Board.
- **Document Repair & Maintenance Expectations** along with the process and time line including both short and long term property needs.
- **30/60/90 Day Follow-up** by RMF staff encouraging involvement from Grand Trustees and Grand Praetors.
- **Refine Insurance Underwriting Data** to lower premiums for the best maintained facilities in shared risk pool.
- **Consider Coverage Limits** for newly identified exposures.

Where areas for improvement are noted in the inspection report, RMF expects that the house corporation will resolve the deficiencies. It is important that a knowledgeable house corporation member be present for the inspection to answer questions. Copies of prior inspection reports and a blank template

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



of the upcoming inspection report can be obtained by emailing RMF@sigmachi.org.

RMF understands that some repairs may not be financially feasible in the short term, but a reasonable action plan will be required. RMF has loan funds available to address the deficiencies noted in the report at competitive rates and repayable over a term of 24-36 months.

For questions about the PCI or loan program, visit www.RMFEducation.org or contact Steve Davidson, Executive Director RMF@sigmachi.org or phone (847) 612-6525. **IHSV**

2015 Outstanding House Corporation Awards

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

1. Have a minimum of 3 board members
2. Hold a minimum of 2 board meetings

3. Have adopted written bylaws.
4. Current with state/province reporting requirements.
5. House corporation funds are segregated from chapter funds.
6. Use a written rental agreement for each tenant.
7. Charge a tenant security deposit.
8. Have at least a weekly janitorial service.
9. Have a plan for replacing major building components.
10. Have a fire sprinkler system.
11. Have a professional 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 31 house corporations submitted applications for this prestigious award.

The winners are (drum roll please):

Gold Award (20-25 POINTS)

- University of Arizona
- DePauw University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- University of Memphis
- University of Montana
- Syracuse University
- Texas A&M University-Commerce
- Oklahoma State University
- George Washington University
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Kettering University
- Southern Methodist University
- University of Washington
- University of Michigan
- University of Texas-Austin
- University of Cincinnati
- Bradley University
- Clarkson University
- Mississippi State University
- University of Texas-Arlington
- University of Denver
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Arkansas
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- University of Kansas
- Pennsylvania State University
- University of South Alabama
- University of Illinois

Sigma Chi Fraternity's



CONSTANTINE CAPITAL INC.

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

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- ✦ New Construction
- ✦ Renovation
- ✦ Loan Guaranty



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

Blue Award (15-19 POINTS)

University of St Thomas
University of North Texas

Honorable Mention (UNDER 15 POINTS)

Clemson University

Congratulations to all the applicants. Sigma Chi owes you a debt of gratitude for safeguarding our chapter houses. To collect your Outstanding House Corporation Award Certificate, email William.Scott@sigmachichapter.org with your mailing address. **IHSV**

Chapter House Checklist

Each year, Sigma Chi house corporations are charged with life/fire safety and maintenance of the chapter house. Due to the customarily "intense" lifestyles of the active brothers, the facilities often experience a higher degree of wear and tear. Keeping up with these tasks in a consistent way is extremely important. Take the time to perform the following each year:

Life & Fire Safety. The highest priority of all for a house corporation is to provide a safe environment for the undergraduate brothers. Here is a list of common life and fire safety issues that chapter houses should review:

- Fire Alarm System.** Inspected and certified in good working order by a qualified contractor.
- Fire Sprinkler System.** Inspected and repaired annually by a qualified contractor. (If your chapter house does not have fire sprinklers, contact your Grand Trustee for further information and resources.)
- Smoke Detectors.** All in place and working, especially in sleeping rooms. (Replace battery operated detectors with hardwired.)
- Exit Signs & Emergency Lights.** All in place and functioning properly.
- Fire Egress.** All required egress windows and doors meet fire code. All hallways, stairwells, egress doors and windows are clear of

obstructions.

- Fire Extinguishers.** All are in place and have been inspected and recharged as needed within the last twelve months.
- Housekeeping.** No accumulation of trash, clothes or other flammables.
- Kitchen Range Hood.** Steam cleaned within the last 6 months.
- Central Heating System.** Furnace or boiler has received an annual inspection and repair by a qualified contractor. Furnace/boiler room is free of storage (boxes, furniture, flammables, etc.).
- Fire Doors.** Fire rated doors in all locations required by fire code. All hardware (crash bars, hinges, knobsets and closers) working properly.
- Stairwells.** All hand rails in place and stairs in good repair.
- Flammable Storage.** All flammables (cleaners, gasoline, etc.) are in proper containers and fire code rated storage.

Maintenance & Repair. Keeping the chapter house in good repair is essential to preserving liveability and attracting and retaining brothers who appreciate high standards.

INSIDE

- ❑ **Bathrooms.** All fixtures are working properly. No evidence of mold.
- ❑ **Carpet/Vinyl.** No tears or seam separation.
- ❑ **Electrical Outlets/Switches.** Intact and working properly.
- ❑ **Furnace/HVAC.** In good working order.
- ❑ **Furniture.** In good serviceable condition.
- ❑ **Hot Water Heater/Boiler.** Flushed to remove sediment and working properly.
- ❑ **Kitchen.** All equipment is working properly.
- ❑ **Lights-Interior.** All working properly including light bulbs.
- ❑ **Plumbing.** No leaks.

OUTSIDE

- ❑ **Broken/Missing Glass.** All window and door glass is in good repair.
- ❑ **Concrete Safety Repair.** No tripping hazards.
- ❑ **Entry Door Locks.** All locks are in good repair.
- ❑ **Roof.** In good condition; no torn, missing or broken shingles.
- ❑ **Fire Escape Stairs.** In good repair and free of obstruction.
- ❑ **Roof-Gutters & Downspouts.** In good repair and running clear (test with hose if necessary).
- ❑ **Siding & Trim.** In good repair, caulking around windows and doors in tact.
- ❑ **Paint-Exterior.** No cracking or peeling.
- ❑ **Lights-Exterior.** All in good working condition including light bulbs.

Curb Appeal. Looks matter to the city, college, neighbors, rushees and pledges. To encourage self respect, pride in the chapter house and to make it attractive for actives and pledges, the following should be done weekly:

- ❑ **House.** Cleaning to remove trash, vacuum, mop, dust, clean kitchen and bathrooms. (This is also a fire safety issue.)
- ❑ **Grounds.** Yard and parking lot free of trash and debris. Bushes and trees are pruned. Lawn is regularly mowed and watered.

Doing a chapter house walk through to address these specific issues is extremely important and should be done at least twice a year. Performing this checklist will help develop your To Do List and keep the chapter house in good and safe repair. **IHSV**

Brother Landlord

House corporation members find themselves in conflicting roles. As landlords of the chapter house, there is the obligation to enforce rent payments and proper maintenance of the facilities. As a Sigma Chi brother, there is an obligation to mentor and advise and be a "strong arm to lean on". Doing both well at the same time can be difficult.

As a landlord, there are ongoing challenges: rent revenue is often inadequate to pay for all the usual operating costs of insurance, maintenance and major renovation. Those issues is made more complicated by the accelerated wear and tear on the facilities.

The landlord role puts house corporations in the unwelcome role of rule enforcers and collection agents. While some do the job begrudgingly, others avoid conflict which allows collections to mount and maintenance to mushroom. Those that landlord chapter houses well are definitely made of "sterner stuff".

But the active brothers need much more than a kick in the rear. They need the perspective of mature and experienced Sigma Chis who can point them the way to go as men and brothers. It's one of the true strengths of the fraternity that allows older and younger men to enjoy a common bond.

So how can house corporation members take advantage of this conflicted relationship of landlord and brother? Let's count the ways:

Get Acquainted. Knowing the active brothers on a personal level will produce enormous dividends. When there is a personal connection, there is a higher degree of accountability, responsiveness and respect.

Get It in Writing. The criteria for living in the chapter house should be clearly defined in plain English and in writing. More than a Rental Agreement, a "Live In Agreement" reinforces the fraternal obligations as well. Having such a document establishes the expectations and consequences for non-compliance from the get-go and helps eliminate disputes.

Encourage Communication. While active brothers like to be self sufficient, most 18-21 year olds lack the life experience to deal with complex maintenance, relational and organizational issues. The smart ones will welcome constructive input, especially when it's not done in a condescending or paternal way.

Identify & Promote Leaders. Within each active chapter, there are individuals that bear the traits of leadership (academics, enthusiasm, confidence, command respect, etc.) It's important to identify and encourage them to run for office.

While it's often said that the cream rises to the top, this isn't necessarily the case at active chapter. Encouragement from a mature brother can make the difference whether the candidates are the best or the worst picks.

Problem Solving. From time to time, the active chapter is faced with difficult situations involving individual members who are struggling with personal or academic issues that impact the well being of the entire chapter. Undergraduate brothers often have

difficulty with confrontation or can underestimate the ramification of these problems.

Alumni brothers can help by assisting with the confrontation and getting specific plans and commitments for change. These "defining moments" will demonstrate the power in partnering with older brothers in problem solving. More importantly, this course correction may make all the difference whether a Sigma Chi survives college or even life. We owe it to our brothers to do what we can to help.

Make Regular House Calls. Visiting the chapter house several times each month both during the week and on weekends keeps you informed about the good, bad and ugly. Try to catch them doing right like cleaning, studying, mowing the lawn, etc. Praising specific actions is extremely meaningful to those who receive them and reinforces the positive things active chapter is doing. In an age where focus often falls on fraternity troubles, this will be a welcome balance.

Consider holding your house corporation and alumni chapter meetings at the chapter house. If the actives know you're coming, they will often make an extra effort to tidy up. That's a good thing for them and for house corporation.

Regular visits to the chapter house will also give you a chance to spot repair or maintenance issues. Generally, the sooner these problems are identified, the cheaper they are to fix.

In the Final Analysis. Even if you wear both landlord and mentor hats, both can be successful. Protecting the viability of the chapter house will ensure it's there for future Sigma Chis. Mentoring the active brothers will benefit their experience in the chapter house and life as Sigma Chis. This is a win-win that works! **IHSV**

Here to Serve

The Board of Grand Trustees is 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, maintenance, renovation, insurance, tax planning, accounting, construction, fund raising, legal, education, housing, risk management and more. Give us a try. **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
5250 Avalon Blvd
Alpharetta GA 30009 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 C916.769.2464
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@infocpps.com 314.422.3407
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Brian Gill brian@gillgrilling.com
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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 C541.517.8820
daryle@thecarpetcompany.biz www.thecarpetcompany.biz
All major brands of commercial and residential flooring.

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Affinity Connection 814.237.0481 ext 131
Greg Woodman greg@affinityconnection.com
www.affinityconnection.com Database management, website hosting/management, newsletter production, e-newsletters, 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 C404.441.9630
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

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