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Joint Position Statement Against Hazing

Council of Presidents
National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc.
September 13, 2000

PREFACE

The organizations of the National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc. (NPHC) are committed to nurturing the ideals of sisterhood and fraternalism in an atmosphere of responsibility and respect. We are also committed to upholding the dignity and self-respect of all persons seeking membership therein. Hazing is antithetical to this commitment and is prohibited by the rules of each NPHC organization. In 1990, the member organizations of the NPHC jointly agreed to disband pledging as a form of admission. At the dawn of a new millennium, we the members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council do hereby reaffirm our unequivocal opposition to hazing and those who seek to perpetuate it.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc. (NPHC) is comprised of local councils drawn from the ranks of 1.5 million college and professional members of the nine historically African-American fraternities and sororities, namely: Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. and Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. and the Council of Presidents of these member organizations who come together on issues that promote the common purposes and general good for which these organizations exist; and

WHEREAS these NPHC organizations, operating through chapters located in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, Africa and Asia, are proud of their commitment since 1906 to scholarship, community service, leadership and the promotion of sisterhood and brotherhood in an atmosphere of respect and responsibility; and

WHEREAS these NPHC organizations are likewise committed to promoting the self-respect and dignity of all persons seeking membership in the respective organizations; and

WHEREAS hazing is antithetical to this commitment and is strictly prohibited by the constitution, policies and procedures of each NPHC organization; and

WHEREAS "pledging" has been officially abolished as a process for membership and pledge "lines" have similarly been abolished; and all members and prospective members are prohibited from engaging in hazing, pledge or pre-pledge "lines"; and

WHEREAS in 1990 the NPHC organizations issued a joint statement announcing the elimination of pledging and each has instituted within its respective organization a revised membership development and intake process; and

WHEREAS each NPHC organization has instituted strong policies against hazing and has taken steps to reinforce and strengthen its stand against prohibited conduct; and

WHEREAS as we begin this new century and a renewed commitment to the fundamental principles of brotherhood, sisterhood, human dignity and mutual respect, the NPHC organizations desire to make their commitment against hazing abundantly clear and fully intend for every member, prospective member, parent, university and the general public to be aware of the individual and collective position of the organizations against hazing; and

WHEREAS these NPHC organizations further desire to make known their respective commitment to hold any person who engages in hazing individually and personally liable to the victim and to answer to the law and the organization; and will hold such persons to respond in

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monetary damages, civil and criminal penalties and severe disciplinary action by the organization, including expulsion; and

WHEREAS the definition of hazing has been held to include any action taken or situation created that involves or results in abusive, physical contact or mutual harassment of a prospective Fraternity or Sorority member; and that any such action is considered hazing, whether it occurs on or off the Fraternity or Sorority premises, campus or place where chapters or prospective members meet; and that hazing has also been described to include any action that results in excessive mutual or physical discomfort, embarrassment or harassment; that such activities include, but are not limited to, paddling, creation of excessive fatigue, physical or psychological shock, morally degrading or humiliating activities, late work sessions that interfere with scholastic activities and any other activities inconsistent with fraternal law and regulations and policies of the affiliated educational institution and federal, state or local law; and

WHEREAS such illegal conduct is inimical to the principles for which each organization stands and fails to foster respect for fellow members or preserve human dignity;

BE IT RESOLVED AND RESTATED WITH EMPHASIS ANEW that hazing, pledging, pledge "lines", pre-pledge "lines" or post-intake hazing are strictly prohibited by these NPHC organizations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, RESTATED AND MADE KNOWN that these NPHC organizations are committed to eradicate the scourge of hazing; and to that end.

That the intake process has been recodified by each organization, which permits the conduct of intake only when specifically authorized by the officer placed in charge of the process and only at such times, places and in the presence of persons specifically authorized and certified to conduct the intake process;

That prospective members and the parents of collegiate applicants are advised that hazing is not a requirement for membership, nor is it tolerated;

That members and prospective members must attest that they are fully aware of the organization's policy against hazing and will not engage in prohibited conduct and that the organization will fully cooperate with law enforcement authorities and with university officials in the investigation and prosecution of hazing or other illegal activity;

That members and applicants for membership are also put on written notice that they will be held responsible to the organization for violation of policies against hazing and the organization will pursue full remedies allowed by law to obtain indemnification for damages caused by the actions of the members or applicants who participated in illegal, unauthorized or prohibited conduct despite notice to refrain from such conduct;

That each organization shall enforce severe penalties, including expulsion, for proven violations of its policies against hazing and impose sanctions against a chapter involved and cooperate with the university in implementing sanctions by the university;

That members and applicants for membership shall be required to immediately notify the national office of the Fraternity or Sorority, the local chapter advisor, university officials and law enforcement officials of any observed hazing incident or improper activity believed to be in violation of the policy against hazing, without fear of reprisal and their application for membership will not be affected by so doing; and, indeed, failure to report known violations may disqualify a candidate for membership; and, finally,

That these NPHC organizations shall continue to encourage their members to participate in activities which promote high scholastic achievement, sisterhood, brotherhood, loyalty and leadership; and shall continue to affirm sound values and the worth of every member working together to accomplish organizational goals and serve the community.



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