

SUMMER BOARD MEETING 2024 | Kansas City, MO

Attendees: David Grady, Reatha Cox, Howard Farrell, Anne Forcier, Larry Lunsford, Darald Stubbs, Barbie Tootle, Antonio Ramirez Salcedo, Ana Nunez, Ed Whipple, Lamar Bryant, Cheri Wechsler, Caitlin Roberts, Tyler Manning, Heidie Lindsey, **Sara Runyon [VIRTUAL ONLY]**, Mardie Sorensen, Seth Reszl, Mike Taddesse, Kent Pawlak, Adam Joiner

FRIDAY, JULY 12, 2024

Introductions – David Grady

- David Grady introduced two new RCDs, Sara Runyon (*Northeast*) and Caitlin Roberts (*Western*).
 - David introduced the new 2024-2025 Student Board Member, Antonio Ramirez Salcedo of Texas Tech University.
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Scholarship/Fellowship – Reatha Cox

- Reatha updated all on the new undergraduate scholarship format i.e., the “19 and 59” format where Order of Omega selects:
 - **19** top scholarships -- the Dr. Kent Gardner scholarship (*1 recipient at \$3,000*), the Daisy “Dee” Wood scholarship (*2 recipients at \$2,000*), and the Founders’ scholarship (*16 recipients at \$1,000*).
 - **59** general scholarships -- the Parker F. Enright scholarship (*18 recipients @ \$750*) and the Patrick W. Halloran scholarship (*41 recipients @ \$500*).
 - Board member Darald Stubbs asked if the Daisy Wood scholarship could be designated for members of an NPHC-affiliated organization. Discussion was held on this proposal.
 - **VOTE --** Reatha motioned to accept the new scholarship format including renaming the Dr. Kent L. Garner scholarship as the top award level (\$3,000), with preference for the Daisy Wood scholarship to be awarded to an NPHC member (the scholarship committee will work on criteria). Motion seconded by Darald Stubbs. With no further discussion, eligible voters were asked to vote. **All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**
 - Headquarters staff are tasked with identifying the specific student who earns the \$1.5 million mark scholarship for marketing purposes.
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Website/Technology – Kent Pawlak

- Kent updated the Board on new website deployment, new enterprise software upgrade (Microsoft E5 product license), new office telephone infrastructure replacing existing phones with IP-based Teams telephones, upgraded the office network from general 300MB cable internet service to AT&T Business Fiber 2GB service with new WiFi router and new firewall software, and secured and installed two new computers and one printer.
 - Kent provided technical support during the collection and disseminating of the 2024 undergraduate scholarship applications for the scoring process.
 - Kent maintained:
 - The Order of Omega website regularly.
 - Various enterprise applications including our Microsoft mail and file environments.
 - Communication with the *MyHonorSociety* (MHS) technical staff on new enhancements to member management and reporting.
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Special Guest – AFA Foundation

Christian Wiggins, formerly a member of the AFA Foundation Board and currently with Lumen Leadership Strategies, gave a presentation on the AFA strategic plan.

- Christian discussed the *Forward to Fifty* initiative guiding the association from 2022 to 2026 centered around four main pillars: professional competency, advancing research, advocating for the profession, and building community.
 - Some pain points identified by the association in the industry include:
 - the loss of seasoned, experienced professional staff members
 - reorganization of departments which results in budget cuts across the board
 - the pipeline of who's coming into the field is smaller than ever
 - government oversight isn't getting better
 - the mental and emotional health of our professionals isn't getting better
 - the uncertainty in the shifting of college enrollment
 - Discussed the *Elevate the Standard* campaign. Elevating talent/people, elevating research, elevating innovation (less tied to our traditions), and elevating equity and inclusion.
 - Discussed Order of Omega's involvement and help in the campaign through scholarships, and Case Study Competition.
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HQ Year in Review Presentation – Mardie, Seth, and Mike

- Seth went over the Year in Review presentation highlights including:
 - Marketing and communications updates
 - Updates on newsletters and communication going out to all members
 - Social media updates and trends, most engagement is on Instagram.

 - Mike discussed:
 - membership numbers and trends going back five years. While numbers decreased during the pandemic years, this was also the case across the F/S industry.
 - the uptick in member numbers and newly established chapters (six new chapters chartered in 2023-2024).
 - the process of sending all the inter/national organizations a list of their reported members initiated into Order of Omega during the academic year.

 - Mardie went over:
 - the advances over the years in staffing
 - programs provided, advisor gifts instead of having the reception at the AFA Annual Meeting
 - bringing back the Chapter of the Year and Chapter Advisor of the Year awards program (no money allocated)
 - the growth of the Case Study competitions at the respective Regional Conferences
 - the increase in Student Board member virtual roundtables for chapter presidents and for potential Student Board member position interest
 - increase in engagement with NALFO and NPHC including doing a special honorary initiation at their respective meetings
 - increased conversations with inter/national organizations on having Case Study competitions and honorary initiations at their respective leadership meetings/conventions.
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Financial Report – Howard Farrell

- Howard briefly discussed the 2024-2025 proposed budget which had been sent to all previously.
 - Discussion was held on some of the budget numbers including a clarification on investment numbers, asked by Board member Cheri Wechsler.
 - **VOTE --** Howard made a motion to accept the 2024-2025 budget, seconded by Board member Darald Stubbs. With no further discussion, eligible voters were asked to vote. **All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**
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Business recommendations – Mardie Sorensen

- Mardie made a recommendation about raising membership dues and not going another 15 years without raising dues. Provided two options:
 - 1) A small increase every other year
 - 2) An increase every five years of \$10
- Mardie made a recommendation regarding the restructuring of the current committee structure to better realign them to our four strategic initiatives, with the understanding that the Governance committee needs to stay intact, and we can create ad hoc committees as needed.
- Mardie made a recommendation regarding the archiving of our historical materials at headquarters. Most of our historical documents are currently housed in the attic at headquarters which is not temperature controlled. We need to have the documents scanned and saved electronically which also gives us the option of recalling specific parts of our history based on keyword search/s.
- Mardie made a recommendation to focus on updating the last historical reporting done in honor of our 50th anniversary.
- Mardie discussed the need for some capital investments at HQ. The conference room chairs are still the original chairs from 2006, and they are falling apart. The signage outside recently fell, and the landscaping has fallen into disrepair.

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- Mardie asked the group to consider a two-path chapter structure model:
 - One path would be a chapter could choose to be just a recognition-only chapter wherein the chapter doesn't have to have meetings, doesn't have to participate in programming. One of the parameters we could consider is that if your chapter becomes a recognition-only chapter, your members would not be eligible for scholarships.
 - The other path would be a normal path wherein the chapter operates with regularly scheduled chapter meetings, and participates in chapter-wide programming for the FSL, campus, and city community.
 - Board member Cheri Wechsler made a recommendation to have a committee take on the research behind the two-path chapter model.
 - Mardie then gave an update on some of the focus points of the strategic initiatives and where the current progress is, for example:
 - Have started the reach out to HBCUs and Hispanic-serving institutions
 - Rebrand/refresh initiative focusing on the organization's storytelling
 - Working on increasing student input and engagement, Adam Joiner will be focusing on virtual continuing education sessions for chapter leaders. Our Student Board Member and RCDs continue to host virtual engagement sessions with chapter stakeholders.
 - Mardie updated the group on the renaming of the headquarters to the Dr. Kent L. Gardner International Headquarters building. The external signage and the internal bronze plaque were shown to the group. The Gardner family is appreciative.
 - Mardie announced to the group that she plans to retire from the Executive Director position in 12-18 months.
 - David stated that there will be an ad hoc committee put together to look at succession planning for the Executive Director position including a job description, a timeline, and the selection process for selecting the next Executive Director which includes onboarding and any possible transitional overlap.
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Policy Documents – Mardie, David

- Mardie gave an update on the status of the organization’s official name as noted in different areas i.e., some areas showed us as “National Order of Omega”, some “The Order of Omega”, and other areas just “Order of Omega”. We were registered under different names with the federal government and with the State of Texas. Mardie worked on getting this corrected including our office building deed to have one name across the board.
- **VOTE** – Motion made to approve the amended certificate of formation, seconded by Board member Barbie Tootle. With no further discussion, eligible voters were asked to vote. **All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**
- **VOTE** – Motion made to approve Corporate Bylaws, seconded by Board member Larry Lunsford. With no further discussion, eligible voters were asked to vote. **All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**
- **VOTE** – Motion made to amend the International Treasurer position to include the title “Secretary” to align with State of Texas requirements. Seconded by Board Member Barbie Tootle. With no further discussion, eligible voters were asked to vote. **All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**
- **VOTES-**
 - ❖ *Accountability Reimbursement policy* – all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Use of Communication & Computer Systems policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Equal Opportunity policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Health & Safety policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Investment policy* -- ****approved previously during a quarterly meeting****
 - ❖ *Non-harassment policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Sexual harassment policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Vacation & Sick Leave policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Whistleblower policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously
 - ❖ *Reserves policy* - all in favor, accepted & passed unanimously

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- Motion to accept resolutions for the Board, seconded by Board member Darald Stubbs. Board member Anne Trask Forcier added a friendly amendment to include “*With the Board’s approval of the work of International President David Grady’s work on getting the organization on the right path.*” **All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**
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Mardie updated the group on Nancy Gardner’s appreciation of all who have donated to Order of Omega in Dr. Kent Gardner’s honor, as well as for all who were able to attend his celebration of life in October.

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The group adjourned at 1:15 p.m. for a group city tour on a trolley.

SATURDAY, JULY 13, 2024

Student Board Member presentation – David

- David presented the outgoing 2023-2024 Student Board Member, Ana Nunez with her parting gifts.
- In keeping with Student Board Member history, outgoing Student Board Member Ana presented incoming 2024-2025 Student Board Member Antonio Ramirez Salcedo with a sweatshirt from her alma mater.

Committees Update –

- **Executive committee** – David Grady reported that the committee recently evaluated the Executive Director’s performance.
 - **Internal Affairs committee** - no report at this time
 - **External Affairs committee** - no report at this time
 - **Governance committee** - Chair Larry Lunsford gave highlights including:
 - The committee solicited potential Board of Directors candidates, reviewed the list, and recommended top candidates to the Board President.
 - The committee reviewed a comprehensive Board position description, including the duties and responsibilities of a Board member, drafted by the Board President.
 - The committee was asked to review recommendations regarding revisions to our governing documents to align with filing Order of Omega corporate documents with the State of Texas.
 - The committee drafted recommendations for Constitution revisions to be presented at the 2024 Summer Board meeting.
 - David Grady updated the group on his reaching out to several potential Board members. Many declined because of new jobs or timing.
 - Cheri Wechsler discussed options for the election process for officers.
 - Tyler Manning talked about the changes to the Constitution, including changing the International Treasurer position name to “International Treasurer/Secretary”, updating “headquarters” to “International headquarters”, and several language changes i.e., “he/she” to “they/them”.
 - Committee moved for acceptance of changes – approved.
 - Will work with IHQ staff to send out to chapters for ratification **[MOTION PASSES]**
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New Business –

- **VOTE –** David Grady motioned to accept the two nominated additions to the Board of Directors, Rob Wellbaum of Auburn University and Dr. Elizabeth With of the University of North Texas. Seconded by Board member Barbie Tootle. With no further discussion, eligible voters were asked to vote. **All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**
 - Mardie Sorensen showed the group the 2024 Board gift, Omega-branded glassware, and luggage tags.
 - A gift presentation was made in honor of Barbie Tootle and Ed Whipple who will be retiring from the Board this year after 39 years and 41 years of service, respectively.
 - A \$500 donation was made in their respective names to their respective affiliations (Pi Beta Phi and Phi Delta Theta).
 - In addition, a \$500 donation will be made to a charity or fund of their choice.
 - Barbie and Ed spoke about their time on the Board and were very appreciative of the parting gifts.
 - Board member Larry Lunsford's term is up in 2024. He expressed a desire to return for one more term. The motion was seconded by Board member Cheri Wechsler. **The motion passed unanimously.**
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The group broke for a working lunch.

- Board/Executive Session to work on Executive Director succession plans and other business.
 - The RCDs to meet with Adam Joiner and Mike Taddesse to discuss 2024-2025 goals and calendaring.
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Strategic Initiatives Working Groups –

- David Grady assembled all into four (4) groups to discuss the top identified Strategic Initiatives for 2024-2025 and develop ideas for implementation. The idea is to identify common themes and assign them to the respective committee or working group to follow through with.
- Based on the groups' reporting, several common themes were identified:
 - Move forward with exploring the Order of Omega badge on LinkedIn (Kent Pawlak).
 - No appetite currently for a membership dues increase.
 - Move forward with archiving & digitizing our historical documents (IHQ staff).
 - Move forward with upgrades to IHQ i.e., improving landscaping, and new office chairs (IHQ staff).
- With additional comments from the working groups, a discussion was held regarding a new committee structure as well as who would be tasked to serve on each:
 - *Executive Committee* – will stay the same
 - *Governance Committee* – Chair, Larry Lunsford, Cheri Wechsler, Tyler Manning, and Seth Ressler (IHQ rep).
 - *Finance Committee* – Chair, Howard Farrell, Rob Wellbaum, Darald Stubbs, Anne Trask Forcier, Janet Proffitt (IHQ rep).
 - *Membership Engagement & Expansion Committee* – Chair, Adam Joiner, Heidie Lindsey, Sara Runyon, Caitlin Roberts, Antonio Ramirez Salcedo, Dr. Elizabeth With.
 - *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Ad Hoc*: Lamar Bryant, Antonio Ramirez Salcedo, Heidie Lindsey, Mike Taddesse.
- The Membership Engagement & Expansion Committee (MEE) needs to develop a charge to develop a path forward. Adam will work on this and present it by the next Board quarterly meeting in October 2024.
- David Grady plans on having an update on the Executive Director succession plan at the October 2024 quarterly meeting.

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- Quarterly meetings for the 2024-2025 academic year were set:
 - Tuesday, October 22nd, 2024 at 4 P.M. CDT
 - Tuesday, December 10th, 2024 at 4 P.M. CDT
 - Tuesday, April 1st, 2025 at 4 P.M. CDT

These virtual meetings will be held on Microsoft Teams. Mike will send calendar invites soon.

2025 Summer Board Meeting details –

Mardie Sorensen updated the group with the dates and location of the 2025 Summer Board meeting:

July 10th – July 13th, 2025 at the Renaissance Providence Downtown Hotel in Providence, RI

Meeting adjourned

Approved 10/22/24