

Alpha Chi Sigma Fraternity

Professional In Chemistry

Office of the
GRAND
PROFESSIONAL ALCHEMIST



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2014 Grand Professional Alchemist Annual Report

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This has been a very exciting four months serving as Grand Professional Alchemist and it is an honor to continue my service for Alpha Chi Sigma at the beginning of my second biennium on the Supreme Council. Alpha Chi Sigma is on the move and there are changes afoot as well as new challenges on the ground. Alpha Chi Sigma has seen phenomenal growth in the collegiate branch in the past few bienniums and with the beginning of this biennium, the Supreme Council is presented with a unique opportunity to facilitate the growth and continued vitalization of the professional branch. The role of Grand Professional Alchemist is institutionally less defined than my previous role as Grand Master of Ceremonies, and with this biennium I am endeavoring to generate documentation and institutionalization of some practices to go along with the office to pass to my successor.

At the beginning of the biennium, I have the following to report:

- **Professional Representatives**—The role of PR is in transition as well as how the PR's relate to the GPA. In the past there may not have been as much communication between the Supreme Council and the Professional Representatives, nor as much direction as the PR's have desired, and I have worked to clear the barriers of communication to some of our most diverse and inventive members of the Grand Chapter. Unlike District Counselors who are appointed to serve in a defined role and purpose, Professional Representatives are elected and each individual has their own unique set of skills and abilities to contribute. I have personally called each professional representative, to hear their ideas, concerns, and plans for the future. Coming out of these phone calls, we have set a path for each Professional Representative to work on. Each PR chose a short term and a long term individual project and I have directed the PR's as whole to work on a few small tasks as a group. The goal is to enable each PR to work on something beneficial that they have ownership of which can be completed in time for their annual report. The format of their annual report will also be standardized. As a group, the Professional Representatives are developing a Mission Statement to provide direction and guidance in their efforts. In addition, the Professional Representatives engaged on a task directly related to the literal definition of their title—to physically meet with their constituents so as to represent them better. All together this provides something that is deliverable that the fraternity and their constituents can use to see how the PR's work and gauge their performance, the same as other members of the Grand Chapter. The PR Mission Statement will provide guidance for the PR's for the rest of the biennium in defining their tasks and is short, simple and will be completed in time for the Winter 2015 SC Meeting. The representative task, a social outing in the locality for each PR has been fun, exciting, and timed for the release of the annual solicitation. The PR's were provided business cards and asked to email all professional Brothers in their locality inviting them for the outing, either lunch or dinner. While this was a challenge for some of the PR's in rural areas, the PR's in localities with a critical mass had considerable success in gathering brothers in the spirit of the First Object. Hopefully these events will continue and perhaps result in the formation of a few new professional groups.

Based on feedback from the PR's, the incoming 2015 PR's will be mentored by more senior PR's. The PR's have been helpful in preparing the Professional Branch Brochure, developing presentations marketing the professional branch to collegiate members, and visiting collegiate events to promote the professional branch. Finally the GCA and I have been working with the DC's to find ways to incorporate PR's into more district events and to help break any barriers there may be that impede communication between the collegiate and professional branches.

- **Online Meetings**—Monthly online meetings continue to occur for the good of the order. There are online meetings on google hangouts for the Professional Representatives and meetings for the professional chapters and groups.
- **Solicitation**—The 2014 annual solicitation is nearing completion and Alpha Chi Sigma has had its best year in over four years in terms of donor participation. In the donor period from September 1 to December 16, 2014 there has been an increase of 2.5% in the number of gifts and an increase of 9.5% in average gift amount over that of the same time period in 2013, Figures 1 and 2. The average gift amount has increased for 30 to 59 year olds and has remained relatively flat for other age groups except for a net decrease in 70 to 79 year olds. However the total participation rate in our annual solicitation campaign is small and relatively unchanged going from a 1.79% to a 1.82% participation for this time frame in 2013 versus that in 2014, Figure 3. Participation in Alpha Chi Sigma's annual solicitation campaigns is quite small compared to our donor pool and we have not been effective at increasing our donor participation rate. We have seen the beginning of success of improving stewardship in the 20 to 30 year old age group. However, the increase in gift size and quantity of individuals donating may well be due to an increase in the number of living members in the professional branch as well as an improvement in the economic picture, stock market, and unemployment, from 2010 to 2014. It is also important to note that the participation rate increases with age consistently from year to year, Figure 3. This may be due to either a better tradition of giving for our older age groups, a better perceived value of use of the donations by that age group, or as the over 50 age groups children go to college they are reminded of their Alpha Chi Sigma experience and have more disposable income, or it is suspected that postal mail hard copy letter campaigns appeal to older age groups over younger age groups.

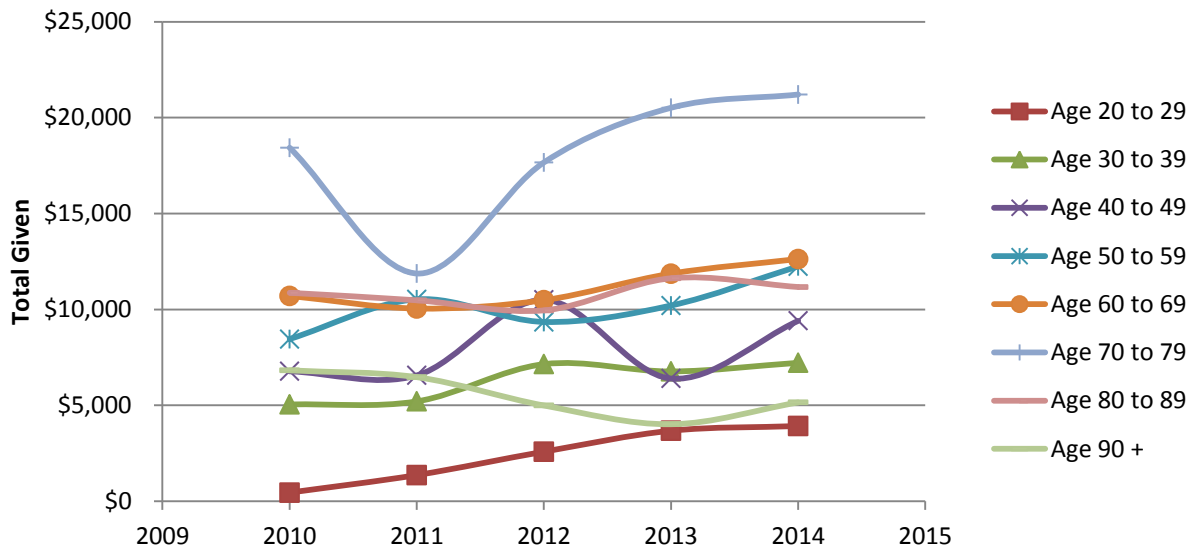


Figure 1: Total amount given by age group September 1 to December 16

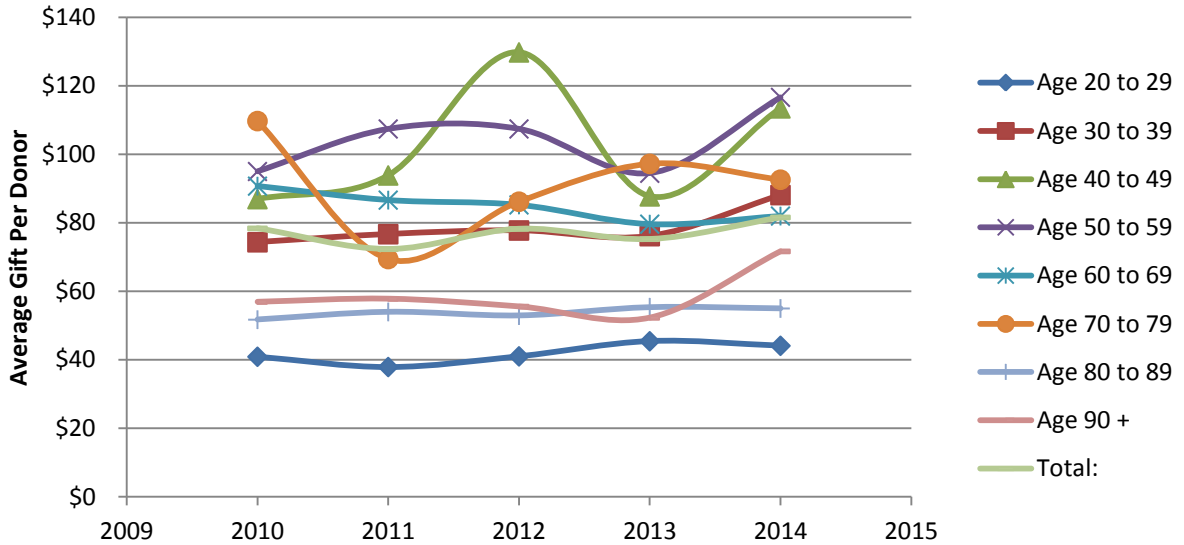


Figure 2: Average gift per donor, September 1 to December 16.

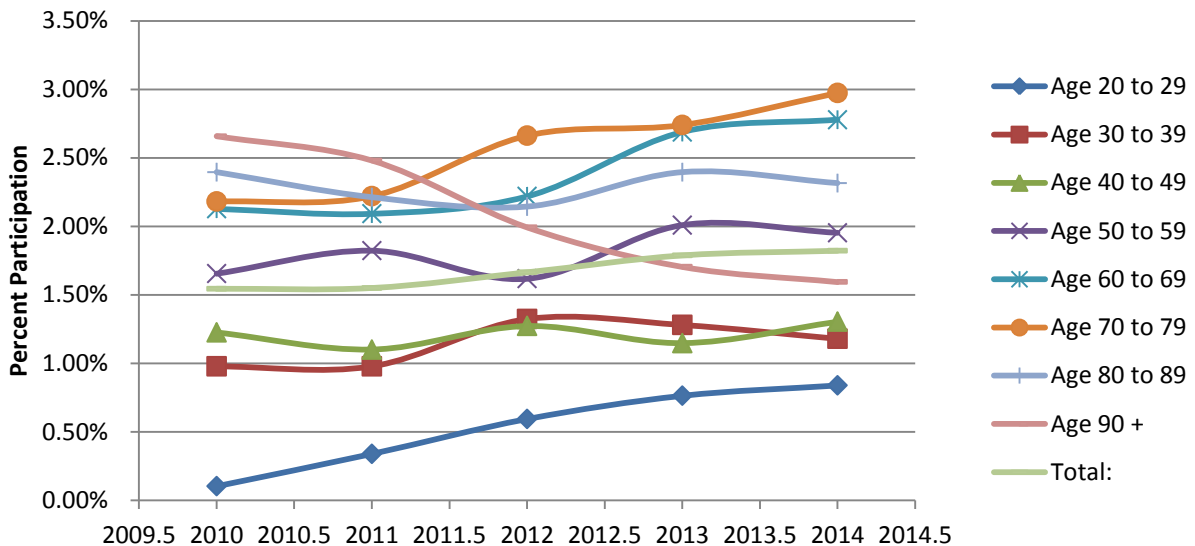


Figure 3: Percent donor participation, September 1 to December 16.

Alpha Chi Sigma has a targeted campaign, with different solicitation materials going to different groups which are active donors, reserve fund members, past donors that hadn't donated in a while, an insert in the HEXAGON, young professionals, and non-donors. The 2014 campaign had a matching challenge from the Supreme Council to first time young professionals to donate, and the non-donor group was changed from 20-39 year olds to over 60 year olds. The non-donor group was changed in anticipation of a planned giving campaign in 2015. In the period of September 1 to December 16, the number of non-donors participating increased from 24 to 45 from 2013 to 2014, an 87% increase. New young professional giving has remained flat, active donors have increased and past donors have decreased, Figure 4. In terms of the average gift given per solicitation group, young professionals were the lowest, followed by non-donors, magazine, past, active, and reserve fund members. The suggested contribution by young professionals is \$25 and other groups are \$50. Reserve fund members, the majority of which are members of the Order of Altotus, typically give 4 times more than the next highest donor group. At the time of this report, the donor statistics from an email campaign to non-donors had not reached by postal mail is not available. In conclusion the campaign targeting non-donors

over the age of 60 was successful over past year's campaigns; however the Supreme Council matching campaign with first time young professionals was a disappointment.

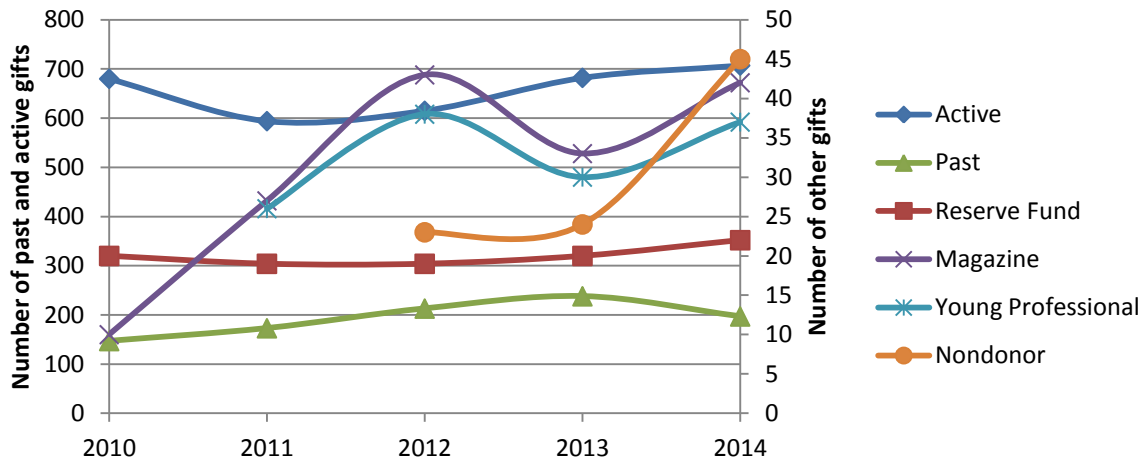


Figure 4: Number of gifts by solicitation group

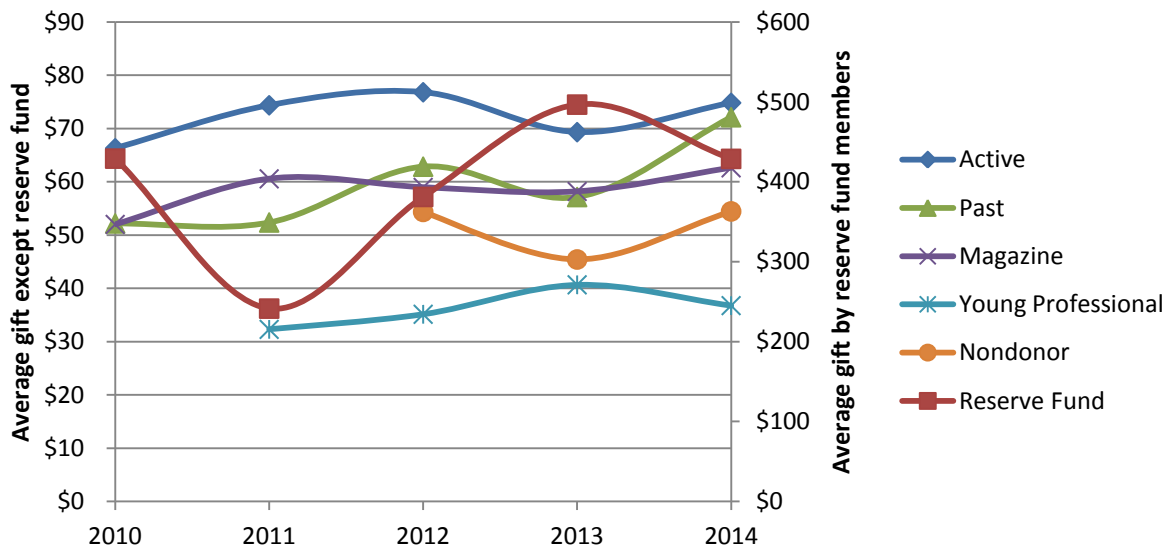


Figure 5: Average gift given by solicitation group

After evaluating the annual solicitation materials, given our low participation rate and the growing expense of performing the annual solicitation, Alpha Chi Sigma must critically assess the effectiveness of our annual solicitation to make it more effective. If it is affordable, I recommend hiring a 501c3 fundraising consultant to evaluate our annual solicitation and its materials as well as help to prepare materials for a planned giving campaign. Kettering University implemented the advice of a fundraising consultant for their materials and annual campaigns which resulted in over a three-fold increase in donor participation. This has been transformative for the institution. Kettering University's Vice President of University Advancement has also offered to proof our solicitation materials. An additional item to consider is raising the minimum suggested donation amounts, which has not increased in over a decade. Given inflation and the increasing cost of the annual solicitation combined with stagnant participation rates and average donations has resulted in a decrease in the financial

effectiveness of our annual solicitation. If something is not changed, this trend will likely continue to the point where an annual solicitation may not be cost effective.

- **St. Louis Professional**—St. Louis Professional Chapter has made considerable progress since its charter was suspended at the first Supreme Council meeting of the biennium, which immediately followed Conclave. St. Louis Professional Charter was suspended due to lack of inactivity and lack of communication with the District Counselor and the previous Supreme Council to determine the health of the chapter. Specifically, the suspension was necessary to provide time to investigate the liability of their Apothecary structure which was not built according to code and partially condemned and the fraternity's exposure to financial risk. As a result of the investigation, Alpha Chi Sigma's insurance policy was amended to cover the Renaissance Fair event held at the structure and the chapter was moved from suspension to probation. The chapter has been very responsive on working through the terms of their probation by communicating with the District Counselor, holding two meetings, planning an event to be held in addition to or in substitution of the Apothecary event, catching up on delinquent reports, and holding officer elections for the first time in years. The chapter is continuing its work and if it is completed, I anticipate the chapter will be removed from probation and returned to active status.
- **Articles and Solicitation Materials**—Being GPA has presented opportunities for preparing several articles for the Chrome and Blue and the Hexagon. The articles I have prepared were aimed at encouraging Brothers to reach out and visit with the alumni of their chapter, in the surrounding area, and long lost contacts to build up excitement leading to a coordinated expansion effort. After years of reflection and conversations of what Alpha Chi Sigma does best, it became personally evident that what we do best is being social with one another and networking: the Founders were wise, the first object is the first for a reason. While most solicitation materials that are sent by paper mail were set by the previous Supreme Council, there are a few materials that I have revised to include quotes or brief stories of Brothers that donations have enabled their activities. In addition, solicitation is not a once a year event, but a continued relationship between the fraternity and its members, a year round activity. One item that several of us are endeavoring is giving our resources and materials a bit more of a human touch to them.
- **Expansion**—Professional Branch expansion is one of the GMA's key themes for this biennium. At this time, the Supreme Council has not approved a directed campaign, but will be one of the GMA's agenda items at the Winter 2015 Supreme Council meeting. However, professional expansion works on its own schedule and opportunities have presented themselves coming out of Conclave. Kansas City Professional Group is on the path to becoming Kansas City Professional Chapter. A group of brothers in Cincinnati are organizing to form Cincinnati Professional Group, and there are inquiries in other parts of the country as well. In addition, it is hoped that some of the PR's gathering events with professionals in their localities will lead to the formation of a couple of additional professional groups.
- **ACS-Alpha Chi Sigma Reception**—The Alpha Chi Sigma Reception at the ACS meeting will be held at the Bubba Gump Shrimp Company in Denver, Colorado on March 24, 2015 from 11 to 1. All Brothers are invited to attend and collegiate Brothers eat for free. The reception will be attended by GMA Evaniak, GPA Wenzel, and Gary Anderson, OA.
- **Presentation of the Alpha Chi Sigma AIChE Outstanding Researcher Award**—This was presented by GPA Wenzel at the AIChE Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia on November 26, 2014 as part of his attendance for presenting at the technical sessions of the meeting.

Goals for 2015

Documentation—Unlike the Grand Master of Ceremonies position, the office of Grand Professional Alchemist has little information or archival documentation that accompanies the office. In 2015, with help of the office staff, documentation and manuals of procedure with timelines will be developed for use by future Grand Professional Alchemists to guide the annual solicitation. In addition documentation with timelines will be developed for putting together the ACS-Alpha Chi Sigma Banquet

AIChE-Alpha Chi Sigma Reception—Attempts have been made in the past by Brs. Weinstein and Wenzel to put together a reception or event for the American Institute of Chemical Engineers Annual Meeting. The challenge has been attendance as well as publicity. There are several competing events in the event that feature free alcohol that have lead to the failure of past events. An attempt will be made to list the event as a lunch time event in the Extraordinary Session Program.

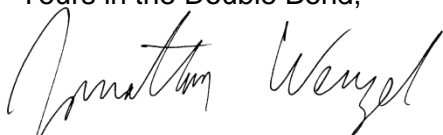
Solicitation/Planned Giving Campaign—Annual Solicitation Materials with timeline, method of delivery, and publicity materials will be revised and provided to the Supreme Council for review. At the time of this report, bids are being solicited for a fundraising consultant to review Alpha Chi Sigma's present annual solicitation and propose a new strategy. These bids will be considered at the Winter 2015 Supreme Council meeting to assess a need to contract a consultant.

Professional Representatives—At the beginning of 2015 the Professional Representative's will begin a mentoring program for new PR's and this program will be evaluated for refinement prior to the election of PR's for terms beginning in 2016.

Other tasks and goals will be added as needs arise and as the GMA's expansion program is developed.

It has been a very productive start to the biennium and I have high expectations over the next 18 months. It has been phenomenal working with our Brothers, the office staff, my fellow members of the Supreme Council, and the Professional Representatives.

Respectfully Submitted,
Yours in the Double Bond,



Dr. Jonathan E. Wenzel, Delta 1996
Grand Master of Ceremonies
Alpha Chi Sigma Fraternity