

# *Alpha Chi Sigma Fraternity*

**Professional In Chemistry**

Office of the  
**GRAND  
PROFESSIONAL ALCHEMIST**



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## **Biennial Report of the Grand Professional Alchemist June 10, 2012**

It was a challenging biennium as I entered onto the Supreme Council in the role as Grand Professional Alchemist. Upon assuming the office, the GPA must immediately be prepared to address the financial needs of our Fraternity through the implementation of our annual solicitation and other fundraising programs. At the same time, the GPA must assist our Brothers in the Professional Branch who seek to grow in their support of AXΣ through creating local and national opportunities to pursue the Three Objects. Finally, as a board member, the GPA serves the Fraternity by providing accountability and oversight to its mission, programs, policies and procedures; and providing support to other SC members when needed.

This biennium, I have most enjoyed the role of providing guidance and encouragement for the establishment and growth of new Professional Chapters and Groups and facilitating opportunities for their representatives to communicate through monthly online chats. Additionally, I have appreciated the opportunity to oversee the annual election of the Fraternity's Professional Representatives, and identify and apply recommendations from several sources including several related ad-hoc committees, which have helped further shape the duties and expectations of their office. Finally, the GPA's office helped prepare the Fraternity for its participation in the International Year of Chemistry in 2011, a role I took on prior to entering the office.

### **Professional Chapters and Groups**

Welcome New Jersey Chapter - the newest Professional Branch Chapter of Alpha Chi Sigma who received its approval of its charter in January 2012. Additionally, this biennium witnessed the formation of Wisconsin Group and Boston Group, with "Bo Pro" having requested permission to petition for a chapter charter.

Chapters in the Professional Branch continue to conduct regular activities ranging from social-focused dinners to well-organized chemistry outreach focusing on pre-college students, their families and communities. Representatives from many of these chapters regularly communicate with each other, along with individual brothers interested in starting or reactivating professional chapters, using monthly online chats. The topics they address vary, but attention continues to focus on issues relevant to maintaining chapters in the Professional Branch, which include assisting in the transmutation of collegiates into active professionals. These, along with conversations about the continued general health of the Fraternity have produced a number of results including Professional Branch expansion.

Per request, San Antonio Group was removed from group status. Other groups around the country continue to be important sources of contacts for Brothers moving into these areas. A Professional Chapter helps facilitate Brothers coming together to fulfill ALL Three Objects— something a single Brother cannot do on his or her own. Whereas Professional Chapters are important as they provide a structured presence of fraternal activities in a community and Grand Chapter representation – Professional Groups are also important as they help Brothers identify points of fraternal contact in a

new community and sometimes catalyze the formation of new Professional Chapter. Last biennium, conclave legislation record will show an attempt to reduce the requirements in starting a Professional Group, and I will encourage the possible benefits of reducing the requirements in starting and maintaining Professional Groups be revisited.

Additionally, the complete list of Professional Chapter and Group activation history is now updated and online. Brothers are encouraged to view this, especially towards efforts of reactivation of professional chapters.

### **Professional Branch Representation**

Special acknowledgement goes to Abbey DeGraffenreid, AO 1995; Eric Haas, Σ 1998; and Pete Ritter, ΓΘ 1989, who completed their service as Professional Representatives during this biennium. And to Pete Yochim, Nu 1963 who has served as Chair of the Professional Representatives during the first part of this biennium, and helped conduct a necessary and meaningful reflection on the value and role of the office of the Professional Representative within the Fraternity.

In the spring of 2011, the document *PR Expectations*, describing the duties and expectations of the office of Professional Representative, was revised and provided to the Nominations Committee for distribution to potential PR candidates. Many changes to this document were due to the recommendations from Conclave Motion 17 Committee, and better aligns the duties and expectations of PRs more closely with those of the current Constitution & Bylaws, along with the present needs of the Fraternity and current Supreme Council. This committee was also charged with reviewing the possibility of geographically elected and defined PRs, but after consideration, this committee concluded this change to be unnecessary, ultimately with limited benefit to the Fraternity.

Additionally, a Grand Chapter Motion 42 at the 50<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conclave directed the formation of a committee to review if the ratio used to calculate the total number of Professional Representatives, currently ten, adequately represents the needs of the Fraternity. This committee, chaired by Michael Clager, ΓI 1989, is prepared to report and provide potential legislation for consideration at Conclave.

### **AXΣ Hall of Fame**

A note of appreciation to GV John Stipp, Epsilon 1989, for chairing the committee of Order of Altotus and Professional Representatives who provided guidance in the selection of our recent AXΣ Hall of Fame inductees Harry B. Gray, Upsilon 1958 and Paul K. Kuroda, Alpha Sigma 1996.

### **AXΣ Annual Fund**

Thank you to those Brothers who donated to the 2010 and 2011 AXΣ Annual Fund Campaigns. The 2011 calendar year showed a modest increase in contributions from professionals over 2010, but for several years, the bottom line of monies collected by the Fraternity through the AXΣ Annual Fund campaign no longer represents the largest piece of the income pie, and there has been concern about the long-term impact this change in trend might mean. Even though other sources of income, such as commercial affiliate partnerships, income generated through investments, and the AXΣ Reserve Fund, are now available and budgeted to support operations allowing us to continue to meet our financial obligations and implement new programming; the desire remains to strengthen the AXΣ Annual Fund.

Research is needed to determine if the decline in the number of contributors, nearly half from 10 years ago, has been caused due to attracting young members to become regular financial supporters of the Fraternity not pacing natural attrition, or reasons we might address disinterest in members supporting the Fraternity and its Three Objects. As GPA, my concern extends beyond these financial consequences to the fact there are significantly fewer Brothers finding personal value in connecting with their Fraternity for life. With this, a major goal of the GPA should be to find ways to get professionals, young and old, reconnected to AXΣ and to their Brothers. In this recent annual fund campaign, a

message promoting the opportunity for Brothers to reconnect with the Fraternity and seek out or provide support to one another, was prevalent and I hope this message and focus continues while other fundraising methods continue to be identified and implemented.

In late 2010, the GPA's review of solicitation materials resulted in a number of corrections and changes to account for inconsistent terms, cluttered layouts, and unclear information. These changes have been overwhelmingly appreciated as revealed in conversations with numerous brothers. For example, the consistent use of the terms 'Annual Fund' and 'Reserve Fund'. Another example is making the online donation option more prominent. While the online donation system had several operational limitations, online giving has gone up to nearly 16% of donations. Additionally, it has now been adopted to provide a "Thank you" letter to every donor regardless of the size of his or her contribution, or IRS requirement. A simple note of thanks to ALL of our supporters increases the level of donor stewardship while keeping with reducing the cost-per-dollar-raised.

Finally, a limited, yet successful social media driven campaign was launched the week of Founders Day and attracted online contributors to make a special, one-time contribution in celebration of Founders Day and to help support our expanded outreach activities during the IYC2011. Thank you to those who gave \$20 on the 11<sup>th</sup>, especially if it was your first voluntary contribution to the Fraternity!

### **AXΣ Reserve Fund**

This biennium, several Brothers became AXΣ Reserve Fund Members, receiving the fraternal status of lifetime 'active professional member' along with receipt of a Reserve Fund recognition coin. Additionally 28 new members began contributing to the fund during the 2011 campaign that ran from September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011; joining the existing 14 regular donors working toward completing the requirement of contributing \$2000 within a period of 10 years. Education about the purpose and use of the fund was featured in an article in *The Hexagon* and may have contributed to this renewed interest in the fund. However, several of these new donors are located near active Professional Chapters and Groups and the growth of participation in this fund may parallel these active Professional Brothers growing in their involvement in the Fraternity.

### **AXΣ/International Year of Chemistry in 2011**

Alpha Chi Sigma kicked off its IYC2011 activities on its Founders Day, December 11, 2010 with an awareness campaign urging Brothers everywhere to wear their Greek Letters in support of the Fraternity and its participation in this unique global celebration of chemistry as a central science. Throughout 2011, Collegiate Chapters were encouraged to seek new audiences for their chemistry outreach programs. A number of Collegiate Branch and Professional Branch chapters had these activities featured in *The HEXAGON*, earning "Wyvern Chapter" Awards for their efforts. Additionally, distribution of the remaining balloon kits to make tetrahedral water molecules will occur at this upcoming Conclave to encourage continuing to promote chemistry outreach beyond the International Year of Chemistry. Our Fraternity is proud to have been involved with a global initiative that aligns with our Second Object.

### **AXΣ Luncheons at Professional Meetings**

Professional luncheons are a small, yet significant, part of our organization, and we have had success in adding the promotion of these events to local Brothers. Recent professional lunches have occurred in Boston, LA, Denver and San Diego in conjunction with ACS national meetings and a Fall luncheon will be held in Philadelphia. Additionally, a luncheon was organized in Minneapolis for the Fall AIChE meeting. OA Gary Anderson, AH 1962, has continued in the important role as onsite contact for ACS conference luncheons and his support remains valued.

## **PFA Awards**

The office of GPA worked with GMA Showerman, OA Settle and BX MA Kyle Harshey in submitting the nomination of BX Advisor Br. Herb Sipe, A 1962, for Professional Fraternity Association's Faculty Advisory Award. Brother Sipe was selected for this award and attended the Fall PFA conference, along with GR Johanns and GMC Evaniak and received appropriate recognition. In the future, nominations for some of PFA's other awards may be submitted, including the Professional Activities Award. AXΣ Professional Representatives could help identify these nominees, analogous to their Hutchinson Award selection duties they perform at each biennial conclave.

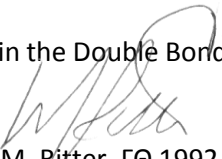
## **Travel and Other Fraternal Opportunities**

In addition to attending the PFA Conference in Fall of 2010, it has been my privilege this biennium to participate in the installation of the FX Chapter at Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia, and Gamma Psi in University of Toledo. Additionally, I attended the Southeast District and Central District meetings; Professional Induction Ceremonies conducted at BX Chapter/Longwood Colony and at ΓΘ Chapter; and attended BX Chapter's 40th Anniversary kickoff celebration. I also conducted the pre-chartering visit for the University Of Toledo Colony Of AB Chapter on behalf of GMA Showerman.

I continue to enjoy my involvement with the St. Louis Chapter and have participated in several of the chapter's social and chemistry outreach activities, including their Alchemy Outreach programs, a chapter visit to the Da Vinci Inventions exhibit and a farewell dinner to former St. Louis President Bec Shane. I joined local Brothers in attending the funeral services of friend and longtime supporter of St Louis Chapter OA Ed Schneider, BΔ 1942, the recipient of the 2010 John R. Kuebler Award.

Finally, I want to offer special thanks to my husband, Pete Ritter, ΓΘ 1989, for his continuous support and encouragement during my service as Grand Professional Alchemist and Supreme Council member.

Yours in the Double Bond,



Mistti M. Ritter, ΓΘ 1992  
Grand Professional Alchemist