

PRESS RELEASE

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Six Named Anti-Hazing Heroes by HazingPrevention.Org: 2008 Anti-Hazing Heroes and Essay Contest Winners

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Hazing Prevention.Org Names the 2008 Anti-Hazing Heroes

Denver, Co. – January 9th – In a year focused on change, 2008's Anti-Hazing Heroes are making positive changes not only for their immediate communities, but for students everywhere now and in the future.

HazingPrevention.org, with the sponsorship of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity, recognizes the students and professionals who take action towards a hazing-free future, by naming them Anti-Hazing Heroes. This year one professional and five students received this honor.

Christina Covington, National President of Alpha Sigma Tau sorority, was instrumental in establishing AST as a founding member of the Anti-Hazing Hotline (1-888-NOT-HAZE) and for making this number accessible through sorority publications including a revised new member handbook. She was nominated for her “unrelenting passion to eradicate hazing from the sorority, and to demonstrate our values and behavior by example to our Greek colleagues.” 571-261-1855 ccovington@hotmail.com

This year's other Heroes, Bill Gibson, Daniel Kim, Jacob Lopez, Wallace McKinney, and Andrew Richter, are all students who took on the traditions of their organizations and the behaviors of its members in order to create hazing-free organizations and meaningful new member processes.

As **Bill Gibson** prepares to graduate from the University of Montana, he leaves knowing his chapter of Sigma Nu Fraternity is a better place than when he pledged. With assistance from the national organization, Bill helped to develop a candidate program based on the Fraternity's values, rooted in the organization's LEAD program, and incorporating constructive team building. Bill endured threats and overcame much adversity to set the chapter on the “right track.” Bill said, “This award is really for the chapter, as a whole, for doing the hard work to make these changes.” 406-549-6751 bgibson27@gmail.com

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Daniel Kim served in many leadership roles at Cal Poly, but demonstrated his strongest leadership in a role that doesn't often have the greatest visibility – Associate Member Counselor for his fraternity, Delta Chi. As one of only a few members who saw hazing as detrimental, he tried to bring the practice to an end. Daniel eventually reached his brothers through an impassioned speech presenting the facts, pros and cons of hazing. “I have learned that change comes gradually,” he said. “Especially when dealing with issues that are deeply rooted in a chapter's history and tradition. I have had plenty of struggles of whether being involved was what I wanted, but realized that if I simply quit, there would be no one to fight for what was truly right.” 408-355-4993
danielhkim04@gmail.com

Jacob Lopez initially left his fraternity due to hazing, but returned to make great change. After being hazed as a new member, Jacob announced his resignation from the fraternity. Following much pleading from his closest friends, he agreed to come back only if no hazing would occur again. Jacob stepped into The New Member Educator position and, within two weeks, he created a new hazing-free program for the Fall 2007 class. The new program manages to include the old traditions without hazing. Despite resistance from older chapter members, the fraternity has been able to maintain a non-hazing new member education program. Jacob's courage has led him to the role of current chapter President for TKE at Cal Poly. 415-250-5592 jdlopez@calpoly.edu

Wallace McKinney witnessed the hazing of a freshman by one of his brothers. Wallace stepped in on the spot and asked the brother to apologize, and then turned the brother into Standards Board, where the leadership of the chapter removed the member and took his badge. Wallace's chapter had been found responsible for hazing in the fall of 2007, and he was determined that it would not happen again. Wallace's nominator and Greek advisor said that as President of the Alabama Mu chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon at Auburn University, Wallace has changed the culture of his fraternity. 251-377-6238 mckinwr@auburn.edu

Andrew Righter is the Vice President of Tau Kappa Epsilon at Cal Poly, and was formerly President of the chapter. After only a few of months of membership, the President of Andrew's chapter was ousted due to hazing that took place under his leadership. Andrew stepped up to fulfill the role. As a first year student, many people didn't feel he was ready, but he proved them wrong. He eliminated hazing from the chapter's new member program, and was the recipient of the Most Outstanding Greek President at Cal Poly award. “I'm proud of the fact that I was able to make my fraternity much better than when I joined. I attribute much of my success in that to Adrian Herrera (2007 Anti-Hazing Hero) and the Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute,” said Andrew. 714-745-1100 arighte@calpoly.edu

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The Anti-Hazing Hero Awards were presented on December 3, 2008, at the National Hazing Symposium held in Denver, Colorado. Steve Good, Director of Education & Technology of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity, said, “For the second year, our organization is proud to help recognize these students and professionals who are making a real impact on the issue of hazing. Their courage in standing up to the problem is commendable.”

Applications for 2009 Anti-Hazing Heroes and Essay Contest submissions are currently available on the HazingPrevention.Org website, and due anytime before October 1, 2009.

Hazing is defined as any action taken or situation created intentionally, whether on or off campus, that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule, and has the potential for mental or physical harm. Actions can fall under the hazing definition even if victims agree to participate, and even if they are no longer considered “new” members of a team or organization.

HazingPrevention.Org is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower individuals – through education and collaboration - to expect and create groups that value human dignity. The mission is accomplished through recognition of the heroes who are fighting the problem, general awareness-raising efforts and sponsorship of several annual educational programs including: The National Hazing Symposium – generally held in the fall; National Hazing Prevention Week – taking place on campuses the last week of September each year; The Interdisciplinary Institute for Hazing Intervention, a training program for professionals & volunteers held annually in early summer. For more information, or to read the winning essays, go to: www.hazingprevention.org

HavingPrevention.Org's mission is to empower individuals - through collaboration and education - to expect and create groups that value human dignity. Hazing is any action taken or situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule; or risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of an organization or team. It is still considered hazing whether or not a member is considered 'new' and regardless of the person's willingness to participate. For more information, go to: www.hazingprevention.org

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