



# Mortar Board

*Scholars...Chosen for Leadership...United to Serve*

## **INK: Important news for chapter officers and advisors**

### **Mortar Board Virtual Book Drive challenge ends**

#### **October 15**

With only two weeks remaining, and short of the national goal of \$30,000, it is time to energize chapter efforts to meet the Mortar Board Virtual Book Drive challenge.

#### **The current leading chapters are**

1. Kansas State University
2. Ohio Wesleyan University
3. Tulane University
4. Carnegie Mellon University
5. Drury University

#### **Accepting the virtual challenge**

- Through October 15, raise funds for the purchase of books in your community using the Virtual Book Drive Web site at [www.firstbook.org/mortarboard](http://www.firstbook.org/mortarboard).
- Identify a program serving children from low-income families to receive the funds you raised and notify First Book about applying store credits.
- Help the program purchase books with their First Book Marketplace credits.
- Incorporate the arrival of the books in a Reading is Leading project or chapter event with area children.

Please make sure your chapter reports all donations before the October 15 deadline so that your selected organizations can shop for their books.

#### **Your chapter can STILL participate**

Gather chapter members and hold a fundraiser or two using helpful ideas listed on page 4 of the Virtual Book Drive packet. Donate your group's proceeds online or by check/money order by October 15. Together, your chapter can identify a program (or even multiple programs) that you can directly support with your contributions. For complete details, please download the Virtual Book Drive packet.

#### **Chapters with the most donations will receive prizes**

The top three chapters will receive Borders gift cards in denominations of \$500, \$250 and \$100 respectively to be given to the recipient group/program of their choice. Additionally, the Mortar Board section that raises the most funds will be able to select two programs to receive 500 books each from First Book.

#### **Ways to donate**

- **Online at [www.firstbook.org/mortarboard](http://www.firstbook.org/mortarboard)** - Simply fill out an easy online form, select the amount you would like to donate and credit your collegiate chapter with the donation. Parents, friends, individual members and the chapter as a whole can donate online before the book drive ends on October 15.
- **Check or money order** - Complete an online donation form and mail your donation to First Book, Campus Advisory Boards, 1319 F Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington DC, 20004. To ensure proper credit of donations, please indicate your desired collegiate chapter and location.

#### **Service: a keystone of Mortar Board**

The three key ideals of Mortar Board are scholarship, leadership and service. Each chapter finds a different way to incorporate these ideals into their annual projects. Members are not only honored for their commitment to service past, but are charged with actively participating in service throughout their senior year.

#### **Deadlines & Reminders**

***Check your files to ensure that all reports from last year have been submitted.***

#### **October 15**

- Chapter Planning Calendar due
- Chapter Project Grant Application due
- Forum submissions due
- Virtual Book Drive ends

#### **December 15**

- Membership Recruitment and Selection Plan (MRSP) due
- Mortar Board Week Visibility Grant application due

#### **January 31**

- Applications for national Mortar Board post-graduate fellowships are due

#### **Showcase your accomplishments in the national magazine**

The perfect opportunity for your chapter to get national recognition is in the semi-annual *Mortar Board Forum* magazine. The deadline to submit chapter updates or stories for the *Mortar Board Forum* Fall 2008 edition is Wednesday, October 15.

Each chapter's director of communications is encouraged to submit at least one update or news release for publication this year. A great way to see what has been submitted in the past is to view the Fall 2007 or Spring 2008 OnCampus section. Some things you can submit are:

- Summaries/write-ups of recent chapter events
- Statistics from recent chapter projects or events, such as how much money was raised or number of participants
- Detailed plans for an upcoming event
- Pictures of your chapter in action to be featured in the magazine (should be color, high-resolution photos)

## On a budget

Even with very little money to spend on a service project, there are some great options:

- Tutor at an area school
- Hold a book drive
- Clean up area parks or highways
- Volunteer at local animal shelters
- Host or participate in a food drive
- Volunteer at local hospitals or nursing homes
- Hold a blood drive
- Help out with Habitat for Humanity

## Going big

Some chapters with more funding prefer to hold fewer, larger-scale projects versus several small projects. As a group, an important initial step is to create objectives and realistic goals for the project, which may vary from contributing service to promoting awareness.

Executing these large events often requires a strong support system and significant dedication. This may mean the selection a chairperson or creation of a committee to assist in planning and executing the event.

To get maximum support, funding and awareness, a chapter may consider pairing with other campus organizations. This can exponentially increase your resources. Beyond the university level, working with a local or national organization such as First Book, Better World Books, Habitat for Humanity or the Red Cross can further increase the event's impact.

Good examples of some bigger projects chapters hold are Longwood University's Oktoberfest, Purdue University's Premier Volleyball Tournament, and The Ohio State University's World's Largest Pillow Fight.

## Get together

Collaborate with other chapters in your regional section to complete a project. Section 22 holds an annual project at the Garden of the Gods park in Colorado Springs. Many sections are motivated to join forces to build stronger events and awareness. Whether you are working alongside other members in your section or simply holding an event the same day as another chapter, the Mortar Board National Office encourages you to reach out to chapters around you with the help of your section coordinator!

## Reading is Leading

Since it was voted the permanent national project of Mortar Board in 2002, Reading is Leading has been the highlight of Mortar Board chapters' service activities. The Reading is Leading initiative stresses awareness and action regarding literacy issues in our community. Each chapter is encouraged to have at least one event to fight illiteracy in its community. This year, an easy way to contribute to Reading is Leading is by participating in the First Book Virtual Book Drive through October 15 at [www.firstbook.org/mortarboard](http://www.firstbook.org/mortarboard).

Specific events take many forms, such as hosting book drives, trick-or-treating for books, tutoring at local schools and supporting area libraries. No matter the project your chapter chooses, you are dually promoting another of Mortar Board's ideals - scholarship - whenever you support Reading is Leading.

## Service-learning

Service-learning incorporates reflection and learning with traditional service activities in order to promote deeper investment in a cause. An individual engaged in service-learning looks further into the project to analyze the service and truly understand how it makes an impact on society. Service-learning theory is made up of several key components:

- **Curricular connections** by integrating learning into a service project
- Looking to determine **authentic community needs**
- Giving a **student voice** by selecting, designing, implementing and evaluating the service activity

You can submit your story ideas in one of two ways:

- Send your story in a Word or text document (complete with your name, office/position and college/university) and any high-resolution pictures to [mbforum@mortarboard.org](mailto:mbforum@mortarboard.org)
- Complete a simple online form and e-mail any corresponding pictures to [mbforum@mortarboard.org](mailto:mbforum@mortarboard.org)

## Icebreaker of the month The Digging Game

Members sit in a circle of chairs with one person standing in the center.

The person in the center asks a question, such as "who has brown hair?" and everyone who does has to get up and switch seats. However, a person can not sit in a seat immediately to their left or right or return to their original seat if they are unable to find a new chair.

At this time, the person in the center also attempts to find a seat, which will in turn leave another member without a chair to ask a question of their choice.

A few question examples:

- Who speaks Spanish?
- Who has ever gone to another college or university?
- Who attended Mortar Board initiation?
- Who was on the dean's list?
- Who plays a sport?

You may choose to set a time limit, as the game continues until you decide to quit. This is a great way to "dig" up information and help members get to know each other.

## About INK

The Mortar Board INK e-newsletter is distributed monthly throughout the academic year (September - May). All chapter officers and advisors reported on the Officer Address Information Form receive the newsletter. If you think an officer or advisor in your chapter is not receiving the newsletter, encourage them to sign up here.

To ensure that you promptly receive the newsletter each month, Mortar Board recommends adding [enews@mortarboard.org](mailto:enews@mortarboard.org) to your address book or safe-senders list.

- Engaging in critical **reflection** to analyze leadership responsibilities, involvement and impact
- Participation in **community partnerships** to identify genuine needs, provide mentorship, and contribute assets toward project completion
- Constructive feedback and reflection provide well-structured **assessment**

Read Mortar Board's complete Service-Learning Guidebook to find a way to make service more meaningful for your chapter.

*2007-2008 Project Excellence Award recipients*  
*2006-2007 Project Excellence Award recipients*

## **Raising funds for your chapter**

Fundraising is an important part of any organization's functionality – and Mortar Board is no exception. Here are some tips to planning and executing your fundraising efforts this year.

### **Create a fundraising plan**

Collaborate with chapter officers and advisors to create a detailed budget for the entire academic year. With this budget, you can visualize exactly how much needs to be raised and when – allowing you to plan early in the year so that fundraising doesn't get forgotten. Establishing a participation policy or member requirements for fundraising can improve the span of your efforts. When planning, don't forget that your chapter is tax-exempt from federal tax. Learn more about tax-exempt status online.

### **Strategize**

Take your resources, chapter size and university demographics into consideration. Does your group have the capability to execute one large fundraiser to fund the entire year's budget? Or should you plan several small events? Only your group can determine the best course of action.

### **Gather ideas**

There are a variety of fundraisers you can execute, from selling products online at eFundraising.com to hosting a karaoke night on campus. Create an extensive list of possible projects by viewing ideas on the Mortar Board Web site and brainstorming your own with the chapter executive board. Take the list you create to the entire chapter and vote on preferred events, dates and times. Be sure to plan with regard to your university's academic or community calendar so that your fundraisers don't compete with other major events.

### **Consider grants and partnerships**

Apply for grants from your university or Mortar Board as a great way to gain funding for project support. Or, you may choose to work with local or national partners for financial contributions. For example, holding a book drive in conjunction with one of Mortar Board's national partners, Better World Books, will not only support literacy, but pays \$.50 per qualifying book! Working with another partner, Blossom Express, to sell flowers at graduation can help your chapter earn up to \$2,000 in just one day of work!

### **Motivate your team**

Getting your chapter excited is crucial for success in fundraising. Start a committee or appoint an officer to head up fundraising efforts. This delegation will prove effective in executing the events. If possible, choose fundraisers that are enjoyable so members can have fun while making money for the chapter. Even if the project is fairly mundane, try to spice it up by setting up a post-event social gathering or creating participation incentives for members.

## **Be among the first to fundraise with Blossom Express and earn a \$250 grant**

Mortar Board and Blossom Express are making it easy and profitable for your chapter to hold a graduation flower sale. For those who are already doing a flower sale, you know how successful they can be. For those that are not doing a sale,

Archived editions of Mortar Board INK are available online.

## **From your National Council student representative**

Hello Mortar Board friends!

It was great to meet so many of you this summer at conference and to hear about all the amazing things your chapters are doing. However, I know that as the school year gets going and as people get busy, it gets harder and harder to keep the enthusiasm and drive of conference going. Let me take this opportunity to re-ignite you with that spirit! Remember that you have an entire team of support waiting to assist you – Joseph, me, and the rest of the National Council, the National Office staff, your SC, and don't forget all the other MB members you met at Conference. Brainstorming with friends made over the summer is one of the best ways to improve and invigorate your chapter – so go for it! That's what e-mail and Facebook were made for!

Perhaps at conference you also found yourself wanting to do more on a national level. Or perhaps since you've returned to your chapter you've found someone in your group that you think could help the national MB do great things. Terrific! There are so many ways to get involved and we are always searching for members who want to help. Any member can join a national committee simply by letting us know! We have various committees to aid in everything from chapter expansion to communications to governance. Just e-mail me and let me know what strengths you'd like to bring and we can get you assigned. Another way is to become a conference assistant – look for information about that coming in the spring. And, don't forget, you can always simply e-mail me with suggestions or comments. That's what I'm here for!

I look forward to working with each of you this year!

- Katie

*Katie Schirmer, a recent graduate of Drury University, serves as one of two National Council student representatives. Her two-year term will end in July 2009. The other seat*

Blossom Express is sweetening the pot!

The first five (5) new chapters who sign up for the Blossom Express program will receive a special, one-time \$250 chapter project grant funded by Blossom Express to do anything with you please! No reports, no application fees!

Blossom Express helps your chapter by:

- Offering quality rose bouquets, already wrapped ready to distribute, in a variety of colors.
- Absolutely no up-front costs or expenses. Payment follows the sale. Flowers are shipped to you at no cost.
- Guaranteed quality. If the flowers aren't up to snuff, Blossom Express will FedEx replacements.
- Earn up to \$2,000 for less than a day of effort.
- Providing sales support, suggestions and tips every step of the way.

I want the \$250 for my chapter AND to make some money selling flowers, now what?

- To move things along, ask the person in charge of commencement at your campus for permission for your chapter to sell bouquets of roses at spring commencement 2009 or earlier ceremonies.
- Blossom Express will be following up with you shortly to see if you are interested in selling flowers
- Or give Lori Taylor a call at 800-332-7421 to jump on this chance!

Blossom Express, Fresh flowers for grads and parents since 1985  
1-800-332-7421 | 105 Forrest Avenue, Suite 9 | Los Gatos, CA 95032

### **Chapter spotlight: Purdue University**

For more than 80 years the Barbara Cook chapter at Purdue University has continually exemplified excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership and service. Unlike most chapters, members are selected based on a nomination, not application, process. This proves to be rewarding and challenging – rewarding because it recognizes those who are truly worthy of the honor and challenging because some of those outstanding students may not have knowledge of Mortar Board.

Despite the diverse group coming together, often lacking familiarity with Mortar Board's three key ideals, the chapter maintains its strength and prestige with ease. The chapter has been honored nationally numerous times, receiving the first-ever Mortar Board National Citation Award in 1971 for its record of service on campus. This former recipient of the Ruth Weimer Mount Chapter Excellence Award (2002) was selected as a Ruth Mount finalist again this summer, also taking home the Golden Torch Award, two Project Excellence Awards and the Best Web site Award.

President Sam Killermann says his best advice to other chapters is to find their niche on campus. "Every campus has different needs or different venues in which your Mortar [Board] chapter can lend a hand – uncover those needs or find those venues and do your best to serve your community." Killermann goes on to explain that chapters shouldn't force events or programming simply because it is what they want to do, but should allow their individual campuses to guide the way, showing groups where they can rise to the occasion.

Rising to the occasion is certainly something the Purdue group has done. They are well-known for many renowned events, including their women's volleyball tournament, an annual leadership conference, and their exemplary Reading Extravaganza. Additionally, the chapter awards fellowships, honors underclassmen and sells a campus-wide calendar.

This year, the group will implement a few new projects to help expand visibility of Mortar Board and promote the ideals of scholarship, leadership and service. First, they will introduce a mentoring program in which a current Mortar Board member will be paired with a freshman student in the Purdue Emerging Leaders Program.

Additionally, the chapter will borrow an idea from numerous other Mortar Board chapters - the conceptualization of a Last Lecture Series. Killermann explains, "I think it is something that could really tie all of campus (and our local community) to the ideals of Mortar Board by publicly showcasing individuals that have excelled in our world here at Purdue."

For more information on the Barbara Cook chapter, please visit their Web site or contact Chapter President Sam Killermann at [killer@purdue.edu](mailto:killer@purdue.edu).

***Your chapter can be in the spotlight too!*** Nominate your group by sending your chapter name, university, e-mail address and what makes your chapter unique to [enews@mortarboard.org](mailto:enews@mortarboard.org).

*is held by University of Arizona senior and chapter president Joseph Rodriguez, whose term will expire in July 2010.*

### **Apply for a Mortar Board Week Visibility Grant**

Mortar Board is offering a special grant to chapters who hope to enhance their group's visibility during Mortar Board Week (February 15 - 21, 2009).

This grant varies from a typical project grant in that it can be used to cover any visibility costs, from printing t-shirts to buying advertising.

The deadline to apply is December 15, so be sure to complete the grant application online this fall! Recipients will be notified in January.

