



Mortar Board

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

INK: Important news for chapter officers and advisors

Welcome to the 2008-2009 INK: Important monthly news for chapter officers and advisors

The Mortar Board INK, distributed September through May, serves as a resource for officers and advisors of Mortar Board. It features national deadlines and reminders, important announcements, monthly ideas and highlights chapter activities. Officers and advisors reported in the Officer Address Information Form receive this newsletter.

Please forward this to others who you believe would benefit or ask them to subscribe.

The Mortar Board model year

Being a Mortar Board officer or advisor is a great responsibility that will be both fun and challenging throughout the year. Below are things that will help to guide your chapter throughout the year.

Getting started

- Ask the official delegate to share what they learned at the national conference in July with the rest of the chapter. The 2009 Mortar Board National Conference will be held July 24-26 in Chicago, Ill.
- Download and read the Officer & Advisor Handbook (Please note that each chapter's membership chairperson, advisor and president should download an additional guide, the Membership Selection Handbook)
- Review the Chapter Minimum Standards online or as outlined in the Officer & Advisor Handbook to help you plan for the upcoming year
- Make a list of questions, concerns or ideas you have regarding the upcoming year. Search for answers online at the conference resource page or chapter resources page. For more help, contact your section coordinator or a national representative.
- Be sure to set up your chapter's mortarboard.org e-mail address using these instructions, update your local chapter Web site and consider creating a public calendar, such as a Google Calendar, to share events.
- Review chapter award opportunities here and set goals accordingly.
- Plan early for all scholarship, leadership, service and fundraising events that will occur throughout the year. These plans must be submitted to the National Office in the Chapter Planning Calendar by October 15.
- Bookmark the Mortar Board calendar and report forms site - you need to be sure to meet all deadlines throughout the year.

First half of the year (August - December)

- Set membership meeting times, selecting a time and location that most, if not all, members and advisors can attend. You may have to change meeting times each semester to accommodate your group. General membership meetings should be held monthly as soon as school starts.
- Participate in fall campus activities.
- Submit your chapter success stories and photos by the 15th of each month for a chance to be featured in the INK newsletter or by October 15 to be included in the national magazine, the Mortar Board Forum.
- Create a Membership Recruitment and Selection Plan (MRSP) and submit by December 15. (Note: this plan requires getting facts and figures from your university, so get started early!)

Deadlines & Reminders
Check your files and with the National Office to see that all reports from last year have been submitted to reports@mortarboard.org!

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

March 15

- Excellence in Advising nominations due
- Alumni award nominations due
- Conference assistant applications due
- Forum submissions due
- Conference registration opens

May 15

- Chapter Annual Report due
- Chapter Finance Report due
- Final Official Membership Report (OMR) due
- Advisor Annual Report due
- Officer Address Information Form due
- Chapter Project Grant applications due
- Conference registration due
- Annual chapter award nominations due
- All fees due



- Have fun! Plan a social event or two, and have icebreakers at each meeting so chapter members can get to know each other.

Second half of the year (January - graduation)

- Use your MRSP to begin the membership selection process.
- Celebrate national Mortar Board Week, held February 15 - 21, 2009.
- Participate in campus activities.
- Complete the Official Membership Report (OMR) for the National Office
- Tap new members in a memorable, public way.
- Hold a special, meaningful initiation ceremony for your new members
- Orient your new members with a fun retreat or orientation meeting.
- It is important to plan an effective transition process for outgoing/incoming officers.

Mortar Board launches Virtual Book Drive

Since 1985, members of Mortar Board have worked toward a national project in order to make a difference in campuses and communities around the country. Today, the permanent national project is Reading is Leading, a literacy initiative.

Nationally, Mortar Board has launched a Virtual Book Drive, held in conjunction with First Book as a way for our chapters, alumni and supporters to unite nationally while working toward a common goal – to give children across the country access to books.

With a donation of just \$2 you can provide a child with their first book, and contribute to the national goal of raising \$30,000. Detailed information can be found in the Virtual Book Drive packet. Please note that the Virtual Book Drive will end on October 15, 2008.

Why does literacy matter?

Illiteracy is linked to nearly every major socioeconomic crisis today. Children who cannot read are statistically more likely as adults to suffer poor health, struggle in the job market, rely on government assistance, and find themselves in the criminal justice system.

- More than 85 percent of all youth in the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate;
- In several states, third-grade literacy rates are used to project prison capacity needs;
- Healthcare costs for people with low literacy are statistically four times higher than for the general population.

Please help to uphold the Mortar Board ideals of scholarship, leadership and service by making a difference today through First Book!

How your chapter can participate

The Mortar Board Virtual Book Drive is a fundraising challenge in which chapters compete to raise funds in order to bring new books to local programs serving children from low-income families. These funds will be available for use through the First Book Marketplace, where programs can choose from hundreds of high-quality titles at deeply discounted prices.

Gather chapter members and hold a fundraiser or two using helpful ideas listed on page 4 of the Virtual Book Drive packet. Donate proceeds online or by check/ money order. Together, your chapter can identify a program (or even multiple programs) to assist directly with your contributions. Communicate with this group, and they can shop at the First Book Marketplace for books of use to them.

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.

GET YOUR
OFFICIAL MERCHANDISE
TODAY



www.mortarboard.org/merch

Icebreaker of the month

Autograph Bingo

Let your chapter members get to know each other by learning interesting (and humorous) facts about other members.

First, create a table with 5 rows and 5 columns and fill it in with interesting facts or statements like those on this sample card. These facts can be easy such as "has blond hair" or more out of the ordinary such as "knows a martial art." Remember, you want someone to actually win, so mix and match easy statements with more difficult ones.

Distribute writing utensils and the bingo cards you created to members. Be sure to let the group know that they should mingle and find other members to sign squares with facts that apply to them. Members can only sign each card once, and cannot sign their own card. The first member to get a complete row of 5 autographs (horizontal, vertical or diagonal) and shout "BINGO!" wins!

For an extra get-to-know you benefit, you can ask everyone to introduce themselves after the game. They can stand and say their name, major(s) or minor(s), chapter office (if they hold one) and one square they were able to sign on the bingo cards.

Consider giving a prize to the winner, such as a Mortar Board gift item or gift certificate to a local restaurant.

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** - 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.

Chapter spotlight: University of Wyoming

The Cap & Gown chapter at the University of Wyoming was honored at the 2008 National Conference as a Ruth Weimer Mount Chapter Excellence Award. The chapter's wonderful planning skills, the members' unwavering devotion to Mortar Board's key ideals, the group's wonderful events, and the chapter's deep-rooted traditions are all keys to this immense success.

Goal-setting has contributed to the chapter's consistent strength over the years. By setting specific goals, large and small, the chapter was able to appropriately plan and execute their Mortar Board year. Just a few of last year's goals included enhancing alumni relations, hosting a week of Mortar Board Week events, and updating and maintaining their chapter Web site – all achieved.

Specifically, the chapter worked cooperatively and without dissonance throughout the year, coming together to execute large projects which significantly impacted their community. Most importantly, each individual member of the 2007-2008 chapter carried their weight throughout the year, remaining extremely active in chapter activities and on campus, all while graduating with excellent grades, honors and merits.

With numerous events and traditions, chapter members must be committed and devoted to each of the group's events. Advisor and Section 22 Coordinator Dr. David Whitman encourages chapters to choose quality over quantity, planning fewer, more memorable events rather than opting for countless small events. Some of the Wyoming chapter's well-loved and well-known annual events include "Top Prof" and "Tip of the Cap," events to honor an esteemed faculty and staff member, respectively. Another significant tradition is "Torchlight Laurels," a time-honored tradition that brings together several organizations and societies to recognize more than 300 students for academic excellence, service and leadership.

Beyond these great events, the chapter still makes time to participate in several service activities. Members volunteer with SafeRide, build homes with Habitat for Humanity, participate in the Festival of Trees, hold book drives, work with their Mortar Board section to clean up the Garden of the Gods park and much more.

Finally, tradition is important keystone of the Cap & Gown chapter, founded locally in 1924 and chartered in 1933. This year, the group will commemorate their landmark anniversary with a wonderful 75th Anniversary celebration. This milestone is so important to the group that last year's acclaimed chapter actually started the planning for the upcoming celebration. This celebration will now serve a dual purpose, honoring the anniversary and the chapter's Ruth Weimer Mount Award.

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.



Sign up to receive all of Mortar Board's e-newsletters!

Mortar Board distributes several e-newsletters to members throughout the year, including news for collegiate members, alumni members, merchandise specials, information for potential members and more.

From your National Council student representative

Mortar Boarders,

First, I'd like to thank you for a wonderful experience and opportunity. I plan on keeping you all informed on the progress we are making as a National Council, and will actively work to keep you involved as well. Thanks to those of you who expressed interest in serving on a committee, I will be contacting you all shortly.

Here is my contact information; feel free to give me a call for whatever reason.

Phone:

(602) 460-6430

E-mail:

studentrep2@mortarboard.org

Lastly, I hope you all remember that we are working together as a national organization. Our ties go far beyond the conference in Columbus, so stay in touch.

-Joe

Joseph M. Rodriguez serves as the chapter president at the University of Arizona. He was elected to one of the two student representative seats on the Mortar Board National Council at the 2008 Mortar Board National Conference held this July. His term will end in July 2010. The other seat is held by Katie Schirmer, a recent graduate of Drury University. Katie's term will end in July 2009.