



# Mortar Board

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

## ADVISOR NEWS

### **Virtual Book Drive comes to a close on October 15**

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

#### **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. 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.

**LEARN MORE →**

### **Start the year off right**

- Browse [www.mortarboard.org](http://www.mortarboard.org). Familiarizing yourself with the available resources and necessary requirements early will help pave the path to success.
- Make sure you have your chapter's passcode for completing online report forms. It is typically passed down from prior advisors and officers, but is also available by contacting the National Office.
- Check with the chapter president to ensure they have set up the chapter's [mortarboard.org](http://mortarboard.org) e-mail address.
- Download the new Officer & Advisor Handbook and Membership Selection Handbook.
- Ensure that all last year's reports (2007-2008) have been submitted. One report that is often forgotten is the Officer Address Information Form. Even if you have missed deadlines, we encourage you to submit overdue reports.
- If not previously done, register your chapter as a student organization on campus.
- Plan officer meetings for the year in addition to regular chapter meetings. Encourage officers to complete all national reporting deadlines and local chapter requirements.
- Good resources for advising assistance include your institution's student organization resource center, professional organizations, and university training programs.
- Use your section coordinator or a National Office staff member as a great resource.
- Forward the names and e-mail addresses for all current chapter members to the National Office in ANY preferred format.
- Check out the frequently asked questions page online – it may have just the answers you are looking for!
- Sign up for Mortar Board's e-newsletters at [www.mortarboard.org](http://www.mortarboard.org). Spread the word and encourage others to sign up to receive e-news for collegiate members, alumni, prospective members and more.

### **How to become an award-winning chapter**

Each and every chapter should strive to meet (and exceed) the Chapter Minimum Standards to become a Silver Torch Award recipient!

Mortar Board chapter standards have been developed to ensure the strength and success of each chapter. Highlights of a few of these standards include:

- Establish and revisit your chapter participation policy
- PRIOR to tapping, complete the Official Membership Report (OMR) for approval
- PRIOR to initiation, ensure that all national member fees have been submitted and host an orientation to introduce new members to Mortar Board and its expectations

### **Mortar Board Lingo**

#### **What is the MRSP?**

After the recent decision to allow chapters to use multiple methods a part of their membership selections process, the Mortar Board National Office has revamped the Membership Selection Plan (MSP) into a new and improved Membership Recruitment and Selection Plan (MRSP). This required form, due on December 15, asks chapters to outline their preferred selections method. This method has to be approved by the National Office before it can be put into action. Additionally, information on chapter GPA standards, tapping, orientation, initiation and officer transition is required.

Please ensure that your chapter's membership chairperson and/or president are aware that this report requires a significant amount of information and should be thoroughly completed by December 15.

This form must be approved by the Mortar Board National Office before the chapter may proceed with selections.

#### **Questions about the MRSP?**

Contact Assistant Executive Director Megan Stevens at [mstevens@mortarboard.org](mailto:mstevens@mortarboard.org).

### **Encourage your chapter to 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.

- After the election of new officers, hold an officer transition with both incoming and outgoing officers to ensure a smooth conversion to the new year
- Choose and register your conference delegate before the end of the academic year

### ***New membership standards implemented for recruitment of 2009-2010 class***

The next membership selections process your chapter manages may be different, if the group so chooses. As a result of a recent decision by the Mortar Board National Council, the previously required method of “selection by consensus” is no longer a national obligation.

Now, chapters are permitted to follow a set of guidelines to set up and use their own unique selections method. These standards are outlined on pages 3 - 5 of the Membership Selection Handbook. With these principles in mind, chapters must submit their proposed selections method to the National Office for approval via the Membership Recruitment and Selection Plan (MRSP) by December 15.

### ***National conference fee announced***

Each year, the chapter as a whole is required to submit a conference fee in the spring to help offset the costs of the annual Mortar Board National Conference. This year, that fee is \$200. The payment of this fee contributes to the travel, meals, hotel and materials for one official delegate from each chapter to attend the conference at no additional cost to the chapter or member.

Although the perception by chapters has often been the chapter conference fee covers 100 percent of the cost for the official delegate to attend the annual conference, this is far from the truth.

In 2008, the Mortar Board National Conference accounted for 28 percent of the total annual expenses of the organization. Chapter conference fees, set at \$150 in 2008, assist with only a fraction of those expenses. The remaining costs (nearly 80 percent in 2008) are funded through generous donations from the Mortar Board National Foundation, partnerships and in-kind donations.

Most chapters can receive additional travel funding through their student activities department to help pay for the chapter conference fee. If you need additional ideas for how to raise the additional \$50 to cover the entire conference fee, please contact the Mortar Board National Office.

### ***ACHS advising grant deadline is October 15***

ACHS has announced a grant program that encourages cross-campus collaboration and new initiatives among student organizations related to social responsibility. Specifically, ACHS will offer six \$500 grants to pilot projects that achieve one of the following objectives:

- Conduct initiative or pilot project related to social responsibility, or
- Strengthen current social responsibility or sustainability initiative of individuals and the campus.
- This project must also:
- Address one of the elements of the Seven Wonders of the Socially Responsible World, outlined in this grant information packet
- Include two or more honor societies on campus
- Report on the plans and outcomes of the project

Funding is intended as an honorarium to the advisor for facilitating and reporting on the outcomes of this pilot project. The grant will be awarded after the project report is received. Funds for the project should be provided by the honor societies or by fundraising activities (including institutional or corporate grants).

Advisors interested in submitting a proposal should download this information packet provided by ACHS. Proposals must be received by October 15, 2008. All questions should be directed to ACHS Executive Director Dr. Dorothy I. Mitstifer at [dmitstifer@achsnatl.org](mailto:dmitstifer@achsnatl.org).

### ***Advisor spotlight: Kirsten Freeman Fox, University of Maryland***

In her four years as advisor to the University of Maryland chapter, Mortar Board alumnus Kirsten Freeman Fox (The Ohio State University, 1996) saw the group through thick and thin. When she began as advisor in 2004, the group was dwindling. However, with an enormous amount of enthusiasm and devotion, she facilitated the growth and improvement of the struggling chapter to the astonishing status it holds on campus today. Upon leaving as the group’s advisor at the end of the 2007-2008 academic year, Fox was recognized with the national Excellence in Advising Award.

With her encouragement and assistance, the chapter has increased chapter visibility and prestige in many ways, including the procurement of a campus office and a beautiful initiation location. The 2007-2008 chapter president Rishi Kumar commended her work, explaining “It is through her hard work that Mortar Board has a place to call their own at the University of Maryland.”