

Dear Brothers,

It is with great enthusiasm and humility that I offer myself as a candidate for the office of Kappa Kappa Psi National Vice President for Colonization and Membership. I have been a brother of Kappa Kappa Psi since being initiated at the Zeta Eta chapter at South Carolina State University in 2006. As your current National Vice President for Programs, I have the experience gained during my time on the National Council and immediate knowledge of the work of our leadership. I believe you will find the work I've done this biennium to be reflective of my passion and capabilities as a member of the National Council and a brother of our great Fraternity. As Vice President for Programs, I've worked to initiate new programs such as the Chapter Development Grant, a new grant used for chapter officer development training and logistics; increased the number of applications for the AEA Scholarship to an average of 30 per quarter (every 6 months/biennium); increased participation in our yearly initiatives such as the Month of Musicianship to a 90% participation rate across chapters nationwide in 2017, and to 93.5% in 2018. My work and passion for Kappa Kappa Psi extends prior to my tenure on National Council. For the 2015-2017 biennium, I served as the first Musicianship Director for the Kappa Kappa Psi Alumni Association Board of Directors (AABOD). During that time, I worked with the Alumni Association, members of the National Council and Board of Trustees to promote musicianship across all districts, as well as pioneer the first Solo Competition at National Convention, a model still in use by the current AABOD.

As a college band director, past chapter sponsor (for both Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma), and past member of the Kappa Kappa Psi Alumni Association Board of Directors (Musicianship Director), I have seen our Fraternity from multiple perspectives and feel best equipped to serve brothers at every level. Combined with my passion and dedication for Kappa Kappa Psi and my commitment to our values, it is my sincerest hope that you find me a worthy candidate for the office of National Vice President for Colonization and Membership.

#### -Colonization

My work as VPCM would include working with the Curriculum Development committee and the Colony and Chapter Education Coordinator to create an updated Guide to Colonization reflective of the Road to Wisdom. In addition to the list of requirements for successful colonization, we should begin discussing what colonies need to be able to do afterwards and assess their colonization process so that we may continue to improve for future chapters.

The process of colonization is essentially how the Fraternity grows its number of active chapters. Essentially, an institution petitions the National Council to be granted a Chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, and once approved for the colonization process, these potential brothers have to create a wide variety of things including, but not limited to, a chapter constitution, working fundraisers and service projects, and institutional recognition.

The Road to Wisdom educates chapters on what the basics of a successful chapter should look like. However, for those who are new to obtaining a chapter designation (colonies), there need to be resources in place to ensure that new chapters last longer than a few years, and are not "just staying afloat". The new guide to colonization should include things such as officer training manuals, sample budgetary outlines, sample documents, how

to plan for recruitment, making a calendar for the year to include deadlines, running chapter meetings using parliamentary procedure, etc. Though some of these documents are already in progress, organizing them into a collection specifically for colonization has yet to be completed.

After a colony has finished the colonization process, there needs to be follow-up. Traditionally, a new colony has a visit scheduled from one of the Chapter Field Representatives (CFRs) in their first year as a Chapter. However, I feel this is not enough. Additional meetings (via videoconference or face-to-face, pending resources) would be held with the new chapter officers, myself, the District Vice President (for Membership) of that colony's respective district, and their District Governor(s) in order to ascertain where the new chapter is with regards to their operations, growth, and sustainability. Ultimately, I wish for this post-colonization work to be done by a new Colony/Chapter Mentoring Committee composed of colony advisors, one brother from the alumni association, the VPCM (as ex-officio), the National Chapter and Colony Education Coordinator, the respective District Vice President (Membership), and the CFRs. My justification for the make-up of this new committee is as follows:

- The Colony Advisors are the “first stop” after an institution has been approved for colonization. These people help coordinate everything from Road to Wisdom instruction, to answering any questions concerning paperwork, to communicating with the National Vice President for Colonization and Membership (and the rest of National Council) concerning the progress of the colony. Their experience with the colony is vital in determining the best way to cultivate and sustain a well-rounded and functioning chapter.
- Representation from the Alumni Association would also be recommended. During my tenure on the AABOD, a common question I got from many brothers was, “What is there for me as a brother of Kappa Kappa Psi after I graduate?”. Having an alumni board member present to answer these questions, talk about alumni membership benefits, as well as other pertinent information would help to bridge this gap; especially concerning those colony members near graduation.
- The National Chapter and Colony Education Coordinator (CCEC) helps govern chapter correspondence, review chapter constitutions, and works with chapters on disciplinary status. The CCEC also works with the National Vice President of Colonization and Membership for the fraternity to coordinate colonies and national programs.
- District Vice Presidents are great to have on this committee. Having a student voice that can relate to the work completed by a new chapter can be extremely helpful! District constitutions, respectfully, list the primary duties of the District Vice President (some districts have only one Vice President, and some have two; one being a Vice President for Membership) as a liaison between the chapters of the district and the National VPCM; facilitating communication between chapters, Curriculum Advisors, and the National Curriculum Committee regarding the implementation of the Road to Wisdom; as well as fostering relations among new colonies and chapters within the district and assisting the National Vice President for Colonization and Membership in these capacities when needed.

- The Chapter Field Representatives (CFRs) are under the direct purview of the VPCM. These people have more interaction with our active membership than any other position in the Fraternity, and are crucial factors in the development of our Chapters and Colonies.

Each of these components play an integral part in the development and sustainability of our Fraternity. If we are to continue to grow in our work and where we serve, we must make significant investment in our new chapters so they don't fall to the wayside after colonization.

#### -Small Chapter Support:

Our National Fraternity is housed at over 200 college campuses across the country. Currently, there are nearly 40 chapters with less than ten members. That's almost 20% of our Fraternity's active chapters! As a previous sponsor of successful chapters at small institutions, I know how much work these brothers do for their band programs, and how much of a resource for morale and leadership they offer to their bands. As VPCM, I will work with District Governors and officers to help support these Chapters as they work to grow their membership and make sure that we have the conversations needed between myself, the Director of Bands, Governors, district officers and the chapter to place those chapters on a path to success. In many cases, I will be helping to identify broader networks of support and resources in addition to student support from district officers, because a small chapter is most likely not only struggling with recruitment, but putting the work of a functional chapter on a few brothers, and it can be difficult to make a transition to more sustainable work. These same conversations can be transferred to larger chapters, if needed, to help improve on their work and sustainability within their respective institutions.

Additionally, I would work with the incoming Vice President for Programs and other members of the National Council to promote applicable Fraternity resources to help with small chapter issues; thus making space for collaborative efforts.

#### -Road to Wisdom

Efforts should be made to build upon the existing foundations of the Road to Wisdom. Now, we need to examine critical areas (i.e. training our volunteers, assessment, etc.) where we can focus our efforts and energies to build on the foundations laid by previous leadership. As with any new program, there are bound to be challenges, as well as positive outcomes. The Road to Wisdom not only provides a transparent and flexible framework, but it relies heavily on the creativity and teaching ability of our student brothers (mainly the Vice President for Membership, or VPMs). I have spoken with incoming President, Marco Krcatovich, and to this extent, both of us agree that National Leadership must commit sufficient time and efforts to teach our students how to be better teachers. In my profession at California State University, San Bernardino, I not only conduct band ensembles, but I also help develop and train future educators. As VPCM, I want to work with National Leadership to create opportunities to teach good pedagogy and find ways to get our students more involved in the teaching process. Utilizing technology such as livestream training and recorded webinars would not only be effective for our students, but also cost efficient for our Fraternity.

#### -Continuing Membership Education

Continuing membership education (CME) should be used to educate the new members (and refresh Active members) on the ritualistic work and daily operations of the Chapter. As VPCM, I would work with the Ritual Education and Performance committee and Curriculum Development committee in order to lay the groundwork for a Continuing Membership Education document that reflects our current national curriculum. Some work has been done over previous years, but not yet organized into a living document reflective of the Road to Wisdom. The CME would consist of, at the very least, sessions concerning the Ritual, National Constitution, and a more detailed history of the Fraternity. Similar to previous incarnations, Continuing Membership Education should be done shortly after initiation and/or spread throughout the academic year in separate sessions as time and/or resources allow.

-Volunteers and the Volunteer Resource Page

Another large component of our Fraternity are the volunteers. The Fraternity utilizes a broad range of volunteers to help run its operations. A Volunteer Resource page was a project initiated by the incoming National President, Marco Krcatovich, and I intend to continue and build on that work with Marco and the rest of National Council, and begin a page listing the many ways that alumni, honorary, and life members can give back to Kappa Kappa Psi. In agreement with the vision of our incoming National President, we need to increase the opportunities to serve in our Brotherhood after graduation. This would, undoubtedly, create more opportunities for leadership, generate more ideas, and bring more skills to our already diverse population of volunteers.

My plans as your National Vice President for Colonization and Membership will not be an easy task, and while they are not intended to be projects that can be done in one biennium, I can assure you that I will devote sufficient efforts and energies to get the job done; just as I have done for the office of National Vice President for Programs and the Alumni Association. My goal is to build on critical foundations so that our next generation of leaders will be prepared to move our Fraternity forward with knowledge, compassion, and leadership. I want to focus on building resources, training our leadership, expanding our Membership Education curriculum, identifying brothers who are marginalized and help institute policies that can serve them well (as set in the goals of the incoming President), and creating a recruitment and retention process that is beneficial to all qualified musicians. As an active member of the current National Council, I can, and will, begin working towards our shared goals and the work of the Fraternity on day one. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to continue serving you with humility and distinction.

Fraternally,

Nicholas Bratcher, Ed.D.  
National Vice President for Programs  
Life Member, Zeta Eta (South Carolina State University)  
Director of Bands/Assistant Professor  
California State University, San Bernardino