Dear Parent, Today’s Fraternities and Sororities May Surprise You…

Parents have many ideas about what it means to be associated with a fraternity or sorority. The fraternity and sorority system at Clarkson is evaluated annually and continual improvements are being made to an already strong system.

The rich and dynamic history of Clarkson fraternity and sorority life is a vibrant and unique part of a Clarkson tradition. The community’s involvement in volunteer and leadership work is a vibrant part of the school’s tradition. Clarkson applauds the valuable contribution fraternity and sorority life has made, and will continue to make to the students, the institution, and the town of Potsdam.

**Joining:** All recruitment events for fraternities and sororities at Clarkson are alcohol free (dry). Students who choose to participate in recruitment activities are under no obligation to join. At the end of the recruitment period, the chapters extend formal written invitations (bids). If a student chooses to accept the bid, then they become affiliated with that chapter. Once a student decides to accept a bid from a chapter, they are oriented through meetings, philanthropic service, social events, and study sessions. This new member period may not last more than six weeks and programs are structured so as to not interfere with academic responsibilities. New member education is designed to be informative and fun. **Physical and mental hazing is not tolerated at Clarkson or under New York State law.**

**Benefits:** National research projects conducted by the Center for Advanced Social Research at the University of Missouri provide data on why membership in a fraternity or sorority may be a beneficial choice for your student:

Following graduation, fraternity- and sorority-affiliated alumni have higher average incomes than not affiliated alumni.

Students who join fraternities and sororities are **28% more likely** to return to school the following year than students who choose not to join a fraternity or sorority. Affiliated alumni are more likely to donate money to their Alma Mater, participate in civic activities like the PTA or Rotary, and are more likely to be satisfied with their undergraduate years than not affiliated alumni.

**Academics:** Clarkson fraternities and sororities can help your student succeed academically! All Clarkson University chapters have academic requirements that a student who wishes to join must have a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point average and be in good academic standing. The chapters help their members achieve higher grades through study hours and by using each other as a resource. Many chapters and national organizations recognize and reward their members’ scholastic excellence.

**Leadership:** All fraternities and sororities are working examples of democracy in action. This is often the first time that members are responsible for their own activities and living within their
means. This provides an excellent opportunity to experience leadership and the responsibilities
of membership.

**Housing:** Housing opportunities vary from organization to organization. Some groups live in
Clarkson residential facilities and others in houses owned and operated by the chapters
themselves. Chapters with off-campus houses commonly run their own meal plans, either with a
paid cook or members themselves preparing meals. Students must maintain a minimum grade
point average of 2.5 (3.0 for first year students) to be eligible to live in on- or off-campus chapter
houses.

**Social Life:** Members organize social functions including theme parties, picnics and barbecues,
faculty dinners, formals and trips to area attractions. Any event with alcohol must be registered
with our office and all state and local policies must be followed. There are also student-led walk-
throughs to ensure that regulations are enforced.

**Advising:** Each chapter has at least one alumnus/a advisor to help with day-to-day operations.
Clarkson fraternity and sorority alumni/ae also meet regularly as members of the Greek Alumni
Council, providing networking and sharing resources for efficient chapter management for the
whole system. Every chapter is required to have at least one member of the Clarkson faculty or
staff as an advisor as well. My office is also available as a resource or for friendly advice.

Fraternity and sorority life, however, is not for everyone. We encourage you to talk with your
student to help to decide what is right for them and also to support their decision. If they join, we
hope that you will view the choice as a positive aspect of your student's college experience. My
office is centrally located in the Student Center for your student's convenience. I can be reached
at 315-268-3525 or mmunley@clarkson.edu for any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Megan Munley
Assistant Director of Student Life