



national panhellenic conference

College Panhellenic Conversations

From the Desk of the NPC Panhellenics Chairman

Save the Date

• RFM Lite for Campus-Based

Professionals: July 26 at the NPC office in Indianapolis; Details available late May

• College Panhellenic Academy:

Jan. 25-26, 2019, at the Hyatt Regency Indianapolis; Details available fall 2018

College Panhellenic Awards

Each year, NPC recognizes outstanding College Panhellenics that meet specific criteria with College Panhellenic Awards.

We encourage your College Panhellenic to review the [Awards Questions](#) and [apply online](#) for the NPC College Panhellenic Awards no later than **June 1**.

National Women's Health Week

May 13-19 is National Women's Health Week, an annual observance dedicated to empowering women to make their health a priority and encouraging women to take steps to improve their health. Find health and wellness related resources for women, customized by age group, on the [National Women's Health Week website](#).



"Something of Value" Refresh

NPC is working with RISE Partnerships to refresh and redesign the "[Something of Value](#)" (SOV) program curriculum. RISE has extensive experience in developing programs and resources for fraternity and sorority members. Curriculum development is well underway, with RISE delivering content in late April.

We expect to pilot the program with five campuses in fall 2018. We then will begin accepting applications in fall 2018 for the spring 2019 SOV programs. Please watch for more details.

Dear friends ...

As this academic year winds down, NPC is focused on ensuring College Panhellenics document what was done this year through the [Annual Report](#) and recognizing them for Panhellenic excellence through the annual College Panhellenic Awards (see sidebar at left). In addition, we are focused on helping College Panhellenics be successful in the next academic year and beyond.

In addition, NPC is pleased to again partner with the Office of Women's Health in the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services to provide resources in support of National Women's Health Week. Our feature article is related to that effort and focuses on fighting the stigma of talking about and taking care of one's mental health.

We also are pleased to report more than 55 collegiate women applied to serve on the NPC Student Advisory Committee. The NPC Executive Committee is reviewing the materials, and we look forward to announcing the women who will be asked to participate during the 2018-19 academic year.

Please let me or the NPC staff know how we may assist you.

Interfraternally,



Frances Mitchelson

Frances Mitchelson
Panhellenics chairman
panhellenics@npcwomen.org

Recruitment Planning & Preparation

Whether your College Panhellenic is prepping for a fall primary recruitment or your campus just completed recruitment this past term, NPC wants you to be aware of resources to help train recruitment counselors and prepare potential new members for recruitment and the sorority experience. Resources include the [Recruitment Counselor Guide](#), [Recruitment Counselor Training Online](#) and [Potential New Member Orientation](#).

What's more, all sorority women are expected to demonstrate ethical behavior in the recruitment process. Consider hosting an [Ethical Versus Unethical Recruitment Workshop](#) for your Panhellenic community to increase awareness and knowledge.

Lastly, a reminder when scheduling recruitment or other events, please avoid scheduling during times that conflict with major holidays per the NPC Best Practice: Respect for Diversity and Religion and Cultural Holidays (2007).

The Power of One

By Dennis Gillan, an international speaker on mental health issues with a focus on suicide prevention. You can find out more about Dennis at www.dennisgillan.com.

Early in my career, I was giving a talk at a wonderful school, but to be honest, the talk started out as not one of my best efforts. Some unattended issues back home were weighing on my heart, and the cavernous lecture hall was way too big for the crowd. The sound guy was awesome, but he had to leave for a class halfway through. Typically, that's no problem – except for this night. About 30 seconds after the sound guy left, the microphone died and I had to yell this presentation for the next 45 minutes. I sort of tuned out the crowd, but little did I know they were all taking it in – and it's a tough story to take in.

I'm a guy who lost two siblings to suicide and, in my talks, I go over the steps I took to take care of my own mental issues. We land on sobriety and counseling – which could be a tough sell on any college campus, and on this night, I felt like no one was buying. I wrapped up by asking if there were any questions. The initial silence was normal; people often share their stories after the talk. But before I could close the computer, I heard a voice. This lone voice would spark an hour-long conversation that was better than my talk! In fact, by one person sharing her struggles with depression out loud, other folks opened up and we started talking about local resources. It was a total 180 and turned out to be one of the best talks I ever did. All because the power of that one voice. *One voice.*

Now we all have one voice. Are you using your one voice to build people up or tear them down? Are you using your voice to share with your peers your struggles with mental health? That is truly how we fight the stigma of mental health – kindness and vulnerability.

A kind word perfectly placed can elevate the spirits enough to save a life. I recently heard from another student who told me he is on this planet because someone told him nice shoes while he was on the way home to end his life. One voice is all I need to inspire to help tear down the stigma surrounding mental health, and I truly believe that his generation is going to be the ones to do it. They have to. All the numbers for completed suicides are heading in the wrong direction and while males have more completions, women attempt three times more than males. There were close to 45,000 suicides in the last data set and 90% of those who die by suicide have some form of treatable or misdiagnosed mental illness. The way to fight all of this is to get comfortable talking about mental health or “go upstream” as they say.

What can you do to fight the stigma surrounding mental health? For starters, try these seven tips:

1. Know the facts about mental illnesses and the first step is to acknowledge that mental health is just as important as physical health.

2. Be aware of your attitudes and behavior

See the person beyond their mental illness; they have many other personal attributes that do not disappear just because they also have a mental illness.

3. Choose your words carefully

The way we speak can affect the way other people think and speak. Don't use hurtful or derogatory language.

4. Educate others

Find opportunities to pass on facts and positive attitudes about people with mental health problems. If you have a mental illness, talk about it. You'll be amazed at the response.

5. Focus on the positive

People with mental health and substance use problems make valuable contributions to society. Their health problems are just one part of who they are. Let's recognize and applaud the positive ones.

6. Support people

Treat people who have mental health problems with dignity and respect. Think about how you'd like others to act toward you if you were in the same situation

7. Include everyone

The National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) is committed to partnering with NPC member organizations, institutions of higher education, nonprofits and other organizations to make campuses safe for all who attend. Keyword = ALL.

In summation, the way we fight the stigma of mental health is one mind at a time – and the only mind you can control is your own. Be the one that makes a difference in someone else's life and watch what it does to your life.

Dr. Seuss said it best with this quote:

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.”