



THE CREST

An ePublication for the Brothers and Friends of Acacia Fraternity

January 20, 2012

â€¢ [Executive Director's Message](#)

â€¢ [8th Annual Acacia Claus Philanthropy](#)

â€¢ [ACACIAconnect](#)

â€¢ [AcaciaCornerstones.org](#)

â€¢ [Alumni Spotlight: Richard B. Risk](#)

Join Acacia online:



[Send us an e-mail:](#)

Executive Director's Message: What a Year!

Greetings!

As a child, I remember my parents telling me not to "rush my life" as the years would fly by the older I would get. I took that sage wisdom for granted, but have now discovered that the years do truly fly past us. This year has been no exception. It seemed that after the 9th Biennial Acacia Leadership Academy in August 2011, the new fall semester was upon us. Fall ended as quickly as it began, and now, here we are beginning the second semester of an academic year. Behold how swiftly the sands run.....

The past few months have proven to be successful for Acacia. We were fortunate to have a superior group of young men participate in the Leadership Academy and it is evident that new practices and tips they learned are being used to enhance their individual chapters.

After active membership numbers were calculated in the fall, we had an approximate **eight percent increase in membership** over the previous year. In addition, **pledge numbers** for the fall semester were over **twenty percent higher** than the previous fall semester. With the momentum that our chapters are showing, Acacia has the potential to initiate our 50,000th brother this year!

Although we have focused our efforts on chapter growth/retention and membership education, expansion opportunities have also been a major priority. This year has been one of great potential. This past spring we initiated our first group at [Texas Tech University](#) and are currently re-colonizing at the [University of Michigan](#) and [Trine University](#) (formerly Tri-State) in Angola, Indiana.

We have fielded numerous calls from interest groups across the country and will be looking for approval to colonize at Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas and re-colonizing at Illinois State University in Normal. Our future endeavors are to return to the University of Iowa and the University of Vermont, to name just a few. In 2008, Acacia re-colonized on the [Washington State](#) campus and this past weekend the colony was presented their charter by International President, Robert E. Roberson. It was a momentous occasion for active and alumni alike.

Our motto of Human Service continues to be the center of our Fraternity. Our chapters are logging more service hours consistently on a yearly basis. This year, more than two-thirds of our chapters participated in the Acacia Claus Holiday Toy Drive. Also, blood drives are being hosted by many chapters, and money is being raised for those in need. We are witnessing more innovative philanthropic events and our chapters are being recognized in their communities for their generous efforts.

Time certainly has passed us by quickly, but what a year! Looking back over the past several months, I could never have imagined the progress we would make. Looking forward, I have faith in our brothers to continue to make me proud to be an Acacian. Enjoy the eNewsletter and all of the links below.

Fraternally,

8th Annual Acacia Claus Philanthropy



For the past eight years during the holiday season, Acacia chapters around North America collect **new, unwrapped toys for children who might otherwise not receive presents.**

Dubbed Acacia Claus, this annual toy drive is designed to assist families and organizations in our chapters' communities.

Chapters are encouraged to put their own personal spin on the event — which often involves partnering with local retailers to solicit donations of toys or money from residents and customers.

Some chapters raise money separately and make a toy shopping spree part of a brotherhood event. Others dress members up as Santa Claus and his elves and deliver the toys and gifts personally to local agency-sponsored children's parties.

This year over two - thirds of our chapters are participating in Acacia Claus! Each of these chapters truly exemplify compassion during the holiday season.

This worthwhile event has not only brightened the lives of countless families in need, it has also provided our brotherhood with an opportunity to show the communities in which we reside that Acacia's "[Human Service](#)" focus is more than just lip service. It is a passion that drives and motivates our brothers in every aspect of their lives.



If your chapter did not participate this year, and you are **interested in getting involved for next year**, or if you are an alumni member and you'd like to **financially support Acacia Claus through a donation** which an Acacia chapter will utilize to buy gifts for children email Executive Director Keith Bushey kbushey@acacia.org for more information.

ACACIAconnect

During the 2011 Acacia Leadership Academy, one of the featured presenters was Joe McMenammon, Director of Business Operations for ChapterSpot.com, an innovative company we've been working with since early 2011.

Joe demonstrated a new resource created in conjunction with Acacia Headquarters, called [ACACIAconnect](#).

ACACIAconnect offers two main resources to our chapters:

1. a Chapter Management & Communications Network, and
2. a Public Chapter Website



Chapter Management & Communications Network - Included as part of the service, our chapter members have many abilities, including the following: (for a complete list, [click here](#))

- member database with multiple statuses (Active, Pledge, Alumni, Parents, etc.)
- event calendar
- Recruitment database function
- track & record Human Service hours
- individual MyCornerstones account to participate in Cornerstones

- optional Dues Processing function: (discussed more in depth [here](#))
- ability to link up chapter bank account with Dues Processing function (demonstrated via [video here](#))

Public Chapter Website - Included as part of the service, our chapter members have many abilities, including the following: (for a complete list, click [here](#))

- easy-to-update Web 2.0 Website Editor
- registration forms (alumni, parent, recruitment prospect, scholarship applicant, etc.)
- social media link-ability (Twitter, Facebook)

If you are an active member in a chapter that has not started using this service, and you are interested in getting started, email Patrick McGovern (pmcgovern@acacia.org) at ACACIA Headquarters for more information.

For more information about ACACIAconnect, please see the following blog articles:

[ACACIAconnect Overview](#)

[ACACIAconnect Financial Features](#)

[Top 5 Ways to Optimize your Website's Homepage for Recruitment Success](#)

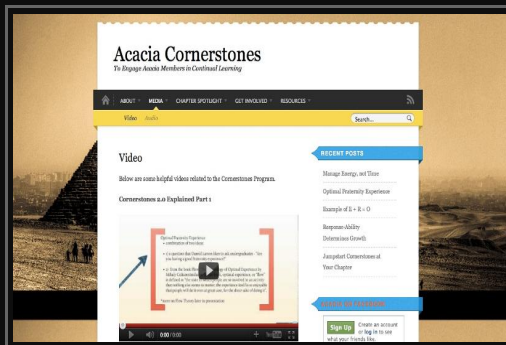
[ACACIAconnect Service Hours Feature](#)

[3 Steps to Engaging Alumni on ACACIAconnect](#)

[Ways to Boost Traffic to ACACIAconnect](#)

AcaciaCornerstones.org

“Until one is committed there is hesitancy, a chance to draw back; always ineffectiveness - concerning all acts of initiative and creation. There is one elementary truth - that ignorance kills countless ideas and splendid plans. The moment one definitely commits, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things happen which never would have occurred - a whole stream of events issue from this decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings & material assistance which no man could have ever dreamt will have come his way - commitment.” - W. N. Murray, Scottish Himalayan expedition



The Cornerstones program continues to evolve each semester as more & more chapters are utilizing the ideas & concepts related to the program to aid their members in personal development. One new resource for active and alumni members is the new Cornerstones blog site at [AcaciaCornerstones.org](#).

At the site, you will find the following:

- [blog articles](#), including this one: [Jumpstart Cornerstones at Your Chapter](#)
- a [resources](#) section
- [videos](#) to explain the program
- suggestions for how to participate [as an undergraduate](#) or [as an alumni member](#)
- [Chapter Cornerstones Spotlight](#)
- an [FAQ page](#)
- and more...

Another resource that may interest you is the new Cornerstones eNewsletter. Only one edition of this eNewsletter has been sent out & you can sign up for the mailing list here: [Cornerstones eNewsletter Signup](#)

Please provide any feedback regarding the Cornerstones Program or the new website here: [Feedback](#)

Commitment to Cornerstones

The quote above by W. N. Murray expresses an important basic assumption that we have operated with since the beginning of the program, which is: **"Our members will engage in their own development, and engage to a greater degree, if they are personally committed to growth, as opposed to being compliant with a mandate handed down by the International Conclave or Council."** This assumption is reinforced by the famous quote by Samuel Butler - *"He that complies against his will if of his own opinion still."*

The reason this is pointed out here is that if you or your chapter have not "fully implemented Cornerstones", that just means that you haven't really committed to it. Commitment is what takes Pythagoras on his fantastic journey to Egypt. Commitment is what drives you toward new experiences that expand your comfort zone. How do you commit? See below...

How can you commit to Cornerstones? First, visit [the Get Involved page](#) at AcaciaCornerstones.org. Spend some time viewing the blog posts & resources . Download & complete the Personal Development Plan from the Resources section. Then work diligently to achieve your goals, while supporting your brothers in achieving their goals. It's that simple. Want to push your own development in a different direction? Great! Let me know about it & we'll see if we can include any aspects in the program resources.

During the spring of 2012, the Cornerstones Task Force (volunteer committee) will be working to create the "Profiles in Lifelong Learning" alumni interview series to highlight exceptional Acacians via the Cornerstones blog site. Also, the Task Force and ACACIA Headquarters will be holding alumni training sessions regarding Cornerstones. Email me at pmcgovern@acacia.org if your chapter alumni are interested in scheduling a training session.

Let's close with another quote, this one from the Buddha: *"Believe nothing, no matter where you read it, or who said it, no matter if I have said it, unless it agrees with your own reason and your own common sense."* Make your efforts in development relevant to your life. Commit to yourself that your own growth is your own responsibility, and make the most of today by working toward achieving your highest vision for your life.

Fraternally, Patrick McGovern

Director of Membership Development

Alumni Spotlight: Richard B. Risk

“Acacia Brother Exemplifies Service Throughout Life”

This section is dedicated to celebrating the achievements of Acacia brothers during the alumni years. Many of our brothers go on to impact the world and all impact their local communities. The brother in this article was brought to our attention via a link to [the University of Tulsa Office of Alumni Relations website](#).

Brother Richard B. Risk, a member the Oklahoma State Chapter has lived a life of service impacting his community in major ways. The article link above reports how Richard has practiced lifelong learning as demonstrated by an impressive academic career which includes the following:

- B.A in Radio & Television (Oklahoma State University)
- Masters in Public Communications (Boston University)
- Masters in Business Administration & Juris Doctor (University of Tulsa)
- Masters of Public Administration (University of Oklahoma)

Brother Risk has significantly impacted his community by serving in the U.S. Air Force as staff officer, generals aide, and commander. The [article](#) mentions that Risk served during the Vietnam War and earned “multiple decorations for meritorious service and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.”

He would go on to influence the highest level of national executive affairs as well. We also learned that he served in the Senior Executive Service of the United States in a sub-Cabinet position as a bureau head in the administration of Ronald Reagan.

In recent years he has battled insurance industry lobbyists to change the way structured settlements are handled by the insurance industry. [Read more about this major insurance industry shake-up here.](#)

As Acacians, we state one of our purposes when we recite the Preamble. “...to take a more active part and to have a greater influence in the affairs of the community in which we may reside...” Join us in celebrating the impressive achievements of Brother Richard Risk!

Thank you for taking the time to read the Crest eNewsletter! May you have great success in the new year!

Fraternally,

Keith M. Bushey
Executive Director
Acacia Fraternity

For more information, contact Acacia Fraternity International Headquarters, 317-872-8210, acacianat@acacia.org.

Donate Online Today



Acacia needs your support.

[Make a contribution to Acacia Fraternity today.](#) Your online donation makes a lasting impact and may be tax-deductible.

Update your Membership



Change of address?
Change of marital status? Children?
New job? [Click here](#)

to keep us and your fellow Acacians informed.

Order Acacia Gear



Check out a wide variety of Acacia gear, from apparel to jewelry to gift

ideas. [Find it all right here](#) Your purchase directly benefits Acacia Fraternity.