

# The Niner

IOWA - MINNESOTA - NORTH DAKOTA  
SOUTH DAKOTA - WISCONSIN

Alpha  
Phi  
Omega

Leadership  
Friendship  
Service

September, 2011

Keeping the Region Connected

Volume I, Issue I

## WELCOME!!

Welcome to *The Niner*; the newsletter that will be published throughout the year, on the ninth of the month, written by Region Niners for Region Niners!

Every Issue will have a lead article by Region Director **Emily Engelland** and supporting entries by Section Chairs **Amy Uitermark**, **Melissa "Ding" Donndelinger**, and **Dan Winters**. Region Staff members will also contribute articles, and Chapters are encouraged to submit entries of their happenings, stories, and events.

Feel free to send an article to Region IX's Communications Chair, **Liz Bales**, or to your Section Chair. If you have any ideas for future issues of the newsletter, let us know!

Without further ado, enjoy our inaugural article!



## Top Nine Ways to Have a Great APO Year

By Emily Engelland

Welcome to a new year of APO in Region IX! For me, it has been a summer filled with new things, as I have moved to a new state (Minnesota) and started a new job! This school year will bring you many new opportunities to lead and serve in Alpha Phi Omega. This is our brand-new newsletter which we plan to send you on the 9<sup>th</sup> of the month throughout the school year.

Here are my **Top Nine Ways to Have a Great APO Year**:

- **Make a new friend!** Whether it is someone already in your chapter, or someone you have just met, get to know your brothers and share APO with those around you!
- **Plan a service project!** Help a brother out - or someone on your campus or in your community. Think how much we could accomplish if every brother brought just one new service project to each chapter every semester!
- **Talk to your Section Chair and your region staff!** Your Section Chair and region staff members are alumni volunteers who have a wealth of knowledge in the Fraternity, and we are here to

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serve you. We can help your chapter with any challenge and celebrate your successes with you along the way. Add your Section Chair to your chapter's mailing lists so they can help you succeed.

- **Go to Membership Academy!** We are having one just for Region IX on October 1. If you are involved in planning your membership program, or you want to be next semester, you should attend and learn more about building a strong membership program.
- **Road trip!** Whether it is an excuse to eat out or to visit another brother, get off campus and explore. Road trips are a great chance to bond with your brothers.
- **Tell your friends about APO!** The best way to share APO is to talk about it with

"We must never for a moment believe that we are good as we will ever be, and we must never accept for even a second that Alpha Phi Omega is simply, 'good enough.' 'Good enough' is less than our best." – **President Mark Stratton**

the people you know. That is how chapters start on other campuses (like the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities) and how they grow on your campus.

- **Take care of each other.** We cannot eliminate risk - we can only manage it. So know about your risk management policy and ask a region staff member for help if you have any questions.
- **LAUNCH (or go even further) with the APO LEADS program.** Learn about servant leadership by requesting an APO LEADS course for your campus or at a conference.
- And most importantly, you should **attend the Region IX Conference**, November 4-6, 2011 in Madison, WI! The **Beta Theta** Chapter at the University of Wisconsin - Madison will be hosting a great weekend of leadership, friendship, and service.

I look forward to a great year of leadership, friendship, and service in Region IX!



## Section 21

By Amy Uitermark

Summer is usually a calmer time for me as a Section Chair, but this summer the staff in Region IX worked hard on planning events for the upcoming semesters for both student and staff development. I also got FIVE chapter visits in this summer to talk about upcoming events and the switch to on-line reporting. I travelled to Des Moines for a staff meeting, to a Twins game for a Section 23 Fellowship, and to the National Volunteer Conference (NVC) in Independence, MO.

At NVC, I took advantage of the training offered and am on my way to becoming an APO LEADS Observer to help alumni advance in APO LEADS presentations.

Section 21 also beginning extension! St. Ambrose University in Davenport, IA is officially a Prospect Group and I anticipate them becoming an Interest Group within the month. Eric and Erin Field are working on spear-heading the extension effort. Please share this with any of your friends that may attend St Ambrose.



## Section 23

By Ding

Welcome back students! It has been a busy summer for staff, and we have been planning for and anticipating your return this fall. We look forward to sharing our ideas and incorporating yours as we continue to better our Sections and Region.

Over the summer a group of actives, alumni, staff, and friends met to watch a game of America's Greatest Pastime. Unlike the majority of their season, the Twins actually won the game that we attended! It was a nice summer night in June, though a little wet, with great company.

Section 23 started off the academic year with three chapter visits by our esteemed Field Rep and Region IX alum **Meagan Savage. Epsilon Theta, Alpha Lambda, and Nu Pi** all had successful visits and capitalized on Meagan's resources and input. All are extending their recruitment well into October, and are tweaking and further developing their pledge programs. The specific strategies and schedules put together during these visits will serve as the framework to a successful year.

Section 23 also is excited to be the first stop for the newly appointed Extension Field Rep **Alyson Clark!** Allyson is with the **University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Prospect Group** this week, and by the time she leaves Minnesota, they will have the paperwork all signed to become an Interest Group. If all goes as planned we will have a newly rechartered Gamma Psi Chapter within the Region by the end of the academic year!

As part of our goals set forth at the Section 23/27 Conference last February we decided to try out a buddy system with our Chapters. Chapters were randomly paired together with the objective that they check-in with one another at least once a month. The goal is to share ideas, provide resources, help troubleshoot issues, and better one another through open communication. Until February the buddy Chapters will be **Alpha Lambda** and **Nu Pi, Epsilon Theta** and **Zeta Epsilon**, and **Nu Mu** and **Iota Tau**.

It is only September and already it is busy in 23! Best of luck on the school year; I look forward to whatever comes next.



## Section 27

By Dan Winters

HEY STUDENTS!

Welcome back for another fantastic year of APO! I hope you all had a marvelous summer and are geared up for big things happening this year!

Section 27 can now officially say that it has an Alumni Association due to the work of Eta Lambda! Way to go Brothers! Also, I would like to welcome to the Region Staff the Section 27 Vice Chair, Corrine Turk! She is an alum of the Eta Lambda chapter and is going to help move 27 forward!

Keepin' it brief!



# Upcoming Events

- **October 1: Region IX Membership Academy in Mankato, MN.** For details, contact your Chapter President or Section Chair.
- **November 4-6: Region IX Conference in Madison, WI.** Hosted by Beta Theta. Details coming soon!
- **November 6-12: National Service Week** “Improving Nutrition and Exercise”
- **November 12: Xi’s Merit Badge University**
- **December 3: Omicron’s Girl Scout University**



## LD Low-Down By Ben Peters

Greetings Brothers! My name is **Ben Peters** and I am the newly appointed Leadership Development Chair for Region IX. Quick personal background: I was born and raised in Iowa, attended Iowa State University, studied abroad in Italy and my hobbies include cooking, photography and traveling. APO background: I pledged Xi Chapter in 2006, was elected VP of SAYS immediately, was elected President in 2007, became an Alum and Life Member in 2009, became an Advisor in 2010, and began the journey to be an APO LEADS Presenter in 2011.

Enough about me, let’s talk LEADERSHIP! Leadership is one of the core values and selling points of Alpha Phi Omega and is something that we can really use to help sell ourselves during rush and recruitment. Many of the leadership skills learned and practice in APO are directly transferrable into the working world. In fact, the two answers most often given during the National Volunteer Conference this summer when asked, “What were the biggest take-aways from APO for you personally?” were: 1.) Leadership skills, and 2.) Lifelong friendships.

Formal Leadership opportunities are the APO LEADS courses and the APO IMPACT courses. APO LEADS is a series of five classes that focus on personal and group development and are most commonly offered at conferences. APO IMPACT vary greatly in their topics and delivery. There are trainings that cover all functional areas of the Chapter, Chapter Activities and many more topics. These are delivered in person at conferences, via webinar, and are available by PDF on the National APO website.

**I challenge every Chapter in Region IX to have at least one representative attend each APO IMPACT webinar.** They are facilitated by highly-qualified instructors, are informative, are short (limited to 1-hour), and provide a great opportunity to ask questions and improve your Chapters.

Ben: [benjpeters@gmail.com](mailto:benjpeters@gmail.com)



## Introducing... ARC By Meagen VanHalanger

Welcome back to another school year of Leadership, Friendship, Service and whatever it is you may be studying at school!!

While you were busy enjoying a summer free of studying, Region IX Staff has been hard at work developing a “plan of action” for this school year. Developing an Awards and Recognition Committee (ARC) was one of the subjects the Staff Members decided we needed to push forward, hence me writing you this little letter.

My name is **Meagen VanHalanger** and I am the Chair of ARC for the Region. The ARC Committee currently comprises of myself and Section 21, 23, and 27 representatives **Derek Ebel**, **Angela Renneberg**, and **Corinne Turk**. We will develop, with the assistance of students and other staff members, a solid set of Regional and Sectional awards. These awards will include the already existing Man Mile and Roll Call (get ready for a Roll Call session at Regional Conference in November!!), and develop an array of awards based around our Standards.

Also, be on the lookout for information regarding National Awards and Recognition. Every National Convention chapters are able to submit applications for awards. Those awards are reviewed by a committee and a winner is selected and announced in front of all of those in attendance at Banquet. Speaking as someone who has chaired the committee at Nationals, only a handful of chapters apply for each of these awards. Region IX staff hopes to educate our chapters on the National Awards, and assist you in getting some National Recognition.

Please feel free to contact myself, Derek, Angela, or Corrine with any questions, input, or brilliant ideas you have and we will be sure to assist you in the best way we can.

Cheers to a new semester and a whole lot of Service goin’ on!!

Meagen: [meagen.vanhalanger@gmail.com](mailto:meagen.vanhalanger@gmail.com)



# 10 Pledge Preparation Pointers

By Meagan Savage

1. Before your brothers get busy with recruitment, spend a few minutes looking at your pledge program. Often times, pledge programs get passed down through the years without much thought or adjustment. Go through the National Pledging Standards and make sure you know exactly how your chapter's pledge program satisfies each standard.
2. Is your week-by-week pledge syllabus ready to go? If not, be sure to finish it up before recruitment starts. Sometimes providing an unsure potential member with the syllabus, so they can see exactly what happens during pledge meetings, can help alleviate their anxiety about pledging.
3. Have your chapter decide now when and how to collect pledging and initiation fees. That way you can clearly communicate the information to potential members during recruitment. This helps them know how much time they have to save or ask their parents for the money, so the chapter is not stuck having to constantly pester them for their fees.
4. The week before the pledging and initiation ceremonies, do a run-through of the rituals. It will help brothers better understand their parts (particularly those who have never done it before), learn words they cannot pronounce (there is a handy guide in the back of the book), and you can make sure you have all the supplies you will need well in advance (no mad dash to Walmart only moments before the ceremony).
5. Consider revising the length of your pledge program. The Standards mandate the pledge period be 6-10 weeks. If your chapter has low membership numbers, but you have a 10-week program, condensing it to 6 weeks gives you an extra 4 WEEKS to recruit!
6. Get those requirements for Big Brothers/Pledge Parents nailed down and emailed to the chapter ASAP. Have potential Bigs/Parents fill out an application with information about themselves and why they think they would be a good mentor for a pledge now - that way Bigs/Parents and Littles/Kids can be assigned as students commit to pledging, which helps reduce the amount of work you will need to do later.
7. Instead of telling potential members when and where the pledging ceremony is and waiting to see how many show up, have them confirm their intent to pledge a few days ahead of time. Ceremony on Sunday afternoon? Ask that all potential members email the recruitment chair and/or MVP by Wednesday at midnight to let them know they are pledging. That way you will know exactly how many people to expect at the ceremony and can plan accordingly.
8. Figure out the dates of your ceremonies and pledge meetings and contact your campus to reserve the space you need right away. Best to call dibs now before the other organizations beat you to it and you are left scrambling.
9. Use conferences as selling points when recruiting, but be specific. Where and when are your conferences this fall? Is there a cool theme? How much does it cost? Crunch some numbers now and roughly break down the total cost per brother, figuring in what the chapter will pay, and put it in terms of dollars that need to be saved each week. By giving potential members this information, the pledges will be aware of the conference well in advance and be able to save and plan accordingly.
10. Inventory your pledging supplies. Pins, manuals, supplemental pledge books, binders—whatever your chapter might use. If you need more materials from the National Office, order them now so they have time to be shipped to you. Do you need anything special for pledge meetings and/or activities? Take care of that now. School gets busy, so pre-planning and preparation are key.



## Region Conference Update

By Katie Witham

Hello Region 9!

Region 9 Regional Conference is happening in Madison Nov 4th - 5th and the theme is Harvest Hoe-down!

### Lodging

We will be housing brothers in a hostel in downtown Madison, the homes of brothers, and a hotel in downtown Madison. All these locations are within walking distance of regional events. The price of lodging is being worked out with more information coming out shortly. If we could get an estimate from each chapter on how many students plan on coming it would be so helpful! Email your potential registration numbers to your Section Chair by September 30.

### APO LEADS

We will be offering LAUNCH, ACHIEVE, and potentially DISCOVER during the conference. Workshops TBD will be offered all day Saturday as well.

### Service

[Beta Theta](#) is still discussing service opportunities, but we are hoping to have a clothing drive Saturday as well as card making. We are planning a large dance fundraising event for Saturday night to benefit the Easter Seals.

### Fellowship

There will be a fellowship event the evening of the 4th. On Saturday the banquet will feature a performance by a UW a cappella group and fundraiser dance will offer more opportunities for fellowship.

Look for more information to come out in the upcoming weeks.



## How to Make Google Calendar Work for your Chapter

By Liz Bales

Google Calendar is a great resource that can help your chapter share the dates and times of your events with your fellow brothers both within your chapter and throughout your section and region. Google has all sorts of features with the calendar to allow your chapter to make the calendar work for you.

**You can make specific events public or private and invite "guests."** If your chapter is sponsoring a service project and other brothers are welcome to help out, invite the Chapter Presidents from area chapters to attend from the

"*Edit Event*" page. If all of your events are open to brothers from other chapters, you can go to "*Share This Calendar*" under settings. On this page, you can make your entire calendar public and/or send emails to share with specific people. Share your calendar with your Section Chair and Region Director as well.

**Use the description area to input more information about the events in question.** Where is the event occurring? What building and room on your campus? What's the address for off-campus events? Is there a contact person that could be emailed for more information? Do brothers need to RSVP if they are planning to attend? Is there a carpool being setup for off-campus events? If so, where and when should brothers meet before the event?

**You can set reminders to be sent prior to the event.** Each individual brother will need to arrange for such reminders to be sent, but this feature is a handy one for brothers who may lose track of time and forget what time a particular event happens. Google Calendar allows for both email and cell phone notifications to be sent.



**You can embed the calendar on your Chapter's website.** Under "*Calendar Details*" under settings, there is a text box with code that you can copy and paste to embed your calendar onto your website. You can further customize the code to fit the needs of your chapter from that page.

**You are able to color code events.** Meetings, Service Projects, and Fellowship events can be color coded. The different colors will allow your chapter members to easily browse the calendar and determine what events they need or want to attend.

**Suggestion: Create a Chapter Gmail account to be the calendar "owner."** To simplify things, create an account to be passed down through your Executive Committee with each year's transition. That way, you can ensure that the calendar will always be accessible and editable by future brothers at your chapter. You can also create multiple accounts with access to the calendar - one for service, one for fellowship, one for leadership, etc., if you want to allow for multiple members of the Executive Committee to create and edit events on the calendar.

The overview is fairly in-depth, but you can certainly work with the calendar and find more features other than those I have outlined above.

There is also a Region IX calendar. To add events to it, or have the calendar forwarded to you, please email me. Of course, if you have questions, feel free to email me at [elizabeth.bales@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.bales@gmail.com).

