

“Housing is an Experience!”

In the latest President’s Message in *The Phi Gamma Delta* magazine from Archon President Nic Loiacono (Illinois 1974), he talks about quality housing enhancing the undergraduate experience, as well as the experience of graduate brothers returning to their chapter house. Phi Gamma Delta considers housing to be of strategic importance!

Something of strategic importance requires short-term and long-term capital. Is your house corporation prepared to ensure that financial resources are available so that your chapter house infrastructure remains updated and provides a safe and healthy living environment for our undergraduate brothers?

Keep in mind that securing graduate investment is not a quick process. It involves consistent communication that informs and makes a graduate feel pride in being a Fiji. It builds excitement about “paying it forward” for future generations of Fijis. And communication is only the first step . . .

Among house corporations that are most successful in raising funds to maintain quality housing, we see the following programming attributes:

1. Communication with graduates multiple times per year;
2. Recognition at events (virtual events work!) in newsletters and chapter house signage/plaques of graduates for their accomplishments in careers and communities;
3. Conducting periodic surveys of your graduates seeking advice and counsel on what they view as strengths and challenges for the chapter;
4. Promotion of an annual giving program for brothers to contribute to the house corporation;
5. Use of service professionals such as engineers, architects, and contractors to maintain and spec necessary improvements for the chapter house.

Only after the items mentioned above are taken care of does it become advantageous to think about a capital fundraising effort. When graduates feel

confident that the house corporation manages the property efficiently and professionally, they are more inclined to make substantial investments. Confident graduates are then asked to provide advice and counsel through a fundraising feasibility study, which measures graduates' willingness to give and at what levels. Once this is known, a capital campaign commences raising the necessary funds.

The bottom line is that if you think you need a campaign in the next three years, the time to start planning for it is today!

For more information on communication programs and fundraising for your house corporation, please reach out to the team at Columns Fundraising.

Mark R. Wilkison (Vermont 1983)
Columns Fundraising
Principal & Partner
2870 Peachtree Road, Suite 956
Atlanta, GA 30305
mark@columnsfundraising.com
Direct: 404-317-0435