

On Your Honor

Get the scoop on the top honor societies

Compiled by Student Leader staff

Want to get involved with a national honor society but don't know where to start? With numerous options to choose from, it's difficult to know which one is best for you. Here are a few of the largest national campus honor societies. Just make sure you have a good GPA and are willing to serve your community.

Who: Alpha Phi Omega

What: This nationwide co-ed service fraternity is based on the principles of the Scout Oath and the Law of the Boy Scouts of America. Their motto: "Be a friend. Be a leader. Be of service," is used both nationally and locally. Each year, APO has workshops and conventions to aid members in leadership skills. APO chapters partner with America's Promise, Boy Scouts of America, President's Student Service Award, Youth Service America, and USA Freedom Corps to provide members the opportunity to cumulate service hours ranging between 250,000 and 500,000 hours per semester. "The fraternity has many proud accomplishments including our international book drive, held last year where our chapters collected 120,000 books for school children in the Philippines," says Robert London, executive director of APO.

How: To join Alpha Phi Omega, a prospective member can contact a chapter directly or send an e-mail to the national office and they'll forward it to the chapter. —LE

Where: Alpha Phi Omega
14901 East 42nd Street
Independence, MO 64055-7347
816-373-8667
admin@apo.org
www.apo.org

Who: Golden Key International Honour Society

What: Golden Key provides students with the guidance to inspire service and the networking capabilities to make it successful. Local chapters tailor community service projects to the needs of their respective communities and may also choose to support one of Golden Key's national causes. "Golden Key is not just a society where you hand in a check and get a certificate," says Elisa Sugar, **University**

of Tennessee Golden Key student representative. "It's an active organization that provides a lot of opportunities to build a resume." Along with service opportunities, networking opportunities are ever present for Golden Key members. They gain access to a network of corporate sponsors that consistently rewards the organization's students and alumni with internship and employment opportunities. Involvement in

Who: Lambda Sigma Society

What: Lambda Sigma promotes what some members refer to as "the four basic food groups": leadership, scholarship, fellowship, and service. More than 48,500 members nationwide participate in activities such as fund-raising and service programs, cultural and self-development activities, and organizational and business meetings.

Members are challenged to maintain a high GPA while working to improve the campus and community. "While most honors societies are just a designation, Lambda Sigma is a great leadership training ground," says Brooke Martin, co-advisor of the Epsilon chapter at **Allegheny College** in Pennsylvania. Individual chapters around the country welcome incoming freshmen in the fall, coordinate blanket drives and gift wrapping during the Christmas season, and work year round to encourage disadvantaged children to pursue higher education.

How: Students must be in their first year of college and in the top 35 percent of the school's freshman class to be eligible. Candidates are invited to join based on each chapter's specific grade point requirements and the individual's potential for leadership and service. —CG

Where: Lambda Sigma Society
5330 Old Harding Road
Franklin, TN 37064
615-799-9391
kay.mcclain@vanderbilt.edu
www.lambdasigma.org

Who: Mortar Board

What: "Scholars...Chosen for leadership...United to serve," is the motto of Mortar Board. Today, there are over 200 co-ed chapters, 50

alumni chapters, and 25 sections all containing members that are recognized for their ability and achievement in scholarship, leadership, and service. "A Mortar Board member must be an above-average scholar, actively giving back to society, and serving as a leader on campus and in the community," says Majeane Remy, communications coordinator for the national office. The largest project that Mortar Board participates in is a national project chosen biennially by student delegates. The project gives the members of Mortar Board a chance to show off their leadership skills, while at the same time helping the community.

How: If your campus has a chapter, you're in



Amanda Fix, ODK secretary at St. Lawrence University in New York, lights a candle to remember victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Golden Key not only leads to jobs, but scholarships and awards as well. Last year alone, Golden Key awarded more than \$500,000 in scholarships.

How: Golden Key membership is by invitation only. Juniors and seniors are eligible in the United States along with second-year students and higher in other countries. Students must be within the top 15 percent of their class. —BF

Where: Golden Key
International Honour Society
1189 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE
Atlanta, GA 30306-4624
800-377-2401
custserv@goldenkey.gsu.edu
www.goldenkey.org

the top 35 percent of your junior class, and you have a 3.0 GPA or higher, you're eligible to apply for membership. If a student is selected, she's required to spend her senior year attending chapter meetings and participating in projects. —SC

Where: Mortar Board National Office
1200 Chambers Rd., #201
Columbus, OH 43212
1-800-989-6266
mortar-board@osu.edu
www.mortarboard.org

Who: Omicron Delta Kappa

What: Founded in 1914 at Washington and Lee University, ODK is now a national leadership honor society with 271 active "circles" nationwide. The society recognizes achievement in several areas: scholarship, athletics, campus/community service, social/religious activities, campus government, journalism, speech and mass media, and creative and performing arts. ODK's goals are to recognize high leadership in collegiate activities, bring together student leaders from all across campus, and draw faculty members and the student body together. "We seek to recognize outstanding collegiate leaders that are also top-notch students," says Executive Director Jack Morgan. "Each circle serves their community in a different way." ODK alumni include George W. Bush, Winston Churchill, Jimmy Carter, and Bob Hope.

How: If you have junior standing, are ranked in the top 35 percent of your class academically, have shown leadership on campus, and have high character, contact your campus ODK chapter. —SC

Where: Omicron Delta Kappa Suite 188 Bradley Hall University of Kentucky Lexington, KY 40506-0058 859-257-2110 odknhq@uky.edu www.odk.org

Who: Phi Beta Kappa

What: Founded in 1776, Phi Beta Kappa was the first society to have a Greek letter name. Now, with 600,000 members it recognizes excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. With a focus on three principles—friendship, morality, and literature—members get support in the form of scholarships, lectureships, and book and essay awards. The organization produces an informational quarterly newsletter called *The Key Reporter*, and a quarterly journal called *The American Scholar*, which is dedicated to preserving the essay.



The PTK chapter at Burlington County College in New Jersey started Project Graduation, a book and canned food drive at college commencements.

How: Candidates are nominated as undergraduates, called "members in course" for election by their chapters and cannot apply for membership. Contact a chapter officer through the PBK web site if interested in being nominated. —LE

Where: Phi Beta Kappa 1785 Massachusetts Ave. NW, 4th Floor Washington, DC 20036 202-265-3808 info@pbk.org www.pbk.org

Who: Phi Kappa Phi

What: Dating back to 1897, Phi Kappa Phi aims to recognize and honor excellence in all areas of study. The group, also the oldest and largest of its kind, began with just 13 members at the University of Maine but now claims more than 120,000 active members and almost 300 chapters in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Working under the motto, "Let the love of learning rule humanity," PKP offers \$500,000 in scholarships annually. In addition, PKP sponsors on-campus seminars with well-known speakers. "Phi Kappa Phi is unique in that it honors scholars in all disciplines," says Robert

PKP members from Kennesaw State University in Georgia kick off their Spring Cleaning Campaign for Literacy with an Adopt-a-Mile clean-up.



Gotshall, member and president of the PKP chapter at Colorado State University. "It addresses cultural, social, and scientific issues."

How: Students in all studies are encouraged to become members; however, membership is by invitation only. Juniors in the upper 7.5 percent of their class who have at least 72 credit hours, seniors and grad students in the upper 10 percent of their class, and outstanding professional staff and alumni are welcome to join. Invited members must be nominated and approved by the chapter in that area. —LS

Where: Phi Kappa Phi

P.O. Box 16000 Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70893-6000 1-800-804-9880 or 225-388-4917 info@phikappaphi.org www.phikappaphi.org

Who: Phi Theta Kappa Int'l Honor Society

What: With a goal to encourage scholarship, leadership, and service development, Phi Theta Kappa provides a plethora of opportunity for students at two-year institutions. PTK currently has 1,200 chapters located throughout the 50 states, three U.S. territories, Germany, Japan, and Canada. PTK is dedicated to encouraging service, and it accomplishes this through its annual International Service Program. In addition to getting involved with activities and services locally, members also spend time getting involved with other chapters from other communities. "I believe that the opportunity to interact with other scholars is a critical component of the college experience," says International President James Daugherty. PTK also promotes scholarship and has already organized transfer scholarships specifically for two-year college students at more than 550 senior institutions.

How: To join Phi Theta Kappa, prospective members must be enrolled in an accredited institution offering an associate degree program, have completed 12 hours of coursework, have a general GPA of 3.5 or higher, and have full rights of citizenship in his or her country. The local chapter offers membership. —BF

Where: Phi Theta Kappa 1625 Eastover Drive Jackson, MS 39211 601-957-2241 member.services@ptk.org www.ptk.org