



# TAU KAPPA EPSILON

— Better Men for a Better World —

April 10, 2020

Dear TKE Volunteer,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones healthy as the world battles the COVID-19 pandemic. TKE like every other organization and business in the United States is keeping abreast of CDC guidelines and crafting future plans to ensure our Fraternity not only survives, but thrives through this challenging time. As we are all currently in quarantine, it is a period to evaluate and evolve both personally and as an organization.

It is not business as usual. This is breaking news to no one. Our collegiate members are currently back home and missing memories and moments that they had longed for all year. This includes Red Carnation Balls, Senior Days, Greek Olympics, Initiations, Fraternity For Life ceremonies, and commencement amongst others. On many campuses, they didn't even have the opportunity to complete spring recruitment to welcome new candidates into our TKE family. Volunteers like you are juggling your professional life and home life. If you are like me, you appreciate teachers and daycare leaders even more as I navigate working from home with three small children who see this as an extended spring break.

On behalf of Tau Kappa Epsilon, I want to thank you for the work you do as a volunteer. We can never thank you enough, nor quantify the impact you have on our beloved Fraternity. TKE cannot operate without your selfless service to advance the mission of TKE – to aid men in their mental, moral, and social development for life. Your dedication and guiding hand is more critical now than ever.

Our collegiate men are balancing this sudden transition in a number of ways. There are men still in the shock of this new reality, some who are frustrated at what has been taken away, and others who have retreated into the world that has shut down until further notice. All of these reactions are understandable given the rapid rise of COVID-19 and the grinding halt of life as we knew it. Another group has arisen that I want to champion – those who are using this opportunity to remain connected, innovate, and elevate themselves through this time of isolation. They have not allowed physical distancing to hinder their ability to be social and spread the values of TKE – this I ask of each of you.

I must stop here again and thank many of you. Volunteers have been part of many of these zoom meetings, phone calls, messages across social media, and served as counselors to our men. You are on the front lines with critical relationships that you may have fostered for a few weeks or decades. You balance these conversations and push forward while you may harbor many of the same challenges, concerns, and feelings in your personal and professional life.

None of us know with perfect clarity what the future will look like, but we have the power to shape and prepare for it as much as possible. As we know, our Founders and those giants that came after lifted TKE through World Wars, financial depressions, recessions, and pandemics like the Spanish Flu that we continually see compared to our current pandemic. While those leaders were no doubt visionary, I am confident an army of men/women like you stood amongst them to guide our great organization through those difficult days that challenged our existence. As TKE has before, we can use this opportunity for evolution and set TKE on a path to lead for decades to come.

As we chart the future during this pandemic, I ask that you stay connected via [www.tke.org/coronavirus](http://www.tke.org/coronavirus). This site is dedicated to updated news, FAQ's, videos, and resources being produced through this time to serve both you and our collegiate members. The Professional Staff has been working on overdrive to produce content and educational pieces to supplement the TKE experience. Additionally, the TKE Nation Podcast continues to produce episodes every two weeks. You can find the TKE Nation Podcast wherever you enjoy downloading your favorite podcasts.

Below are critical items to know operationally as we approach the close of the 2019-20 academic year:

- All financial deadlines have been extended from March 15 to May 15. We understand groups and members are in diverse financial situations at this time. We welcome the chance to work with every group to be as helpful during this time as possible.
- The question has arisen about the collection of these fees when members didn't have a traditional experience the last 45-60 days of the year. It is a fair question. Our team is working harder than ever to make direct contact, produce content, and deliver value for our membership to engage and inspire them. I have been lucky enough to participate in two new member educational classes already through Zoom and know our staff has done much of the same. This time has allowed our team to be more accessible than ever to you or the men you work with. I encourage them or you to email our team by finding our contact information on [tke.org](http://tke.org). No question is too small or too large. This financial investment will allow TKE the resources to be reinvested into our current and future members.
- Our education team is producing member education videos throughout April to aid in both new member and active member education. These videos can be found on our YouTube channel.
- Many staffers are holding virtual office hours where you can brainstorm, seek advice, or build bonds with members of our team. Hours are posted on [www.tke.org/coronavirus](http://www.tke.org/coronavirus).
- I am producing weekly videos to update on Fraternity news and any highlights I can share from chapters and colonies across TKE Nation. You can see these videos on our social media channels or on our YouTube channel. If you have news to submit, please email me at [daldrich@tke.org](mailto:daldrich@tke.org).
- The Grand Council is finalizing a five-year strategic plan to boldly drive TKE forward.
- Excellence Awards will maintain the May 15 deadline. Every group will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis understanding what activities were cancelled due to COVID-19.
- Annual reports are due May 15. This report will highlight what was accomplished both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic understanding every group's situation is unique.
- TKE is evaluating the future of the Alumni Volunteer Academy scheduled for mid-June 2020 and the Charles R. Walgreen, Jr. TKE Leadership Academy slated for August 2020. If these events cannot be held physically, we are committed to deliver content virtually.
- I am pleased to share that the Zeta-Omicron Colony has been approved at Western Carolina University through this pandemic. TKE has celebrated 3 charterings this year and now 8 colonizations.
- Any shifts to the calendar or fee structure of the 2020-21 academic year will be communicated with this group.

We will continue to produce information through the channels above and I welcome any questions you have or input to make TKE or our team better. Please contact me at [daldrich@tke.org](mailto:daldrich@tke.org) if I can be helpful to you in any way or connect with your regional team whose contacts can be found at [www.tke.org](http://www.tke.org). Thank you again for being part of our TKE family and for your service, passion, and dedication to Tau Kappa Epsilon!

Our Declaration of Principles speaks to us now, as always. It states in the DOP that “We stand for men whose manhood has withstood the test of trying conditions.” As volunteer Edwin Robinson reminded me, we are in the thick of those words. The trusted responsibility and accountability to impact TKE for generations excites me each day. I am filled with deep appreciation that our Fraternity has a dedicated TKE Foundation, alongside a tremendous Venerable Grand Prytanis, Grand Council, Professional Staff, and volunteers like you to build and expect excellence together. Stay safe and healthy!

Yours in the Bond,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donald E. Aldrich', written in a cursive style.

Donald E. Aldrich  
Chief Executive Officer  
Tau Kappa Epsilon