

Hate Prevention Activity

- A) **Name:** Jordan Lander
- B) **Title of Activity:** “Pledge” of Unity: Rush Retreat
- C) **Ideally Used By:** Collective groups of collegiate Greek organizations, such as Greek councils, Interfraternal councils, and Panhellenic associations.
- D) **Purpose:** To break the early stages of hate by confronting the process of absolutism in the Greek community during the pledging process. This is to be achieved by having a “retreat” where pledges from all Greek groups can come together in a relatively laid-back setting and work collaboratively after they have been “divided” by joining their particular groups. A familiar activity like a scavenger hunt will balance out the anxiety of working with new and “different” people; this, coupled with enlightening one another about interesting facets of the individual organizations, will provide a comfortable atmosphere to combat the beginning processes of hate. By focusing on new members who have not yet been institutionalized into this mentality of “loyalty equals establishing dominance,” it will encourage cooperation and unity between houses instead of constant competition starting with pledges, which will hopefully trickle up through the system.
- E) **Materials Required:** Prepared scavenger hunt lists (see advanced preparation.) Slips of paper prepared by pledges with interesting facts (see advanced preparation). Small prizes for winners (for example, something small such as mini candy bars to give away for correct answers during introduction activity, and something like \$5 gift cards to fast food restaurants for members of winning scavenger hunt team — see advanced preparation.) Pen and paper for each group.
- F) **Permissions Required:** Agreement from houses to participate. To be safe, have pledges sign waivers saying that by agreeing to participate, they are doing it of their own free will. Therefore, this cannot be a “mandatory” activity for them. This is to avoid any potential conflicts with certain Greek groups’ hazing policies and guidelines.
- G) **Advance Preparation:** Set aside a day far enough in advance so participants can plan ahead. Prepare scavenger hunt lists. A couple initiated members from each house should work collaboratively on this in advance and make sure there are enough copies for the number of groups (determined by number of people in attendance; will vary by school, chapter sizes, etc.) The list should contain items that are appropriate/ in

good taste. For example, Sharpie markers, batteries, gum, etc.—items that aren't TOO obscure but more difficult to find than say, a regular pen. Make as many items on the list as a multiple of the number of Greek houses participating. For instance, if there are ten Greek groups on campus, the number of items should be a multiple of ten. *Alert houses this will be happening and they WILL get their items back, so they're willing to participate. Also, ask pledges to write down in advance one interesting fact about their organization without mentioning the group's name. An example for a member of Alpha Delta Pi might be: "Betty Crocker was a member of this sorority." It can be about famous members, different chapters, basically anything about their organization EXCEPT for secretive items; make sure pledges have their facts approved by their chapter president beforehand. For acquiring money for prizes, most collective Greek groups have funds set aside for such activities. If this is not an option, try dividing the total costs between the houses and asking them to donate the money; it should be a minimal cost once split between all the groups.

H) Conducting the Activity:

a. Introduction activity:

- Sit in a circle or other casual formation and go around to each person, having them state their name, what Greek group they are in, and something interesting about themselves.
- Then, for a fun and informative way to learn things about each Greek group, collect all interesting facts previously written by pledges. Have a mediator from the collective Greek council read off the random facts, and pledges will raise their hands and attempt to guess which Greek group it is describing. Correct answers will be rewarded with small prizes.

b. Scavenger hunt:

- Split the pledges into groups, with a relatively equal number of pledges from every house represented within each group.
- Give each group a scavenger hunt checklist and a pen and paper.
- Instruct each group that they must travel around to all of the different Greek groups and attempt to accumulate the items on the list. The catch is that they must collect an equal

number of items from each house. For instance, if the number of items per house is three and the only place they can find, say, Scotch tape, is at the Beta house, but they already have three items there, they might have to give up one of those items for the Scotch tape and try to find the other item elsewhere. ** Make sure they are recording where and from whom they got each item!

- The first team to collect all of the items wins! Members from the winning group each receive a prize. **Members of the council will gather all items collected and lists and make sure that the items are returned to the owners.

D) Follow-Up Options:

- a. First Option: An IFC- or Panhel-sponsored reception after new members have been initiated into all houses. After the new members have been initiated, host a reception to honor their pledges and have them interact again after being fully inducted into their organizations
- b. Second Option: An all-Greek sporting event, such as a volleyball tournament, flag football, etc. All teams would have members from each Greek group instead of pitting one Greek group against another.

Once we start breaking the habit of absolutism at the level of pledge members, hopefully through diffusion and events such as this, it will trickle into the rest of the initiated members as well.

If this could be of use for SAVE, go right ahead and use it!