

My First Trip to Alpha Chi Rho's National Convention

In 1992, I was initiated into Alpha Chi Rho's Phi Eta Chi Chapter at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. At that time I had never met anyone from the national headquarters and really did not have any idea what the National Convention, LSI or Conclave were all about. By 1994, my chapter had pretty much dissolved and I took a semester off of school and changed my major. When I returned to Stockton another group of undergrads were restarting the fraternity and at that time I felt that I was pretty much done with the Alpha Chi Rho. I had made some very good friends who were brothers and I remained in contact with them, but for the most part I thought I was done with the fraternity as a whole. I married my wonderful wife in the spring of 1997 and graduated from Stockton with a Bachelors of Science in Social Work in the spring of 1998. I continued my education and earned my Masters in Social Work from Rutgers in 1999 and never really gave the fraternity another thought. I had my first child in 1999 and my second child in 2001 and life was going great, I still kept in touch with some of my brothers from Phi Eta Chi, but for the most part the fraternity was the farthest thing from my mind.

It was a cold night and I was driving down the Garden State Parkway in January of 2004 when my cell phone rang and it was my Postulant Educator Sean Hughes. I had not really spoken to him in years, but I figured I would listen to what he had to say. He informed me that he was the new National President of Alpha Chi Rho and asked if I would be interested in being the Risk Management Officer on Council for the National Fraternity. Honestly, I had no idea there was a National Council. After a lengthy conversation, I agreed to attend a meeting and find out what it was all about. At the meeting I was approved as the National Risk Management officer and this started my reconnection with the National Fraternity. I attended a few meetings and other national events and started meeting brothers from many chapters. In July of 2005, the fraternity held the 98th National Convention in Boston and at the time with a wife and small children I was unable to attend. Brother Hughes was elected to a second term and I decided to stay on and assist him as the National Risk Management Officer for the next 2 years.

As the summer of 2007 neared I explained to my loving wife that since I was on the National Council, that I really should attend the National Convention in Williamsburg and thought we could make it a family vacation. Over the past 3 years I had been to Conclave and LSI and many other meetings and events for the fraternity however I had never been to the National Convention and I had no idea what to expect. On July 25, 2007 we packed up the car grabbed our kids and headed off on our 8 hour drive to Williamsburg, Va. When we arrived I had no idea what to expect. I knew that I would be sitting through meetings much of the time but I wondered what my family would be doing. The first day I sat in a few meetings and we walked around Williamsburg and ate dinner in an old historical house. The second day was the opening of the National Convention and my family went to Bush Garden's Water Country.

The convention was starting in a few hours and I didn't know what to expect. When I was a child my father would take me with him to trade show conventions, where you would walk around for hours visiting vendors and collecting samples of things they wanted to sell. This was the only type of convention I had ever been to so I guess that

was what I was expecting. I thought there was going to be like thousands of people attending, I was expecting to see brothers from all over the country from young to old. I was expecting to see many brother's with their families with kids running around and playing. So I put on my suite and made my way to the convention. I found a brother from my chapter who was also on the National Council and we stood in line to enter the 99th National Convention of Alpha Chi Rho.

Once I entered the room, I realized that it was very similar to other events that I had been to including Conclave and LSI. I realized that there would only be a couple hundred people and that many of the Alumni were people I had already met and knew. The National Convention it turns out is a meeting held under our Ritual and includes all chapters and alumni. The purpose of the meeting is to make decisions about our organization and elect new officers to run our organization. There were no circus acts and there were no people trying to sell me goods and services, it was a room full of brothers. These brothers were participating and making decisions for the betterment of the National Fraternity and had the ability to make decisions that would shape the future of our organization and I was a part of it. After a few hours of discussions and deliberations we took a recess until the following day. That evening my family and I attended the Scholarship and Awards Banquet and I saw many of the same brothers who were there with their families.

The following day we continued with the National Convention and elections were held and a new National President was chosen. At this point I thought my time of being on National Council was over and that the new president would nominate his own National Risk Management Office. Once convention was closed and the meeting was adjourned, the new national president informed me that he would like me to stay involved with the National Council and offered me the option of remaining the Risk Management Officer or taking over as the National Scholarship Officer. Apparently the Scholarship Officer not only sits on the National Council, he is also on the Board of Trustees for the Alpha Chi Rho Educational Foundation. This would mean getting to know a whole new group of people, learning more about the organization, and attending an additional four to five meeting a year. So I went from thinking I was done with the fraternity again to moving on and becoming even more involved.

After the convention was finished, my family and I attended the Feast of the Fraternity. We ate good food and were surrounded by great people. The following day I packed up my family in my car and started my 8 hour drive home. I am sure that for my family it might not have been the best family vacation they had ever had, but they knew that it was important to me and they seemed to enjoy themselves.

Many people ask me why I am so involved with the National Fraternity. When I joined Alpha Chi Rho back in 1992, I had a vision of what I thought the fraternity was about. My vision was that we were different from other fraternities. We had a mission in life to be better people who not only drank with each other and built lasting bonds, but that we would make the world and our communities a better place because we existed. We would go above and beyond to assist those who are less fortunate than ourselves and do so without expecting anything in return except for the satisfaction of knowing that we did something good. We would continue to recruit new members to follow in our footsteps and carry on our traditions and our beliefs. These are the principals that have brought me back and kept me involved with the fraternity over the last 8 years. Our

bonds to the brotherhood are only as strong as we choose to make it and I promise you that the more you work at it the more your bonds with the brotherhood will grow.

In the bond,
Dominic J. Mevoli III
National Scholarship Officer

