

# SIGMA PHI SOCIETY

## **The Sigma Phi Newsletter Awards**

Sigma Phi has long supported open and frequent communications among its members in order to nurture the flame shared by all initiates. This is evidenced at the national level by the frequent publication of The Flame, which is mailed regularly to all Sigs and posted on the Society's national website.

The Society recognizes, however, that local publications issued both by active chapters and by alumni organizations also play a vital role in accomplishing the same global objective. Hence for many years at each General Convention, the Standing & Advisory Committee presented its "Newsletter Award" to the chapter that published the best newsletter during the previous year.

In order to encourage even more-frequent, high-quality publications, in 1990 the Society committed to confer two awards annually, one to an active chapter and one to a local alumni organization. These awards recognize both the frequency and quality of overall communications efforts by local chapters and their associated alumni groups.

### Evaluation Criteria

To help minimize the inherent subjectivity involved in determining "best" publications, the Standing & Advisory Committee's judging panel uses the following criteria to evaluate newsletters (and other communications media, if any).

- Contents' relevance to Sigma Phi and the academic community
- Contents' relevance to actives and alumni: Conveys spirit of the chapter
- Content that reflects Sigma Phi's ideals
- Readability: Good writing/editing
- Aesthetically-attractive layout and format, including pictures/graphics
- Diversity in content and range of contributors
- Creativity, freshness

The panel evaluates the overall character and effect of the chapter/alumni communications efforts, which might include one or more publications, for the entire year.

### Judging, Selection, and Presentation Process

1. Copies of all newsletters published during the year by active chapters and alumni organizations are to be forwarded to the Newsletter Awards Committee Chairman for receipt no later than each July 15. "Year" in this context is defined as a July 1-June 30 twelve-month period.

Ideally, at least three copies will be sent to the awards chairman as each newsletter edition is published. This might be accomplished best by simply placing the chairman's name on the mailing list three times, thus making the process automatic. In addition, the electronic version of each publication should be e-mailed to the awards chairman.

2. The awards chairman will work with an alumni judging committee, to whom a collection of all contending newsletters will be provided by the chairman shortly after July 15.

Each committee member will review and assess the newsletters, relying on the evaluation criteria as his guidelines, and report his rank-ordered top three selections in both the active chapter and alumni categories to the chairman on or before August 10. The chairman, also an evaluator, will compile the results of the committee members' selections.

In the absence of clear-cut outcomes, the chairman may convene the committee members (most likely by telephone) to reach mutually-agreed selections.

3. The two newsletter awards will be presented to representatives of the winning active chapter and alumni organization at the following General Convention.

*Note: "Publications," as the word is used in this document is intended to be broadly interpreted, including printed-on-paper and electronic newsletters and other communications pieces.*