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Making a Difference | **“Committed to Making a Difference”**

What makes a good story is something that inspires people and sends a good message to which a certain group of individuals can relate. These stories captivate people and inspire them to make a difference. Whether the difference is in a community, in a group, or within ourselves, we all find ways to make a difference in our lives. The process of making that difference comes with taking initiative, fighting for what you believe in, and above all, recognizing your goal as a means to win or just to prove a point. I searched all around Southern Illinois University Edwardsville to find people who want to share their stories. One person tells how his organization helps out other organizations.

Nic Simpson tells us about Student Government and its importance to the life of student organizations on campus.

“SG provides funding to any recognized student organization, travel requests, program requests, etc. Before fees can increase, it goes through SG. There's also lobby day for student aid. All student clubs and organization constitutions have to be approved by them. There's quite a bit.”

In a sense, Student Government helps the organizations fund for their activities.

“That's one of the big things. SG ultimately decides constitutions, too... If SG doesn't approve a constitution, a student organization can't be formed. Kimmel puts that completely up to SG. There's also a time limit for approval.”

The Kimmel Leadership Center’s purpose is to help organize student organizations collectively. It is formulated around the constitution of Student Government.

“It's the base of Kimmel, yes.”

So, SIUE has over a hundred student organizations ranging from Greek Life to academic, professional to recreation, honors to culture, and even religion.

Stu Jones led us to an organization that eliminates denomination within the Christian religion in order to openly practice faith. The Catholics Alive organization offers just that. They organize Mass, weekly meetings, and Bible studies. Like all religion, the Catholics Alive organization lets its followers to make a difference within them. The organization hosts retreats to allow sole devotion to self-improvement.



<http://www.catholicsalive.net/#!>

Lastly, I would like to talk about my organization. Alpha Kappa Lambda, Fraternity is an organization for men who are committed to making a difference within their community, within their own organization, and within themselves. Community service is one aspect that keeps our name alive around the Edwardsville area. We have hosted events such as “Go to Hell with AKL” to raise funds for our philanthropies. AKL’s SIUE Chapter Beta Tau has raised approximately \$7000 in funds donated to organizations like AKL’s national philanthropies “These Hands Don’t Hurt” and cystic fibrosis, as well as to “Up Til Dawn” – a foundation created to raises funds for families whose children are in need of medical funding. However, in order to do that, we must first make a difference within our organization.

Fraternities are not all about partying. Running and maintaining a fraternity is a great deal of work. We have an executive board which oversees all events, activities, funds, publicity, and policies within the Chapter. AKL also maintains active communication with our alumni, promotes recruitment, and organizes community involvement. It also allows for education for our pledges and for our actives that want to step up to chairs when others step down. In order to do that, we must find the capability to make a difference within ourselves.

Our organization is an educationally and socially maturing process in which we all take the initiative to learn the responsibilities in fulfilling the obligations of life. Our older members have learned this and teach these philosophies to our younger members. This is how we make a difference for each other and keep our fraternity going.



Finally, I would like to mention I am making a difference within my community, within my organization, and within myself. I am the Director of Philanthropy for Alpha Kappa Lambda, Fraternity. I have helped sponsor American Red Cross blood drives. I have helped a family build a house with Habitat for Humanity. I have helped my organization to raise money for the St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital. I am also a minority in my organization. I make a difference by showing that I am nothing like the stereotypes of my race. I make a difference by proving myself to be a leader even toward those who doubted me. I make a difference by starting over if I mess up, especially when it comes to my education. I make a difference by devoting my loyalty to my friends and coworkers. I make a difference by defying the odds of unfortunate situations and circumstances. As

my fraternity’s motto states: we are “men of character committed to making a difference.”

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