



sigma phi beta

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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College Fraternity to accept transgender members

Sigma Phi Beta Fraternity adopts groundbreaking policy in recognizing students' self-identified gender

Tempe, Arizona – Sigma Phi Beta Fraternity's national board of directors enacted a policy at its May 14th meeting in Tucson which allows transgender students to join the Fraternity. The policy goes above and beyond any other known policy of a national social college fraternity by allowing individuals who self-identify as male to seek membership, regardless of their sex at birth and whether or not they have obtained legal recognition of their gender identity. Furthermore, the policy allows full members to maintain their membership, even if at a later date they decide to change their gender to female.

Jamison Green, a nationally-recognized transgender activist and educator who serves on the board of directors of the Transgender Law and Policy Institute, expressed his support.

“Sigma Phi Beta's decision to welcome transgender fraternity members is in direct fulfillment of the Greek Life values of self-determination, self-actualization, and brotherhood. The inclusion of gay and transgender students in the fraternity system ensures the formative experience of true brotherhood,” said Green, who is also the author of *Becoming a Visible Man* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2004).

While the purpose of Sigma Phi Beta Fraternity has always been “to build character in gay, straight, bisexual and transgender male college students,” this new policy acknowledges the complex nature of gender identity by respecting students' ability to self-identify.”

“Sigma Phi Beta Fraternity wants to make it known that we are committed to being inclusive and supportive of transgender students while maintaining our identity as a Fraternity for men,” said the fraternity's national president and chairman, Sam Holdren. “Students develop best in environments where they feel valued, protected, accepted and socially-connected to their peers.”

“Brotherhood is about respect, and Sigma Phi Beta is demonstrating true leadership by adopting a fully inclusive policy that recognizes that our sense of self as men and women is far deeper than what's on the outside,” said Donna Rose. Rose is a nationally-recognized transgender activist from Arizona who serves on the Human Rights Campaign's national board of directors and who authored *Wrapped in Blue: A Journey of Discovery* (Living Legacy Press, 2003).

Sigma Phi Beta Fraternity was originally formed as a local chapter at Arizona State University in September 2003, forming its own national parent organization in July 2005. Since its inception, the fraternity has made great strides in the Greek fraternity system.

The development of this groundbreaking policy came about in collaboration with the local and national transgender community. The policy enacted by the national board will be binding on present and future chapters of the Fraternity.

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Sigma Phi Beta Fraternity is a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to build character in gay, straight bisexual and transgender male college students through social and meaningful activities that will empower them in their future endeavors, while upholding the bonds and true meaning of brotherhood.

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