



Honors in Action

College
Completion

Competitive
Edge

Leadership
Development
Studies

Collegfish.org

ΦΘΚ

Missouri Region

OCTOBER 2011



A Package Deal

CollegeFish.org, Competitive Edge, Community College Completion Corps (C4), Honors in Action (HIA); if you haven't heard of some of these terms, then you're in luck! The regional newsletter is a way for us, the regional officer team, to inform you: the awesome members, officers, and advisers, of the goings on of the region and give valuable information on programs that we hope you are taking advantage of.

Having a hard time deciding on a school, don't have the time to send a ton of messages to schools, or really need some scholarships? Check out the section on CollegeFish.org! Want to stand out above the rest when applying for that dream school or job? Head on over to the Competitive edge section and be sure to read the information on Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Development. And last, but certainly not least, if you plan on transferring before getting your Associates Degree, you should definitely read the section on C4! Not unlike a certain electronics store, if you have questions, we have answers. Please don't hesitate to contact your district's Regional Officer!



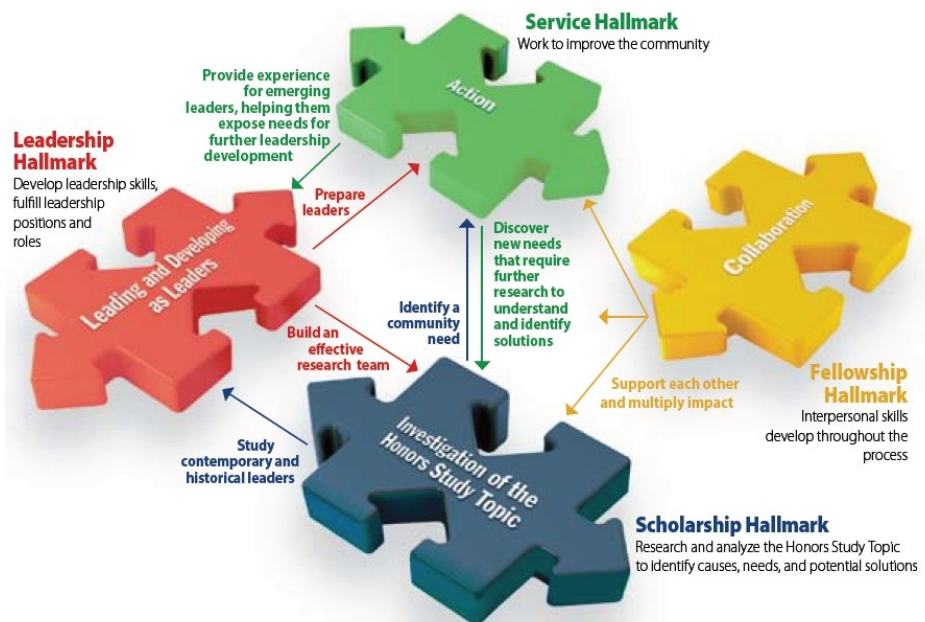
Honors in Action

It has been almost three months since our Leadership conference at Stephens College, located in Columbia, Missouri. Stephens College was where Phi Theta Kappa began in 1918 and all of us regional officers were honored to have the opportunity to host a conference in such a historic place.

Fourteen of Missouri's twenty-six chapters were in attendance at the conference. From those fourteen chapters, numerous officers were present. These officers acquired crucial leadership training and obtained information which they can now use to further the success

of their home chapters. Also in attendance were eighteen members and two provisional members. It is especially important that members and provisional members, such as these, gain the same knowledge and passion as the officers who were in attendance; they are key contributors to the success of their chapters.

The conference weekend began with an excellent presentation given by Steve and Jo Fritts. Mr. and Mrs. Fritts are advisors from Ozarks Technical Community College's Alpha Psi Tau chapter. Their presentation covered Honors in Action and how chapters can: successfully choose an issue, select a study question, conduct research, develop a project, and write a Hallmark. Their presentation can be found as a PowerPoint on the Missouri Region's website.





After Mr. and Mrs. Fritts' completed their presentation, the serious but fun work began. The attendees were paired with people from other chapters and Edge, College Fish, and the Hallmarks.

The weekend concluded when we, the Regional Officer Team, presented our Honors in Action project. Each of us spoke about the different steps that are necessary to successfully complete an

Honors in Action project. They explained the brainstorming, research, collaboration and decision making processes as they relate to Honors in Action. At the end of their presentation, we announced that each chapter will need to submit a survey that we developed; this survey, which was launched on August 22, 2011, can be found on the regional website. It is important to understand that we, as a Regional Team, do not submit a Hallmark to headquarters; the purpose of the Regional Honors in Action project is for chapters to be involved and complete a requirement from the four star level of the Five Star Chapter Development plan.

Chapters and members who were unable to attend the conference

should not feel that they have missed out on the information that was given. In order to obtain the information, provided at the conference, or request assistance, please e-mail your District Vice President, the President, or the Vice President of Communications.



We look forward to seeing all of you at our next exciting conference in Potosi and the International Conference in Nashville. More information can be found about

the next regional conference on the regional website and more information can be found about the international conference on the international website.



-Debbie Zamora

College Completion

President Obama created the College Completion Challenge in 2009. The College Completion Challenge challenged America to once again have the highest proportion of col-



Only 20-29.1 percent of community college students complete within three years; only 45 percent of community college students complete within six years.

lege graduates in the world and to produce an additional 5 million community college graduates by 2020; to this end President Obama and higher education leaders created the Community College Completion Corps and pledged to increase completion rates by 50 percent over the next 10 years. The Community College Completion Corps (C4) is headed by Phi Theta Kappa in collaboration with five organizations which devote themselves to students and to the community college system. The purpose of C4 is to combat decreased college completion rates by raising awareness about the importance of college completion and by providing resources which aid students in their quest for completion.



The United States has fallen from being ranked first, in relation to the percentage of its citizens who hold a degree, to being ranked 12th among industrialized countries. Currently, fewer than half of American community college students complete their degree. In 2008 only 35 percent of Missouri's working-

age population held a degree, three percent under the national average. Despite enrollment being at an all time high, completion rates have remained stagnant over the past 30 years. For the first time in our history the current generation of college-age students will be, on average, less educated than their parents.

It is estimated that job openings for Completers will increase twice as fast as job openings for individuals who have only completed high school and that within just a few years an associates degree will be required to earn a living wage. American employers are already reporting a shortage of college graduates. Unless completion rates are increased, these job openings will not be filled. In order to be competitive in the global economy we must commit to complete. In order to meet this demand and to maintain our country's prosperity, it is estimated that 8.2 million additional students need to complete by 2020.

For students, completion is a doorway into a successful career and an informed life. Higher Education is the key to success within our knowledge-based economy and our knowledge-based society. Not only does completion open up these opportunities to individuals who complete, it also benefits society. By completing we aid our economy and help to prevent both crime and public dependence by providing productive alternatives and opportu-



nities. America's educational system made it a global leader and it will do it again.

Phi Theta Kappa's membership can assist with this initiative in a variety of ways and can even build their College Projects around their effort to combat decreased completion. The initiative can be pursued by holding signing days on campus, by having speakers address the issue, by helping students to become aware of the resources that are available to them on campus, or even by simply spreading the word about the benefits of completion. For promotional material and more information about C4 please go to



www.Cccompletioncorps.org/

-Robert Gaines

Competitive Edge

As a Phi Theta Kappan, you strive for excellence. So, why not set yourself apart from the crowd by taking advantage of one of Phi Theta Kappa's most beneficial programs? Competitive Edge is a Phi Theta Kappa program designed to strengthen members by developing their leadership, communication, and time management skills while also recognizing members for their chapter and community involvement.

Divided into five levels, each with varying degrees of involvedness, Competitive Edge allows members to work at their own pace and customize their experience by choosing from a variety of electives throughout the program. Each level is structured to track your progress by submitting written works to your online profile and journaling about activities that you take part in, may they be with your chapter or out in the community.

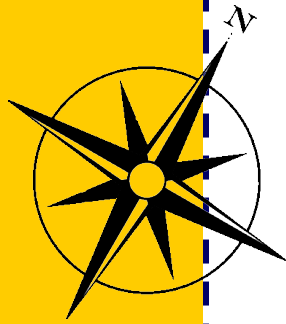


Not only will you have the personal satisfaction of completing the highest level of individual achievement that Phi Theta Kappa has to offer, the online profile is designed so that it may be shared and expended to meet your needs. Perhaps you want to create a portfolio that appeals to prospective employers, or one geared toward the transfer school of your dreams. Either way, the Competitive Edge portfolio builder can be customized with photos, research papers and resumes to help you stand out. So, get started today by logging into my.ptk.org and



make the most of your Phi Theta Kappa experience!

-Kelly Lucas



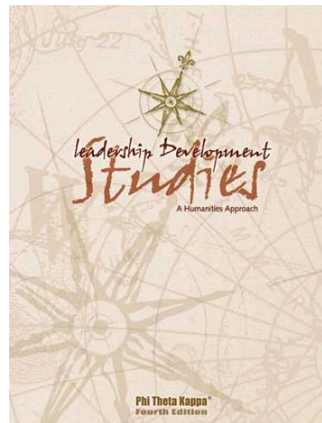
“Phi Theta Kappa’s Leadership Development Studies Curriculum is life-changing! It is a thoroughly-developed, exceptional curriculum.”
-Dr. Mary

Leadership Development Studies

Although we all know about Phi Theta Kappa's four Hallmarks, scholarship; leadership; service; and fellowship, we often forget to divide our focus between them. Service is addressed by the majority of events held by chapters, scholarship tends to be addressed through our Honors in Action projects, and fellowship grows organically within our chapters, however we rarely pay much heed to leadership. Leadership does develop naturally within chapters, especially for chapter officers, however chapters rarely put any conscious effort into developing the leadership skills of their members. Although I could address a wide range of ways by which leadership skills can be developed, such as member lead committees and presentations about leadership, I am going to focus on one of Phi Theta Kappa's hidden gems, the Leadership Development Studies program.

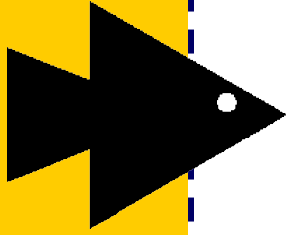
The Leadership Development Studies program is composed of two

courses, both developed by Phi Theta Kappa and both entitled Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Development Studies: A Humanities Approach. These courses help participants to gain a fundamental understanding of leadership, the role of servant leaders, how ethics relate to leadership, and of their personal leadership philosophy. At the same time participants learn leadership skills such as how to articulate a vision, how to effectively set goals, how to handle important decisions, how to manage time, how to build effective teams, how to empower



others, how to delegate responsibilities, how to manage change, and how to manage conflict. These lessons are learned through the application of five different leadership development methodologies built around discussion based learning, shared analysis, film studies, book studies, and experiential exercises.

The first of these courses is offered as an actual class at several community colleges and has a strong focus on the experiential aspect of the program. Within the class students will often cover a subject presented within the course textbook and then put what they have read into action through a leadership exercise. The course offers an excellent way to develop leadership through real life activities, however it is only provid-



ed by a handful of community colleges throughout the country.

For Phi Theta Kappa members who do not have access to a physical leadership development class there is an option; every semester Phi Theta Kappa hosts an online version of the course on Facebook. This nine week long online course makes up for its inability to provide leadership activities by focusing heavily on the Socratic Method. Throughout the course students will be required not only to write short essays about the materials found in their textbooks, they will also be required to engage in meaningful debate about what they have read.

I encourage all of you to take advantage of this program and to introduce it to your membership. Furthermore, I also encourage you to speak with your advisers about the possibility of introducing the physical version of this class to your campus. If you would like to sign up for the next online Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Development Studies course or if you would like to find more information about the program, please navigate to <http://www.leadership.ptk.org>



**-Keith Crisman
& Robert Gaines**

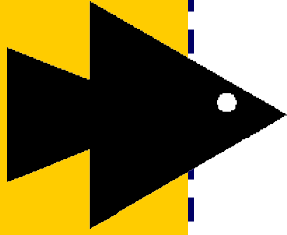


Collegefish.org

Are you planning on transferring to a four-year university? CollegeFish.org can assist you in the transition process. As members of Phi Theta Kappa, you have free access to this online tool designed to bring advisors, scholarship providers, four-year transfer counselors, and Phi Theta Kappa members together in one centralized location. CollegeFish.org provides college and scholarship search features based on your unique profile. Recently added to the program is a scholarship matching tool whereby your profile is automatically reviewed and notification is sent regarding eligible scholarships you should pursue.



From the detailed profiles of over two thousand educational institutions, you are able to choose your top universities and place them in your FishBowl; a folder to save, rank, and track up to six schools you are interested in pursuing. One



of the many benefits of placing your top selection in the FishBowl is important transfer dates are automatically added to your personal calendar, helping you avoid missing any important transfer deadlines.

Along with your personal calendar, CollegeFish.org provides you with an interactive task list, My Next Steps. This tool will assist you in planning by reminding you of the important steps you need to follow so as to complete a successful transfer. As you complete each item, they are removed and your next task is added.



CollegeFish.org provides extensive details for over three thousand scholarships available for Phi Theta Kappa members. The Treasure Chest is a storage folder for you to place the top scholarships that interest you. Once the scholarships are placed in the folder, simply click on the link and you are taken to the scholarship profile page. The scholarship profile page provides you with award information, eligibility requirements, and contact information as well as other available

scholarships at that specific college or university.

These are just a few of the highlights included in the online tool, CollegeFish.org. Students have their own idea of the perfect school. By completing your profile, you are provided with information relative to your specific needs, desires, and ideals. When you attend a school that meets those needs and desires, your success rate is greatly improved. Take a few minutes and visit the CollegeFish.org website to complete your profile and begin your search for a perfect school and a much deserved scholarship.



-Tobi Wilkins



If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact the regional officer team or our coordinator, Ann Parks. We are here to serve you, the Missouri Region, and will do anything within our power to do so. We would love to speak at your events, consult with you about Phi Theta Kappa programs, or speak with you about the structure of your chapter. Please note that Regional Officers cannot meet with chapters or attend chapter events without first receiving an invitation from the chapter.

Thank you again for taking the time to review our newsletter.

-Your Missouri Regional Officer Team

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For more information and resources please refer to the Regional Website and Regional Facebook page:

<http://www.macc.edu/~ptk/>
<http://www.facebook.com/PTKMissouriRegion>