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July 2021

Year in Review and Looking Ahead

Greetings Circle Officers

It is now just past mid-summer, and we know that you are preparing for the start of a new academic year. The last two years have been filled with challenge and reward. We hope the new year will bring new opportunities for your circle and your campus.

Please read this email to the end. There are many changes at ODK of which you need to be aware. As I have said many times in the past, I don't put anything in an Officer Updates that you don't need to know!

FY 2021 Wrap Up

FY 2021 By the Numbers

- New Members (paid): 7,065
- Honoris Causa Members (and Free Faculty Advisors): 44
- Total New Members in FY 2021: 7,109
- Circles Initiating: 199
- New Circles Established: 3
- Registrants: 2021 NLC: 302
- Virtual Program Registrants (Webinars, Training, Initiation, etc.): 1,769

FY 2021 Annual Reports/Circle Minimum Standards/Circle Health Reports

The Circle Annual Report process is complete for FY 2021. We are still compiling the information from the circles that completed your annual report. Circle Minimum Standards for FY 2021 have been updated. If you are green, you qualify for circle recognition. The Circle Health Reports will be posted to your Membership Management System (MMS) administration page in September.

New for FY 2022

Welcome Jamie Bouldin

OΔK National Headquarters welcomes Jamie Bouldin as the director of membership services. Jamie is an initiate from the Stephen F. Austin State University Circle and longtime OΔK volunteer. She most recently served as the Director of Career Services for SFASU. Jamie will lead our efforts to strengthen circles and enhance the membership experience as we turn our focus to celebrating and connecting members across our multigenerational organization. Jamie will be working remotely from Texas. Her first day "in the office" is August 2, 2021.

Policy Changes

We have a number of policy and nomenclature changes that were approved by the Board of Trustees during the past year. These changes have been made throughout various OΔK documents and on the website. We will send more detailed updates about each in future communications.

Pillars: *The term phases has been replaced with pillars. Many circles and documents already used these names, which are more descriptive of the areas of campus from which our membership is drawn.*

Pillar Names: To add additional clarity, the full and abbreviated names of three of the pillars were changed. The new names are:

- Academics and Research (Academics)
- Athletics (Athletics)
- Service to Campus and Community (Service)
- Communications (Communications)
- Creative and Performing Arts (Arts)

Alumni Advisor: *OΔK has added a new advisor role to the officially approved advisors. The Alumni Advisor is an initiated OΔK member who can be from your circle or any circle and is willing to assist with the management of the circle. More details can be found in the Circle Officer Handbook.*

Membership Pin: *The Board of Trustees approved a change to the official membership emblems of the Society. Beginning in FY 2022, Omicron Delta Kappa will issue only one pin known as the Key of Membership. The pin design is currently being finalized. See MMS changes for details about pin.*

Circle Minimum Standards

In our efforts to help our circles maintain efficient and effective operations, we will continue to stress the importance of meeting all Circle Minimum Standards, especially when it comes to circle officers. Less than 40% of our circles currently have all five required officer positions filled. We will be working closely with all circles to ensure that the officer corps is fully staffed and functioning for each circle.

Circle Recognition Awards

Circle Recognition Awards will be posted in September. This year, 49 circles qualified for circle recognition by completing all Circle Minimum Standards (only 25% of initiating circles). While we are proud of those circles, we had another 34 circles missing just one or two standards.

Membership Management System (MMS) Changes

There have been numerous changes to the Membership Management System. These changes are designed to assist circle officers with records management as well as improve the information OΔK is receiving from applicants and initiates. Details of all the changes are listed on the MMS Changes page.

Application Requirements: For data integrity, we now require academic and professional information for Graduate/Professional, Faculty/Staff, and Alumni Applicants.

Demographic Items: Demographic items have been added to the application to aid our efforts to understand the diversity and inclusivity of our membership. The data will be redacted from the application view available to circles and will not appear in circle spreadsheet downloads. Only the National Headquarters will have access to the data.

Circle Officers: This listing has been revised to show which officer positions are filled and when they were last updated. As with the Circle Minimum Standards, officer positions that are complete will show as green. Unfilled positions will be red.

Membership Pins: The Board of Trustees approved a new pin for Omicron Delta Kappa initiates. To have a single and lasting symbol of membership for all initiates, the Key of Membership will be the only pin issued for ceremonies. The choice of the pin has been removed from the application.

Custom Questions: The custom questions available to circles have been updated and ordered to group them into categories. All applications have been deactivated. When your circle reactivates its application, be sure to check your custom questions to ensure they are still what you want for the new fiscal year.

Circle Reports: The Circle Health Report and Circle Annual Report (if submitted) will be posted to the MMS Administration page for each circle.

Ceremony Type and Shipping: Because OΔK is suspending national initiation ceremonies (see below), we will no longer ask the type of ceremony the circle is conducting. Also, we will no longer mail membership materials directly to members. As we did before the pandemic, membership materials will be shipped to the circle. Because shipping prices have significantly increased, we will now charge the circle the exact cost of expediting shipping instead of a flat rate.

Circle Contact Changes: As Jamie Bouldin joins the staff, we will be reassigning staff members assigned to circles. The Circle Contact is noted on your MMS administration page. Circle contacts will be reaching out to you in August to learn your plans for the year.

National Ceremonies

Now that nearly every institution will be returning to on-campus activity, OΔK is suspending the National Virtual Initiation Ceremonies. Although they were necessary as part of our support for circles during the pandemic, we believe the connections made through a campus ceremony are crucial to the future of a strong circle and a vibrant Society. If an in-person ceremony is not possible, circles are still permitted to conduct online initiation ceremonies. We highly encourage circles to meet in person when possible. Remember, the initiation ceremony is supposed to be a significant event in the life of a member. We understand these events are a great deal of effort to plan and execute. However, you have a team of highly qualified leaders in your circle. We are confident that they can ensure a memorable experience for everyone.

2022 Initiation Incentives

The [FY 2022 Initiation Incentives](#) for circle have been posted online. We have included a special incentive for circles at small schools this year.

National Leadership Conference

OΔK will be returning to an in-person [National Leadership Conference](#), tentatively planned for June 2-5, 2022. Applications for a conference chair and committee volunteers are open. We hope to have a site finalized and a committee in place no later than October 1, 2021.

OΔK Strategic Plan

Finally, the OΔK Board of Trustees approved a new [strategic plan](#) for the next three years that will refocus our Society on enhancing the member experience, building a more diverse and inclusive organization, and celebrating collaborative and inclusive leadership. We will provide more information about how programs and services will be impacted by the plan in the coming months. You can read the general outline and the primary goals at this [link](#).

Wow! That was a great deal of information. All of these items are also available on our website in the Circle Officers tab [New for FY2022](#). Make sure you bookmark <https://odk.org/circle-officers/> for quick reference to everything a circle officer needs.

We can never fully express our gratitude to our advisors and student officers - you - who make OΔK an important part of a lifelong leadership journey.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need anything to support your circle.

Best wishes on the coming year.

Tim

Timothy A. Reed, Ph.D.
Vice President for Membership and Operations



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