Greeks tackle major social issues through education and programming. Will you consider a year-end gift to the Herman B Wells Greek Education Fund to help support these initiatives?

Indiana University is a microcosm of the rest of the world. Our fraternity and sorority members are not immune from the social issues plaguing this generation of college students. Education is being offered in the Greek community from outside the classroom that addresses risk factors and promotes bystander intervention. These specific programs provide students with the knowledge, skills and resources to raise awareness, address social issues and support each other as they navigate the university living/learning experience.

Greek 101 is a new member education program coordinated through Student Life and Learning and facilitated by high-level leaders in the community. Topics of discussion include IU Greek Community values, Personal values, Intent vs. impact/espoused values vs. enacted values, Real case studies and the ideal fraternity/sorority experience. New members of the Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Association are challenged to examine their personal values in correlation to their respective organization’s values. The conversation deepens to spur an understanding of how to live in congruence with their values and build a better community.
Indiana Greek Emerging Leaders (IGEL) Retreat was held in October. This event was a chance for 92 students representing all 4 councils to develop personal leadership skills, define their values, and discuss community issues. The weekend was led by a faculty team made up of National Headquarters Staff members, Indiana University Staff, and Staff from other Universities. Students did work as a large group but also had the chance to have discussions and activities in smaller group settings. For many of our students, this was the first time they really got to know and work with students from other chapters and councils. The weekend concluded with each student making a personal action plan and defining behavior change they would like to make in their individual chapters and for the entire community.

Men Against Rape and Sexual Assault (MARS) is an all-male peer education group sponsored by IU Interfraternity Council. MARS was started in Spring 2013 and adopted from Miami of Ohio and Northwestern universities. MARS’ purpose is to engage and educate men about the issues of rape and sexual assault. Members of MARS receive training from the Sexual Assault Crisis Service, counselors, and other experts in the field of sexual assault prevention and response. By using presentations focused on discussion and supplemented by statistics, MARS can help men understand consent, examine national and Indiana University community statistics on sexual assault, assist in preventing sexual assault and realize the importance of these issues to men as well as women.

Safe Sisters is a group established in 2007 to educate women about sexual assault and raise awareness of this issue in the Greek community. Currently, our sororities have members trained to handle crisis situations and act as advocates for victims of sexual assault. Safe Sisters are trained to handle sexual-assault issues in Greek chapters, teaching members of the community not to blame victims and to hold perpetrators accountable. The group hopes to foster a campus culture that does not teach or tolerate sexual assault. Men can also be victims of sexual assault, both as children and adults, and the under-reporting of male victims is an issue that requires further work.

Step Up! IU was created in the Division of Student Affairs and the program is used by many Greek organizations. Step UP! IU teaches students how to overcome the bystander effect to help create a Culture of Care at IU. The comprehensive program provides students with knowledge, resources and skills to intervene when fellow students are in need of help. The interactive presentation compiles IU statistics and real-life scenarios to inform students of how to help in situations involving sexual assault, drug and alcohol abuse, hazing, discrimination, harassment, and mental health. At the end of the program, students know the five steps to intervene and are provided with the tools to evaluate ways to intervene in both emergency and non-emergency situations as well as the different ways for responding to various problems.