

## Four Years Made Great: Reflections of a Graduating Senior

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I'll never forget the day I was recruited to join a fraternity at Rhode Island College. I had just embarked on my four-year journey through college, and I was sitting in my political science course when I was greeted by Tyler. He opened with, "Hey man, how's it going? I'm Tyler. What's your name?" We went back and forth with small talk, greeting each other every day in class, until one day Tyler said, "I'm part of an org on campus and we're throwing some events this week. You should come check them out."

At that moment, I didn't really know if I was going to have the time. In addition to being a freshman and trying to get a grip on college, I was working full time. To guide my decision I began asking Tyler about his organization. He said, "I'm part of a fraternity here on campus, Kappa Delta Phi." My head flooded with stereotypes and thoughts leading me to think I didn't really want to be a part of that. Well, I decided to go because that's what college is all about, and I wasn't going to let an opportunity pass me by because I didn't at least try – and what a great experience it has become.

I have been a part of Kappa Delta Phi for four years now. Every year has had its challenges, especially this current year. I am a graduating senior, as well as chapter president, a full-time employee, and trying to get hired in my field of study. I have more than a full plate. Being president alone has a handful of challenges. It's always a task to get attendance rates up and make sure all the brothers are abiding by the rules set by our national board of directors and college. There are many different personalities at play, so we have to try to make everything work for the majority, but it all gets done. Serving as president while working full time is challenging because it puts my time management skills to the test. I have learned to manage my time efficiently having worked full time since I was a senior in high school. As a result, it was relatively easy until the whole graduating thing was thrown into the mix.

I know I am a good leader. I do my best to make decisions for the benefit of the chapter, and I have made sacrifices to better the chapter. One challenge as a senior member of the chapter is making sure there are other members who are ready to step into leadership positions after we leave. Younger members have to be polished so they can be ready to take on these larger roles. Throughout the past year, many of our members have matured and are fully capable of leading this chapter to success after our graduating class has moved on. They have recognized fraternity life isn't just what you see in the movies. Yes, we still hold social events and have tremendous amounts of fun, but we also get down to business raising money for our chapter and national philanthropy.

Every day the reality sets in a little more that next year I will not be returning in the fall to start another year as an active member of my fraternity. This frightens and excites me at the same

time. I am ready to embark on the next step of my life, but I am not ready to give up all the fun, laughter, shenanigans, and camaraderie I have with my brothers as an active member. Currently, our chapter does not have a strong alumni base. We see our alumni once a year usually at our annual Thanksgiving dinner. I do not want that to be my reality, so I have been working on trying to cultivate a stronger alumni base so the alumni and active members can have stronger communication and relationships.

Overall, my struggles this year have been nothing compared to the successes I have achieved. I have grown closer to my brothers over the past year. We have made large advances in our philanthropic work and relationships with other organizations. I can relate at least two successes to every struggle I have faced. With the unconditional support of my brothers, my struggles, as well as the struggles of other graduating seniors, are made easier, and I look forward to continuing my membership as an alumni.