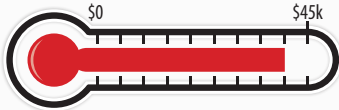


ALUMNI CONTRIBUTIONS

**Our 2018-19 Giving Year
Began July 1, 2018 –
Help Us Reach Our Goal!**



The 2018-19 giving year for annual contributions to RSE is coming to an end with about a month left. So far, we have amassed \$36,377 from 108 donors! Our goal this year is \$45,000 in total alumni contributions. We are so close but we still need your help!

Please visit www.rse.org and make your gift online or send a check to:

The Rensselaer Society
of Engineers
PO Box 7007
Albert Lea, MN 56007-8007

PHOTOS NEEDED

Restoration of Stolen Barker Trophy

The 1940s Barker Trophy that sat on the Trophy Hall table was stolen in 1977. We have recovered some pieces of it and are considering restoring it. In order to get an estimate, we need photographs of the trophy. Can you look through your old pictures to see if you can help? Contact **Mark A. Vince '75** mvss396@gmail.com



InteRSEction



The Rensselaer Society of Engineers • Troy, N.Y. • www.rse.org

June 2019

TIME FOR AN UPDATE

“A newsletter by any other name would ...”

You may have noticed the new name for the newsletter. After review by the Communications Committee, we thought it was time for a change. After careful consideration, we have selected “InteRSEction” as the new name for the newsletter. The word intersection combines several key strengths of RSE that are important to all of us. Our

experiences at RSE, the Clubhouse, the friendships, and our academic foundation are all part of the “intersection” we have with RSE in our personal and professional lives. We hope “InteRSEction” will remain a place where you can keep in touch with RSE. Enjoy.

JUNIOR MEMBER UPDATES

Junior Member Philanthropy Is Going Strong

This semester, RPI has emphasized how important philanthropy is to build a stronger community. As a result, this spring season has been filled to the brim with events. As the current philanthropy chair, **Zachary Alexander '21**, has galvanized brothers through events with Habitat for Humanity, a partnership with a local organization, Unity House, and many other philanthropy events held by other Greek organizations around campus. Towards the end of this spring term, we look forward to RPI's Relay for Life, at which last year the junior members raised the greatest donations for the event.

JT Swetman '20: Setting the Example for the Junior Members and the Whole Society

JT Swetman '20 is a great example of a brother who dedicates his efforts towards the betterment of RSE. James has consistently served as a member on the executive committee since becoming a JM. First as the secretary, followed by a semester as member at large, and now beginning his two terms as table manager, JT has solidified his role as a valuable member during this reinstatement period.



SOCIETY UPDATE

Spring 2019 Society Meeting

It wasn't a warm day in Troy on April 13th for the Society meeting, but at 8am, the two boards got directly to work. The Junior Membership has been having a reasonably successful year navigating their suspension. As predicted, the loss of a pledge class is having a significantly negative impact on RSE JM operations.

After reviewing the various officer reports the team separated into our Task Forces. **Cary Nadel '77**, **Eric John '95** joined our Live-In Advisor Pete Liporace to work on the Reinstatement Plan. The Dean of Students Office currently requires that RSE completes a substantial document to apply for re-admission to Greek life. Current RSE JM President **Jack Graham '21** has led the JM EComm in separating this daunting task into smaller sections. At this time, we have made our initial submission, with inevitable revisions expected before we are approved in the fall.

While that group was working, **Don Thoma '83** joined Rush Chairman **Jake Hodgson '20** and the JM team to continue working on the Rush Plan for Fall '19. As RSE has continued to develop our core values, this has impacted the Rush goals. RSE will continue to recruit students of character, in accordance with the school guidelines. In the current RPI climate with the upcoming recommendations of the Greek Life Task Force and the implementation of the ARCH program, creating a viable Rush plan is more complicated than ever before. After reviewing and implementing all RPI expectations, the JM's have already scheduled the "Phired Up" recruitment education program to aid the brotherhood with recruiting future members.

As we used to say, Rush is the most important house function. However, over the last few years the Board of Trustees has been taking a closer look at our New Member Education Program. Working on this is **Mark Vince '75**, **Mark Anderson '79**, and **Will Furst '19**. Our



Charlie Adkins '95 Leading the 2019 Spring Society Meeting



The 2019 Spring Society Meeting

current suspension has given us the time to spend on examining the entire program from a global view. Every event in the program has been directly linked to RSE's core values, is fully documented, and is designed to create a smooth path for the recruits. The Society Meeting began and 3 PM in the Living Room, and was a positive conclusion to the weekend. The Junior Membership is working diligently to return to a recognized status for the Fall Semester, and it is our responsibility as Alumni to aid them. There are multiple ways to help RSE, so please consider contacting us to assist.

The Fall '19 meeting will be on September 28th, 2019 at our House. There will be a small ceremony to recognize our home's 95th year of supporting our Members. Please consider joining us for a productive and focused weekend.

Let me know if you have any questions at adkinschaz@gmail.com or at (847) 989-4424.

TSIMS.

Charlie Adkins '94
Real Estate Officer

QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS (QCD)

Donating to the RSE Foundation using a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)

An interested RSE alumnus recently provided us with some insight about Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) given the impact of the new federal tax laws on deductions, charitable giving, and required minimum distributions (RMD) from IRAs (and similar deferred accounts). With the important caveat that the following is not tax advice and every situation is different, we wanted to pass this information along.

In 2018, the IRS rules changed significantly including raising the standard deduction to \$12,000 for single filers and \$24,000 for married couples filing jointly. In some cases, filers find that foregoing itemizing deductions and taking the standard deduction is a better option.

Without itemizing, it is generally not possible to realize a deduction for charitable contributions to organizations such as The RSE Foundation, a recognized 501 (c) (3) organization.

We have excerpted the following text from a Fidelity Investment web page for some explanatory information: <https://www.fidelity.com/learning-center/personal-finance/retirement/qcds-the-basics>

"If you are age 70½ or older, IRS rules require you to take required minimum distributions (RMDs) each year from your tax-deferred retirement accounts. This additional taxable income may push you into a higher tax bracket and may also reduce your eligibility for certain tax credits

and deductions. To eliminate or reduce the impact of RMD income, charitably inclined investors may want to consider making a QCD.

A QCD is a direct transfer of funds from an IRA custodian, payable to a qualified charity (such as The RSE Foundation), as described in the QCD provision in the Internal Revenue Code. Amounts distributed as a QCD can be counted toward satisfying your RMD for the year, up to \$100,000, and can also be excluded from your taxable income. This is not the case with a regular withdrawal from an IRA, even if you use the money to make a charitable contribution later on. In this scenario, the funds would be counted as taxable income even if you later offset that income with the charitable contribution deduction.

Why is this distinction important? If you take the RMD as income, instead of as a QCD, your RMD will count as taxable income. Having higher taxable income can directly impact your eligibility for certain deductions and credits. For example, your taxable income helps determine the amount of your Social Security benefits that are subject to taxes. Keeping your taxable income level lower may also help reduce your potential exposure to the Medicare surtax."

If a QCD is a viable option for you, please consider donating to The RSE Foundation, Inc. Feel free to contact **Mark Vince '75** at mvss396@gmail.com if you have any questions.

As with all tax related matters, please consult with your tax advisor for specific advice related to your tax situation.

SCHOLARSHIP DRIVE UPDATE

RSE Foundation Scholarships Update

The RSE Foundation made a special appeal in our December 2018 letter with the specific goal of growing the value of individual scholarships. We are pleased to announce that, through your generosity, our alumni have raised more than \$5000.

The RSE Foundation announced the schedule for scholarship applications during the Spring 2019 Society meeting in Troy. The Foundation works closely with the Junior Member President to facilitate



Eric John '95 Explaining the RSE Foundation Scholarship program at the 2019 Spring Society Meeting

applications for our five scholarships. The awardees will be announced in the Fall, during the Society meeting.

UPCOMING EVENT

Mark Your Calendars! RSE Strategic Retreat Planned for July.

During the summer of 2017, RSE held a Strategic Retreat in the NYC area. The purpose of this first retreat was to address some of the high level concerns facing our organization. As a result of that retreat, RSE has been more focused on a long-term perspective these last 18 months. One of the best results of the retreat was our ability to interact with many Junior Members, and work towards achieving common goals.

One of RSE's struggles is the fact that our JM Leadership team completely changes every three years. While many of us can testify that the three years we lived at 1501 Sage seems to have lasted a long time, from the viewpoint of a 153 year old organization that's pretty rapid turnover. So, we are going to have another retreat in Newark, NJ this summer, the weekend of **July 19-21st, 2019**. RSE will be hosting the JM leadership, and reserving rooms for Society Members to book.

This retreat will be focused on returning the Junior Membership

to active status in the RPI community, preparing for our next rush, and finalizing the planning for our new member education program. I encourage all Society Members to attend this event – especially if your JM experiences involved rush or plugging.

The retreat will be held at the Springhill Suites at Newark Liberty International Airport. There is a block of rooms available for Society members to reserve. I encourage members to attend, please contact me for the specific information. RSE has to commit for the rooms by June 1st, 2019. You can reach me at adkinschaz@gmail.com or at (847) 989-4424. We're hoping to get a solid representation of alumni.

TSIMS.

Charlie Adkins '94
Real Estate Officer

JUNIOR MEMBER WINTER 2018 ELECTIONS RESULTS

The RSE Junior Members have elected new members to the Executive Committee (E Comm), as well as a number of other positions.

Secretary **Leo Henriquez '21** reports that the current officers are:

President: **Jack Graham '21** - Houston, TX

Vice President: **Dylan Starace '21** - Floral Park, NY

Secretary: **Leo Henriquez '21** - Bronx, NY

Treasurer: **JJ Stadler '20** - Harvard, MA

Table Manager: **JT Swetman '20** - Cranford, NJ

House Manager: **Isaiah Stanley '19** - Carson, CA

New Member Educator: **Will Furst '19** - Commack, NY

Risk Manager: **J.C Zweier '18** - Glen Mills, PA

Rush Chairman: **Jake Hodgson '20** - Bend, OR

Assistant House Manager: **Zack Alexander '21** - Wurstboro NY

Sports Chair: **Will Zieman '20** - Ridgefield, CT

Scholarship Chairman: **Nick Corraza '19** - Montville, NJ

Social Chairman: **Jake Hodgson '20** - Commack, NY

Assistant Social Chairman: **Francisco Braschi '21** - Boca Raton, FL

Philanthropy Chairman: **Zack Alexander '21** - Wurstboro NY

Chaplin: **J.C Zweier '18** - Glen Mills, PA

Historian: **Zack Alexander '21** - Wurstboro NY

Alumni Relations Chairman: **Nick Corraza '19** - Montville, NJ

ALUMNI REUNION

Coolies Invade Las Vegas for a Reunion

In September 1966, **Wayne Coleman** and **Otto Zamek** met in Cary 3, and a year later **Bart Guttag** and **Chuck Phelps** arrived at Hall Hall. In spring 1967, Coleman and Zamek rushed RSE becoming Coolies, and a year later Guttag and Phelps followed suit. Led by the spirit of Coleman's big brother, **Bob Briggs '68**, Coolies were RSE's social chairmen for at least six consecutive semesters in the late '60s, and the Coolies hosted many parties in the then undivided Coolie Room.

Old party habits die hard, and for some Coolies they still live. Bart instigated a 50-year Coolie reunion in Las Vegas March 11-15. For five days in Bart's well-stocked suite in Treasure Island, the four Coolies recalled tales of RSE while pretending their lives were still 21. **Otto** (Chem '70), **Bart** and **Chuck** (both Management '71) have been successfully retired for years while **Wayne** (Aero '70) is still an itinerant white-collar worker and musician in this gig economy.

The 150th Society Reunion in October 2016 with its huge turnout was fantastic, but five days together with former roommates was an experience they'll never forget. Pleasant memories of experiences in the house came flooding back, and while the four Coolies did debate Fox News vs. CNN, they put politics aside to thoroughly enjoy one another's company once again. The Coolies highly recommend similar reunions for all RSE brothers.



Coolies pictured from left to right:
**Otto Zamek '70, Chuck Phelps '71,
Wayne Coleman '70, and Bart Guttag '71.**

THE MISSION OF RSE

Over the past year, the Trustees have been discussing and finalizing the revised Mission and Vision Statement of the Society. RSE continues to evolve during its 150 years of existence and we felt it is important for us

to ensure the Mission and Vision Statements provide us with a unifying context for the future. Here is a summary of the revised Mission and Vision Statements for the Society.

PROPOSED MISSION STATEMENT

“Engage and connect all Members of The Rensselaer Society of Engineers collaboratively in a meaningful, lifelong brotherhood - to perpetuate our independent Society, by instilling our core values of service, leadership, personal growth, and the pursuit of knowledge.”

For those of you who have created mission statements before, they can be a mind-numbing task where every word is carefully chosen, (by a group of people!) to summarize the most important characteristics of the organization. The RSE mission statement is no different. Here is some of the explanation why the language was chosen.

The Society is a forum for “engaging” our members, both undergraduate and alumni, through events, communications, etc. RSE is also a resource for “connecting” members to each other, possibly for the first time or as a return after a long time apart (i.e. the 150th Celebration, our proposed Networking Forum, the RSE Speaker

Series, etc.). The words “all Members of The Rensselaer Society of Engineers collaboratively” shows that we want to be inclusive of “all” members, JMs and alumni. The words “meaningful lifelong, brotherhood” speaks for itself and tells us what we are. RSE is not for the three plus years at RPI. RSE is for life. The words “independent Society” were thought to be very important to who we are at our core. We are the only “independent” fraternity at RPI (both financially and through governance) and this should be reflected in our Mission. We end the RSE Mission Statement with the thought of “instilling our core values of service, leadership, personal growth, and the pursuit of knowledge.” After much debate, we felt that these represent the key core values that encompass all of RSE and what it stands for. We feel that they are both specific enough to identify who we are and what we stand for, yet flexible enough to be expandable and open to interpretation in each category.

VISION STATEMENT

“Significantly contribute to academic, local, and long-term communities through a unified and vibrant Society.”

The Vision Statement represents the aspirational, global goal for RSE. The vision statement represents what our experiences at RSE translate to as we move beyond RPI. It is how we use these skills and experiences to build our careers and live our lives, with the ultimate aim of giving back to our communities.

As always, we would appreciate feedback on the work done on the Mission Statement. If you have any comments or would like to discuss, please feel free to contact me at tkeating53@comcast.net.

TSIMS,

Tom Keating

Society President

MEMBER RELATIONS UPDATE AND NETWORKING EVENT

First Ever RSE JM/Alumni Networking Forum Back On - Saturday, September 28, 2019

When you ask the alumni, “What is RSE’s most valuable asset?” You hear responses like the House, or the lifetime friendships, or the shared memories. Did you realize that RSE has over 800 living members and the website, rse.org, has the contact information on over 600 members? What a network we have!!

All of us alumni know that most successful job searches are the result of networking. The sad thing is that, we at RSE don’t make as much use of our powerful network as we could. The 150th Celebration, with over 200 participants, showed there are a lot people still connected to the House and those connections reach across generations.

Prior to the suspension, we were well on the way to holding the event in March of 2018. Due to the great effort by the JMs in working with the school to be reinstated, it looks like we will be able to hold the event to coincide with the RPI Reunion and Homecoming Weekend and the Fall 2019 Society and Trustees Meeting the weekend of 26-29 September 2019. We expect that the event will include an afternoon gathering followed by a reception and networking dinner prepared by RSE’s very own Chef Adam Foti. The event will be structured to give the opportunity for alumni to share their interests and career paths with other alumni and the Junior Members (JMs) and provide the better access to a much broader network. The event chairmen are **Nick Corazza ’19** and **Zach Alexander**

’21. They are using our alumni database to reach out to members in various majors, career fields and companies to ensure we get a good cross section of experiences at the event. They will also be updating the JM resume book that will provide background on the JMs, as well as their career interests.

The chairmen have put together an interesting program for the event

Draft Program for Saturday September 28, 2019 RSE Networking Event

4:30 PM - Arrive, Meet and Greet

5:00 PM - Group Networking Activities Structured Around Major And Career Path

6:15 PM - Break, Prepare for Dinner

6:30 PM - Dinner

7:15 PM - RSE History and Trivia Game

7:45 PM - Official Event End - Informal Networking

One of the key themes of the RSE strategy going forward is to develop a more significant networking program for all members. We will be sending out more details over the summer once we receive final approval from the school for the event. If you are interested in the event, please pre-register. If you have any suggestions on how we can develop this area more fully, please contact us at rse networking@gmail.com.





The Rensselaer Society of Engineers

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In this Issue of *InterSEction*:

- RSE Spring Society Meeting
- Foundation Scholarship Update
- Mission Vision Statement

ALUMNI REUNION

Update on the Greek Life Task Force and What It Means for RSE

As many of you know, last year RPI convened the Greek Life Task Force (GLTF). The purpose of the GLTF is to determine how to improve the long-term sustainability of the Greek system, move the Greek system to a community that promotes good citizenship, and find a way to keep the strong chapters strong and help the weaker chapters improve.

For more than 165 years, Greek Life at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute has played an important role in elevating the student experience: enriching student's lives, creating great resources for philanthropic causes, and dramatically accelerating the successful careers of Alumni. However Greek Life at RPI is showing signs of deterioration, similar to the problems that have impacted Greek Life at other universities. The school decided to convene the GLTF to help address the underlying causes of these problems before they have a tragic impact at RPI.

The GLTF consisted of a committee of school officials, students, alumni and alumnae and external experts whose charter was to review Greek Life at RPI and make recommendations on areas of improvement. The GLTF met on a regular basis throughout 2018 using facilitated campus discussion groups, convened external panels and provided community briefings on the progress of the GLTF. The GLTF proposed a set of recommendations to strengthen and protect the Greek community centered around four key areas: 1. Improving behavioral issues; 2. Addressing health and safety deficiencies; 3. Improving the financial viability of all chapters; and 4. Creating uniform and transparent measures of success:

1. Incorporate CLASS (Clustered Learning, Advocacy, and Support for Student) Goals and Practices into Greek Life
2. Strengthen Finances, and Improve Health, Safety and Behaviors
3. Establish Stronger Relationships through the Timing of Recruitment and Intake
4. Mitigate High Risk Behaviors, Alcohol and Substance Abuse
5. Integrate the Greek Life Commons and The Arch
6. Foster an Intentional Emphasis on Diversity and Inclusion
7. Develop a New Transparent Scorecard
8. Merge all Greek Life Agreements
9. Redefine the Student Judicial System
10. Build Trust, Leadership, Integrity and Accountability

The goal of these recommendations is to help every house and chapter have the tools to fulfill their stated missions and continue to instill the Greek values including a sense of family, service to the community, and leadership skills in its members. The final report has been presented to President Jackson and we expect to see the implementation of most, if not all, of these recommendations by RPI. A summary of the report and the full report can be found at the following link: <https://info.rpi.edu/greek-life-task-force>.



So, what does this mean to RSE? Since we are developing and executing our program to come off suspension, we have been implementing many of the recommendations already, including having a live-in advisor, updating our recruitment program and having an alcohol-free house. **The last area is important as it is the main reason for RSE's suspension. No Alcohol will be allowed in**

RSE, under any circumstances! Period! Even if you are an alumnus and are over 21!

One benefit of these recommendations is that it will provide a consistent framework for all Greek Life at RPI. However the shift of recruitment for incoming freshmen to the spring semester will have a significant impact. Since we missed the Fall 2018 rush, this will make it 18 months since we had new members join, putting pressure on the JMs for a quality rush when it happens. We are also evaluating the impact of integrating the Greek Life Commons and the Summer Arch, which could have a positive impact of allowing members to live-in during Arch.

Change is hard, but recent events at other universities have the potential impact of destroying the Greek system entirely if they occur at RPI. It is better that RSE embrace the changes and help mold them to reinforce the values of our Society and ensure that RSE will last another 150 years.