

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

AGENDA ITEM: 3 – D

DATE: April 3-4, 2024

SUBJECT

Student Organization Awards – USD

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

None

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

At the April 2024 Board of Regents meeting, the Board approves recommendations offered by each institution for the 2023 student organization award winners. The winners of these awards are announced at Board meetings throughout 2024. The University of South Dakota (USD) Student Organization Awards would be presented at the April 2024 BOR meeting in Vermillion.

2023 USD Award for Academic Excellence: Kappa Alpha Theta

The Kappa Alpha Theta sisterhood strives to empower their members to succeed scholastically and foster a love of learning. Kappa Alpha Theta achieved the top GPA out of all Greek houses on USD’s campus with a chapter average GPA of 3.557. They had 45 members receive a 4.0 GPA in the fall and another 45 members with a GPA of 3.5-3.99. Their chapter’s main academic programming comes from their Twin Star program which allows the younger members to receive academic guidance from someone who has been in their position before and knows what it takes to succeed. The chapter also provides Academic Development Plans to members who may be struggling academically after each semester. These plans hold members accountable for study hours, ensure they are meeting with the Academic Development Director, and provide a tangible plan to improve their grades.

2023 USD Award for Community Service: AWOL

The AWOL (Alternative Week of Off-Campus Learning) chapter of the University of South Dakota exemplifies community collaboration for students by providing various diverse Service-Learning opportunities. From the beginning of the academic year, which began with AWOL’s freshman orientation program Serve and Learn, AWOL participants have completed a total of 2,245.5 logged community service hours. AWOL programming has included 26 community partners in the surrounding Vermillion community as well as nationwide. Cultivating partnerships with Vermillion community partners is paramount for

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their program and home—and therefore AWOL does repeat and consistent programming with partners like United Way, Heikes Farms, and Habitat for Humanity.

2023 USD Award for Organizational Leadership: PAVE

The purpose of PAVE is to “promote awareness and voice empowerment” on campus by providing educational meetings and events that increase awareness of different topics related to sexual violence and empower their community to adopt a no-tolerance policy and culture of resilience. PAVE has effectively demonstrated student and community leadership in numerous ways this past 2023-2024 academic year. While initially holding a back-seat stance and passive approach to advocating for sexual assault prevention on campus, a structural reorganization of the executive team that occurred at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year welcomed new leaders with greater visions for the organization. The newly inducted executive team had the common goal of increasing PAVE’s presence on campus by growing inter-organization relationships, working more intimately with university employees, and starting new meeting and event traditions. Over the course of this year, our organization has found it extremely gratifying to be part of a bigger movement than themselves.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board recognizes the important role that student organizations play in the Regental system. Student organizations provide students the opportunity to connect with others who have similar interests as well as experience a sense of community, all of which increases the likelihood of successful college completion. They also provide students with opportunities for professional development by offering practical opportunities to hone skills, including those in leadership and communication.

ATTACHMENTS

None