



To Greek or not to Greek



EMILY MCKINLEY

Members of Theta Phi Alpha pose at the Greek Honors awards held at the end of the year.



SUBMITTED BY BEX HUNTER

Members of CAB bond at their fall retreat at Honey Haven Farms

Why I joined Greek life

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Leaving home, your parents and your friends to start a new chapter of your life is something that can be scary to some. Doing something different, joining something different and being something different than what you have been used to is exciting and nerve wracking all at the same time.

College is the time to break out of your shell and explore all the new things going into the new chapter adulthood has to offer. Whether that be joining a club, intramural sport or Greek life, there is something different for everyone.

I was that person, who came out of high school and wanted to be different and do something different than what was expected of me. So, I joined a sorority. Now by this time you might be thinking, “Yikes, why would you join Greek life?” This is the exact question that went through my head after I decided to go through recruitment with my roommate. All hesitation aside, it was a great decision.

Greek life does not subscribe to the bad stereotypes that you see in movies or hear from your parents or neighbors down the hall. Being Greek is so much more. It is commitment, community service, being a part of something bigger than yourself, helping others, leadership and acceptance.

Going through recruitment was probably one of my most awkward experiences due to the fact that I am an awkward person and hate talking about myself. The chapter that I fell in love with was the very last one I had visited and did not picture myself in it at all. Through fate, I found out my childhood babysitter had joined the sorority I was interested in. She introduced me to all of the sisters and I learned so much information about sororities that I never knew.

By then I was thinking that Greek life was not bad at all and I could actually see myself doing something I had never planned on doing when I got to AU. Flash forward to present day and joining my sorority three years ago was a good freshman decision.

Being involved in something that was practically centered around helping others is such a giving experience.

My philanthropy involves donating the necessities to live to those in rural Appalachia, inviting children of low income or less fortunate families to a summer camp and help those in need when it comes to living situations. Being involved in an organization that helps others is so rewarding and brings so much joy to me.

Throughout my entire Greek life experience, I have not only learned a lot about my chapter, Greek life as a whole and my sisters, but also about myself. Don't get me wrong, I am still an awkward person but I am not as awkward. Having 60 girls around me has helped bring me out of my shell and be the outgoing person I am today.

Greek life is not just about the community service, academics, or helping others. It is about being comfortable around everyone and feeling accepted.

I have went through my fair share of difficult times and having the shoulders of all my sisters to lean, has by far been such a rewarding feeling. If it were not for the support of my sister's, I would not be writing this article or even feature in the newspaper you are reading.

Never did I think that by joining Greek life I would gain future companions, my best friend, future bridesmaids, forever friends, and connections that will last a lifetime. The phrase “it's not four years, it's for life”, has some serious holding power when it comes to thinking of all the wonderful opportunities being involved has given me.

The future can be scary especially if you are trying to go out and do something different than what you are used to. My advice for you is whether you think it's for you or not, just try it. It does not hurt to take a step in a different direction and see if the things you are scared of or not sure about, are actually the right move for you. If you find it is not for you but something else is, at least you can say you tried and take a step in a different direction.

Doing as the Romans do

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In almost every college movie or television show one thing always stands out: Greek Life. While most shows and movies' depictions of Greek Life are not completely accurate, it still tends to give off the idea that you have to join a sorority or fraternity in order to be happy in college.

That is just not true, because when in Rome, you can find other things to do. Greek Life can be an amazing place to make lifelong friends and for some people, it is the perfect group. However, Greek Life may not be for you and that is okay too.

College is a lot of figuring out who you are and what you want to do with your life. In order to do that you have to try new experiences, meet new people, find the things that you like and the people you want to be around.

There are so many different organizations, clubs, departments, sports and religious groups on this campus for you to get involved in from your freshman to senior year.

You can find an accepting, close knit group of people in almost everything on campus, but the goal is to find the ones that are right for you.

For some people that could be finding a club that interests you on campus.

We have so many clubs on campus that range from volunteering to psychology.

You can make a political stance or sit and watch anime; there is something for everyone.

For some people, joining a sport is what is right for them.

There are obviously the varsity athletes who compete for the university, but there are also club sports and intramural sports that are open to everyone.

You could play typical sports like basketball and soccer, or try something new like quidditch.

A great way to get out there and involved if you are religious is to go to a church service. There are so many options on multiple

days of the week. I know a lot of people who have made their closest friends at all of the religious options.

Whether it be Sunday morning church, Sunday night mass, weeknight small groups, or Thursday nights at The Well, people enjoy their time there.

Personally, I found my group of people in the Campus Activities Board and my own major.

In CAB I get to plan events for the whole campus to attend and it is something that I love to do and have loved my whole time at Ashland. Not only do I get to do something I love, but I get to do it with people who I have become so close to.

I have laughed and cried in front of my CAB friends.

They have seen me at both my best and my worst.

They are the kind of people who I know will always have my back, cheer me up, give me advice, and I would always do the same for them.

My major involves a lot of work outside of class.

We have a newspaper, a television station, a radio station and I am involved in all three. I get experience for my future career and I get to do the things I love with people who also work hard and love what they do.

Those people have become some of my closest friends in my time here and I even found my best friend and roommate through getting involved within my own major.

Getting involved is the best way to find what makes you happy in your time here in college, so try everything you can.

Try clubs that interest you, get involved in your major, try a class at the rec center, play an intramural sport, get a job, apply for CAB, rush a sorority or fraternity, but know that not everything is going to be something you really like and stick with.

Do the things you like to do. Find the group of people who help you grow.

That may be Greek Life or it may be something else and that is okay.

The Collegian

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