

ANNUAL REPORT 2026



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The past year has been an exciting one for Pi Sigma Alpha, marked by new transitions as we continue to celebrate and support our members through programs focused on student research in political science, civic engagement, and professional development opportunities.

Pi Sigma Alpha welcomed five new chapters and inducted over 8,400 new members, reflecting the continued strength of Pi Sigma Alpha and our chapters and the dedication of faculty advisors who mentor and support their students. Chapters hosted numerous on-campus events supported by nearly \$100,000 in chapter grants.

For the first time, the National Student Research Conference was hosted by American University, and brought together over 225 undergraduates and master's students from across the country to present their work and participate in professional development events focused on graduate school and careers in political science. In addition, Pi Sigma Alpha awarded over \$20,000 in competitive scholarships supporting outstanding student members pursuing graduate school or interning in Washington, D.C.

This year also marked an important transition in Pi Sigma Alpha's longstanding commitment to undergraduate research. We are excited to announce that the Omicron Alpha chapter and the Department of Political Science at St. Olaf College have been selected to host the Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics for a three-year term beginning Fall 2026. St. Olaf College was selected following a competitive proposal process that highlighted its talented students, strong faculty commitment, and significant institutional support. Dr. Menevis Cilizoglu, Associate Professor of Political Science and chapter advisor for the Omicron Alpha chapter, will serve as Faculty Editor.

For the past six years, the Journal was led by the Sigma Upsilon chapter at Elon University. The Sigma Upsilon chapter and the Department of Political Science at Elon University have made a lasting contribution to Pi Sigma Alpha by expanding opportunities for undergraduate research and publication. We thank the entire team for their thoughtful and consistent leadership of the Undergraduate Journal of Politics and for building a strong foundation for its next host.

Looking ahead, Pi Sigma Alpha remains committed to celebrating academic excellence, fostering civic engagement, and promoting scholarship. Whether through national conferences, chapter activities, alumni networks, or opportunities to publish in the Undergraduate Journal of Politics, we continue to provide meaningful ways for members to grow as scholars and leaders.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the dedication of our chapter advisors, Council members, and students. We thank you for your commitment to Pi Sigma Alpha and look forward to building on this strong foundation in the year ahead.



Tanya Schwarz, PhD
Executive Director



Terri L. Towner, PhD
President

ABOUT PI SIGMA ALPHA

Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society, was founded in 1920 to promote political science and support student research. The organization is the premier honor society for students studying political science in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Pi Sigma Alpha inducts over 8,000 new student members each year and includes over 830 active campus chapters.

Through a range of programs, the Society celebrates excellence in, and provides support for, students studying political science and related fields (e.g. public policy, public administration, international relations).

MISSION & VALUES

Pi Sigma Alpha's mission is to recognize academic excellence by, and provide leadership opportunities for, undergraduate and graduate students in political science and related fields; to stimulate scholarship and interest in politics, government, and democracy; to encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion in the discipline; and to support curricular and extracurricular activities that promote dialogue and civic engagement.

Pi Sigma Alpha's values are:

- Diversity, pluralism, and inclusion
- Nonpartisanship
- Academic excellence
- A commitment to democratic principles
- Transparency and accountability

STRATEGIC GOALS

In 2023, Pi Sigma Alpha's Executive Committee developed a **strategic plan** for 2023-2027. Key goals from that plan include:

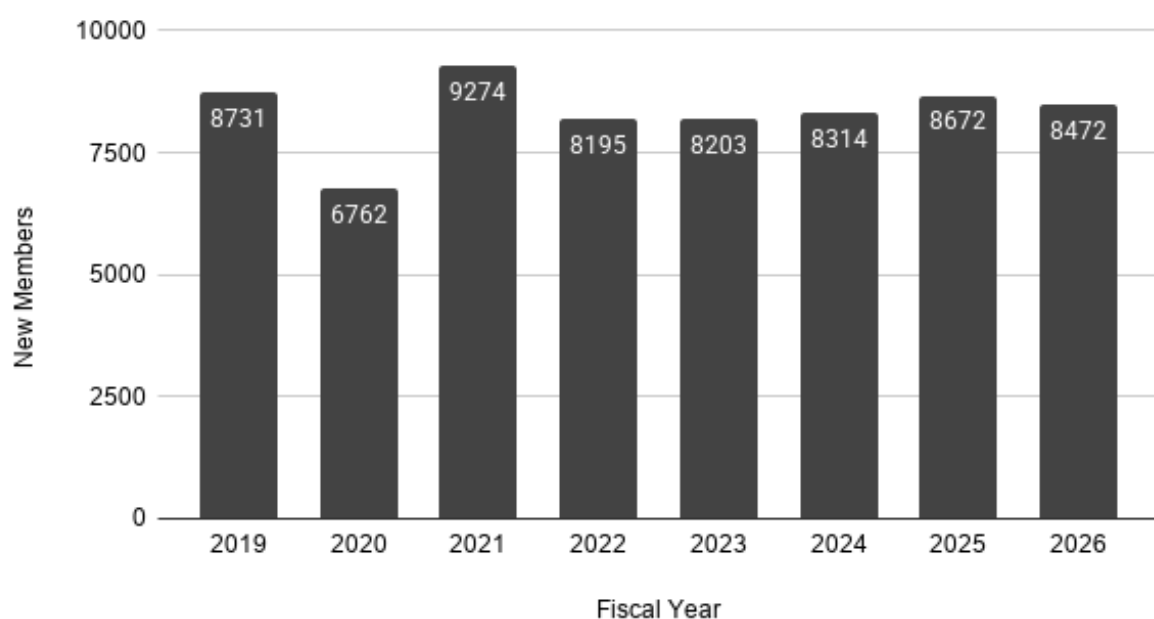
- Increase the number of new and reactivated chapters
- Increase outreach to Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs)
- Maintain or increase the number of new inductees annually
- Develop strategies to increase diversity at all levels of the organization
- Strengthen programming for and access to the Undergraduate Journal of Politics
- Expand programming for graduate students and alumni members
- Improve resources and support for chapter advisors
- Improve data collection and analysis for Pi Sigma Alpha programs
- Develop an investment strategy for the organization's portfolio

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in Pi Sigma Alpha is for a lifetime. Since 1920, the organization has inducted **over 300,000 members**.

One of Pi Sigma Alpha's strategic goals is to maintain or increase membership year-over-year. Over the past year, the organization saw a slight decline in membership from FY2025.

New Members by Fiscal Year



MEMBER BENEFITS

Pi Sigma Alpha members gain access to a wide range of member benefits, including:

- Access to scholarships, paper awards, and chapter grants
- Participation in the annual Pi Sigma Alpha National Student Research Conference
- Discounts on association memberships and professional development courses
- Eligibility to start as a GS-7 federal employee
- Graduation regalia to celebrate one's academic achievements

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Welcome our new chapters!

Dominican University
Mount Saint Mary's University
St. Ambrose University
University of Chicago
University of Maryland, Global Campus

CHAPTER & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT GRANTS

During the last fiscal year, Pi Sigma Alpha awarded close to \$100,000 to chapters via **Chapter Activity**, **Civic Engagement**, **Start-up**, and **Reactivation Grants**. Grant funds supported a range of activities, including Get Out the Vote drives, voter registration drives, election trivia competitions, debate watch parties, essay contests, speaker seminars, and induction ceremonies.



BEST CHAPTER AWARDS

Pi Sigma Alpha awards up to six **Best Chapter Awards** in each of four enrollment-level categories annually. The awards come with a \$500 cash prize for the chapter, and an additional cash prize of \$200 for the advisors of the winning chapters for their service. The selection is based on chapters' annual reports to the national office and other evidence of extraordinary levels of activity.



2025-26 AWARDEES

Undergraduate Enrollment < 5,000

LaGrange College (Alpha Alpha Nu)
Lee University (Alpha Alpha Gamma)
Rhodes College (Tau Delta)
Samford University (Psi Iota)
Sul Ross State University (Omicron Phi)
Texas Lutheran University (Alpha Mu Psi)

Undergraduate Enrollment 15,001-25,000

California State University, Fresno (Alpha Delta Beta)
Illinois State University (Kappa Sigma)
Oklahoma State University (Delta Kappa)
Stony Brook University (Eta Theta)
The University of Texas at El Paso (Epsilon Epsilon)
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Epsilon Xi)

Undergraduate Enrollment 5,001-15,000

Eastern Michigan University (Zeta Tau)
Nova Southeastern University (Alpha Lambda Rho)
Oakland University (Nu Omega)
Saginaw Valley State University (Alpha Eta Sigma)
University of Central Oklahoma (Sigma Mu)
Virginia State University (Kappa Psi)

Undergraduate Enrollment > 25,000

Florida International University (Tau Psi)
San José State University (Epsilon Iota)
The Pennsylvania State University (Beta Pi)
The University of Texas at Austin (Alpha)
University of California, Davis (Delta Upsilon)

CHAPTER ADVISOR AWARDS

Pi Sigma Alpha Faculty Chapter Advisors are critical to the success of the organization. Each year the National Office recognizes outstanding advisors through two awards: The **Best Chapter Advisor Award** and the **James Lengle Advisor Recognition Award**.

2025-26 AWARDEES

Best Chapter Advisors

Daniel Pedreira, Florida International University (Tau Rho)

Sheren Sanders, Virginia State University (Kappa Psi)

Kristin Trenholm-Horowitz, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Epsilon Xi)

John Tures, LaGrange College (Alpha Alpha Nu)



This year's **James Lengle Advisor Recognition Award** goes to **Gabriella Montinola of the Delta Upsilon chapter at the University of California, Davis**. The Lengle Award is intended to recognize advisors who have shown exceptional dedication to their local chapters and, through their service, have embodied the society's mission to stimulate scholarship and intellectual interest in political science.

Dr. Montinola has served as faculty advisor to UC Davis' Delta Upsilon chapter for the last 26 years. Her dedication to her students and Pi Sigma Alpha is exceptional and serves as a model for all other faculty.



STUDENT RESEARCH

A key component of Pi Sigma Alpha's mission is to support student research. To that end, the organization provides a range of programs celebrating and supporting student research.

NATIONAL STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Introduced in 2014, the **Pi Sigma Alpha National Student Research Conference** provides a venue for undergraduate and master's student members to present and receive feedback on their research, participate in professional development events, and network with fellow political science students, as well as industry professionals and faculty.

2026 CONFERENCE

Proposal Submissions	Student Presenters	Attendees	Number of Chapters	Number of Panels
296	212	397	125	50



UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL OF POLITICS

Founded in 2001, the ***Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics*** features groundbreaking research from undergraduate students on a range of topics related to political science and government. The Journal releases two issues per year - one in the fall and one in the spring.

During the 2025-26 year, the Journal was hosted at Elon University. Beginning in Fall 2026, the Journal will be hosted at St. Olaf College.



Fall 2025 Issue

"Confucius Institutes in Africa: How is China Enhancing its Soft Power on the Continent?"

Author: Aidan Krakowski, Creighton University

"The Impact of Power Sharing Agreements in State Legislatures: An Alaskan Case Study"

Author: Matthew Vigneau, American University

"The Effect of U.S. State Abortion Rates on Births, Abortions, and Compensating Behavior: Evidence Using a Quasi-Experimental Difference-in-Differences Analysis"

Author: Emily Wright, Georgia College & State University

"Judicial Candidness or Political Strategy? Divided Government in U.S. Court of Appeals"

Author: Matthew Zinno, University of Maryland

Spring 2026 Issue

"A Six-Year Stewardship of Political Science Undergraduate Research at the Twenty-Fifth Year of the *Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics*"

Author: Barış Kesgin and Laura Roselle, Elon University

"When Justice Falters: On the Inability of Transitional Justice to Deliver in South Sudan"

Author: E.E. Naber, William Jewell College

"Live and Let Tie: The Visual Aesthetics of Partisan Identity"

Author: Mallory Waligora, Oakland University

BEST UNDERGRADUATE CLASS PAPER AWARD

Since 1995, Pi Sigma Alpha has reviewed submissions of **class papers and honors theses** from student members and selected awardees based on the importance and relevance of the topic, originality of research, methodology, and overall quality of writing.

2026 AWARDEES



Samantha Powers, Northwestern University (Winner)
“The Jurisprudence of the Elite: Why the Supreme Court Favors the Powerful”



Sophia Rose Becker-Toro, Purdue University Northwest (Runner-up)
“Rising Numbers, Rising Risks: Population, Growth, and Natural Disasters”



Madison Harley, Winthrop University (Runner-up)
“Death by Override: Capital Sentencing and the Sixth Amendment in Alabama”



Christopher Runyon, Wabash College (Runner-up)
“The Supreme Court’s Green Light: State Legislatures’ Reaction to Jackson v. Dobbs”

Award Committee:

Terri L. Towner, Oakland University
Ransford F. Edwards, Jr., Nova Southeastern University
David Thomason, St. Edwards University

BEST UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESIS AWARD

2026 AWARDEES



Eleanor Peterson, Union College (Winner, Qualitative)
“The Unitary Executive Theory Realized: The Office of Legal Counsel on Privilege, Removal, and National Security”



Hunter Proulx, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (Winner, Quantitative)
“Françafrique Or Chinafrique? Political Alignment & Bilateral Trade Patterns In Francophone Africa”



Alexandra Torres, Trinity College (Runner-up, Qualitative)
“Se Buscan Cuerpos Frescos: Examining How Demand Sustains Sex Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation in Spain”



Logan Hage, Pennsylvania State University (Runner-up, Quantitative)
“Reducing Barriers to the Ballot: The Impact of Automatic Voter Registration on Youth Voter Turnout in the United States”

Award Committee:

Mary Manjikian, Regent University
Manuel DeLeon, Bethune-Cookman University
Jessica Velasco, Sul Ross State University
Jan Hardt, University of Central Oklahoma

LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pi Sigma Alpha provides a range of programs that support its members' leadership and professional development. In addition to the below, the Society **sponsors student and faculty awards** for political science associations across the country.

MCMANUS & PENNIMAN SCHOLARSHIPS

Pi Sigma Alpha awards five **Nancy McManus Washington Internship Scholarships** and five **Howard Penniman Scholarships for Graduate Study** annually to members participating in political science internship programs in Washington, DC or entering graduate school.



McManus Awardees:

Anastasia Kim, Carnegie Mellon University
Ethan Percival, University of California, Davis
Juan Jose Valencia Gallego, University of
Massachusetts, Amherst
Ganeev Virk, California State University, Fresno
Anuva Wardah, SUNY Stony Brook University

McManus Award Committee:

Seong C. Kang, New Mexico State University
Holley Hansen, Oklahoma State University
Daniel Pedreira, Florida International University

Penniman Awardees:

Grant Clark, Eastern Michigan University
Amaya Leiby, University of the Pacific
Raghav Ranawat, University of California, Berkeley
Hailey Toten, University of Texas at Austin
Joseph Weston, Auburn University

Penniman Award Committee:

Terri L. Towner, Oakland University
Yu Ouyang, Purdue University Northwest
Jason Rose, SUNY Stony Brook University

ALUMNI AWARD

The Pi Sigma Alpha Alumni Award recognizes alumni who have emerged as leaders through personal and professional achievements in political science and related fields. This year's award committee included Taeko Hiroi (President-Elect and Committee Chair), Dana M. Parke (the 2025 Alumni Award winner), Terri L. Towner (President), and Rob Alexander (Council Member).



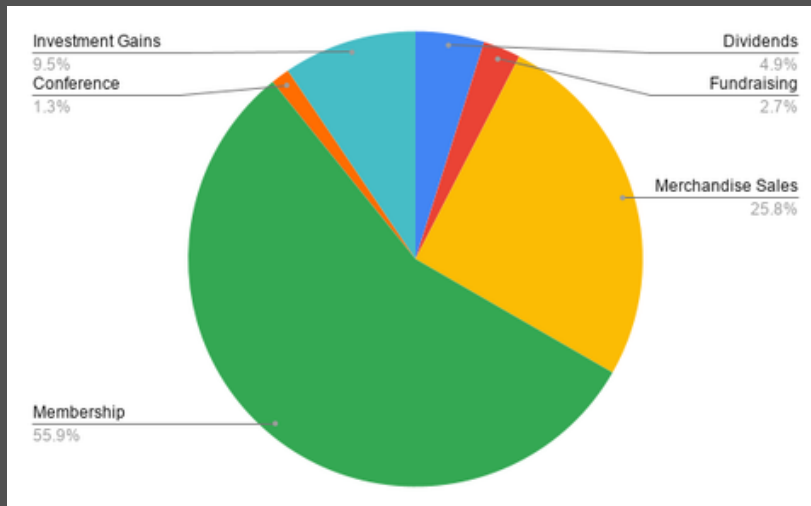
2026 Alumni Awardee, Dana M. Parke, MA (she/her), is a global/public health professional with over 11 years of experience at Henry Ford Health in Detroit, Michigan. Since 2021 she has been Program Manager for Clinical & Social Health Integration, focusing on social determinants of health screening and intervention among primary care patients. She has a passion for housing and works closely with community partners on initiatives including a home repair program to prevent falls among older adults, opening a clinic to serve LGBTQ+ young people experiencing housing insecurity, and volunteering on the Board of her local Housing Commission. For 7 years prior she worked in Henry Ford's Global Health Initiative department, leading capacity strengthening

programs globally, including in Haiti and India. She received her B.A. from Oakland University's Honors College in 2013 with a triple major in International Relations, African Studies, and French, where she also spent a semester in Senegal, was the Outreach Editor for the inaugural Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics, and remains an active alumna. In 2020, she obtained her M.A. in International Development, with specializations in Housing and Urban Planning, from the University of Denver, where she received the full-tuition Sié Fellowship and studied housing in South Africa. While in Denver, she also completed the Urban Leaders Fellowship and worked with the Colorado Division of Housing.

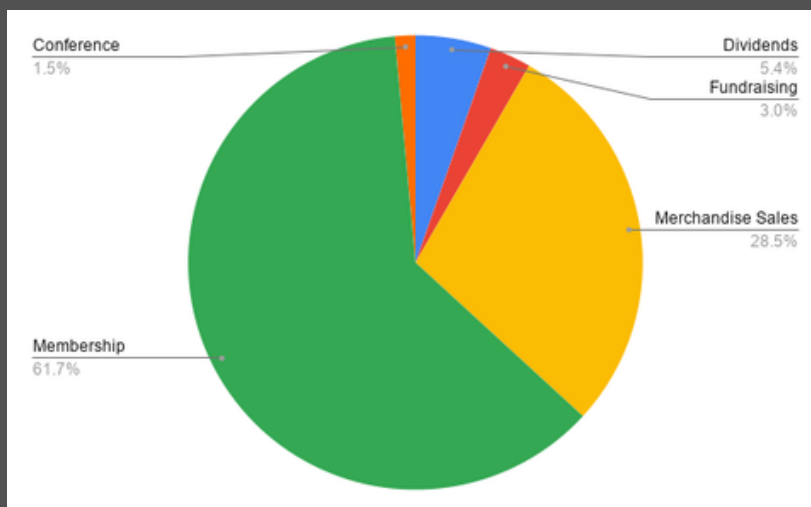
REVENUE & EXPENSES

FISCAL YEAR 2026 (ENDING JUNE 30, 2026)

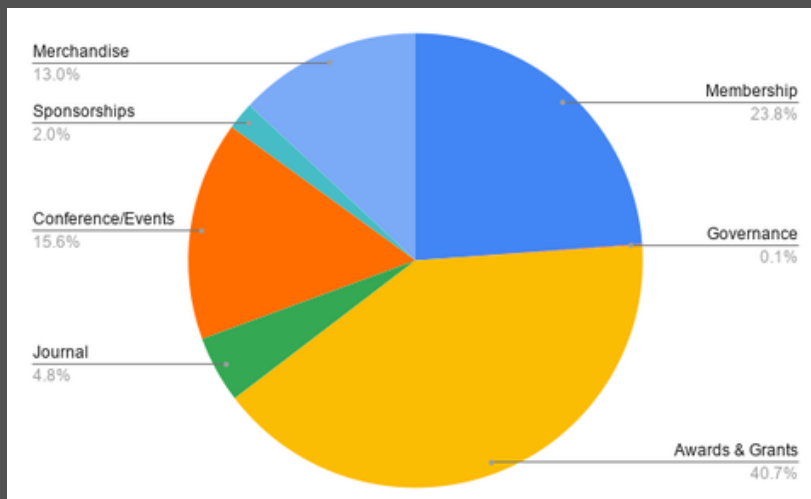
TOTAL REVENUE (WITH INVESTMENT GAINS) = \$532,007



TOTAL REVENUE = \$481,452



TOTAL EXPENSES = \$662,028



COUNCIL & STAFF

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Terri L. Towner, President (Oakland University)*
Taeko Hiroi, President Elect (The University of Texas at El Paso)*
Laurel Elder, Treasurer (Hartwick College)*
Diana Owen, Past President (Georgetown University)*
Zoe Oxley, Past President (Union College)*
Barış Kesgin, Journal Editor (Elon University)
Robert Alexander (Bowling Green State University)
Amy Below (California State University, East Bay)*
Rosalee Clawson (Purdue University)
Sharron Herron-Williams (Southern University at Shreveport)
Alecia Hoffman (Alabama State University)
Dwayne Jengelley (Purdue University)*
Seong C. Kang (New Mexico State University)
Mary Manjikian (Regent University)
Paul Musgrave (Georgetown University Qatar)
Neil G. Ruiz (Pew Research Center)
Judith Russell (Columbia University)*
Clarissa Unger (Students Learn, Students Vote)
Everett A. Vieira III (California State University, Fresno)

*Executive Committee members

STAFF

Tanya Schwarz, Executive Director
Christine Addo, National Office Administrator