

# A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

## CHANCELLOR JACK HAWKINS, JR.

What do Eleanor Roosevelt, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Ronald Reagan, Steven Spielberg and Condoleezza Rice have in common? Answer: All are products of the Greek System at U.S. colleges and universities. Despite the millions of Greek alumni who have excelled in every field from medicine to entertainment to business to public service, it is fashionable nowadays to heap criticism upon U.S. fraternities and sororities.

Over the past year, events at venerable institutions such as Penn State, the University of Oklahoma, the University of Virginia and the University of Houston have shined the spotlight on the worst abuses of this system. Some commentators are even calling for the abolition of the Greek System.

From my vantage point as Chancellor of Troy University since 1989, **I have seen the best the Greek System has to offer, and I can state with certainty that TROY is better because of our Greeks.** Like any other University, we have been forced to impose sanctions upon some chapters, and one fraternity was banned outright, but the good far outweighs the negative.

The collective grade point average of our Greeks has topped the all-student body average every term since I arrived at TROY. **Over the last decade, our Greeks have logged far more than 250,000 service hours and raised more than \$800,000 for charity.** I am also proud that the vast majority of our Greek chapters practices diversity. Fourteen of our 20 fraternity and sorority chapters have integrated racially and initiated international students. This culture of inclusion evolved naturally—without the force or influence of University administration.

Most recently, **our Greek System won the Southeastern Interfraternity Council's Excellence in Outstanding Educational Programming Award** for our TroGent program, which introduces new fraternity members to topics such as academic success, sexual abuse awareness, drug and alcohol awareness, campus involvement and anti-hazing methods. And our Greek System is growing! Our fall term sorority rush set a record with 425 pledges. This growth is leading us to explore the feasibility of adding two new sororities.

My point to parents is this: While the Greek System is not right for every student, it is more than a group of social organizations. It is an excellent leadership training system that benefits many of our students.



Accepting the Southeastern Interfraternity Council's Excellence in Outstanding Educational Programming Award are (L to R) Jake Brown, Vice President of Recruitment and PR; Max Herman, President of IFC; Codi Scheider, Vice President of Administration; and Hayden Whittle, Vice President of Membership Development.

## Safety, student wellness remain key priorities

Our Division of Student Services is taking strides to ensure the safest campus in Alabama remains that way. One way to do this is with the use of student security officers on campus to supplement the efforts of our University Police force. This spring, we have added two student officers to our force to increase patrols in the evening hours. **In addition, we have added more lighting at strategic locations across campus to make traveling at night safer as well as additional closed-circuit television cameras** to monitor places frequented by students after business hours.

Our Peer Educator series presented more than 40 seminars last year on such topics as the dangers of alcohol and drug misuse and coping with stress. We believe these preventive measures are effective, and we are adding new topics and presenting new material on a variety of subjects each semester.

Our student wellness efforts will take a giant leap forward over the next few years as **we are planning to break ground on a new student recreation center.** Once completed, this center will offer exercise rooms, weight-training facilities and areas for indoor sports. With the percentage of U.S. college students classified as overweight rising from 27 percent in 2006 to over 35 percent in 2015, we must do all we can to encourage healthier lifestyles. The old "freshman





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15” rule of gaining weight at college due to poor eating habits does not have to be the norm. That’s why Trojan Dining offers healthier, lower-calorie options at every meal.

## Student debt: A word of caution for parents

America’s college students have entered a new era of debt. When I began college in the 1960s, my costs for my first semester totaled about \$1,000. That will hardly buy books today. **It’s no wonder the average U.S. student graduates with an average debt load of \$30,000** and 54 percent of graduates have incurred debt to pay for their diplomas. For the first time in history, student debt—now topping \$1.2 trillion—exceeds credit card debt. And Alabama ranks 12 in the nation in average student debt at \$29,000.



The good news is you can take positive steps to help ease the burden without having to break your bank account. Talk to your student about wise money management. Help them set up a budget, and encourage them to live within it. To this end, I am encouraging our student services team to develop personal finance seminars for our students. Forming good money management habits will serve your student long after he or she leaves TROY. I should add we are doing all we can to keep TROY’s tuition rate competitive with other Alabama universities.

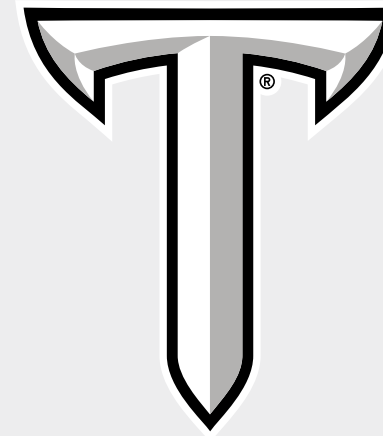
## TROY= value + values

Troy University is a good value for your tuition dollar, and we have been for a long time. That’s why the Princeton Review has named TROY to its list of “Best Value” universities in the Southeast for 11 years running. But TROY offers more than value—we **take pride in our efforts to instill the values in our students that everyone can agree are beneficial.** We call it “The Trojan Way,” and it stresses civility, personal responsibility, proper communication and proper dress. We hope our students leave TROY with more than a diploma. We want them to be prepared for success in whatever field they choose. In an era when college graduates can look forward to holding more than 12 jobs in his or her lifetime, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the lessons your student learns outside the classroom may be almost as important as coursework!

In closing, as another academic year draws to a close, my pledge is that we will continue to work hard every day on behalf of your student’s education. Thank you for entrusting your student to the dedicated faculty and staff at Troy University!

Sincerely,

Jack Hawkins, Jr., Ph.D.  
Chancellor



## A TROY license plate is a good investment

Alabama residents have the opportunity to invest in the future of Troy University through the purchase of an automobile license plate. Sales of TROY license plates fund our Trojan Pride Scholarship, which provides \$750 to defray expenses of students studying abroad and also provides financial support to students in need. The gift of \$50 is tax-deductible, and \$48 goes to scholarships. If you buy the tag for your student’s vehicle, we also waive the campus parking fee. Please join the over 7,000 other Trojans who support our University through the car tag program.



## We want your feedback!

Please let us know what you think of this letter to parents and if there are specific issues you would like to see addressed in an upcoming letter. Please send all comments to [officeofthechancellor@troy.edu](mailto:officeofthechancellor@troy.edu).



Students from around the globe receive top-notch educations and form lasting relationships at Troy University.

**The TROYAN WAY**  
is to

**B** BE respectful  
**S** SPEAK appropriately  
**D** DRESS properly  
**B** BEHAVE as a responsible, kind person  
**A** ADHERE to applicable laws & policies