

The OSU Alumni Association was made aware of Kappa Sigma's decision to disengage with Oklahoma State's most treasured tradition on Tuesday afternoon, following the organization's communication via Twitter. While we are disappointed they are choosing not to participate in the Homecoming house decoration competition, we respect their decision and will work with them to participate in other Homecoming activities such as the Harvest Carnival and Sea of Orange Parade should they choose to do so.

Further, we look forward to discussing their future support of this tradition as we believe the events and activities encompassing "America's Greatest Homecoming Celebration" distinguish OSU among its peers and embody the Cowboy culture that makes us so proud. While many universities host a homecoming event, no other university in the country has a celebration quite like Oklahoma State's.

As our most time-honored tradition, the Alumni Association has worked tirelessly to ensure we safeguard Homecoming, while ensuring our students, who make it all possible, have the right structure and resources to successfully organize these incredible events.

Over the years, the Alumni Association has implemented a number of policies to ensure the house decoration competition does not overburden our students, in terms of both time and resources. These policies have reduced the size of the house decorations and the number of moving parts used within them.

Specifically, in 2013, house decorations were limited to no more than eight moving parts and could not exceed 26,000 cubic feet in size. In 2014, the limitation was changed to six moving parts and no more 20,000 cubic feet in size. Finally, in 2016, the most-recent reduction was made to 16,000 cubic feet – an overall decrease of nearly 40% in size.

Further, the Alumni Association has implemented policies to ensure student organizations do not feel the pressure to grow and increase the financial investment in the house decorations as well. Since 2015, each participating Greek organization has been limited to spending \$6,500 on their house decorations. This equates to \$13,000 for a sorority/fraternity pair for one house decoration.

The Alumni Association recognizes the financial commitment Greek organizations have for house decorations and formed the Homecoming & Student Programs Endowment in 2010 to help address these needs. The endowment has surpassed \$1 million, and since 2013, the Alumni Association has been able to make contributions to each Greek organization with the interest earned to help offset their cost. Those contributions started as \$1,500/pair in 2013 and have increased annually to \$3,090/pair in 2018, or roughly 24% of the limit of a house decoration cost. The Alumni Association is focused on growing the endowment to ensure the student costs associated with Homecoming are eventually fully subsidized.

To monitor spending and policy compliance, Greek pairs submit a budget of all Homecoming expenses weekly to the Alumni Association and daily during the week of Homecoming. Their final budget is turned in to us at 10 p.m. the night before Walkaround. Budgets that exceed the spending limit result in a 5% loss of points toward the overall house decoration score.

Homecoming rules and regulations are managed by the Alumni Association to ensure a fair competition and limit any burden put on participating student organizations. We survey all Homecoming student directors annually and take their feedback into consideration when making changes to rules and regulations, which are enforced with the students' interests as our top priority.

Philanthropic efforts are also an important part of "America's Greatest Homecoming Celebration." The Harvest Carnival serves as the primary philanthropy for the celebration through its canned food collection benefiting Harvest II. Donations from all of the student organizations that participate in Harvest Carnival coupled with those donated by attendees have resulted in more than 4,000 canned good donations annually supporting our local community.

Discussions have already begun for OSU's 100th Homecoming celebration in 2020. We view Homecoming as OSU's greatest tradition – one that is loved by students and alumni alike. We believe Homecoming provides a number of leadership and collaboration opportunities for all students who participate in its contests, and we're committed to working with everyone involved to ensure the celebration is a positive part of the OSU student experience that lasts forever.