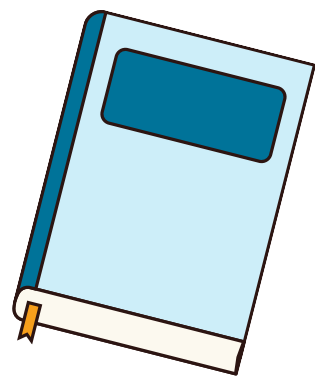


# PROMOTING GROUP BONDING AT LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY

## Alternatives to Hazing

SOME STUDENTS WHO HAZE CONTEND THAT HAZING RESULTS IN POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR:

- THE GROUP (E.G., INCREASED CLOSENESS)
- THE INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE HAZED (E.G., PERSONAL GROWTH FROM OVERCOMING CHALLENGES), AND
- INDIVIDUALS WHO ENGAGE IN HAZING (E.G., PRIDE IN CONTINUING TRADITIONS)



HOWEVER, HAZING RARELY—IF EVER—ACHIEVES THESE OUTCOMES WITHOUT CONTRIBUTING TO NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES SUCH AS PHYSICAL OR MENTAL DISTRESS.

AS A RESULT, THOSE CONSEQUENCES CAN UNDERMINE THE SUPPOSED POSITIVE GOALS OF HAZING. BY CONTRAST, NON-HAZING ACTIVITIES EXIST THAT DO ACHIEVE THE POSITIVE OUTCOMES WHILE AVOIDING THE RISKS OF HAZING.

### CONSIDER THIS PERSPECTIVE

LET'S SAY YOU BELIEVED THERE WERE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FROM HAZING IN YOUR ORGANIZATION. NOW IMAGINE THAT YOU HAVE GRADUATED AND ARE IN YOUR FIRST JOB AS A SALES REPRESENTATIVE FOR A MAJOR CORPORATION. AT A STAFF MEETING, YOUR NEW BOSS ASKS FOR YOUR SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE FUNCTIONING OF THE SALES TEAM. WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST?

- WOULD THE STRATEGIES YOU EXPERIENCED JOINING AN ORGANIZATION OR TEAM AT LONGWOOD BE SOMETHING YOU WOULD BE PROUD TO SHARE? IF YOU HAD ONLY ENGAGED IN GROUP-BONDING ACTIVITIES THROUGH HAZING, YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF STUMPED BY THE REQUEST.
- WOULD YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE TELLING YOUR NEW BOSS THAT IN ORDER TO CREATE A STRONGER SENSE OF GROUP COHESION YOU SHOULD CONSIDER HAZING EVERYONE IN THE ORGANIZATION?
- WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER IF YOU COULD SUGGEST A SET OF CONSTRUCTIVE, GROUP-BUILDING STRATEGIES THAT YOU LEARNED AS A MEMBER OR LEADER OF A GROUP WHILE IN SCHOOL?

SOMETIMES ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAZE NEW MEMBERS ARE CONFUSED ABOUT HOW TO CHANGE THESE PRACTICES. OTHER TIMES, THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE SUPPOSED "BENEFITS" OF HAZING MIGHT RESIST THE CHANGE. THERE ARE MANY CREATIVE WAYS TO CHANGE FROM A HAZING TO A NON-HAZING ORGANIZATION AND THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE "BENEFITS" OF HAZING MAY BE MORE LIKELY TO CHANGE THEIR OPINION IF THEY CAN ENVISION AND PARTICIPATE IN SOME ALTERNATIVES TO HAZING.

ORGANIZATIONS AND TEAMS SHOULD DESIGN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES FOR NEW MEMBERS OR TEAMMATES THAT FOCUS ON THE MISSION, PURPOSE, AND FUNCTION OF THE ORGANIZATION OR TEAM. IF AN ACTIVITY DOESN'T REFLECT FAVORABLY ON THE REASON THE GROUP EXISTS THEN ANOTHER ACTIVITY SHOULD BE USED. COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION TO THE GROUP'S VALUES AND PURPOSES WILL COME FROM ACTUALLY ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE THOSE VALUES AND PURPOSES.

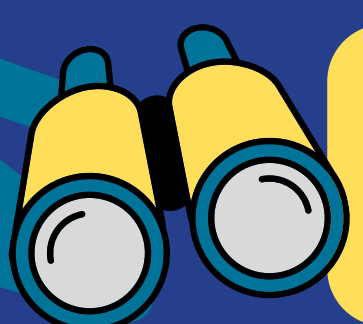


- SOME ACTIVITIES MAY SEEM MORE RELEVANT TO SOME GROUPS THAN OTHERS. FOR EXAMPLE, SOME ARE MORE RELEVANT TO FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES THAN OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.
- ACTIVITIES CANNOT INCLUDE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL BY NEW MEMBERS.
- TRADITIONS CAN BE CREATED AS WELL AS INHERITED. WHILE THE FIRST YEAR OF AN ACTIVITY DOESN'T CONSTITUTE A TRADITION, FUTURE MEMBERS WILL SEE IT THAT WAY.
- SOME GROUP ACTIVITIES CAN BE NON-HAZING OR HAZING, DEPENDING ON HOW THEY ARE DONE. FOR EXAMPLE, HAVING NEW MEMBERS DO SKITS CAN BE A NON-HAZING ACTIVITY. BUT NOT IF MEMBERS VERBALLY DEGRADE THE PERFORMERS OR THROW FOOD AT THEM. SIMILARLY, SCAVENGER HUNTS ARE NOT INHERENTLY FORMS OF HAZING (AS ANY DAY CAMP COUNSELOR CAN TELL YOU). BUT WHEN THE LIST INCLUDES THINGS THAT MUST BE STOLEN OR WOULD LIKELY BE HUMILIATING OR EMBARRASSING TO OBTAIN, THEN IT BECOMES HAZING.
- HAVING CURRENT MEMBERS PARTICIPATE ALONG WITH NEW MEMBERS IN CERTAIN ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS CLEANING THE GROUP'S PROPERTY, CAN SHIFT THE ACTIVITY FROM BEING HAZING (I.E., SERVITUDE) TO NON-HAZING.



## ALTERNATIVES TO HAZING

- HAVE THE MEMBERS WORK TOGETHER ON A COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT
- VISIT THE CLIMBING WALL OR A ROPES COURSE TO WORK ON GROUP COHESIVENESS AND COMMUNICATION
- WORK TOGETHER WITH ANOTHER GROUP TO PLAN A SOCIAL OR ATHLETIC EVENT
- HAVE NEW MEMBERS DISCUSS WEAKNESSES/CHALLENGES THAT THE GROUP HAS, SUCH AS POOR RECRUITMENT, APATHY, AND POOR SCHOLARSHIP, AND DEVELOP SOLUTIONS TO SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS WITH CURRENT GROUP MEMBERS
- PARTICIPATE IN INTRAMURAL SPORTS
- ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL/CAMPUS ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF THE TEAM/ORGANIZATION
- VISIT THE HIGH BRIDGE TRAIL TOGETHER FOR A WALK, RUN OR BIKE RIDE
- ENCOURAGE NEW MEMBERS TO GET INVOLVED IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEES AND/OR LEADERSHIP ROLES
- UTILIZE THE EQUIPMENT RENTALS FROM THE HEALTH AND FITNESS CENTER EX. DISC GOLF, BIKES, TENTS, ETC.
- INVITE CAMPUS/COMMUNITY/BUSINESS LEADERS INTO THE ORGANIZATION TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES
- TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CAMPUS ACADEMIC AND TUTORING SERVICES
- ATTEND A LANCER PRODUCTIONS EVENT TOGETHER
- PLAN A STUDY SESSION FOR ALL MEMBERS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION
- INVITE CAMPUS OR COMMUNITY EXPERTS TO DISCUSS TEST-TAKING SKILLS, STUDY METHODS, TIME MANAGEMENT, ETC.
- HOLD A MOVIE NIGHT FOR ALL MEMBERS
- INVITE AN OLDER MEMBER TO TALK ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION'S EARLY DAYS, ITS FOUNDING, SPECIAL TRADITIONS, AND PROMINENT FORMER MEMBERS
- ATTEND A LONGWOOD ATHLETICS EVENT TOGETHER. GO LANCERS!
- ASK YOUR COACH OR ORGANIZATION ADVISOR TO HOST TEAM BUILDING/ICE BREAKER ACTIVITIES
- USE CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR SEMINARS ON RESUME WRITING, JOB INTERVIEW SKILLS OR VARIOUS CAREERS
- VOLUNTEER AS A GROUP AT FACES FOOD PANTRY
- SIT (COMFORTABLY) IN A CIRCLE AND TALK (FREELY) BY CANDLELIGHT. CONSIDER PROVIDING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS OR HAVE MEMBERS SHARE WHAT THEY VALUE MOST ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION/TEAM
- HOST A TALENT SHOW WHERE MEMBERS FROM EACH YEAR PARTICIPATE
- ORGANIZE A 5K RUN/WALK WITH THE PROCEEDS GOING TO THE CHARITY OF YOUR CHOICE



### RESOURCES:

- SKORTON CENTER FOR HEALTH INITIATIVES AT CORNELL HEALTH
- UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS HAZING PREVENTION
- UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ALTERNATIVES TO HAZING
- STOPHAZING.ORG

