

District of Columbia State Council
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
121st Annual State Convention
District 4 Report

District 4 (Previously 5)

- Catholic University of America Council 9542
- Georgetown University Council 6375
- George Washington University Council 13242
- Patrick Cardinal O’Boyle Council 11302
- Saint John Paul II National Shrine Council 16773

Summary

Fraternal Year 2019-2020 has been largely successful for the college councils. Each of these councils maintains an active service program on their respective campuses, though this was obviously and significantly impacted by the dismissal of students as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Officers from each council expressed a desire to see greater representation from the State Council officers at their events and meetings. Increased communication between the councils and State leadership would benefit each of the councils, especially when planning Delta Church Drives, strongly supplementing recruitment practices already in place. Georgetown University Council 6375 in particular would like greater assistance from the State Council, given its financial circumstances and the effective absences of a chaplain and financial secretary; as long as these two particular issues remain unresolved, the council will likely struggle to tap into its full potential. Although CUA Council 9542 has had a successful year, it has yet to complete its Safe Environment requirements, precluding its designation as Star Council. GWU Council 13242 had another strong year of recruitment and programming. As part of an effort to increase cross-council cooperation, GW planned to resurrect the old “Knights Ball” charity dance, though this was impacted by the coronavirus. It is in a good position to attempt this next year. Being recently added to the district, I did not have a chance to visit O’Boyle Council 11302, though its Grand Knight presented a report to me that indicated it had and is on track again to have a successful fraternal year. The JPII Shrine council presents the single most pressing concern in District 4, as it lacks a fully outfitted officer corps and recruitment base. Unless the council is restructured, I do not expect it to meaningfully change course in the next fraternal year. District 4 continued to conduct degree exemplifications in the old form. The college councils have continued to find insurance promotion difficult to sell to students.

Awards Progress									District Membership	
		Month to Date			Year to Date					
	Quota	Gain	Loss	Net	Gain	Loss	Net	%	Total Membership 4/17/2020	YTD Change in Membership
MBR	27	1	0	1	49	0	49	181	632	36
INS	12	0	0	0	2	0	2	17		

These figures do not reflect O’Boyle Council’s inclusion in District 4

Catholic University of America Council 9542

Recruitment Efforts

This year, CUA Council recruited a total of 28 members, or 133% of their quota (21). CUA was the only college council to gain insurance members, with a total of two out of their quota of seven. The council saw a strong fall semester recruitment drive, which began with their tabling at a university-sponsored club/organization fair. Their chancellor visited the various male dormitories to advertise the council's presence. Through this initial push, 20 members were recruited. Six new members joined in November through tabling in the university student union building. CUA Council was planning a spring recruitment push that would incorporate a Delta Church Drive, though it was derailed by COVID-19.

Programming at a Glance

CUA Council remains strongly engaged with the campus community, and this is reflected in its programming. In November, the council conducted an event called "Knights giving," a Thanksgiving-style dinner at Green Hill, in which 40 participants took part. The council also organizes a rosary prayer group, Mass, and donut social for members of the university community on Monday evenings. Known as the Monday "Knight" Mass, it is well-attended by knights and non-knights alike. For its recently recruited brothers, the council planned "Overknight," the first official event for new members enrolled in the council. This begins with Mass, followed by a service event, communal dinner, and concludes with an evening of fellowship and fraternal activities. Thirty recently recruited brothers and prior members of the council joined together for this event.

Miscellaneous and District Deputy's Remarks

Programmatically and administratively, CUA Council benefits from the close and active participation of its Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Frank Donio. Grand Knight Joe Arbie and other members of the officer corps have expressed a willingness and desire to conduct the new, combined degree as a council moving forward. The council maintains good retention of its new members, encouraged by early participation in events, such as "Overknight." CUA Council is in position to have a successful fraternal year next year, and has conducted virtual elections for its new officer corps. Had the coronavirus not prevented the planned church drive, I believe CUA would have recruited 200% of its membership quota. I would encourage council leadership and the State Council Membership Director to coordinate a Delta Church Drive to coincide with the council's larger recruitment push during the fall semester. While the council remains strongly involved in campus life and sponsors several events, I believe that it would benefit by expanding its charitable reach into the larger Brookland neighborhood using the Faith in Action rubrics. The most pressing concern for CUA Council remains its incomplete status with regard to the Safe Environment training. Only the GK has so far completed his requirements. Over the past several months, I have been in touch with both GK Arbie and State Advocate Armstrong to address this issue, but as of this writing, the council program, community, and family directors have yet to take the training, which is a requirement for Star Council.

Awards Progress									Council Membership	
	Quota	Month to Date			Year to Date			%	Total Membership 4/17/2020	YTD Change in Membership
		Gain	Loss	Net	Gain	Loss	Net			
MBR	21	0	0	0	28	0	28	133	366	20
INS	7	0	0	0	2	0	2	29		

Georgetown University Council 6375

Recruitment Efforts

This year, Georgetown Council recruited a total of 10 members, exactly meeting their quota. However, council leadership expressed that recruitment efforts could have been stronger this year. Tabling during the university org. fair was the primary organized means of recruitment, combined with word-of-mouth advertising. This council has much promise, but it will take an active and sustained cooperation with the State Council leadership and the State Membership Director in particular if Georgetown is to tap into its full recruitment potential.

Programming at a Glance

Georgetown maintains a strong fraternal emphasis in its programming while also focusing on spirituality. For example, over this fraternal year, the council organized spiritual discussion dinners open to the university community. Alternating on Mondays and Tuesdays each week, council members prepared meals for participants before starting discussions on Ignatian spirituality, Eucharistic devotions, and other topics, usually led by a council member or member of Georgetown's Jesuit community. This year, the council was finally able to organize a weekly Eucharistic Adoration on campus, an initiative that had been discussed by the council and the Catholic campus ministry for some time. The council's charitable outreach beyond campus was manifest in its participation with the Grate Patrol ministry to the homeless and its partnership with Georgetown Right to Life's diaper drive. The Georgetown council was also strongly represented at this year's annual Cardinal O'Connor Conference on Life. Several of its officers, including GK DeGrado were active on the student executive board that organized the conference.

Miscellaneous and District Deputy's Remarks

Unlike the other college councils, Georgetown conducts its elections at the midpoint of the fraternal year, such that the council's leadership for the spring semester remains the same for the following academic year's fall semester when students return to campus. This arrangement has so far worked well for the council, and officers describe it as a way of maintaining institutional continuity. Of all the college councils, Georgetown's would stand to benefit the most from an organized Delta Church Drive. GK DeGrado intended to organize a drive during the spring semester, though this was derailed by coronavirus. Council leadership has expressed a preference for conducting degree ceremonies in the old form given the flexibility this provides for recruitment.

There remain issues that Georgetown, working with State leadership, must address before the council can take full advantage of its position on a Catholic campus. One of the most pressing concerns regards the inactivity of their Financial Secretary, a situation that has compounded the financial stress experienced by the council. The council maintains a large number of inactive members on its books and also experiences difficulties collecting dues. The absence of the FS has prevented the council from adequately addressing these matters, either through the mailing of dues notices or initiating the member suspension process. GK DeGrado and IPGK Ryan Anderson have had to take on many of the responsibilities of the FS, but it is

evident that the council requires a dedicated and active FS who can devote his time to these matters. I have strongly advised council leadership to seek out a new FS. Unless and until the council addresses these financial issues, I do not believe the State Council should expect Georgetown to fully comply with its State Per Capita payments, especially if the council fails to attain Star Council designation.

For these reasons, it is critical that the Georgetown officers and State Council leadership work more closely together in future fraternal years. On the council’s part, I would like to see more consistent representation at the State Council’s business meetings. The State Membership Director should be proactive in contacting GK DeGrado some weeks in advance school’s start to plan a Delta Church Drive. This will necessitate coordination with the Catholic Campus Ministry; unfortunately for the council, their Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Stephen Fields has not been engaged during this fraternal year. I suggested the council leadership approach Fr. Fields to discuss his continued designation as chaplain. As part of the State Council’s outreach to Georgetown, I strongly suggest that the State Chaplain work with GK DeGrado to obtain a commitment from Fr. Fields and address whatever concerns he may have or otherwise help the council search for a new chaplain if need be. As seen at CUA, having a dedicated council chaplain on a Catholic campus is a major asset. Georgetown would clearly benefit from a similar arrangement, both administratively and from the standpoint of recruitment. Maintaining an active chaplain would help to further integrate the council into the campus’ Catholic student ministry, better enabling it to coordinate a church drive at one or all of Georgetown’s daily Sunday Masses. Greater communication and coordination between the council and State would benefit all.

Awards Progress									Council Membership	
	Quota	Month to Date			Year to Date					
		Gain	Loss	Net	Gain	Loss	Net	%	Total Membership 4/17/2020	YTD Change in Membership
MBR	10	0	0	0	10	0	10	100	152	7
INS	4	0	0	0	0	0	0			

George Washington University Council 13242

Recruitment Efforts

This year, GW Council recruited at total of 10 members, or 250% of their quota (4). The council continues to work closely with the GW Newman Catholic Student Center, where much of its recruitment efforts have been directed. The council has also advertised its presence on those Sundays when it has prepared pancake breakfasts at St. Stephen Martyr parish. GK Jared Bulla intended to organize a Delta Church Drive at the parish during the spring semester, though the dismissal of students prevented this. During this fraternal year, the council implemented a mentorship program, pairing recent recruits with older Knights so as to maintain engagement and promote retention, which has been a problem of previous years.

Programming at a Glance

GW Council has continued to work with the St. Stephen Martyr community to expand its charitable reach. It conducted a total of three pancake breakfasts, raising money for causes including disaster relief for those impacted by Hurricane Dorian, the Capitol Hill Pregnancy Center, homeless community outreach, and the RSVP sponsorship program for a seminarian and former member of the Council. This year, the council hosted the Annual Brian Adkins Memorial Football tournament and cookout, inviting the fellow DC college councils, as well as the University of Maryland Council. The council furthermore raised over \$1200 for its Coats for Kids drive, buying four dozen coats, as well as hats and gloves for kids and families living in the DC Family Emergency Shelter. The council sent a strong contingent to the March for Life, helping lead GW students in promoting a culture of life. Council rosaries and a reading group focused on Catholic Masculinity helped the council grow in faith. Unfortunately, the council’s planned signature event, the “College Knights Gala” scheduled for mid-April, was cancelled. While the proceeds of this new iteration of the old “Knight’s Ball” would have benefited a Catholic charity, the council has worked to incorporate new events instead, such as a Holy Week Blood Drive and virtual Consecration to St. Joseph.

Miscellaneous and District Deputy’s Remarks

GW Council is well-positioned to have another successful fraternal year. Like CUA, they have already chosen their officer corps for next year. The council continues to benefit from its collaboration with St. Stephen Martyr parish. This year, the council welcomed a new chaplain, Rev. Fr. Martino Choi, who, in his position as Newman Center chaplain, also regularly celebrates the 5:30pm Mass at the parish. Although he is often busy, Fr. Martino makes an effort to attend the council’s meetings and other events, such as its Friday Men’s Ministry reading groups. Located on a secular campus, much of the council’s recruitment efforts have been directed at the Newman Center; the council stands to benefit from an organized church drive at the parish’s Sunday Masses, especially since they are attended by many Catholic students who are not otherwise regulars at the Newman Center. I likewise encourage the State Membership Director to work with the council’s leadership to organize a Delta Church Drive early in the fall semester. The pastor of St. Stephen Martyr, Rev. Msgr. Paul Dudziak, has expressed that he is more than willing to allow the council to conduct recruitment efforts at his parish. As in recent years, the council has benefited from the delegation of responsibilities among its officer corps, which is reflected in its extensive programming and charitable community serve at GW, in Foggy Bottom, and elsewhere in DC.

Awards Progress									Council Membership	
	Quota	Month to Date			Year to Date			%	Total Membership 4/17/2020	YTD Change in Membership
		Gain	Loss	Net	Gain	Loss	Net			
MBR	4	0	0	0	10	0	10	250	68	7
INS	3	0	0	0	0	0	0			

Patrick Cardinal O'Boyle Council 11302

Overview

This year, O'Boyle Council recruited 16 members. Even though this fell short of their quota (23), the council had a successful year and their trajectory and programming indicate to me that the council would likely have reached its quota if not for the coronavirus epidemic. The strong programming and visible nature of the council at these events have served it well when it comes to recruitment. The council's Coats for Kids drive raised over \$6,000, with contributions from all four parishes in the area, supplemented by an additional fundraising event. The council's signature "NatsMass" cookouts raised \$1,200 for Saint Vincent de Paul and featured their first ever World Series NatsMass. During their support for the March for Life, the council worked with Saint Peter's to sponsor continuous overnight adoration leading up to the March, open to all members of the community. In January, six members took the Polar Plunge, donning their vintage top hats and chapeaus, to financially support DC Special Olympics. In total, the council has contributed over \$10,000 to charities and completed over 2,300 volunteer hours for Knights events and activities. If the council maintains its active service events, I am confident that it will have a strong fraternal year next year and be eligible for Star Council status.

Saint John Paul II National Shrine Council 16773

Recruitment Efforts

The council did not conduct any recruitment efforts of note.

Programming at a Glance

The council did not report any service events.

Miscellaneous and District Deputy's Remarks

The JP II Shrine council is in a difficult position. I had problems communicating with the council throughout the fraternal year. While it may intuitively seem to be well-situated to serve both the JP II Shrine and the St. John Paul II seminary, this arrangement actually complicates its recruitment efforts and hampers its attempts at programming. These two apparent pools of recruitment have failed to produce results, and for their own unique reasons. First, the regimented schedules and assignments of the seminarians do not lend themselves to active, consistent participation. Second, while the council may act as a recipient of various transfers, it struggles to find an organic base of recruitment at the Shrine itself, outside of a handful of employees and semi-regular visitors. This, in turn, has made it difficult for the council to fill important officer positions.

Council leadership has explained that it is difficult to schedule events and regular meetings due to the distances that members would have to travel to reach the Shrine. I would suspect online member prospects assigned to the council would experience the same problem, unless they live near the Shrine or attend Mass there or in the area.

The JP II Shrine council, in effect, has two competing identities, those of a seminary council and

a regular council. I believe a more viable alternative would be to establish a council at the seminary that is specifically run by and for seminarians. This would better enable its leadership to tailor meetings and programming to the schedules of seminarians. A strong council at the seminary would be in a better position to serve both the seminary itself and the Saint John Paul II National Shrine.

Awards Progress									Council Membership	
		Month to Date			Year to Date				Total Membership 4/17/2020	YTD Change in Membership
	Quota	Gain	Loss	Net	Gain	Loss	Net	%		
MBR	4	1	0	1	1	0	1	25	46	2
INS	3	0	0	0	0	0	0			

With fraternal regards,

SK Patrick Ambrogio, PGK
District Deputy #4