



Sisterhood within Agriculture

A sorority's sisterhood throughout college offers community, professionalism and service. Sigma Alpha members can gain this knowledge and experience with an agriculture emphasis.

Texas Tech is one out of four universities in Texas that have the sorority Sigma Alpha a part of student clubs and organizations. In May 1992, Sigma Alpha officially became an organization at Texas Tech.

Wanting an alternative to the Greek sororities, the Sigma Alpha website states that five women founded the first Sigma Alpha sorority in 1978 at the Ohio State University. Since the first sorority was founded, Sigma Alpha has become a national organization that consists of more than 80 chapters, and 7,000 women have been initiated into Sigma Alpha.

Emily Marler, senior in agricultural communications, is the current president of Texas Tech's chapter.

"Here at Texas Tech, our chapter focuses on helping our girls make friendships and having fun while in college, but also making connections with the professional agriculture world," Marler said.

She said the majority of the women who are currently in the sorority did not want to join a traditional Greek sorority, and they feel Sigma Alpha fits into their lifestyles better.

Former president of the Texas Tech chapter, Christi Chadwell, junior in agricultural communications, agreed with Marler.

"I was really interested in the fact that Sigma Alpha wasn't a Greek sorority, and that it didn't have a stereotype like a lot of the Greek sororities have," Chadwell said. "I thought it would be a really good way to be around girls who were also interested in developing themselves as leaders in agriculture."

Every month, the sorority is involved in or host different agriculture-related events, and its main focus is community service.

"Typically, we'll work at the Food Bank farm for a few hours on a Saturday," Chadwell explained. "We help them plant and harvest their crops. We've also helped build irrigation systems. We are what the Food Bank calls a 'hunger hero', because our sorority volunteers out there so much."

She said she enjoys doing community service and feels accomplished after completing a day of service.

"It's nice to know that we are helping someone else and making a difference in their day. As of the sorority, community service is important because it helps us be a part of the community," Chadwell said.

Danielle White, senior in agricultural communications, said a person can gain so much insight from participation in community service.

"Sigma Alpha benefits every time we do community service. It's a time to get our problems out of our system and spend time fixing others," White said.

Even though a big focus of the sorority is community service, Marler said they have fun events as well, such as social events, participating in intramural sports, and attending their brother fraternity's formals once a semester.

Marler and Chadwell agreed college students who decide to become a member of Sigma Alpha could benefit from being in the sorority.

"I have gained a lot good of friends and experiences by being a member of Sigma Alpha," Chadwell said. "Also, by being in the sorority I have had many different opportunities and experiences." **T**

Kate McDowell | Shamrock, Texas

