

Hazing in the News

Freshman Drowning During Fraternity Event, Idaho

September 1, 2012

University of Idaho freshman Preston W. Vorhauer, of Kamiah, a talented musician and avid outdoorsman, drowned on September 1, 2012, in Dworshak Reservoir. Preston, a Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity pledge, was reportedly with senior members of the fraternity in a 150-yard swim to an island. Before reaching the island, Preston yelled that he was turning back. Two fraternity members tried to keep Preston afloat but he slipped under. His body was recovered after a three hour search.

"Delayed Rush to Judgment"

Hank Nuwer, September 2012

Two weeks ago, Philip Dhanens and 1100 fellow first-year students and their parents enjoyed traditional welcoming ceremonies at Fresno State University.

Upperclassmen and staff assisted with move-ins into housing.

The school's food service people threw a big barbecue. And the fraternity Theta Chi began courting the new freshman males, hoping to attract members with their own members' good looks, nice guy rep and parties. Those were really all the chapter had going for it, according to one national Greek rating service. [Read full article.](#)

Fraternity Pledge Death, California

September 2, 2012

Fresno State University freshman Philip Dhanens, of Bakersfield, California, died Sunday after a Friday night party at the Theta Chi fraternity. Dhanens was a standout on his high school football team and prom king his senior year. Alcohol is believed to be a factor in his death, but the autopsy and toxicology results are pending. A Theta Chi member at one point that night put Dhanens in the fraternity house "sober up room," and later found him there unconscious. Both Fresno State and the Theta Chi national fraternity suspended the chapter on Saturday, before Dhanens' death. This is the second fraternity pledge death at Fresno State in seven years.

"What's the life of a dead fraternity pledge worth?"

Hank Nuwer, July 11, 2012

One thousand dollars. One thousand dollars per man was the penalty a Virginia court imposed on five Radford University students in the death of Tau Kappa Epsilon pledge Samuel Mason from alcohol poisoning. He was 20. Predictably, a sentence of two years for each of those men was suspended by that court. [Read full article.](#)

"Life-Threatening Hazing" Investigation, Arkansas

April 21, 2012

An Arkansas Tech University student and football player, Deshawn Scoggins, was hospitalized and is in serious condition resulting from hazing injuries inflicted while pledging the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. Scoggins is reportedly on life support, suffering from organ failure. The Fraternity is suspended pending the investigation.

Bid Night Pledge Death, Indiana

February 18, 2012

William Torrance, 19 years old, was found unresponsive after a bid night ceremony at the Delta Gamma Iota fraternity at Vincennes University. Alcohol is believed to be a factor, but the death remains under investigation.

Fraternity Suspended for Hazing, Florida

February 9, 2012

The University of Florida has suspended the Alpha Phi Alpha chapter after learning about a "serious physical hazing incident." The incident is under investigation, and the extent of injuries, if any, is unknown.

Phi Kappa Psi Chapter Suspended for Hazing, Ohio

February 2, 2012

The University of Dayton has suspended the Phi Kappa Psi chapter for one year following a fall hazing incident which involved forced consumption of excessive alcohol, resulting in the

hospitalization of one pledge. The University has withdrawn recognition of the chapter and its house until January 1, 2013.

High School Wrestlers Charged with Assault, Iowa

January 12, 2012

North High School, in Sioux City, Iowa, placed the wrestling coach on paid administrative leave following the indictments of four wrestling team members for misdemeanor charges of simple assault following a hazing incident in December 2011. The hazing reportedly involved "humiliation techniques on bare skin of sensitive body parts."

High School Wrestlers Charged with Second Degree Sexual Abuse, Iowa

January 9, 2012

Two members of the Nodaway Valley High School have been charged with second degree sexual abuse for the hazing assault of three members in December. The younger teammates were assaulted for not making weight or for missing a practice. Second degree sexual abuse is a Class B felony in Iowa, punishable by up to 25 years in prison.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Suspended for Hazing, Florida

December 29, 2011

Jacksonville State University has suspended the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity chapter for hazing which occurred on November 29, 2011, sending two students to the hospital. The district attorney is investigating potential criminal activity and may issue warrants for individual or multiple arrests.

Drum Major Found Dead, Hazing Suspected, Florida

November 19, 2011

Robert Champion, the Florida A&M Drum Major, was found unresponsive on the band's bus Saturday night, shortly after performing at halftime. He was later pronounced dead. Hazing is suspected in the death, and an investigation into the band's "unauthorized and questionable" activities is ongoing.

18-Year-Old Found Dead in Fraternity House, UCLA

November 5, 2011

Glen Parrish, 18 years old, was found dead in the Theta Chi fraternity house at UCLA Saturday afternoon. Police indicate alcohol and drugs may have been a factor in his death, and the investigation is ongoing.

Fraternity Suspended, Members Arrested for Hazing, Virginia

November 2, 2011

Longwood University has suspended the Tau Kappa Epsilon chapter and university police have arrested 16 people for hazing. The investigation is ongoing.

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Hazing Arrests, South Carolina

October 23, 2011

A Francis Marion University student was hospitalized with serious bodily injury following a paddling by Phi Beta Sigma fraternity members and alumni. The student was pledging the fraternity. Nine have been arrested on hazing charges.

Bullying Law Puts New Jersey Schools on Spot

August 30, 2011, The New York Times.

Under a new state law in New Jersey, lunch-line bullies in the East Hanover schools can be reported to the police by their classmates this fall through anonymous tips to the Crimestoppers hot line.

[Read More](#)

Feds: CA School Failed to Protect Gay Teen

A Central California school district did not adequately investigate or respond to complaints of bullying endured by 13-year-old, Seth Walsh, who later committed suicide after being harassed by classmates because he was gay, said federal officials. Government officials launched an investigation based on a civil-rights complaint filed by Seth's mother, Wendy Walsh.

Doug Fierberg to Defend Victim's Rights in Cornell University Hazing Case

View CBS New York article [here](#).

Suit Filed in Cornell Case, New York

June 27, 2011

Marie Lourdes André, the mother of deceased Cornell University student George Desdunes, filed a wrongful death lawsuit in Kings County, New York, against Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity ("SAE"), its officers and members (case no. 500460/2011). The suit seeks to hold SAE, its chapter officers and members responsible for his death by hazing as that term is defined generally, under the laws of the State of New York, and the Guidebook of Rights, Responsibilities, Requirements and Resources (the "Guidebook") of Cornell University. For the full press release, click [here](#).

Fraternity House Death, Colorado

April 19, 2011

Ross Higuchi, a freshman at the University of North Colorado, died Tuesday from injuries sustained in a fall from a fraternity house's second-story balcony Saturday night. Higuchi was highly intoxicated at the Delta Tau Delta party, and police are investigating who supplied the alcohol.

Fraternity Member Death, Arizona

April 2, 2011

University of Arizona sophomore Wilson Forrester was found dead in his fraternity house Saturday morning. FIJI (Phi Gamma Delta) has not issued a statement, and the cause of death remains under investigation. Wilson was a pre-physiology major from Nashville, Tennessee.

University Withdraws Recognition of Fraternity, Cornell

March 19, 2011

Cornell University has withdrawn its recognition of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity based on information and shocking allegations provided to the University regarding the death of member George Desdunes on February 25, 2011. Initial reports are that Desdunes was provided alcohol

"while in the care of fraternity members" and that "members and associate members recognized the position Desdunes was in, [but] they failed to call for help." Members will have until the end of March to vacate the house, and the fraternity will be banned from operation on the campus for five years.

Pledge Hospitalized, Virginia

March 1, 2011

A 19-year-old first-year student pledging Zeta Psi fraternity was hospitalized in a possible case of hazing. Pledges were required to eat a meal of dog food, matzo balls, gefilte fish and soy sauce. The 12-18 ounces of soy sauce the pledge drank caused an electrolyte imbalance that led to seizures. The pledge was placed in intensive care and hospitalized for 4 days.

Alcohol-Related Death, Ithaca College, New York

February 26, 2011

Victoria Chen, a 17-year-old freshman at Ithaca College, was found dead in the snow behind a house near campus on Saturday afternoon. Alcohol is believed to be a factor in her death.

Fraternity Death, Cornell University, New York

February 25, 2011

George Desdunes, a Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity member, was found unresponsive in the fraternity house early Friday morning and transported to the hospital, where he later died. Alcohol is reportedly suspected to have been a factor and autopsy results are pending. George was from Brooklyn, New York, and majoring in Biology and Society.

Hazing and Possible Sexual Assault, Yale University

February 19, 2011

An invitation-only party for people seeking to join the Pundits, a senior pranking group at Yale University, included forced consumption of alcohol and allegations of sexual assault. The party led to the hospitalization of 10 students for excessive drinking. Yale police are investigating the hazing and sexual assault complaints.

Fraternity Chapter Suspended for Hazing, Michigan

February 9, 2011

The University of Michigan chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon has been suspended by the University's Interfraternity Council and the national fraternity. The chapter has reportedly admitted to having hazing practices in its pledge program.

Fraternity Shooting Death, Ohio

February 6, 2011

Jamail Johnson, a student at Youngstown State University, was shot and killed at the off-campus fraternity house of Omega Phi Psi. Eleven other people, including six YSU students, were wounded. Two suspects are in custody and face criminal charges.

University Requires Pledges to Take Class, California

January 27, 2011

Stanford University president Nik Milanovic announced by email to the Interfraternity Council that a "non-negotiable component of joining a fraternity" would be a class on alcohol issues, sexual assault and hazing, among other topics. The class is a one-unit pass/fail course.

Fraternity Hazing Death Lawsuit Settled, Utah

January 26, 2011

The family of Michael Starks, an 18-year-old freshman who died during initiation week in November 2008 while attempting to join the Utah State University chapter of Sigma Nu, settled their lawsuit against the University. The terms of the settlement, all non-economic, were for the University to adopt recommendations made by a task force convened by the University following Starks' death, including education on hazing and the dangers of binge drinking.

Fraternity Chapter Sentenced, Pennsylvania

January 25, 2011

The Penn State University chapter of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity was found guilty of furnishing alcohol to minors, resulting in the death freshman Joe Dado, and sentenced to 70 days of

community service, one day for each member, to be completed within six months. On September 19, 2009, Joe Dado was given alcohol at the fraternity house and his body was later found at the bottom of a stairwell, having died from a traumatic brain injury sustained in a fall.

Fraternity Members Sentenced, California

January 24, 2011

Four California State University San Marcos Sigma Alpha Epsilon members were sentenced under a plea agreement to probation and 80 hours of community service for their roles in the death of fellow member Patrick Drown. In August 2009, Drown attended a party hosted by Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and was later killed after being struck by a car. If further violations of the Social Host Law, including furnishing of alcohol to minors, occur, the fraternity members will likely be given jail time.

Fraternity Death, Indiana

January 18, 2011

19-year-old Brian Macken died at Bloomington Hospital in Indiana after being found unconscious at the Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity house on Indiana University's campus days before. Campus police are investigating whether alcohol or drugs were a factor in his death. Possible fraternity violations are also being investigated.

High School Shooting, California

January 18, 2011

Two 15-year-old students were hospitalized after being injured by the same bullet fired from a 9mm handgun in what may have been an accidental shooting at Gardena High School in Gardena, CA. A sophomore brought the pistol to school in a backpack and the gun apparently shot when he set the backpack down on a desk. One student is recovering from surgery after being shot in the head, the other did not need surgery.

Fraternity and Sorority Shooting Death, Florida

January 9, 2011

Florida State University sophomore Ashley Cowie was shot and killed at the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity house in what has been deemed an accidental, but alcohol-related, shooting. Cowie was a member of Chi Omega Sorority. A Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity member has been charged with manslaughter, and the chapter has been suspended.

High School Shooting, Nebraska

January 5, 2011

Lincoln Southwest High School senior Robert Butler, Jr. shot and wounded high school principal Curtis Case and killed vice principal Vicki Kaspar before committing suicide. Butler posted the following statement on his Facebook prior to the shooting:

Everybody that used to know me, I'm sorry, but Omaha changed me and (expletive) me up and the school I now attend is even worse. You are going to hear about the evil (expletive) I did, but that (expletive) school drove me to this. I want you guys to remember me for who I was before this. I know I greatly affected the lives of the families I ruined, but I'm sorry. Goodbye.

Fraternity Pledge Paralyzed, Kansas

September 17, 2010

Matt Fritzie, a freshman at Kansas University, was paralyzed as a result of injuries sustained by having to dive into a homemade pool at the Fiji (Phi Gamma Delta) house at Kansas University. Fritzie was pledging the fraternity at the time. The pool was constructed of tarps and sandbags for the fraternity's "Fiji Island" party.

Lawyers: Virginia Tech Families Settle

From *USA TODAY*:

Most families of the victims of the massacre at Virginia Tech agreed Thursday to a legal settlement proposed by the state, Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine said in a statement. Surviving victims and families of the dead will receive a settlement valued at more than \$11 million total in cash, health benefits and other assistance, attorneys Peter Grenier and Douglas Fierberg said in a statement Thursday."

[Read More](#)

Judge Agrees to Virginia Tech Payout

From *The Washington Post*:

A Circuit Court judge approved an \$11 million settlement Tuesday for most of the families of victims of last year's Virginia Tech massacre, but some of them remain dissatisfied and angry over the actions of the state and the school.

[Read More](#)

Hazing Death at Chico State

From *NBC News*:

Those who descended these steps of a fraternity house entered a world designed to terrify: The floor, damp with sewage, and the walls, splattered with taunts. Over a door was written, "In the basement nobody can hear you scream." Sometimes secrets can be deadly. In that basement, just what happened to the young man named Matthew Carrington?

[Read More](#)

Alcohol-saturated 'fun' on campus can be lethal

From *USA TODAY*:

As students head to the nation's college campuses, relishing their new independence, criminal prosecutions in the deaths of two young men are a sober reminder of how quickly alcohol-fueled "fun" can spin out of control.

Charges were filed this month against students and administrators linked to the recent fire death of a 19-year-old sophomore at Bradley University in Peoria, Ill., and the alcohol poisoning of a 18-year-old freshman at Rider University in Trenton, N.J.

[Read More](#)

Other News

[Suit Filed in California Hazing Death](#)

[Settlement Reached for Hazing Death Victim at Rider University](#)

[Crime on the Rise at Area Colleges](#)

[Why Hazing Cases Don't go Away](#)

[Students Sued Over Fatal Rite](#)

Links to news stories:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/19/nyregion/amid-hazing-at-binghamton-university-cries-for-help.html?pagewanted=all>

<http://www.cnn.com/2012/09/11/justice/florida-famu-hazing/index.html>

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/florida-bans-student-group-hazing/story?id=17160825>

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-3445_162-57371657/seeking-an-end-to-hazing-deaths/

<http://newsfeed.time.com/2011/06/29/cornell-fraternity-sued-for-allegedly-hazing-a-student-to-death/>

<http://mustangdaily.net/remembering-carson-starkey/>