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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLOs) are dedicated to academic excellence, a critical factor in college student success. These organizations offer vital support networks to ensure their members succeed academically, such as study groups, tutoring services, and mentorship programs. Through promoting a culture that reinforces academic achievement, the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) continuously inspires its members to place a high value on education and intellectual development. The Divine Nine organizations, which are part of the NPHC, work to foster a culture of professional growth and career advancement outside of the classroom.

Members are uniquely positioned to develop meaningful relationships and acquire valuable skills through guest speaker series, seminars, and networking events to succeed in their chosen fields. Furthermore, the emphasis on leadership gives students the skills they need to confidently and competently negotiate the difficulties of the professional world. Even though there has been a significant increase in mainstream media visibility surrounding BGLOs in recent years, there is still limited research focused on BGLOs' influence on members' academic achievement in college, their professional success, and leadership development. The purpose of this brief is to review the literature on BGLO membership, highlight key findings, and identify areas for further research.

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INTRODUCTION and CONTEXT of BGLOs

History and Founding of BGLOs

BGLOs (also known as the NPHC or “Divine Nine”) have shaped history. These organizations are committed to bettering the Black community and themselves and their legacies. Founded in the early 1900s, there are nine Greek-letter Black sororities (four) and fraternities (five): Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. (1906), Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (1908), Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (1911), Omega Phi Psi Fraternity, Inc. (1911), Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (1913), Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. (1914), Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. (1920), Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. (1922), Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc (1963). The “Divine Nine” are independent organizations working through the NPHC to collaborate on initiatives and foster unity among various fraternities and sororities. The NPHC works to forge alliances with other organizations and promotes the positive impact of the “Divine Nine,” acting as a liaison between its member organizations and the general public (Rainey, 2023).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research brief aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do BGLO members view membership influencing their academic achievement?
2. How do BGLO members view membership influencing their leadership and professional development?

APPROACH

I started this research by searching for peer-reviewed articles, dissertations, and books focused on the history of BGLOs, the relationship between BGLOs and academic success, and the

relationship between BGLOs and leadership development. I scoured these data to find evidence of BGLOs’ impact on academic achievement, professional success, and leadership development among its members. Using keywords such as “BGLO,” “BGLO academic achievement,” “BGLO professional success,” “BGLO career success,” and “BGLO leadership development,” I found information that could potentially help substantiate the positive impact of belonging to a BGLO such as achieving academic success in college and using a lifelong professional network of Black leaders within every industry. Based on the common themes across the literature, I developed four recommendations for higher education and student affairs professionals, researchers, and BGLO members, including 1). Strategies to Strengthen BGLO Student Engagement and Visibility on Campus; 2). A Call for Additional Research on BGLOs -- Especially Quantitative Research; 3). Increasing Professional Development and Community Service Opportunities for BGLO Members; and 4). Creating Academic Support Programs to Ensure BGLO Chapter Member’s High GPA and Standing.

Quest for Racial Equity and Recognition in Higher Education

When the organizations were founded, they demonstrated that equitable opportunities are necessary for Black college students to flourish because White sororities and fraternities purposefully excluded Black students. Keeping them out of the conversation, and provided them with insufficient resources to thrive. Every constituent member organization sets its agenda for programs and strategic direction. Unity, academic achievement for members, and community service continue to be the key goals and priorities of the organizations today. Each organization raises community awareness and action via educational, economic, and cultural service activities across college campuses and the surrounding community.

For over a century, fraternities and sororities have been integral to higher education. There has been much discussion about the responsibilities these groups play in the lives of their members

and the college community. These groups are generally held in secrecy; neither the university nor the college officials are entirely aware of their internal operations. Originating mainly at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), the groups established connections and support systems when excluded from predominantly White Greek-letter organizations (Whitfield, 2023). Today, they are a common sight on college campuses.

BGLO's and Academic Achievement of Black Students

NPHC organizations foster an environment of academic success and personal development among their members by emphasizing scholarship as a primary requirement for membership. BGLO graduate advisors must complete and submit an annual undergraduate academic performance review document to the NPHC Headquarters, found on their website (2024). This document asks for the chapters and new members (if applicable) semester and cumulative GPA for the academic year. At the bottom of the document, it requests advisors to provide the respective university/college's community statistics among all Greek and non-Greek members (total number of members/students, semester GPA, cumulative GPA, and graduation rates). This document further solidifies the claim that the NPHC meticulously measures undergraduate chapters/members' academic achievement on their college campuses.

BGLO Funding and Support

Because of the focus on education, NPHC scholarship programs and awards that honor and encourage the academic accomplishments of qualified students have been established. In July 2024, The NPHC awarded \$100,000 in scholarships to 56 "exceptional collegiate members who have demonstrated academic excellence, leadership, and a commitment to community service" (NPHC, 2024). NPHC chapters nationwide also provide scholarships to undergraduate and graduate members to aid their studies. For example, the

Washington D.C. Chapter of the NPHC offers a need-based "Future Leader Scholarship" for active undergraduate and graduate BGLO members attending college in Washington, D.C. The chapter highlights that applicants must be an active undergraduate member of a collegiate chapter overseen by one of the 17 member chapters or a graduate member of one of the 17 member chapters of the NPHC in Washington, DC, at the time of application. Applicants must provide an official transcript and proof of on and off-campus organizational participation in community activities (Washington D.C. NPHC, 2024). The NPHC claims their scholarship efforts "aim to recognize and reward outstanding undergraduate and graduate students who have demonstrated significant involvement and leadership within their NPHC council, as well as a commitment to academic excellence and community service" (Kentucky State University, 2024). This shows that the NPHC is willing to assist its members with educational resources to help them succeed in college. This can motivate members to maintain a high GPA to retain the scholarship during renewal.



One distinct thing about the Divine Nine organizations is that they have philanthropic 501c(3) foundations that annually award their members scholarships, grants, fellowships, and other forms of financial aid. The goal of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.'s philanthropic arm, Alpha Kappa Alpha Educational Advancement Foundation, Inc. (better known as "AKA EAF"), is to encourage lifelong learning, which is achieved through obtaining donations, endowments, and philanthropic contributions that help provide scholarships, fellowships, community assistance awards, and grants for AKA members, non-affiliated undergraduate and graduate students, and community leaders (AKA EAF, 2024). They have been an active foundation since 1980, claiming that they have awarded over \$6 million to students pursuing higher education through various merit and need-based programs. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. awards merit, financial need, and Youth Partners Accessing Capital ("Youth PAC") scholarships through this foundation. In their Membership Brochure, Youth PAC scholarships are "only available to undergraduate members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc." (AKA EAF, 2024).

AKA members can also create their endowment fund through EAF by completing a fund agreement application, which offers them the option to offer funding exclusively to fellow undergraduate and graduate AKA members. Members must give a minimum of \$5,000 to initiate the endowment fund. It is deemed "established" at \$5,000, goes into the Foundation's limited funds, and starts earning interest. This income is compounded to promote growth and eventual capitalization. The fund cannot be used for rewards until it has been "capitalized" at \$25,000 (AKA EAF, 2024). Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. also has a charitable arm, Alpha Phi Alpha Education Foundation, Inc. Through their foundation, they offer members a \$2,000 scholarship opportunity. Applicants must be active members currently enrolled as full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates (5) year programs acceptable or newly admitted to a graduate/professional program (within two years of college admittance). Their minimum GPA requirement is 3.5/4.0 or

equivalent (Alpha Phi Alpha Educational Foundation, Inc., 2024). Scholarship opportunities exclusively offered to Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. members were not found and made accessible to the public.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.'s Dr. Charles Drew Memorial Scholarship Commission offers its members 15 scholarships and grant opportunities, which amounts to over \$100,000 annually (Dr. Charles Drew Memorial Scholarship Commission, 2023). Omega Life Membership Foundation, Inc. states that since 1984, the Foundation has "provided grants, scholarships, emergency aid, and other financial assistance over 7 million dollars" (OMLF, 2024). Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. offers four scholarship opportunities to its members through the Zeta National Educational Foundation (better known as ZNEF). The Foundation's scholarship program is funded by the support of its principal donor, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., through chapter tax and life member fees, by contributions and gifts from members and chapters, by Board of Managers' contributions and fundraising, memorial scholarships, as well as fundraising at the Regional and State levels (ZNEF, 2024). Scholarship opportunities exclusively offered to Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. members are not accessible for public view.

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. offers many scholarships through Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority National Educational Fund, Inc. (SGR-NEF). Since 1984, NEF has distributed over \$1,000,000 in scholarships. SGR-NEF receives annual contributions from the general public, for-profit entities, and Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. members. These funds sustain scholarship programs, including traditional scholarships, mini-grants, fellowships, educational stipends, travel grants, and other forms of assistance for members and non-members. The National Iota Foundation offers three scholarship opportunities to its members through its Iota Phi Theta National Scholarship Program. It is unclear when their foundation was established and how much money they have awarded to applicants over time.

LITERATURE REVIEW

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITHIN THE DIVINE NINE

Though less well-known, academics within Black Greek life play a vital role. NPHC undergraduate chapters are committed to academic excellence because it is a matter of life or death concerning their preservation. Even if one member's grades are poor that semester, the National Headquarters can put a chapter on probation or suspend it until the chapter's GPA increases. This encourages collective accountability and active involvement by all members.

Harper's study "The Effects of Sorority and Fraternity Membership on Class Participation and African American Student Engagement in Predominantly White Classroom Environments" (2007) offers insight into how sorority and fraternity membership affect Black students' engagement rates in class and presents broader questions about the in-class interactions among the Black undergraduate community at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). This study investigated the association between African American student involvement in nearly exclusively White college classrooms and membership in Black Greek-letter organizations. Interviews with 131 members of seven undergraduate chapters at a sizable Midwest university with a predominately White student body were used to gather data. The findings of this study produced an explanatory model demonstrating the positive effects of collective responsibility, voluntary racial representation, and underrepresentation on active involvement.

Harper also focused on BGLOs' community and culture, helping the reader understand the NPHC's collective commitment to academic excellence as a positive example for other Black students, which sheds light on the part of the culture within BGLOs. One of the sorority members he interviewed stated: "Before I pledged,

I looked up to sorority members in my classes, Black and White Greek women alike. I was disappointed if they did not represent themselves well or were slacking off and sleeping in class. I had high expectations. Now that I'm Greek, I know that I have a responsibility to model for other students, especially Black women, the things I was expecting of Black sorority women when I was in their shoes two years ago." Harper also claims that the fraternity and sorority members acknowledged that their performance in the classroom affected the group's achievement as a whole, and they indicated high levels of accountability to their chapters (p. 110). Achieving a respectable evaluation among Black Greek chapters in the Greek Life Office's rankings each semester inspired and motivated the participants.

Harper's focus group with a fraternity chapter enlightens readers on the motivation behind maintaining academic excellence: "We strive hard to be the number one Black Greek chapter on those rankings that come out every semester. We can't be the top chapter if even one of our members does not have his stuff together in the classroom" (Harper, 2007, p. 106). BGLOs give its members study opportunities and academic assistance (study tables, tutors, writing assistance, etc.) to uphold the GPA requirements set by their chapters and maintain high productivity among members. By offering resources, academic support, and mentorship, BGLOs help their members achieve academic success.



Cooper's study "Impact of Membership in Black Greek Letter Organizations on Student Learning Outcomes" (2018) looked at undergraduate student populations at four target colleges in Tennessee to evaluate how relevant they thought BGLOs were. Additionally, this study contrasted the academic performance of Black students who were members of BGLOs with that of Black students who were not. The study claimed that before becoming a member of the NPHC, each prospective student must meet specific academic requirements (i.e., GPA). Following applicants' membership, most organizations have academic counselors at the chapter level, whose main objective is guaranteeing the members' ongoing academic achievement. Cooper (2018) further explains that BGLOs support the institutional requirements (must be enrolled to be active within the chapter) and academic integration (GPA criteria), as well as the social interaction aspects of "Tinto's Model of Student Departure" (1987).

According to Eatman's (2017) dissertation "An Exploration of Black National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) Sorority Membership as it Relates to Academic Achievement and Civic Engagement," NPHC's commitment to offering members to join groups for academic support and achievement, retention, and a continuous "safe place" helps it fulfill its mission and proclaimed purpose. The participants in her study reported that while their comprehension of the information covered in class fluctuated, their experiences with academic performance were favorable. When there was a gap between classroom instruction and real-world application, some participants turned to graduate sorority members for support. The sense of security and choice was shaped by the requirement to understand the material in class. They recognized the value of academic success as a pathway to future liberties like job stability and choice. Participants also mention the sorority sisters' encouragement, who built environments that allowed them to succeed academically. Offering their living quarters as a temporary haven or providing verbal encouragement were examples of their supportiveness; both gestures removed obstacles and made it

possible to achieve academic success. The guiding ideals of the individual sororities also contributed to the participants' academic success.

In Smith, Jr.'s (2019) dissertation "Examining Persistence: The Influence of Joining Pan-Hellenic Black Greek Letter Organizations on African American Male Students Attending Predominantly White Institutions," he claimed that prospective BGLO fraternity members usually choose to continue their studies at the college or university and excel academically to meet the GPA criteria for membership, as prospective members must have a GPA of 2.5 or higher to join. As a result, when they choose to commit, men who want to get into BGLOs begin their journey toward increased participation. Through peer engagement and seeing campus culture, an incoming first-year student might determine early on that he must be actively dedicated to his studies during his first year if he wants to be in one of these organizations. The student becomes motivated to succeed academically to obtain the grades necessary to be admitted into the fraternity after realizing the benefits of being a member of the BGLO (Smith, Jr., 2019). Sutton and Kimbrough's (2001) study "Trends in Black Student Involvement" examines trends in Black student involvement within traditional campus organizations at predominantly White campuses. They found that Black students at predominantly White institutions who are BGLO members maintained a higher-grade point average than non-Greek students. It should be noted that women comprised the majority of students who participated in this study. Patton et al. (2011) found that BGLO involvement significantly positively affected student-faculty involvement and active and collaborative learning at predominantly White institutions and HBCUs.

BGLOs' INFLUENCE ON PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Kimbrough's (1995) study "Self-Assessment, Participation, and Value of Leadership Skills, Activities, and Experiences for Black Students

Relative to their Membership in Historically Black Fraternities and Sororities” focuses on African American students’ opinions of BGLOs and their contribution to leadership development. He gave a questionnaire to sixty-one students (thirty-seven BGLO members and thirty-four non-BGLO members) attending a predominantly White rural midwestern university. The questionnaire aimed to gather the students’ opinions regarding their leadership abilities, the importance of leadership and leadership experiences, and the capacity of different organizations to offer these experiences. Kimbrough compared the self-assessments of African American students in BGLOs to those of non-Greek students to look at students’ leadership abilities and college involvement.

According to his hypothesis, while there would be similarities in the two groups’ assessments of their leadership abilities, BGLO members would hold more positions in organizations (such as residential advisors, student government, and BGLO chapter leadership) than non-Greek students (Kimbrough, 1995). Kimbrough also asked students for their opinions on the importance of leadership development, particularly BGLOs. In the second part of the questionnaire, he discovered that a great majority of BGLO members and nonmembers valued leadership highly and that belonging to the BGLO, which is highly regarded among its members, gave them more and earlier opportunities to develop their leadership skills than did participation in student organizations predominately made up of White students (Kimbrough, 1995). However, a sizable portion of non-members (29%) needed clarification regarding the worth of BGLOs (Kimbrough, 1995). Kimbrough recommended that evaluations of the institutional support given to Black student leadership at predominantly White universities (PWIs) may help decide the approach of campus-wide leadership development initiatives.

Williams’ (2004) study “Perceptions of Fraternity Involvement on Leadership Development Among Members of One Historically Black Fraternity at Predominantly White Institutions” used

a quantitative approach to investigate whether members of historically Black fraternities at PWIs believed that being involved in a fraternity was crucial to the process of gaining leadership responsibilities, qualities, and abilities. Furthermore, he asked students how much of an impact fraternity membership had on their academic experience and projected performance in the future. A survey instrument consisting of three sections on a Likert scale was delivered to a random sample of 1000 undergraduate members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., who were attending PWIs across the United States. Four skills (communication, negotiation, organization, and time management), nine traits (courage, decisiveness, dependability, judgment, sensitivity, loyalty, enthusiasm, endurance, and initiative), and eight roles (monitor, coordinator, director, producer, innovator, broker, facilitator, and mentor) were among the independent variables of leadership characteristics. Perception of readiness and perception as being necessary were the dependent variables. Members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. at PWIs were found to believe that their fraternity had a favorable impact on the growth and acquisition of leadership responsibilities, qualities, and abilities. Furthermore, the participants believed that acquiring and developing leadership skills was crucial. Members also expected future success and believed leadership development was crucial to their educational experiences. The Black PWI participants in Williams’s (2004) study believed that their fraternity membership had a more significant impact on their ability to develop as leaders than on their actual positions in leadership. Lastly, the participants felt that acquiring leadership roles was the least important aspect of their total school experience while developing leadership abilities was the most important. This study made it possible to assert that among historically Black fraternity members at predominantly White universities, there was a perceived relationship between the significance of leadership development and the influences of fraternity engagement.

Robinson’s (2013) dissertation “Efficacy of Fraternity Involvement

on Leadership Development Among Alumni Members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity in the Workplace” aimed to investigate how Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. graduate members applied their leadership abilities from the fraternity to their professional lives. Volunteering, self-evaluations of leadership abilities, and evaluations of the capacity of voluntary associations to foster leadership are all considered components of fraternity involvement and leadership development. Only graduate members of Alpha Phi Alpha chapters in a sizable Midwestern state were investigated in this study. Alumni members have options outside the workplace to develop their leadership skills further. Teaching classes and practical training are outlets, but they are not the only ones. Participating in a fraternity has allowed members to network socially and prepare for the workforce through an informal training program. The study investigated the lived experiences of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. graduate members using qualitative interviews.



One of the participants claimed that being a leader within the fraternity influenced their leadership style and behavior in other leadership positions: “It has helped me want to attain the best possible outcome for myself and lead by example. I have always wanted to be a trendsetter and visionary in my leadership style, which Alpha is to me. Alpha has helped me see how far respect and professionalism go in the workplace and influences my leadership style” (Robinson, 2013). Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. has several formal leadership development programs: Alpha Academy, College to Corporate Life (C2C), and Alpha Leadership Development Institute (LDI) (Alpha et al.). Alpha Academy’s overarching goals are to enhance members’ access to professional networks and resources for career advancement and address issues about higher education and employment opportunities for African American men. Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity’s College to Corporate Life (C2C) program aims to employ exposure and empowerment to help members transition from college to leadership roles. This is in contrast to Alpha Academy, which concentrates on professional resources.

McClure’s (2006) study “Voluntary Association Membership: Black Greek Men on a Predominantly White Campus” examined the relationship between BGLO participation and professional networking for twenty Black undergraduate men in one BGLO fraternity. The study was conducted at a sizable, prestigious research university in the Southeast with a racist reputation. According to study participants, joining a BGLO helped them make the most of their college experience. Students anticipated the fraternity to be a continuous advantage post-graduation, serving as a social network and a helpful way to secure job opportunities. Based on the results of the interviews, it appears that being a part of a historically Black fraternity helps its members integrate into the larger campus community by giving them a social support system to navigate the predominately White environment. In addition, the fraternity provided the members with a network of alumni in the workforce and access to the history and culture of the larger Black community.

When helping members get employment after college, fraternity membership may be handy. Many members were fully aware of this advantage, and a few gave specific examples of how it had helped them. One participant claimed that shortly after joining, he got to know a fellow fraternity member who might offer him advice and encouragement over going after a post-baccalaureate degree. He interned for a big corporation throughout the summer and met a brother he believed could help him land a permanent position. Another participant met a fellow brother who was an employment recruiter for a large corporation. The member was able to arrange an interview for him. The participant believed this network was an “important function of the fraternity” (McClure, 2006, p. 1050).

Beyond the problem areas, Kimbrough and Hutcheson (1998) investigated the function and significance of BGLOs. 387 Black Greek and non-Greek students from 12 institutions—seven PWIs and five HBCUs—were included in the study. Compared to Black non-Greek students, Black Greek students participated more in the six student organization types covered in this study. Greek students of color also held more appointed and elected leadership roles than their non-Greek peers. Moreover, after joining BGLOs, Black Greek students saw increased general involvement. Based on these studies, BGLOS need to be present at institutions because they help Black students successfully transition into college and have enjoyable experiences, particularly at PWIs. Non-Greek Black students can also benefit from their presence as Black Greek students typically consider it their responsibility to help non-members succeed at the institution.

Allen’s (2013) study “What about the Black Greeks? Supporting NPHCs at PWIs” sheds some light on the needs, challenges, and experiences of NPHC councils at large, publicly funded, predominantly White institutions in the South. Allen claimed that students’ level of campus involvement is positively impacted after joining a BGLO because they become more active in other campus organizations. This is beneficial since it broadens both their own and

other students’ experiences as members of campus organizations. Compared to non-Greek Black students, NPHC students not only report having better college experiences, but they also have a higher graduation rate. Greek group involvement may be a means for Black students to raise their graduation rate (Allen, 2013; Severtis & Christie-Mizell, 2007). They also questioned whether racial differences existed in the effects of Greek membership. The information from 3,712 respondents was taken from the General Social Survey (GSS). According to the surveys, there was a positive correlation of 370 percent between Greek-letter membership and the likelihood of graduating from college. Long-term advantages flow from BGLOs because they give students a platform for networking and help them find jobs after graduation (Allen, 2013).

The purpose of Gunn’s (2015) study “Perceptions of Historically Black Greek Letter Organizations Impact on Leadership Development” was to learn how BGLOs helped their members develop their leadership abilities, their experiences in comparison to non-members, and their bond with and loyalty to the organization. To investigate the perspectives of seven participants, Gunn conducted interviews with BGLO members. These participants represented four of the six active BGLO chapters at the institution. The findings demonstrated that members acquired specific standard leadership abilities and unique experiences from their peers who were not BGLO members. Members gain the greatest knowledge about the organization and themselves during the membership intake. They are learning about the organization and the standards that are expected of them. They pick up knowledge that will make them stronger leaders and better people. The education they receive through membership is crucial because it enables them to develop into competent leaders within their organization and the community (Gunn, 2015).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategies to Strengthen BGLO Student Engagement and Visibility on Campus

Higher education institutions would benefit from fully supporting BGLOs' academic and professional development initiatives. Student affairs professionals should consider developing a program that encourages more connection between students and faculty on college campuses by working cooperatively with BGLOs. This kind of program could involve faculty members—some of whom might be involved in BGLOs—serving as facilitators for annual retreats or as guest speakers at social events. Establishing a learning community for undergraduate BGLO members could appeal to students and promote academic achievement and leadership development. Student affairs professionals could use this brief's findings to describe some of the constituent cognitive benefits of BGLO affiliation when promoting Greek life to Black students on campus. Greek life professionals should read relevant books and journal articles about BGLOs (such as those listed in the Literature Review and References of this brief) and attend presentations about these organizations. Furthermore, they should make it an active practice to have listening tours with members of BGLOs and the professionals who advise them. This could involve asking these individuals to come prepared with concerns and ways the more significant student affairs division can support them.

A Call for Additional Research on BGLOs -- Especially Quantitative Research

While this brief highlights some of the data about BGLOs, more research is needed to determine how BGLOs explicitly influence their members' academic achievement and professional success levels. Even if the current research in this brief highlights some of the advantages of Black Greek life, it still touches the surface of what is understood about these groups. Regarding affiliation in BGLOs,

a deeper understanding of academic performance and professional success would be possible through follow-up research that produces qualitative data. The findings in this brief emphasize the necessity of conducting additional quantitative, multi-institutional research on the academic outcomes connected to BGLO affiliation. Initially, it would be beneficial to do more extensive research and employ advanced statistical techniques to ascertain whether these results have wider ramifications in various institutional settings. Second, by expanding on the suggested quantitative studies with qualitative research, academics, and researchers may better comprehend the relationship between BGLO affiliation and academic/professional results, strengthening their capacity to offer more comprehensive practice suggestions.

Increasing Professional Development and Community Service Opportunities for BGLO Members

Undergraduate BGLO members should maximize the professional development opportunities their organizations afford them. For example, consistently attending cluster, regional, and national conferences can be a great way for undergraduate BGLO members to network with graduate members with similar college and professional experiences. As proven in the brief, maximizing the opportunities provided by BGLOs can lead to undergraduate members landing internships and job opportunities and receiving academic support from graduate members with similar or identical college experiences. Participating in community service opportunities in their organizations will also help undergraduate members network with other BGLO members since they already share the common goal of executing the work of the organization's national program tenets.

Creating Academic Support Programs to Ensure BGLO Chapter Member's High GPAs and Standing

Furthermore, BGLOs must implement explicit academic programs

and enhance academic standards to actively support undergraduates (individually and as a chapter) in attaining high academic achievement. Conversely, undergraduate BGLO members should continue encouraging their peers to maintain a high GPA so they can have a high chapter GPA, making chapters eligible to win academic awards and scholarships from their respective organizations and the NPHC. BGLOs can create a graduate/alumni/alumnae chapter-wide academic mentorship program. Undergraduate members could participate in virtual sessions with graduate members who have achieved professional success in their academic field(s) and hold the degree they are pursuing. This provides them with real-world experiences to relate to the material they are currently learning in the classroom and creates an industry pipeline to cultivate the next generation of professionals.

CONCLUSION

The emphasis on professional development and academic success is among the most significant advantages of being in a BGLO. These groups frequently offer scholarship opportunities, mentorship programs, and academic support networks. Members are given tools to help them reach their goals and are encouraged to aim for academic success. Furthermore, networking chances for internships, jobs, and career advancement can be unlocked through BGLOs' professional networks. Leadership development is another critical factor that helps undergraduate BGLO members navigate college and the world optimistically. BGLOs are well known for emphasizing the development of leaders. Members gain essential skills through varied roles and duties, including time management, public speaking, event organizing, and dispute resolution. These experiences equip undergraduate BGLO members to assume leadership positions in other student organizations and their future careers. Furthermore, these organizations' tenets and values—perseverance, integrity, and service—promote character development and personal progress.

Higher education institutions must continue supporting BGLOs on

their campuses because BGLOs facilitate Black students' smooth college transitions and ensure they have a positive experience, especially at PWIs. Black Greek students generally feel they must assist non-members in succeeding at the university, so non-Greek Black students can also gain from their presence. There is a great need for more comprehensive studies to fully understand the role of BGLOs in shaping students' academic and professional trajectories because it will explain the value of these organizations on campus and in society to higher education and student affairs professionals. Acknowledging that the following practices can only be successful with the effort and cooperation of student affairs professionals, NPHC organizations, and students is essential.



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