OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 31, 2015

Dear Colgate Family:

This fall, your student will have the opportunity to participate in membership recruitment activities for recognized Greek-letter organizations. The fraternities and sororities, along with other Colgate residences on Broad Street, provide opportunities for students to live in and to affiliate with communities that emphasize self-governance. In early September, students with at least sophomore status will be eligible to participate in fraternity and sorority recruitment; students may not join a Greek-letter organization until their sophomore year. The eight recognized Colgate fraternities and sororities are Beta Theta Pi, Delta Delta Delta, Delta Upsilon, Gamma Phi Beta, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Phi Delta Theta, Phi Kappa Tau, and Theta Chi.

Additionally, because we are concerned for your student’s wellbeing, we would like to reiterate that Colgate has a policy against students joining or participating in “underground” organizations. These are student organizations resembling fraternities and sororities that are not recognized by the university. Only the fraternities and sororities listed above are recognized and open for Colgate students to join. Underground organizations run counter to the aims of a Colgate education as they have no university oversight and receive no mentorship from professional staff, or active risk management related to hazing or high-risk behavior (e.g., alcohol and other drug abuse and violence). We encourage students to come forward if approached by an underground organization.

In accordance with New York State Law and our core institutional values, Colgate prohibits hazing. We are clear with our students in defining this policy, and Colgate’s Greek leaders are also committed to stopping hazing on our campus. We provide a copy of the anti-hazing policy to all new members and host a new-member session that reviews the inherent dangers associated with hazing. Students may contact the Office of the Dean of the College, the chapter president, or the Panhellenic Association or the Interfraternity Council presidents if they have concerns related to hazing behavior.

We know that parents and guardians play an important role in the lives of our students. In order to address these issues comprehensively as possible, we ask that you discuss concerns related to hazing and “underground” organizations with your son or daughter. In an effort to assist you with these conversations, we have included the relevant policies from the Colgate Student Handbook. If you have any questions about the Broad Street communities or recruitment in fraternities or sororities, please contact the Office of the Dean of the College at 315-228-7425.

Yours truly,

Jill Harsin
Interim President

Suzy Nelson
Vice President and Dean of the College

Scott C. Brown
Associate Vice President and Dean of Students

Kathryn E. Wojcik
Director of Fraternities, Sororities, and Interest Communities

Natalie Carpenter
President
Panhellenic Council

Joseph Aiken
President
Interfraternity Council

Matthew Miller
President
Beta Theta Pi

Laura West
President
Delta Delta Delta

Brandt Gribbin
President
Delta Upsilon

Camille Stroe
President
Gamma Phi Beta

Isabelle James
President
Kappa Kappa Gamma

Sean Macguire
President
Phi Delta Theta

John Crowe
President
Phi Kappa Tau

Niall Henderson
President
Theta Chi
Policy on Underground Organizations:
No Colgate student may rush, pledge, join, recruit for, perpetuate, or otherwise engage in activities as an actual or prospective member of an undergraduate fraternal or similar selective membership organization not recognized by the university. Anyone engaging in such activities, either as an actual or prospective member, will be subject to penalties that may include suspension or expulsion.

Policy on Hazing:
Hazing is any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers mental or physical health, or creates substantial embarrassment, harassment or ridicule, or involves the forced consumption of food, alcohol or drugs in the course of initiation or continuing affiliation with an organization. Groups that violate the university hazing policy will forfeit recognition. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, the following list of activities:

1. Participation in or creation of situations that cause physical harm or emotional strain, such as causing a member or non-member to be the object of malicious amusement or ridicule.
2. Forced, required or implicitly coerced participation in physical activities such as calisthenics, exercises or games.
3. Participation in activities that involve illegal acts such as kidnapping or stealing, or acts that violate university policy.
4. Creation of excessive fatigue or distress through deprivation of privacy, sufficient sleep or decent and edible meals.
5. Use of physical brutality or force (including paddling, striking with fists, open hands or objects).
6. Forced, required, condoned or implicitly coerced behavior resulting in lewdness or potential ridicule or bodily harm (such as forced nudity or partial nudity, including coercing an individual to dress in a degrading manner as part of initiation or affiliation).
7. Forced, required or implicitly coerced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or any other substance.
8. Permitted consumption of excessive amounts of alcohol.

In addition to Colgate University’s anti-hazing policy, students must comply with the New York State Anti-Hazing Law, first passed in 1980. Hazing in the first degree is a Class D Felony carrying a prison sentence. Hazing in the Second Degree is a Class E Felony and also carries a prison sentence. Hazing in the Third Degree is a Class A Misdemeanor.