



# POSITION STATEMENT

# Recognition Programs

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*[The North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), through its President & CEO, takes a position on each of the critical issues within the fraternity industry.]*

The North-American Interfraternity Conference is the trade association representing national and international men's fraternities. Through advocacy, collaboration, and education the NIC works to ensure that fraternities can operate in an environment conducive to their success.

Recognition plays an important role within trade associations around the world. In the United States one need only to look as far as The American Bar Association, The American Council on Education, or even the Plumbing, Heating, and Cooling Contractors Association. In each of these very diverse groups, as in the NIC, you will find a membership body that places great value in the sharing of best practices, recognition of outstanding service, and improving on past performance.

Currently the NIC recognizes its members in several categories

**The NIC Gold Medal** –first presented in 1940, is presented in recognition of lifetime service to the fraternity movement.

**Rationale:** The NIC believes that it is important to recognize those men who have helped to improve the fraternity experience and to publicly thank those who are looked to as lifelong contributors to the college fraternity

**The NIC Silver Medal** – presented to an individual for specific acts of leadership within the fraternity movement.

**Rationale:** It is important to recognize those individuals or groups whose programs and acts have provided leadership and enduring value to the fraternity movement.

**The Laurel Wreath Award** – presented to individuals or groups in recognition of their unique programs, community outreach, and/or influence within the fraternal world.

**Rationale:** fraternities are always seeking ways to raise the bar for their organizations and members. The Laurel Wreath Award recognizes those programs that are truly elevating the Greek Movement



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**The NIC Awards of Distinction** –first presented at 2002 to recognize fraternity leaders and high performing individuals, chapters, and Interfraternity councils.

**Rationale:** another way the NIC seeks to advocate for the fraternity experience, collaborate with both internal and external stakeholders, and educate others about the positive achievements of fraternity men, chapters, and councils across North America. Additionally, an Award of Distinction serves as a way for the NIC to recognize and advance full standards compliance and implementation. When groups say that the standards are “impossible” or “too lofty”, we are able to point to our winners and say, “think again”.

### **What is each seeking to accomplish?**

Each of the recognition programs of the NIC has, at its core, the belief that positive reinforcement and public praise leads to continuing high performance and collective benefit.

The Gold Medal is a way that the NIC can say thank you to the men who have left a positive legacy. They are standard bearers who have taken the interfraternal world to new heights with a lifetime of dedication

The Silver Medal & Laurel Wreath are ways that NIC is able to identify individuals or groups for outstanding service and/or accomplishment. Additionally, the medal and award are a way to draw attention to a program, outreach effort, or initiative that may warrant emulation or attention from the greater community

The Awards of Distinction allow the NIC, as a trade association, to publicize the best practices of its members and to recognize outstanding achievement. The mission of the NIC is to ensure that fraternities can operate in environments that are conducive to their success. What better methods than to show what is possible when the standards of our conference are fully implemented and practiced on a regular basis. The Awards serve the member fraternity in that they provide another tool that can be leveraged to show society the greater impact of fraternities and their members.



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**What is Our Return on Investment?** - Many organizations have a tendency to associate recognition programs with huge costs, major time commitments, and a relatively low return on investment. The NIC as a trade association spends under \$2,000 on a program that allows for industry and community-wide recognition of those who are performing at a high level. In addition, we are able to identify chapters and individuals who represent some of the industry's top performers. Our winners are featured on [www.nicindy.org](http://www.nicindy.org), [www.fraternityinfo.com](http://www.fraternityinfo.com), The Standard (our quarterly newsletter), in our interfraternal leadership programs, and in regular productions and publications. The Awards of Distinction help to identify the men and organizations that deserve emulation.

**Should a Trade Association Recognize a Member's Member?** - Researching not only some of the oldest trade associations in the country, but also some of the largest and most successful we have found that recognition programs are one of the foundations upon which the organizations were built.

- The American Bar Association (ABA) recognizes firms and individuals to help showcase best practices for other lawyers around the country.
- The National Association of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors not only offers national continuing education sessions for its contractors and their members but also chapter excellence awards and individual recognition.
- The American Council on Education annually recognizes excellence in faculty at its member institutions and among its associates.

This is only a sampling of various trade association recognition programs and conveys the importance groups place on recognition efforts. The recognition programs of the NIC are strongly supported by our public relations advisor, Burson-Marsteller.

**Are Individuals or Chapters Recognized Without the Support of the Organization?** – Since the inception of the Awards of Distinction we have never presented an award to a man or a chapter who has not been supported by the inter/national fraternity. We believe that in order to rise to the level of finalist an individual or chapter should have the backing of both his institution and fraternity

**Is Participation Compulsory?** – The NIC Gold Medal, Silver Medal, Laurel Wreath Awards, and Awards of Distinction are strictly voluntary programs. Only those who participate are recognized.

## **In conclusion:**

The NIC is dedicated to advocating for the needs of its member fraternities through full standards implementation and compliance. The recognition programs offer a public method through which to accomplish not only those individuals and groups which are performing at a high level but also those that have dedicated themselves to advancing the fraternal movement.

**For further information related to the recognition efforts of the NIC visit [www.nicindy.org](http://www.nicindy.org) or contact the NIC at 317-872-1112 or email [info@nicindy.org](mailto:info@nicindy.org). For more information about the NIC Standards visit [www.NICstandards.com](http://www.NICstandards.com).**