



2021

# Fraternities and Sororities

Experiences and Outcomes  
in College, Work and Life

GALLUP®



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# Introduction

*Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, colleges and universities across the U.S. had struggled for years with declining enrollment numbers. The pandemic only made the situation worse, and with no immediate reversal of this downward trend in sight, higher education institutions are increasingly focusing their efforts on student recruitment and retention. For colleges and universities, the cost of losing a student is higher than the cost of recruiting one, underlining the importance of programs and organizations that encourage students to remain enrolled and earn their degree.*

Regardless of an individual's background or socioeconomic status entering college, the experiences students have as undergraduates, and their post-graduation workplace and life outcomes, are pivotal to the success of both recruitment and retention.

Alumni who have great experiences in college and great jobs and lives afterward give back to their alma maters at higher rates — and serve as brand ambassadors at a time when these institutions need their influence and support.

In 2021, the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) and the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) partnered with Gallup for a second time to study the experiences alumni members of fraternities and sororities have during and after college. Like the 2014 study, the research focuses on the benefits of the fraternal membership experience and the potential value these members could bring to their schools' recruitment and retention efforts.

As part of its national survey of more than 10,000 U.S. college graduates conducted between Jan. 15 and Jan. 29, 2021, Gallup interviewed more than 3,000 alumni of diverse backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses who graduated within the past 15 years and are members of fraternities or sororities. These alumni, referred to throughout the report as "affiliated alumni," represent a broad range of demographics and member organizations and councils, including NPC, NIC, National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc. (NPHC), National Multicultural Greek Council (NMGC), National APIDA Panhellenic Council (NAPA) and National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO). All other graduates are referred to as "nonaffiliated alumni."

## Gallup found that affiliated alumni...

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### **...had great college experiences.**

Affiliated alumni had great college experiences — such as having a professor who made them excited about learning — and they are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to feel strong emotional connections with their alma mater, recommend their school to others and donate to their alma mater after graduation. And, if they had to do it over, the majority of affiliated alumni would join their fraternity or sorority again.

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### **...felt more prepared for life after college.**

Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to feel that their alma mater prepared them well for life after college and that they gained important job-related skills. Further, affiliated alumni found jobs more quickly after graduation, and they are substantially more likely to be engaged at work than nonaffiliated alumni.

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### **...are more likely to be thriving in their wellbeing.**

Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be thriving in each of the five aspects of wellbeing Gallup has identified. Majorities of affiliated alumni are thriving in every one of these areas.



# Key Findings

## Affiliated alumni had great experiences in college...

that helped them feel more connected to their schools...  
and find great jobs... and live great lives after graduation...

### 23% vs. 14%

**More than one in five** affiliated alumni (23%), versus 14% of nonaffiliated alumni, strongly agree with all of the following:

- 1 They had a professor who cared about them as a person.
- 2 They had at least one professor who made them excited about learning.
- 3 They had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams.

Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to say they felt **supported by faculty and mentors**.

Affiliated alumni are nearly **4x as likely** as nonaffiliated alumni to have had all six of the key support and experiential learning experiences.

### 24% vs. 8%

**Nearly one in four** affiliated alumni (24%), as opposed to just 8% of nonaffiliated alumni, answer affirmatively to or strongly agree with all of the following:

- 4 They had a job or internship that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom.
- 5 They worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete.
- 6 They were "extremely active" in extracurricular activities and organizations.

Affiliated alumni are **3x as likely** as nonaffiliated alumni to say they engaged in experiential learning.

### 15% vs. 4%

Affiliated alumni were more likely to have all six support and experiential learning experiences, from feeling a professor cared about them as a person to being extremely active in extracurricular activities.

Affiliated alumni had great experiences in college...  
**that helped them feel more connected to their schools...**  
and find great jobs... and live great lives after graduation...

## 65% vs. 43%

A majority of affiliated alumni are “promoters” of their institution, based on their likelihood to recommend it. **Nearly two-thirds** (65%) of affiliated alumni selected a 9 or 10 on a scale where 10 is the highest likelihood to recommend their alma mater, compared with 43% of nonaffiliated alumni.

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Affiliated alumni are substantially more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to **recommend their school to others.**

Affiliated alumni are also more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to strongly agree their education was worth the cost, and they are more likely to donate to their institutions.

## 54% vs. 10%

The majority (54%) of affiliated alumni say they donated to their alma mater in the last year, versus just 10% of nonaffiliated alumni.

Affiliated alumni had great experiences in college...  
that helped them feel more connected to their schools...  
**and find great jobs...** and live great lives after graduation...

Almost half of affiliated alumni strongly agree their institution prepared them well for life outside of college (44%) and they gained important job-related skills (45%) — outpacing nonaffiliated alumni, among whom about one in four say the same.

Affiliated alumni are nearly twice as likely as nonaffiliated alumni to feel that their alma mater prepared them well for life after college and that they gained important job-related skills.

Further, the majority of affiliated alumni (64%) say they held a leadership position in their fraternity or sorority during college.

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Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to **find a good job quickly** after graduation.

**51% vs. 36%**

Just over half of affiliated alumni had a job waiting when they graduated or found employment within two months, compared with 36% of nonaffiliated alumni.

Employed affiliated alumni are substantially more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be engaged in their current jobs, which means they are highly involved in and committed to their work and workplace.

**52% vs. 33%**

Affiliated alumni were more likely to have all six support and experiential learning experiences, from feeling a professor cared about them as a person to being extremely active in extracurricular activities.



Affiliated alumni had great experiences in college...  
that helped them feel more connected to their schools...  
and find great jobs... **and live great lives after graduation...**

Affiliated alumni are nearly five times as likely as nonaffiliated alumni to rate their present lives a 10 on a scale where 10 is the best possible life and 0 is the worst.

Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be **satisfied with their lives.**

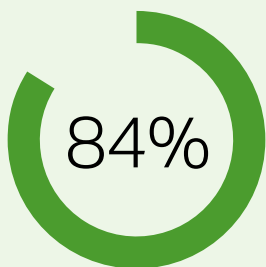
Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be thriving in the five aspects of wellbeing.

Majorities of affiliated alumni are thriving in every area of their wellbeing: 62% in career wellbeing, 66% in community wellbeing, 51% in financial wellbeing, 53% in physical wellbeing and 62% in social wellbeing.

**...and they would do it all again.**

Even after accounting for student loans, household income, gender, race, education, the year they graduated and even their parents' level of education, affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to have had better experiences as undergraduates, in the workplace and in their lives in general.

**These experiences may help explain why so many would do it all again.**



Eighty-four percent of affiliated alumni say if they had to do it all over again, they would still join their fraternity or sorority.



# Great Experiences

*Affiliated alumni are substantially more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to have had all of the positive college experiences Gallup research links to better workplace and life outcomes after graduation.*


Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to say they felt supported by faculty and mentors.


Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to strongly agree that, as undergraduates, they had all three support experiences Gallup research finds are related to positive post-collegiate outcomes in employment and wellbeing.


## Affiliated Alumni More Likely to Experience Support

% Strongly agree

■ AFFILIATED ■ NONAFFILIATED

Professor made me excited about learning  
55%  54%

Professor cared about me as a person  
44%  27%

Mentor encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams  
43%  24%

Affiliated alumni are 3x as likely as nonaffiliated alumni to say they engaged in experiential learning.

Affiliated alumni are three times as likely as nonaffiliated alumni to report or strongly agree they had all three undergraduate experiential learning experiences that Gallup has found to have strong relationships with post-collegiate employment and wellbeing outcomes for graduates.

### Affiliated Alumni More Likely to Have Experiential Learning

% Yes or Strongly agree

■ AFFILIATED ■ NONAFFILIATED

Internship where I applied classroom learning

80%  54%

Project that took semester to complete

47%  35%

Extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations

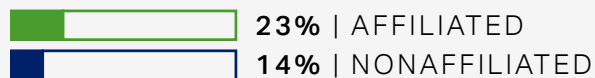
41%  17%

## Six key learning experiences

### EMOTIONAL SUPPORT EXPERIENCES

- 1 They had a professor who cared about them as a person.
- 2 They had at least one professor who made them excited about learning.
- 3 They had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams.

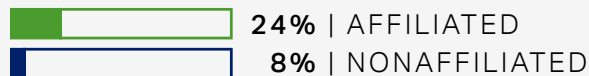
Nearly one in four affiliated alumni (23%), versus 14% of nonaffiliated alumni, strongly agree they had all three emotional support experiences.



### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- 4 They had a job or internship that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom.
- 5 They worked on a project that took a semester or more to complete.
- 6 They were “extremely active” in extracurricular activities and organizations.

More than one in five affiliated alumni (24%), versus just 8% of nonaffiliated alumni, report or strongly agree they had all three experiential learning experiences.



**AFFILIATED ALUMNI ARE MORE LIKELY THAN NONAFFILIATED ALUMNI TO...**

...feel that their alma mater prepared them well for life after college and that they gained important job-related skills.

...feel emotionally attached to their alma mater.

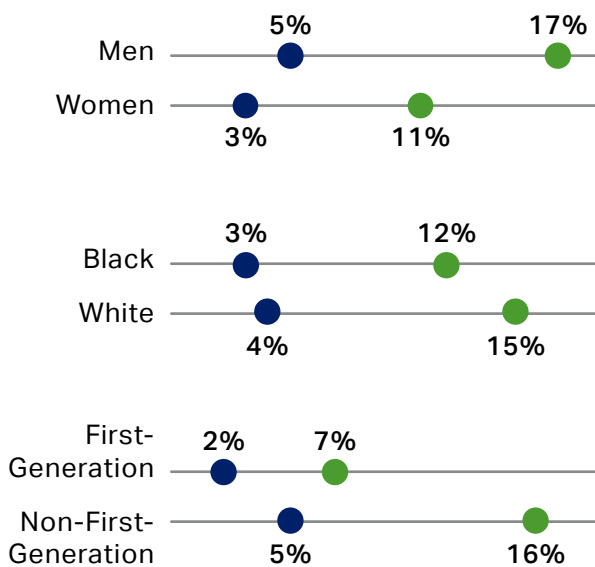


Experiencing all six elements of emotional support and experiential learning is rare for most college graduates. Still, affiliated alumni are **nearly 4x as likely** as nonaffiliated alumni to have had all six experiences.



**Affiliated Alumni More Likely to Have All Six Key Student Experiences**

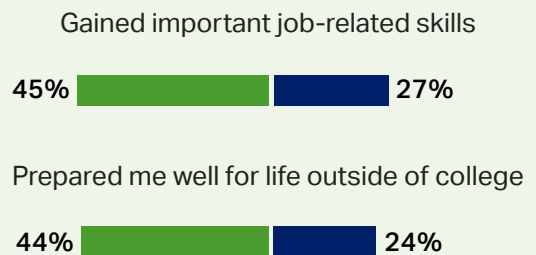
■ AFFILIATED ■ NONAFFILIATED



Regardless of gender, race or first-generation status, affiliated alumni are substantially more likely than their nonaffiliated alumni counterparts to have all six emotional support and experiential learning experiences in college.

**Affiliated Alumni More Likely to Gain Job Skills, Feel Prepared**

*% Strongly agree*



**AFFILIATED ALUMNI ARE ALSO MORE LIKELY TO...**

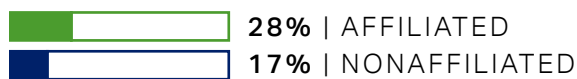
- ...have felt supported.
- ...recommend their school to others.
- ...strongly agree their education was worth the cost.
- ...donate to their alma mater.



Overall, even after accounting for student loans, household income, gender, race, education, the year they graduated and even their parents' level of education, affiliated alumni are more likely to have had better experiences as undergraduates, in the workplace and in life in general.

The experiences of fraternity and sorority alumni, like the support they felt from faculty and mentors, contribute to their sense of emotional attachment — whether alumni feel their school was perfect for people like them and whether they can imagine a world without it.

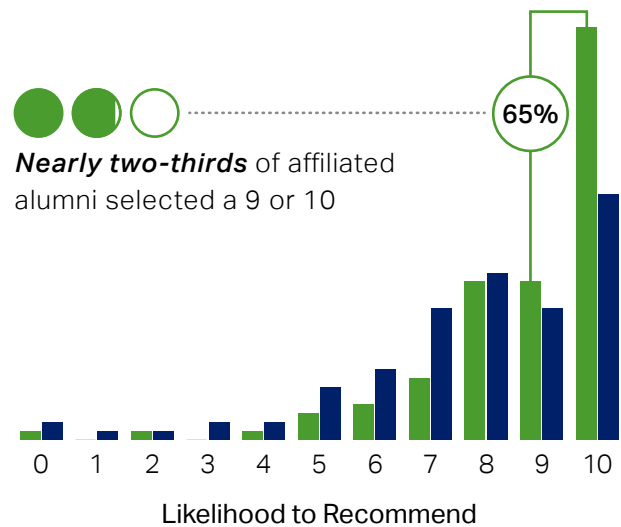
Affiliated alumni are more likely to have felt emotionally attached than nonaffiliated alumni.



A majority of alumni who are fraternity and sorority members are “promoters” of their institution, based on their likelihood to recommend it. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of affiliated alumni selected a 9 or 10 on a scale where 10 is the highest likelihood to recommend.

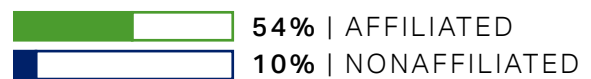
**Affiliated Alumni More Likely to Promote Alma Mater**

■ AFFILIATED ■ NONAFFILIATED



Gallup research shows that having supportive relationships with faculty members and other mentor figures powerfully influences whether alumni believe their college experience was worth the cost. Nearly half (47%) of affiliated alumni strongly agree their education was worth the cost.

The majority of affiliated alumni say they donated to their alma mater in the last year.





# Great Jobs

*Engaged employees thrive in their roles because they have the opportunity to do their best work, they enjoy the work they do and they have someone who cares about their professional development. Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be engaged at work after graduation.*

Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to say they found a good job quickly after graduation — many with the help of other affiliated alumni.

Just over half of affiliated alumni (51%) had a job waiting when they graduated or found employment within two months, compared with 36% of nonaffiliated alumni. Affiliated alumni were more likely to have a job waiting immediately after graduation (30%) than nonaffiliated alumni (22%).

## Affiliated Alumni Found Good Jobs Faster

AFFILIATED | 51%



NONAFFILIATED | 36%



  Employed immediately

  Employed within 2 months

Roughly **four in 10** affiliated alumni say a member of their fraternity or sorority:



helped them find an internship or a job  
**(42%)**

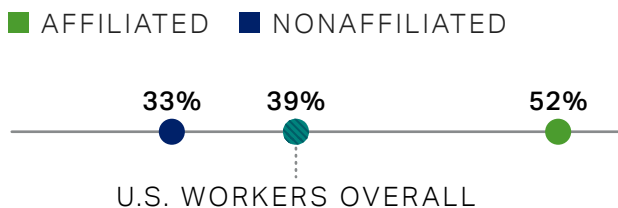
provided them with career advice  
**(39%)**

Regardless of gender or race, affiliated alumni are substantially more likely than their nonaffiliated alumni counterparts to be engaged at work.

Employed affiliated alumni are substantially more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be engaged at their current jobs — which means they are highly involved in, enthusiastic about and committed to their work and workplace.

A majority of employed affiliated alumni (52%) are engaged at work, compared with 33% of nonaffiliated alumni. Affiliated alumni are also significantly more likely to be engaged than U.S. workers overall so far in 2021 — 39%.

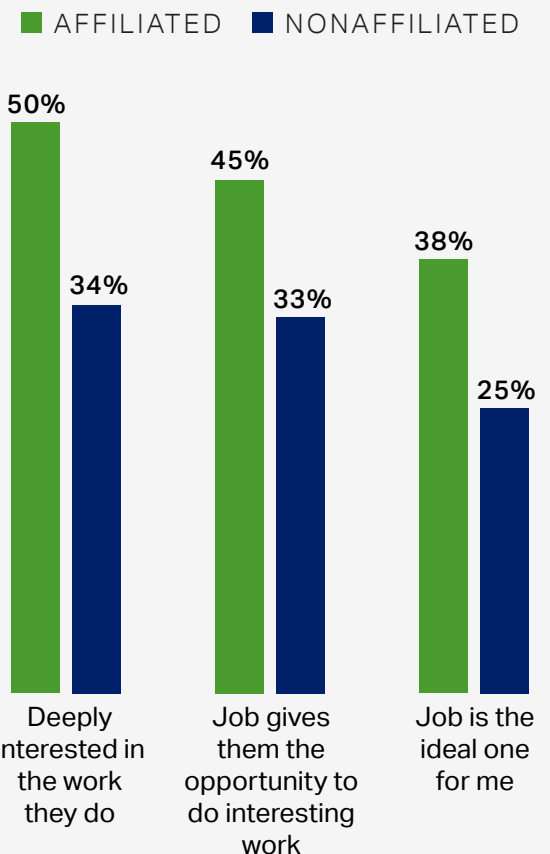
### Affiliated Alumni More Likely to Be Engaged at Work



Employed affiliated alumni are more likely than employed nonaffiliated alumni to say they are deeply interested in the work they do, their job gives them the opportunity to do work that interests them and their job is the ideal one for them.

### Affiliated Alumni More Likely to Find Ideal Job

*% Strongly agree*





# Great Lives

*Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be thriving in multiple areas of their lives, which means they are less likely to change employers voluntarily and are more resilient in the face of layoffs or other challenges — like pandemics. They are better able to take care of their own basic needs, adapt to change and contribute to and support the success of their organizations and communities.*

Gallup categorizes individuals as “thriving,” “struggling” or “suffering” in each element according to how they respond to the particular questions that relate to that facet of wellbeing:

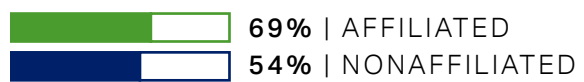
**THRIVING** | wellbeing that is strong, consistent and progressing in a particular element

**STRUGGLING** | wellbeing that is moderate or inconsistent in a particular element

**SUFFERING** | wellbeing that is very low and at high risk in a particular element

Affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be satisfied with their lives.

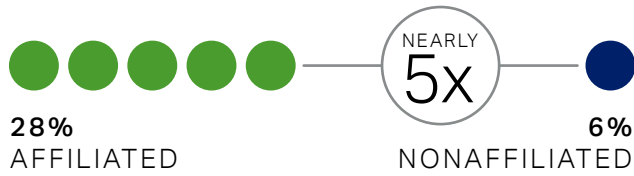
On a 10-point scale, 69% of affiliated alumni rate their current and future lives positively enough to be considered “thriving” — the apex of life satisfaction. Fifty-four percent of nonaffiliated alumni rate their lives this way.



% Thriving



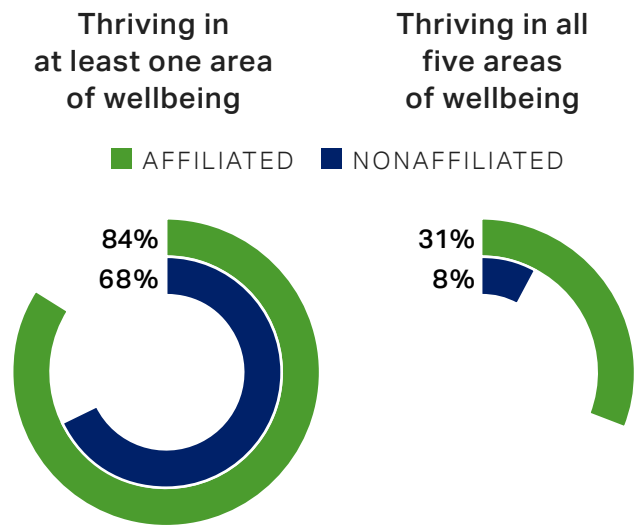
Moreover, affiliated alumni are nearly five times as likely as nonaffiliated alumni to rate their present lives a 10, where 10 is the best possible life and 0 is the worst.



**Majorities of affiliated alumni are thriving in every aspect of their wellbeing**, and they are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to be thriving in each area.

Affiliated alumni are strong in all wellbeing areas, particularly in community wellbeing, which means alumni like where they live, feel safe and have pride in their communities. Affiliated alumni are twice as likely as nonaffiliated alumni (39% versus 19%) to say their city is a perfect place for them to live. They are more than six times as likely to say they have been recognized for helping to improve their city in the past year (32% versus 5%).

These percentages are higher than levels among nonaffiliated alumni and are also higher than the national 2020 averages.

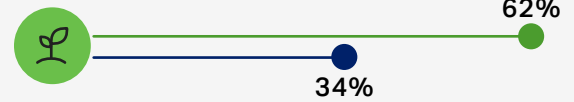


As with their experiences as undergraduates and in the workplace, regardless of gender, race or first-generation status, affiliated alumni are substantially more likely than their nonaffiliated counterparts to be thriving in every area of wellbeing.

## Majorities of Affiliated Alumni Thriving in Wellbeing

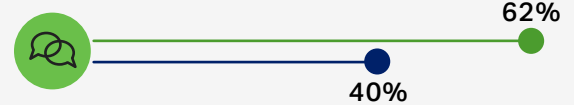
### CAREER WELLBEING

liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals



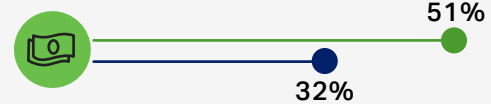
### SOCIAL WELLBEING

having strong and supportive relationships and love in your life



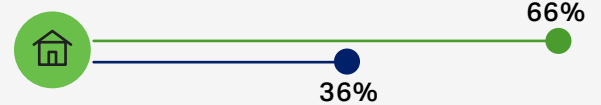
### FINANCIAL WELLBEING

managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security



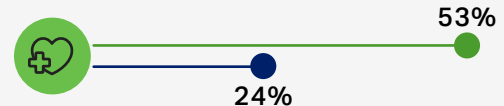
### COMMUNITY WELLBEING

liking where you live, feeling safe and having pride in your community



### PHYSICAL WELLBEING

having good health and enough energy to get things done daily



*Gallup's National Health and Well-Being Index™ measures the important aspects of a life well lived. Based on decades of Gallup's global research, the index includes 10 questions that measure wellbeing in five interrelated elements that are essential to most people.*

# Conclusion

As in 2014, Gallup's recent look into the lives of alumni who participated in fraternity and sorority life reaffirms that they are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to have great experiences as undergraduates, and more likely to have great jobs and be living great lives after graduation. Notably, these differences are statistically significant after controlling for key demographic variables, including gender, race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

As much as affiliated alumni seem to get from their college experiences, they are also more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to give back to their alma maters through donations. Furthermore, they are more likely than their nonaffiliated counterparts to recommend their schools to others and to still see their schools as perfect for them — which suggests the financial value of these alumni to colleges and universities may extend well beyond their individual donations.

Affiliated alumni are more likely than their nonaffiliated counterparts to recommend their schools to others and to still see their schools as **perfect for them.**



## Appendix: Additional Findings

As part of its national study of more than 10,000 U.S. college graduates conducted between Jan. 15 and Jan. 29, 2021, Gallup interviewed more than 3,000 alumni who are members of fraternities or sororities (referred to as “affiliated members”). In partnership with the NPC and NIC, Gallup asked these affiliated members a specific set of questions related to their fraternity or sorority experience.

Sixty-four percent of affiliated members say they held a leadership position in their organization during college.

Nearly a quarter of affiliated alumni are still serving today as a chapter advisor, alumni officer or volunteer for the fraternity or sorority house corporation.

In addition to affiliated alumni being more likely to financially support their alma mater than nonaffiliated alumni, more than one-third (37%) of affiliated alumni have donated to their member organization or foundation in the past year.

Regardless of an individual’s race, ethnicity or first-generation status, affiliated alumni are more likely than nonaffiliated alumni to say they took out loans to finance their undergraduate degrees, but on average, affiliated alumni who took out loans incurred less debt. Seventy-five percent of affiliated alumni say they took out loans — about \$23,000 on average. While 67% of nonaffiliated alumni took out loans, their average debt was about \$36,000.

The lower average loan amount among affiliated alumni may yield dividends after college. Gallup studies show that college graduates who carry a high amount of student debt are less likely to be thriving in multiple areas of their wellbeing — which may help explain some of the differences in the wellbeing of affiliated and nonaffiliated alumni discussed previously.

Most notably, 84% of affiliated members say if they had to do it all over again, **they would still join their fraternity or sorority.**

# Methodology

Results for the national study used for comparison purposes — the Gallup Alumni Survey — are based on web surveys, with a random sample of 10,081 respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher, who graduated since 2006 and the fielding date of the survey, are aged 18 or older, have internet access and live in one of the 50 U.S. states or the District of Columbia. Of these, 3,033 respondents indicated that they were a member of a national fraternity or sorority (excluding academic and honors fraternities and sororities). Gallup conducted the survey from Jan. 15 to Jan. 29, 2021.

Gallup Alumni Survey interviews are conducted via the web, in English only. Samples are weighted to correct for unequal selection probability and nonresponse. The data are weighted to match national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic

ethnicity, education and region. Gallup bases demographic weighting targets on the most recent Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older U.S. bachelor's degree or higher population.

All reported margins of sampling error for the Gallup Alumni Survey of all college graduates include the computed design effects for weighting.

For results based on all 10,081 respondents from the Gallup Alumni Survey, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 1.4$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on the 3,033 respondents who indicated that they were a member of a national fraternity or sorority, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 2.9$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

# About NPC/NIC

The National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), one of the largest organizations advocating for women, is the umbrella group for 26 national and international social sororities. Through its advocacy, NPC highlights the importance of women's-only spaces and showcases the transformational power of the sorority experience.



For more information, including a complete list of NPC sororities, visit [npcwomen.org](http://npcwomen.org).

The North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) is a trade association that represents 58 national and international men's fraternities, including a diverse range of culturally and religiously based organizations, on campuses in the United States and Canada. The NIC is committed to supporting organizations for young men to seek and form positive, enriching fraternal bonds. The health and safety of students guides NIC's advocacy, standards and education.



For more information, including a complete list of NIC fraternities, visit [nicfraternity.org](http://nicfraternity.org).

# About Gallup

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.

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