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### Engaging Student Clubs and Organizations

Office of Marketing and Communications

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# Engaging Student Clubs and Organizations

When classes moved off campus in wake of the pandemic in the spring of 2020, many thought student clubs and organizations at [Governors State University](#) would hit pause, but GSU's Jaguars are moving forward.

Club leaders say it's not enough to just continue to function at a time when in-person socialization has been at an all-time low. Now, engagement in student life is especially important.



[Reconstructed,](#)

GSU's Literary and Visual Arts Journal, showcases student artwork and literature in a magazine curated and designed by students. With the debut of the journal typically in May alongside an annual banquet, its plans were altered by the pandemic. The staff decided to postpone the banquet and the publication of the journal until the fall semester in order to safely celebrate GSU's artists and writers. Rachel Beckmann, Vice

President and Graphic Designer of Reconstructed, explains that the decision to push back the deadline required a change in mindset for the entire staff.

“For any student leader, such a drastic change in deadlines could make one twiddle their thumbs, especially for someone like myself who prefers to keep busy. However, this pandemic has taught me how to adjust to the current slower-paced environment.”



The school year didn't ended as Kappa Delta Pi, the International Honors Society in [Education](#), had originally planned, but members look forward to opportunities in the upcoming fall semester such as an initiation ceremony—whether it be in person or online. Caitlin Miller, president of Kappa Delta Pi, says the pandemic has made her realize that if there is a will, then there is a way. According to Miller, there were a multitude of events that were canceled due to COVID-19 including the Spring Social and a partnership with the [Student Education Association](#) (SEA) and the [Family Development Center](#).

“Dedication, creativity, a positive attitude, and determination go a long way in ensuring success, despite the circumstances. If online learning continues throughout the fall semester, we have plans in place to still engage our members in events remotely,” Miller said.

[The International Culture Organization](#) (ICO) has had a similar experience post-COVID-19. According to Milica Maras, Treasurer of ICO, there were some events that did not lend themselves to a virtual setting, such as Holi Festival; however, the organization was able to organize a Virtual Multicultural Fashion Show—one of ICO’s most popular events. To do this, Maras reached out to students and asked them to submit videos showcasing their traditional attire which she edited together to create the show.



Maras believes that being a part of ICO is one of the best ways for a student to experience college life. She looks forward to next semester which is expected to be more engaging than ever, complete with a new set of leaders on the executive board.

GSU's College of Arts and Science newsletter, [ArtSci](#), has been able to continue business as usual, debuting the most recent issue on schedule. Erik Kay, writer and editor for ArtSci, said there were even some advantages to meeting online.

"Originally we would have met in-person and conducted our editing together. However, we had no problems doing so online," Kay explains. "My favorite part about holding online conferences was the fact that I didn't have to get out of my pajamas!"

For the fall, ArtSci is prepared for either in-person or a remote classes. "Our publication could certainly be put together entirely through remote interviews and writing/editing sessions," Kay said.

According to Penelope Perez, the Treasurer for the [Physical Therapy Student Association](#) (PTSA), the organization is committed to creative ideas and events. Perez hopes to be able to reschedule events for the fall semester in an online or in-person format, as regulations allow, such as its "Run for Rehab 5k" at GSU which benefits the Brain Injury Association of Illinois. For now, Perez is content with taking this time to discuss plans for future PTSA events and help foster the growth and development of club leaders as they transition leadership roles.



During such an uncertain time, it is important to look ahead into future possibilities. Neha Sajeev, [Student Healthcare Management Association](#) (SHCMA) communication chair, is looking to continue planning for the future while actively posting on social media to keep club members engaged. Sajeev believes that by being active in student life, it may help ease feelings of isolation members may experience during the pandemic.

As Illinois gradually moves into phase four, students are looking forward to being on campus again to engage with peers.

Despite the challenges, it is clear that in the face of uncertainty Jaguar Nation sticks together to win!