



## **ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF PI SIGMA ALPHA**

In December 1919, members of the government department at the University of Texas, Austin gathered for their monthly faculty meeting. In addition to traditional business, the concept of a new political science honor society emerged. The task was handed to Professor C. Perry Patterson and over the course of the next year he set the foundation for what was to become Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society.

The Alpha chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha was formally chartered in October 1920. The first class of members were undergrads and graduate students. The class included a future Supreme Court Justice and U.S. Attorney General, a future U.S. Ambassador, a number of future attorneys, and other individuals who would go on to make an impact in their communities. Patterson set out to build the organization and added the University of Oklahoma (Beta) and the University of Kansas (Gamma) in 1922. By end of the decade 14 chapters had emerged. Patterson served as president of the organization until 1932 and remained a driving force around its expansion. In the next three decades nearly 20 chapters were founded across the country by individuals who had been inducted as members at the University of Texas, Austin.

Today, Pi Sigma Alpha hosts chapters on nearly 850 campuses and has inducted more than 300,000 members. Its rolls feature national, state, and local political leaders including one president, three Supreme Court justices, and dozens of members of Congress. Through these 100 years there have been many changes but neither the mission of the organization or the quality of the young men and women inducted has changed. Each year those who have achieved academic excellence are inducted and display the same passion for politics and policy. Like those who first joined, today's student strives to uphold the purpose of Pi Sigma Alpha first described in 1919: "to encourage the scientific and practical study of problems of government, to foster reforms in our governmental machinery, and to aid in the education of the electorate in problems of government."

We are excited to have you as a member and hope you will continue to uphold the ideals set forward by our founders.