

Seeking the Heights and Finding Alpha Chi

BY LAURA KNOBEL (IOTA ALPHA, ALUMNAE INITIATES), ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LIFETIME ENGAGEMENT

Monika Salita (Iota Alpha, Alumnae Initiates) is wise beyond her years.

A native of Washington state and the daughter of Polish immigrants, Monika studied abroad in college, and then her passion for language and exploration took her across Europe after graduation as a teacher. She speaks three languages, holds dual college degrees, has completed multiple professional certificates and works full-time as a marketing program manager.

But still, she says, “I knew I wanted more from my life.”

Exploring and learning independently wasn’t enough for Monika – she sought connection. “I got to thinking of organizations that could offer me an experience to use my professional skills to give back to an organization and mentor others,” she says.

As an only child, Monika had headed off to the University of Washington without much perspective of what college would be like, let alone how to navigate the overwhelming experience of sorority recruitment.



MONIKA

Although she was curious, she says her nerves got the better of her and she never quite got up the confidence to attend recruitment events.

But as she considered her next step later in life, she thought back to her time in college and recalled friends who were sorority women and who stuck out to her as “bright, uplifting, welcoming and engaging.”

In addition to professional and personal development, Monika realized she wanted to “grow friendships with other like-minded women who shared my values...A sorority provides the opportunity to do all of this as a part of one organization with the backing of a rich history.”

When it came time to research sorority membership through an alumna initiate program, in addition to our national philanthropy of domestic violence awareness and our musical heritage, a few key things about Alpha Chi Omega really spoke to Monika.

“First, I found strength and encouragement in the Real. Strong. Women.® tagline. I know that when I was an 18-year-old college freshman, I certainly did not feel strong, and [that was] one reason why I never went through formal recruitment,” Monika shares. “Secondly, the open motto rang out to me as the encouragement I needed in my personal life - the subtle, resounding call to aim high and always try my best.”

Perhaps most importantly, she got the same feeling that many members have about our sisterhood: “Alpha Chi Omega simply felt like home.”



MONIKA (THIRD FROM LEFT) WITH NEW SISTERS AT HER INITIATION

On Hera Day 2020, Monika found herself “appreciat[ing] every little service rendered” as sisters of the Iota Iota (Seattle, Washington) alumnae chapter came together at a member’s home to host the Alumnae Initiation Ceremony. Monika recalls, “I was enamored with the history and Ritual. I was so appreciative of all the hard work my new sisters put into making my initiation such a touching and memorable experience.”

As one might expect, Monika quickly got involved in Alpha Chi Omega in a myriad of ways after her initiation, with no plans to stop anytime soon. Already an active member of Iota Iota and Rho Chi Rho (Alumnae Initiates) alumnae chapters, a participant in the Women & Wisdom program and a Foundation donor, she also recently joined the volunteer ranks and became a member of the Sister Outreach Team. *(Editor's*

Note: Read more on the team on page 11).

“I am excited about what the future holds for me in this organization,” Monika says. “You get as much out of Alpha Chi Omega as you put into it. The notion that ‘It’s not for four years, it’s for life’ is evident.”

Alpha Chi Omega is fortunate that a woman like Monika went seeking the heights and landed in our sisterhood. We can’t wait to see what she does next.

MONIKA IS ONE OF MORE THAN 235,000 SISTERS LIVING OUT OUR MISSION TO CONNECT, LEAD, GROW AND SERVE. IS THERE A WOMAN IN YOUR COMMUNITY YOU THINK WOULD MAKE A GREAT ALPHA CHI OMEGA? LEARN MORE AT [.ALPHACHIOmega.ORG/NAIP](http://ALPHACHIOmega.ORG/NAIP).