**KEYNOTE SPEECH**

**FOR**

**DONALD FLORIDDIA**

Hello everyone!!! It's great to be here with all of you at this year's annual Grand Council Convention for Kappa Psi. I would like to take a moment to thank (**If you feel it's necessary, take a moment to thank any organizers, current officers, and anyone that was involved in coordinating the session, etc**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for doing such an excellent job in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ this year. I would also like to acknowledge some of the current officers and leaders of Kappa Psi, namely \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who has done a great job as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. This year's theme is "Preserving our Future," and in order to do that we must be respectful of our legacy and conscious of our actions and mandates in the present.

As we look back on the history of pharmacy and explore, we can find different **roots....** and herbs.... and stories that served to remind us who paved the way for our current practice. Some may look towards the establishment of the country's first hospital in Philadelphia back in 1751, and that spawned a pharmacy to serve the needs of the doctors and patients. It is believed that John Morgan, the second pharmacist at this Philadelphia hospital, is credited for establishing professional procedures that influence our practices and methods today. He recognized the importance of writing prescriptions and as both doctor and pharmacist, it was a brilliant move on his part for so many reasons. First of all, having both points of view informed his abilities and understanding in both professions, and I'll bet he was able to empathize with the challenges he and his colleagues encountered, as both doctor and pharmacist, and secondly, of course as the person not only writing but also filling those medicinal orders, Morgan was probably the only person **able to read his own handwriting**. (**Wait for the laugh**).... it **HAD** to start **SOMEWHERE**.... right ? (**Wait for the laugh**). Some people cite the Chinese emperor Shen Nang who lived and reigned in around 2000 BC who researched the use of hundreds of herbs and their ultimate effect and value on the human body. Ancient Egyptian medicine dates back to around 2900 BC. Theophrastus was an Ancient Greek philosopher who was known as "the Father of Botany" and his writings have shown to be incredibly ahead of his time. .... and then there was Mithridates VI, King of Pontus. It's been said that he " battled Rome for a lifetime," yet somehow found the wherewithal to research and practice "the art of poisoning." He used his prisoners for experimentation, but he also dosed himself for practice I don't know about this.... it could be a little counter intuitive, but it would certainly accelerate the development of effective antidotes! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Mithridates may have been a bit overzealous, but he and all of his comrades throughout history have done their part to advance the cause and ultimately the effectiveness of medicine which led to their natural progression to preserve the future .... no matter how unwittingly it was achieved.

Kappa Psi was founded in 1879, first as a prep school fraternity, founded by F. Harvey Smith on the campus of Russell Military Academy in New Haven, Connecticut..... but you probably knew that already (**Wait for the laugh**). It began as both a medical and pharmaceutical fraternity and then evolved into an organization committed to providing a nexus for all issues, innovations, and connections that would have a positive impact on the profession of pharmacy while encouraging learning, fellowship, and advancement of all those involved and participating.

Now I'm not going to say that I **KNEW** F. Harvey Smith, but I **WILL** say that my history with this fraternity goes back.... back.... **WAY** back... and it's because it's meant so much to me, throughout my life, and my participation through my college and professional career that I am here today, meeting and speaking with all of you, and I pray none of you are descendants or acolytes of Mithridates VI (**Wait for the laugh**). I intend for this talk to be fun, informative, and inspiring, but let's keep one thing in mind.... although there is no "Comedy Wall of Fame" in the Kappa Psi headquarters, and whereas it's probably true that the search term "pharmacist comedians" is not a trending topic currently on Google, there's always new precedents to be set... and I am an optimist!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

I have been involved with this great organization for over fifty years... and I will not forget my introduction, my first impressions, and the natural flow of participation and subsequent sense of community and possibility that took hold from the very beginning. It was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**give the year**) at a convention in San Francisco that I first had an experience of what it would be like to be involved with this fraternity. I was \_\_\_\_\_\_ years old, finishing up college, and a man named \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ engaged me in conversation. He mentioned that it might be a good idea if I considered going to University of the Pacific for my graduate work, and before I knew it, **BOOM**!! Over forty years have passed since that conversation in San Francisco. I did my graduate work at University of the Pacific, I had another great opportunity, and that was to study nuclear pharmacy at USC for a year, I made friends, I advanced my career, I mentored others coming up through the ranks, and it was completely due to my involvement in and participation within Kappa Psi, that I achieved any kind of success or accomplishment. This organization has provided a haven of sorts.... a clearing house.... a central, common ground for all people interested in this profession... from students to new entry level pharmacists to renowned professors, faculty, and prominent figures in this world.... you know... the **movers and shakers.**.... and keep in mind, if all of that moving an shaking get to be too much, .... we've got a pill for that!!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

Throughout my involvement in Kappa Psi, each experience yielded new promise and with enough vision and determination, greater opportunities and prospects evidenced themselves. Thanks to my dedication to my career, my eagerness to learn and be involved, and of course, (**Do you want to say**) my **devilishly quick wit** (**Wait for the laugh**), I met two young men who really understood me, shared my enthusiasm for the profession, and were in sync with me professionally. **(If your 2 partners are there, it would be nice to introduce them**). Those two men are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and they have been my good friends and great business partners for the past \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years. Back in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we started the first centralized nuclear pharmacy concept in California, and for the past \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years we have done whatever is possible to advance the purposes of nuclear medicine in the state of California and beyond. .... and .... you guessed it....**NONE** of this would have been possible without the guidance, support, and network so generously available through the tireless contributions of the members of Kappa Psi.

Over the course of its lifetime... so far... Kappa Psi has grown to be a strong and positive force that provides enrichment for both our educations and our professional careers. Since it chartered its first chapter in 1898 at the School of Pharmacy at Columbia University, then went on its own after splitting from the medical fraternity in 1924, we have grown to one hundred and six active collegiate chapters and seventy six graduate chapters. We can be found throughout the United States, Canada, and the Bahamas, and over the years we've had a community that exceeds eighty thousand members. With those kinds of numbers, we all know that it's not only laughter that's the **best medicine**.... it's partnership, participation, and sharing the "joys of the pharmacist's world!" ... all jokes aside, we are all so fortunate to have this great resource.

It's no secret and certainly no surprise that all aspects of life in our global community are changing quickly and it is our responsibility to stay apace with the knowledge base, insurance rules, regulatory updates, and technological and medical advancements that seem to be updated **QID**... and on top of it all, we have to know Latin.... and we have to be able to read every doctor's handwriting!! (**Wait for the laugh**).... note to you younger folks in the audience.... those of you who will only know electronic prescriptions....that'll be one less opportunity for a "doctor/handwriting" joke! (**Wait for the laugh**) that's like a cartoon I saw a few weeks ago.... one elementary school teacher is saying to the other.... "I have an idea... we'll write in **cursive** and the kids will think it's a secret code..." if you're not sure of what that means, we can explain it later... (**wait for the laugh**).

Today this organization is made up of about 80% students and graduates and approximately 20% professional pharmacists, and let me tell you, the energy and enthusiasm of the younger members is beautifully offset by the knowledge, wisdom, and experience of our more seasoned colleagues. Although the profession as an entity has its roots in its extensive history and the basic tenets of ancient pharmacy practice still hold today... except for maybe the intentional poisoning part (**Wait for the laugh**), today's students and professionals have to be prepared, knowledgeable, and poised for the challenges of the future.

A wise man once said, "The best way a mentor can prepare another leader is to expose him or her to other great people." ... and **THAT'S** why we are all here and why we find value in being a part of Kappa Psi.

The field of pharmacy has always been fascinating, demanding, and relevant to its times. That's evidenced by the number of pharmacy programs that are steadily growing throughout this country and Canada. Records tell us that in the United States, in 1987 there were seventy-two pharmacy schools. By June, 2014, there were a reported one hundred and thirty accredited pharmacy colleges, and current estimates raise that number to over one hundred and fifty pharmacy schools in the United States alone (**I got these statistics from Wikipedia.... do they seem correct to you? If not, we can adjust them**). What does that mean? More competition.... which is great, because it inspires all of you out there who are still in school to realize that the competition is real and the number of players, or eligible grads, is growing. It tells us that the more people that are involved, the greater the chance of a broader sense of community, intellectual and professional support, friendship, and synergy, and maybe, as what happened to me, the great good fortune to discover lifelong partnerships.

So, yes.... there's competition.... a steady stream of challenges, rules and regulations to learn and to follow, and there is also the current social and professional climate... as health care resources update, morph, swerve, and compound, so does our responsibility to be malleable, alert, aware, and poised for critical changes in our chosen field. We have to stay informed, be amenable to any curveballs headed our way, and to learn of and have access to the tools, tips and tricks that will insure our ability to respond with the most contemporary knowledge, solutions, and efficiency possible. Peoples' lives and well being depend on our skills, responsiveness, and wisdom.

Steve Jobs has said of the future, " You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect your future. You have to trust something - your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all of the difference in my life." For me and my experience, as I look back, I see the common thread, "the dot connector," and to a great extent, my own "crystal ball," in my participation within Kappa Psi. I was fortunate enough to have found a comprehensive and supportive arena within which to "play-" to find mentorship, opportunity, and connection to all things pharmaceutical. Kappa Psi is a great fraternity... a fellowship... an organization, but when it comes down to the actual analysis of what it truly is, we have to see that it is a context, one that holds the possibility for each of its members to participate to whatever degree works for them. We have a rich legacy that becomes even more relevant as our constituents gain knowledge and experience while accessing and enriching the numerous services and benefits membership affords. Every generation has its advancements and challenges, and so far, since before the turn of the last century, Kappa Psi has been as fluid and as elastic as has been needed to serve its participants.

For our professional members who have been associated with Kappa Psi, you have a direct experience of how the world has changed within your professional tenure. When I began my career forty odd years ago, this country as a society was in a very different place.... (**Name two or three conditions that were very different when you started**). I know it's quaint to imagine some of these things now but back then we had to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It wasn't unusual to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. And don't forget we also had to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and if all of that weren't enough, when we got phone calls from doctors' offices, patients, and suppliers, we had to stay put! We couldn't move around any further than the length of a telephone cord! (**Wait for the laugh**)... Remember the good old days when we had to count pills manually?

As we advance medically, procedurally, and technologically, the pharmacy world can become an unfamiliar place, but lack of understanding is not an acceptable excuse. Our function in the lives of our customers and patients is becoming more vital and if we are to prepare for the future, we have to be open to absorbing and responding to the trends that are evidencing themselves in the present. To paraphrase Steve Jobs, we have to find the dots of our lives.... our careers.... and our evolving practices... in order to connect them and pave the road to the future. Of course those dots come in the form of participation in a vital, engaged organization. And as the world advances, it is up to each one of us to progress along with it and to insure we take our colleagues and resources with us. As we observe and respond to the trends evolving in all aspects of life and industry, we cannot turn our backs on the simple fact that those trends will have an impact on us. It may not be direct and immediate, but it will have an effect. As an example, whether or not we are aware of it, the retail climate of the United States is changing. Who would have predicted ten or fifteen years ago that mega merchants like Sears, K-Mart, Macy's and others would find themselves in survival mode.... who would have thought that we would see headlines heralding "the death of the shopping mall?" If any of you think this will not affect you as a current or future pharmacist, think again. Your careers and this profession are not predicated on a narrow world view. As stores lose customers and close and malls lose leases, tens of thousands of jobs are lost. Local economies can be harshly affected. People's need for and ability to pay for medical care and medications are drastically impacted... and in turn the pharmacy profession is affected.

We are all aware of the unsettled conditions and proposed legislation facing health care. We have learned that as healthcare costs accelerate, responses to care and treatment have to adapt as well. We see how managed care and insurance companies are influencing the way patients gain access to, and pay for medications, and we see how innovations in medical research have a constant impact on drugs that are needed and hopefully available. Many of you are students and you may not have a direct or personal experience of the challenges faced by pharmacies and patients on a grass roots level. We know what we read in the newspapers or the reports we see on television. We hear of incredible incidents of price gouging for life saving drugs. We may learn about expensive "cocktails" of medications that patients can no longer afford. There is so much uncertainty in the health insurance and managed care field that sometimes there are no answers to provide.... and when people attempt to contact health insurance companies for clarity, none may be available. As an example, I knew a woman that had to take a certain eye drop. It is branded. She was smart enough to find a co-pay program with the drug manufacturer and was paying approximately $30.00 for a bottle of these eye drops. Her insurance company's mail order pharmacy didn't accept the co-pay program and on top of that, they were almost forcing her to use that mail order prescription partner to get the drug. When she called up to get the price of the same eye drop, through mail order, it would have been $499.00!!! How is that justified? How many consumers and patients **even know to question** the motives of the insurance providers and drug companies? I will tell you though, that she found solace, commiseration, and cooperation from her local pharmacist, and he could have been.... and might be, one of you. And participation through membership with Kappa Psi brings with it access to a forum of discussion and partnership to navigate the uncertain waters of the future as issues like this one become more commonplace.

What other factors might affect us in the future? When we think of trends in the pharmaceutical industry, those trends may come from anywhere. Trends may have to do with advancements in nuclear medicine, the next steps after nuclear, the response to discovering more advanced procedures to combatting "super bugs," government regulations on medications and therapies, the increased popularity of natural remedies, the evolution of us as human beings, our life expectancies and our responses and reactions to evolving environmental factors, the business structure of the profession itself.... it's impossible to pinpoint from where that new information and innovation or change may generate, but as dedicated professionals and future professionals, we must be informed, prepared and connected. We won't be correct about every prediction, but we must be amenable, open minded, and willing to be as ready as possible. As Nelson Mandela said, "I never lose. I either **win** or I **learn**."

I also want to say that right now, in this climate, professional opportunity is ripe in the field of pharmacy. At the education level, as I said earlier, there is increasing opportunity to get a quality education. Graduates have chances to get well paying, interesting jobs, and job scope is evolving while responsibilities become increasingly diversified, and that's another point to consider.... as the job market evolves, so do employment trends. While years ago, a person in a job had a particular focus, in today's market, it is not unusual for an employee.... and maybe even **YOU**, to have multiple responsibilities. And although the term "multitasking" was coined in 1965 by IBM in reference to their supercomputers, contemporary meaning applies almost exclusively to human ability. That's a condition that is so pervasive, we may not even be aware.... probably because we're doing to much... all at once!! (**Wait for the laugh**)

It has been my intention today to share my experience of having the privilege of being a part of a fraternity that has served, mentored, and partnered with me so well for so many crucial years of my life. While the French Republic claimed, "Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!...I would like to adapt that for Kappa Psi and coin a new motto... "Pharmacy! Community! Fraternity!" As you can see, I have a tremendous amount of respect for what this organization stands for, and for how it supports its members. From biennial conventions like this one, to dinners, receptions, events, forums, and other means of connection through the organization and its regional chapters, Kappa Psi has made an immeasurable contribution to this profession for the past one hundred plus years.

It has also been my intention today to encourage all of you to take a look at your own goals and how you plan to preserve the future personally, and of course professionally. What we have here is a great mix of experience and enthusiasm, knowledge and inquisitiveness, wisdom and curiosity. When all of those elements come together, like a perfect cocktail of potent ingredients, magic.... or at the very least synergy, happens.

I am honored to have been both acolyte and mentor, student and guide. This is an honorable, fascinating, organically evolving field and fraternity that will only improve with diverse and energetic participation. I wish all of you the very best in your careers and in life, and I look forward to continue being your Kappa Psi brother. Thank you all!