

# COUCH PIT UNIVERSITY FRATERNITY





Couch Pit University Fraternity (commonly known as CPU) is a unique organization of papermakers who have attained the rank of paper machine superintendent (or higher) and have joined forces to “give back to the papermaking industry the knowledge and experience they have accumulated over the years”.



CPU's mission statement:



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Dedicated to perpetuate the  
“*ART*” of papermaking



Couch Pit Fraternity was the brainchild of Gene Shurling, a former PIMA “Paper Machine Superintendent of the Year” who at the time was working for the Black Clawson Corp. Gene felt there was a need for an organization made up of premier papermakers that could capture the collective talents of its membership and focus on key issues confronting the industry.



The membership would be nominated and elected for induction into the organization by their peers in the industry. Under the sponsorship of Black Clawson's president, the late Carl Michael Landegger Jr., the Couch Pit Fraternity was founded, chartered, and registered as a non-profit organization in 1992 with 54 charter members.



In 1994 the members proposed a name change.

Their position was that anyone who had 25 years experience within this industry and had achieved at least the level of paper machine superintendent, had the equivalent of a college degree whether they had obtained one or not. Thus, the Couch Pit Fraternity became Couch Pit University Fraternity.



There is a very strict list of requirements that must be met to enable an individual to be considered for membership in this organization. These requirements include but is not limited to being of high moral character and respected by his or her peers in the industry.



- To be considered for membership in CPU, a candidate must be nominated by an existing member in good standing, approved unanimously by a five member nominating committee, and inducted at the group's annual meeting.
- Requirements that *must* be met for a nomination to even be considered for membership are as follows:



- Have at least 25 years of experience in the pulp and paper manufacturing process



- Have at least 25 years of experience in the pulp and paper manufacturing process
- Be at least 50 years of age or older

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- Have at least 25 years of experience in the pulp and paper manufacturing process
- Be at least 50 years of age or older
- Have attained positions equal to or greater than paper machine superintendent
- or



- Have at least 25 years experience in the pulp and paper manufacturing process
  - Be at least 50 years of age or older
  - Have attained positions equal to or greater than paper machine superintendent
- or
- Have been the recipient of PIMA's Brookshire Moore Superintendent of the Year award.



- The PIMA Superintendent of the Year recipient is automatically inducted into the organization and all other stated requirements are waived.



- Although only 9 of the charter members are still on the active membership list, the Fraternity has continually grown by bringing present and former superintendents together to share their experience and knowledge with one another and with the paper industry as a whole.



- CPU currently has 85 active members, 9 of who are charter members. There are also 7 members on Emeritus status, 5 of which are charter members. There are 29 members on the deceased list.
- No more than 10 new members can be added annually and total membership cannot exceed 100 nationwide.



In 1997 Carl Landegger Jr. suffered a fatal heart attack at the early age of 42. Gene Shurling died in a tragic accident within the next year. At that time CPU faced uncertainties as to its financial future, but with the assistance of several new sponsors and a 1998 agreement for affiliation with PIMA, CPU is now stronger than ever.



- Under the PIMA umbrella, CPU maintains its own board of officers, elects its members and establishes its own rules. CPU members are automatically members of PIMA and serve as a “Professional Specialist Group”.



- A year or two after being organized, CPU was asked to conduct a roundtable at Dixie PIMA. The session was so well received it has become a permanent session of the Dixie division's annual conference.
- CPU now also organizes and sponsors the Superintendent Roundtable at National PIMA conferences.



- The current 85 members of this distinguished organization now range from 40 to over 90 years of age. The average member of Couch Pit University Fraternity has spent more than 40 years in the pulp and paper industry.



- CPU is an elite organization and one that is a distinct honor of which to be a member. Many people have described this organization as being the  
the  
“Hall of Fame” of Papermakers.



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