

# Keramos Annual Report

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Academic Year 2019-2020

Ceramics Building,  
University of Illinois.—27



**I** ILLINOIS





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# A Brief Forward from Illinois' Faculty Advisor

It has been a pleasure to serve as the faculty advisor for the Illinois Chapter of Keramos for the year 2019-2020. I took over this role from Trudy Kriven in late 2018 and have had the chance to meet with the student leaders to discuss plans, observe this spring's new member initiation, tour the group's "play with clay" facilities including the new kiln, and participate in discussions with members over dinner. From these observations, I can attest that this chapter remains very well organized and highly active, with participation from students in all years and continued innovation from the executive board.

The events and updates from this academic year are detailed in the following report. I would like to highlight that the number of people initiated into Keramos membership within this Chapter has increased each year for the past two years. Forty-one new members joined in the academic year 2019-2020. Additionally, graduating students are particularly excited about gaining customized Keramos graduation cords, a new perk of remaining a member in good standing, introduced this year. The Chapter has continued unique activities including Play with Clay, Fall and Spring Initiations, and professional development activities, while partnering with the Materials Advantage student group on other events to increase participation and to benefit a broader cross-section of the materials community on campus. Three novel fundraising activities, including the Holiclays sweater sale, not only supplemented the budget but also brought together faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students to build community. Educational activities continued from previous years included the study sessions, course feedback opportunities, and tutorials, but due to the covid-19-related cancellation of late spring semester events, the excellent clay-based demonstration planned for Engineering Open House could not be held this year. Nonetheless, the planning for that will not go to waste, as this event will at least be held next year. Students participated in professional development activities including trips to the MS&T and TMS conferences, where they took part in the annual Mug Drop and Materials Bowl trivia competitions, finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the latter. Students also completed an impressive and extensive series of outreach/service and social activities, which are described in further detail in the report.

Even while working from home, the Chapter has successfully carried out elections for next year's executive board. I look forward to working with Justin Gruber (incoming President), Joe Boyce (incoming Vice President), Vineet Tagare (incoming Treasurer), Kacper Rebeszko (incoming Professional Chair), Talen Seghal (Herald 1), and Noah Hanselman (Herald 2). In summary, the Illinois Chapter of Keramos remains strongly committed to student professional development, education, and service, as evidenced by the wide variety of successful events held this past year and upward trajectory in membership.

Sincerely,

Nicola H. Perry

Assistant Professor, Materials Science & Engineering, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign





# Annual Plan for the Coming Year

Dear Keramos National Board,

I am excited to serve as the next president of Keramos's Alpha Chapter at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. As a Keramos member for the past two years I was able to participate in various Keramos events and engage with different members, learning from older members and teaching younger ones. The past year I served as Service Chair for Material Advantage and worked very closely with the Keramos board. This allowed me to learn all the inner workings of the organization and understand how events are organized and run. As president I aim to increase both member quantity as well as active member participation, increase professional involvement, and foster better relationships with materials science and engineering professors.

Our Keramos chapter continues to add members every year during both the Fall and the Spring semesters. However, there are still many people in the materials science department that are hesitant to join, I plan to work with the Social Media Chair to spread information about the organization, about both the benefits and the amazing opportunities that Keramos continues to provide. I hope to continue to help oversee the expansion of Keramos. For the past two years Keramos initiations and events have grown and I plan to build upon this success. Working professional relationships with engineering companies are critical in the success of our Keramos chapter. In the past we have had companies visit and talk about what they work on and what opportunities they have for students. I would like to take the next step in our relationship with these companies and have sponsored company meet ups where members visit them to learn more about their opportunities. Our expectation is that we would see more involvement in the school's engineering career fairs in the fall and spring. There has been a shortage of materials science and engineering companies in the recent years, and if we establish stronger relationships with various companies it could encourage them to come to the career fairs which can provide engineering internships and full-time opportunities for our members. I would also like to increase involvement with Illinois professors because having a close relationship with the department is critical. I would like to continue with professor lunches, an experimental concept from a couple years ago where Keramos members and professors chat in a casual environment. A new idea that will strengthen Keramos' relationship with the materials science faculty would be professor appreciation gifts (beta tested this year by the current executive board) from the students that shows how grateful we are for their hard work and dedication.

I am looking forward to overseeing all these changes and building upon the longstanding success of Keramos at Illinois. I believe our Keramos chapter will continue to succeed and improve. I cannot wait to start working bring our materials science community together in these difficult times.

University of Illinois Keramos Chapter President 2020-2021

Justin Gruber



## List of Officers

	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021
<b>President</b>	Amy Merkelz [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Justin Gruber [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
<b>Vice President</b>	José Mancias [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Joe Boyce [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
<b>Treasurer</b>	Colleen Moauro [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Vineet Tagare [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
<b>Professional and Alumni Relations Chair</b>	Gillian Niezyniecki (Fall) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Kacper Rebeszko (Spring) [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Kacper Rebeszko [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
<b>Herald/Secretary</b>	Talen Sehgal [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Talen Sehgal [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
<b>Herald/Webmaster</b>	Noah Hanselman [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Noah Hanselman [REDACTED] [REDACTED]



# Active Members List

## Spring 2017 Initiates

Humza Ahmad	Kevin Halloran	Jiwoo Lee	Jarod Meyer
Justin Silberman	Dylan Blake	Lukas Janavicius	Matthew Lee
Sarah Pirih	Edward Thomas	Julia Brodecki	Aneesh Jonelagadda
Samuel Li	Alexander Prather	Jingyi Wen	En Ju Cho
Namita Kulkarni	Mengke Ma	Paige Pendergast	Hongtao Yang
Kelsey Golk	Bao Lam	José Mancias	Julia Schultz

## Fall 2017 Initiates

Tyler Jensen	Madeleine McDonald	Katherine Vuong	Ari Harding
Brian Liu	Laion Neves	Rachel Yuan	Hannah Harris
Raka Mahakul	Gina Oshana	Justin Pham	Noah Vivo

## Spring 2018 Initiates

Talen Sehgal	Clarissa Domanus	Abigail Berg	Vineet Tagare
Alberto Martinez- Garcia	Justin Gruber	Colleen Moauro	Jay Baek
Amy Merkelz	Timmy Dong		

## Fall 2018 Initiates

Alison Nunes	Matthew Wu	Kevin Lee	Amay Nirula
Wonjoon Suk	Jin Woo Kim	Elena Di Mare	Sankhya Hirani

## Spring 2019 Initiates

Andrij Kozych	Adamaris Nuñez	Tommy Yang	Adam Zatar
Alekh Beri	Alex Futterer	Alexander Swett	Aly Gilani
Bonian Pan	Cole Klobuchar	Dana Yun	Donghyun Lee
Elizabeth Atkinson	Gillian Niezyniecki	Grace Levita	Haibo Gao
Hui Zhi Tao	Ian Flueck	Joe Boyce	Jon Ripper
Jordan Meyer	Lucas Carrillo	Matthew Larson	Meera Jagannathan
Noah Hanselman	Patrick Gardocki	Samuel Feathers	Trisha Gupta Sharma
Varun Sharma			



## New Initiates This Academic Year

### Fall 2019 Initiates

Avery Maloto	Patrick McNutt	Talha Tariq	Corynne Roberts
Nihar Mara	Joshua Simpson	Vansh Gupta	Mohammad Yassin
Paloma Alcala	Kevin Li	Kacper Rebeszko	Meghan Oh
Amanda Mittanck	Brisa McGrath		

### Spring 2020 Initiates

Julia Dreher-Threlkeld	Christina Yu	Maryanne Derkaloustian	Julia Prendergast
James Heaton	Jenna Ornias	Malik Siddique	Bailey Wooldridge
Charlotte Holas	Mostafa Abdalla	Jessica Lawson	Stephen Skala
Nathan Levandovsky	Katelyn Bagwell	Maria Liset Castellanos	Nithiyassri Vivagandan
Ryan Halton	Valeria Cruz	Catherine Ott	Simon Grimm
Micah Rubel	Jan Lakomy	Xiangrui Deng	Eden Li
Lucas Zaczek			



## Graduating Members This Academic Year

Sai Komaragiri ████████████████████ ████████████████████	Arianna Harding ████████████████████ ████████████████████
Charlotte Isreal ████████████████████ ████████████████████	Priyalini Bharath ████████████████████ ████████████████████
Enola Ma ████████████████████ ████████████████████	Katherine Vuong ████████████████████ ████████████████████
Jose Mancias ████████████████████ ████████████████████	Rachel Yuan ████████████████████ ████████████████████
Paige Prendergast ████████████████████ ████████████████████	Humza Ahmad ████████████████████ ████████████████████
Andrij Kozych ████████████████████ ████████████████████	Julia Brodecki ████████████████████ ████████████████████
Suyoung Choi	Madeleine McDonald
Dylan Blake	Gina Oshana
Kevin Halloran	Jarod Meyer
Justin Silberman	Lukas Janavicius
Matthew Lee	Sarah Pirih
Edward Thomas	Raka Mahakul
Aneesh Jonelagadda	Samuel Li
Jingyi Wen	Namita Kulkarni
Justin Pham	Pranjal Agarwal
Bao Lam	Julia Schultz
Kevin Sager	Noah Vivo





# Honorary Keramos Member Nomination

*Prof. Henrique M. Reis, Ph.D.*

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Keramos Chapter would like to nominate Professor H. Reis to be an honorary member of Keramos for the 2019-2020 academic year. Professor Reis received his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the Universidade de Luanda in Angola in 1972, and M.S. and Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1978. He is currently a member of the Department of Industrial & Enterprise Systems Engineering (formerly General Engineering) at Illinois. His research is focused on sensor development, nondestructive testing and evaluation of infrastructure, materials characterization, structural health monitoring, and inspection and design of composite materials. His primary research motivation is to develop rapid and inexpensive nondestructive evaluation methods for assessing infrastructure, particularly asphalt concrete. He has published over 100 technical articles, reports, and book chapters in these fields. As a fellow of the American Society for Nondestructive Testing (ASNT) since 2000, Professor Reis has served as the chair for numerous committees within ASNT and was recently granted the ASNT 2016 Research Council Award for Sustained Excellence.



As a professor at the University of Illinois, Professor Reis has taught every design course in the Systems Engineering curriculum. His course on Nondestructive Evaluation is one of few offered at engineering colleges in the United States, and it has given dozens of Materials Science and Engineering majors knowledge of key inspection methods, including eddy current inspections, ultrasonics, and radiography, to prepare them with practical knowledge of nondestructive testing seen in many industries. His enthusiasm for teaching and significant contributions to the field of nondestructive evaluation make Professor Reis an outstanding candidate for honorary membership in Keramos.



# Treasurer's Report

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Chapter of Keramos obtained a total of \$4,275.02 and spent a total of \$4,344.93 over the course of the 2019-2020 school year. The amount gained was obtained through a combination of fundraising events, the CGIF grant, and membership fees. The amount spent was used on Play with Clay equipment, society events, graduation cords, and conferences such as MS&T 2019 and TMS 2020. The final balance is \$69.91 less than the initial balance for this year but considering the large one-time purchase for the graduation cords, we are quite happy with the financial situation of Keramos at Illinois. The following table contains the annual expenditure report for the UIUC Chapter.

<b>Bank Account</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Debit</b>	<b>Credit</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Description</b>
8/26/2019			\$2,177.34	Beginning Balance
10/7/2019	\$250.00		\$1,927.34	October Group Meeting – Papa John’s Pizza
10/21/2019	\$40.00		\$1,887.34	Evenheat Wifi-Dongle and 3D Print of Mug for Play with Clay
10/31/2019	\$1,514.25		\$373.09	Graduation Cords
10/31/2019		\$1,000.00	\$1,373.09	CGIF Grant
11/6/2019	\$9.12		\$1,363.97	November Group Meeting - (Dietary Restriction)
11/12/2019	\$284.70		\$1,079.27	Keramos Fall 2019 Initiation - Food
11/22/2019		\$700.00	\$1,779.27	Keramos Fall Initiation -Membership Fees
12/3/2019	\$8.23		\$1,771.04	December Group Meeting - (Dietary Restriction)
12/3/2019	\$176.08		\$1,594.96	December Group Meeting – Papa John’s Pizza
12/10/2019	\$64.49		\$1,530.47	Fall 2019 Gripe Session - Papa John's Pizza
1/22/2020	\$1,180.80		\$349.67	TMS Conference 2020 - Flights
2/4/2020		\$20.00	\$369.67	Blaze Pizza Fundraiser



2/4/2020	\$9.12		\$360.55	February Group Meeting - (Dietary Restriction)
2/5/2020		\$1,180.80	\$1,541.35	TMS Conference 2020 – Flights Paid Back
2/5/2020		\$0.82	\$1,542.17	Account for ATM transactions
2/16/2020	\$41.59		\$1,500.58	Engineering Open House Keramos Booth - Clay Order
2/19/2020		\$123.40	\$1,623.98	Keramos Care-the-Most Candy Gram Fundraiser
2/25/2020	\$287.67		\$1,336.31	Keramos Spring 2020 Initiation - Food
2/29/2020		\$1,250.00	\$2,586.31	Keramos Spring Initiation - Membership fees
3/1/2020	\$176.33		\$2,409.98	March Group Meeting - Papa John's Pizza
3/24/2020	\$302.55		\$2,107.43	MS&T 2019 Keramos Funded Reimbursements



# Chapter Activities

## ❖ **Note on Keramos/MA at Illinois Partnership**

- Material Advantage (MA) is another materials science student organization on campus at the University of Illinois. Keramos at Illinois is blessed to have an extremely tight-knit partnership with our local chapter of MA. Many of our events are co-sponsored in an effort to increase turnout and provide the best possible service to our materials science and engineering (MatSE) community here at the University of Illinois. Many Keramos members are also MA members. Keramos at Illinois, however, keeps many separate components including our bank accounts, fundraising efforts, and several Keramos-only events. These events include the Keramos Initiation, Play with Clay and many professional events. We at Keramos at Illinois keep our proud and unique Keramos traditions, even as we collaborate with MA to better serve the MatSE at Illinois community.

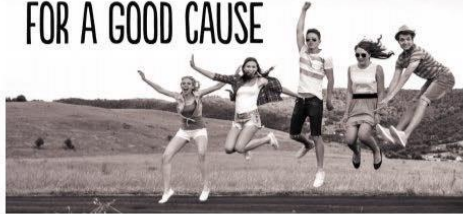
## ❖ **Fundraising Efforts**

- **Blaze Pizza**
  - This year Keramos held a profit share fundraiser at the Illini Union's Blaze Pizza. This fundraiser was prepared by our Treasurer and attended by students as well as professors. This event not only achieved an increase of our funds but also doubled as a social event between professors and students who were able to chat and eat pizza together.
- **Holiclays Sweater**
  - The Heralds created a design for a ceramics themed holiday season sweater that was available for purchase. The design read: "Happy Holiclays" over a red backdrop. The majority of the 33 purchases came from students and, to our surprise, the sweater was a favorite of graduate students as well.
- **Keramos Cares-The-Most**
  - Our final fundraiser of the academic year was organized by our Heralds and took place in the days leading up to Valentine's Day. The idea behind the event was that purchasers could buy a personalized message that comes with candy. This package would be, depending on the purchase, picked up by the receiver of the message at one of the pre-specified times or hand delivered by one of our Keramos members during the receiver's class in order to embarrass them. This was all in good fun, of course, and the ability to embarrass a friend or Valentine during class was incentive enough for 35 purchases to be made. This fundraiser is excellent because it is very popular, only requires a small cost of a bag of candy and paper, and it spread information about Keramos to people who normally are not involved as we did most of the selling in public locations, such as the Student Union Building.



# CAUSE A SCENE

## FOR A GOOD CAUSE



Enjoy yourself and support our cause at a special fundraising event for:

**Hosted by:** KERAMOS HONORS SOCIETY

**Date:** TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3RD

**Time:** 5:00pm – 8:00pm

**Location:** BLAZE PIZZA ILLINI UNION



**Bring in this flyer or show it on your phone before paying.** Blaze Pizza will donate 20% of proceeds from your meal back to our organization.

Donation amount excludes proceeds from tax and gift card purchases. Valid for dine-in and take-out only. Not valid for online orders. Alcoholic beverages excluded. Event proceeds void if flyers are distributed in or near the restaurant.

Donation amount excludes proceeds from low cost gift card purchases. Valid for dine-in and take-out only. Not valid for online orders. Alcoholic beverages excluded. Event proceeds void if flyers are distributed in or near the restaurant.

*Keramos Cares-The-Most*  
-----Candy Gram Fundraiser-----

# CANDY GRAMS

**FEB. 10-11 2020 | 10 AM TO 3 PM**  
**SOUTH ENTRANCE OF THE UNION**



Online form available 02/1 – 02/11  
Pick-up / Delivery 02/13 – 02/14  
[Order Here!](#)

**10% OF PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT ST. JUDE'S**



### ❖ Educational Outreach

#### ➤ Study Sessions

- Study sessions spanned the entire year and mostly revolved around lower level MatSE classes the week before an exam. Upperclassmen Keramos members shared some of their knowledge with MatSE students in the class of interest by answering questions, explaining key concepts and completing worked example problems. This was a great way to introduce members of the MatSE general student body to Keramos, providing us with another opportunity to encourage underclassmen to join Keramos.





- Gripe Sessions
  - These events occur at the end of every semester and revolve around student feedback to the department. Keramos at Illinois is lucky enough to have fantastic relationships with our previously mentioned partner organization Materials Advantage (MA) as well as with the MatSE department faculty. This event was made in coordination by all three organizations. Keramos and MA invite the MatSE general student body to attend a meeting and go through all the MatSE courses that had been offered during the semester. Students who were registered in each class give positive and negative feedback to us about that class during this time. Students also provide feedback about the MatSE curriculum in general and some of the practices used by the department. Keramos and MA condense and refine that feedback and two representatives of the student organizations meet with several representatives of the MatSE faculty. These usually include the MatSE department head, the department associate head and the department head advisor. The representatives of the MatSE department then give feedback to each of the faculty about their courses.
- Student Panels
  - Keramos holds student panels once a semester that typically revolve around upperclassmen's personal experiences getting internships, conducting research and applying to graduate school. In the fall, Keramos held an internship student panel in the days leading up to the fall career fair. The purpose of this was for underclassmen to learn and ask questions of their peers. The panel consists of Keramos members who are approachable and have diverse academic backgrounds and experiences so that underclassmen can learn about the variety of paths there are to follow.
- MATLAB Tutorial
  - Our MATLAB Tutorial has become an annual event following our January general body meeting. MATLAB is an important software in the MatSE curriculum and as underclassmen begin taking MATLAB intensive courses in their second semester, we are able to provide them with some basic techniques they will use throughout their undergraduate career as a MatSE student. MATLAB content covered included remote access, basic syntax, vector math, graphing data and several data manipulation methods. This event was organized by one of Keramos's Heralds, Talen Sehgal, and incoming Keramos President, Justin Gruber.
- Engineering Open House
  - The annual Engineering Open House (EOH) is a massive and very popular two-day event hosted by the entire College of Engineering at the University of Illinois. Prospective students, children and their parents and teachers flock to the Engineering Quad in late March every year, and about 25,000 people are expected to turn out annually. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this staple of spring campus life had to be cancelled. Keramos had a ceramics-themed booth planned in which we would have had throwing clay available for children to play with and a poster showing some of our ceramics processing methods, such as creating slip in our facilities. Additionally, the exhibit would discuss new applications of ceramics that are making waves today in academia and in industry. One of our goals was to take



EOH as an opportunity to make prospective MatSE at Illinois students interested in Keramos early with the hope that a more interactive EOH exhibit would help facilitate an improvement in membership a couple years from now.

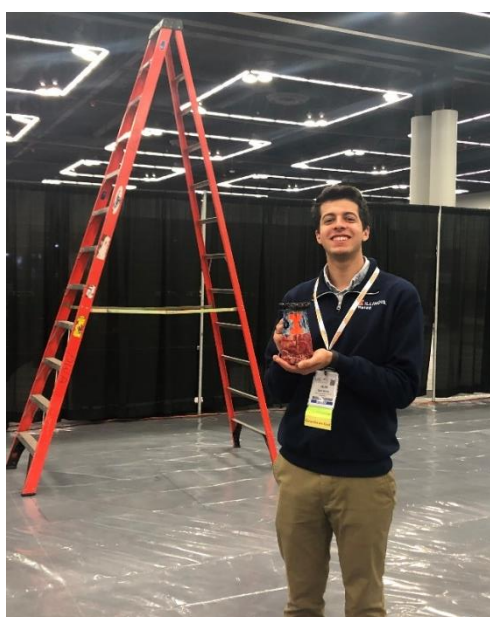


#### ❖ Professional Development

- Resume Reviews
  - As part of Keramos' services to our MatSE community and members, we provided experienced upperclassmen to look over resumes of underclassmen in the days leading up to each career fair. For younger students, getting help from their peers is often less intimidating than getting help from professionals and can even be more instructive, as they can hear advice from people who were in their place only a couple years ago.
- Company Info Sessions
  - Our professional chair is responsible for keeping contact with and finding new company contacts. These contacts often visit once a year to talk to Keramos about their company, what they are looking for in applicants, and how to apply to materials science positions. These info sessions are fantastic networking opportunities for Keramos members, and these are some of our most popular and talked about events. Companies that talked to Keramos this year included the Chevron Corporation, Clorox, HexNest and Exxon Mobil among others.
- MS&T Portland 2019 & TMS San Diego 2020
  - Keramos and MA worked together to organize trips to Materials Science and Technology conference (MS&T) in the fall and the Minerals, Metals and Materials Society conference (TMS) in the spring. These materials science conferences are great for networking with other students and professionals in the field. At MS&T,



Keramos at Illinois participated in the mug drop competition. Our Heralds created three mugs, the best of which finished 6<sup>th</sup> in the dropping competition. Keramos at Illinois also participated in the student speaking competition with Vice President José Mancias finishing in fourth place with his talk about his research on aluminum-copper intermetallic phases. The student networking mixer and the annual convocation and business meeting were also attended by several representatives of Keramos at Illinois. During the business meeting, our chapter's events and policies were discussed and ideas were exchanged with other Keramos chapters. This is always an opportunity we look forward to, so we can learn from our sister Keramos chapters. Keramos at Illinois was represented at MS&T by President Amy Merkelz, Vice President José Mancias, and Heralds Talen Sehgal and Noah Hanselman. At TMS our Keramos at Illinois chapter was represented by Treasurer Colleen Moauro and Herald Talen Sehgal. TMS saw the joint MA/Keramos University of Illinois team finish an impressive 2<sup>nd</sup> place spot in the student Materials Bowl trivia competition against other universities.





## ❖ Service Events and Outreach

- Destination Technology
  - Keramos has a wonderful and long-lasting relationship with a Peoria, IL based program called Destination Technology. This is an after school and weekend program for elementary and middle school students where they learn about different aspects of the world and participate in educational and problem-solving activities. Once a month for three months, Keramos students drove to a middle school in Peoria, IL to teach students about this year's theme, Going Green. Throughout the three visits we taught the students about pollution, recycling, and energy. Keramos helped run experiments to demonstrate these aspects such as a filtration demonstration, biodegradability tests, and made batteries with household items such as lemons and potatoes.
- Blood Drive
  - For the first time ever, Keramos and MA were planning to host our own blood drive on campus in April 2020 through the American Red Cross. The event was fully scheduled and had upwards of 40 willing participants. However due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event had to be cancelled to ensure the safety of the students and nurses. We still plan to officially host a blood drive next school year.
- Illini-Thon
  - Keramos raised money for St. John's Children's Hospital through a school-wide dance event called IlliniThon. IlliniThon is a 12-hour dance marathon held every March in which participating teams are challenged to raise a minimum of \$125 and participate in the main event in the Spring. Although this year's event was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Keramos was still able to raise over \$160 amongst its members for the hospital.
- Illini Mentorship Program
  - Keramos participated in the Illini Mentorship Program hosted by the University of Illinois. This program is an opportunity to educate elementary and middle school students about the world of STEM and inspire them to embrace science and pursue engineering as their passion. Keramos members ran a materials science-based demonstration that consisted of a short presentation about different types of materials and then proceeded to run various interactive stations. These stations demonstrated interesting aspects of different material classes. The stations consisted of a shape memory alloy to demonstrate a unique property of some metals, an Orbeez and self-siphoning liquid demonstration to show special properties of polymers, and finally a demonstration of the differences in thermal conductivity between ceramics and metals by melting a Hershey Kiss on top of each.





➤ Grainger Grove

- To celebrate the renaming of the University of Illinois College of Engineering to Grainger College of Engineering, the college hosted a science fair on campus with various engineering related booths run by students. Keramos and MA jointly hosted their highly successfully and interactive “Polymer Magic” booth. This consisted of various demonstrations of the properties of polymers with Orbeez, a bead chain, and self-siphoning liquid. Families and students were able to stop by and learn about the ‘magic’ of polymers while enjoying the hands-on demonstrations.







## ❖ Social Events

- Welcome Barbeque
  - Every year Keramos co-hosts a Welcome Barbeque with MA in the early Fall to make the incoming MatSE freshman feel welcome and give them the opportunity to meet some upperclassmen. This is also an opportunity for Keramos members to socialize with underclassmen and explain the great things about Keramos and what it can provide to them through involved membership. This year the event was pushed back because of rainy weather but even with this last-minute change, the event still had around 35 people in attendance. Burgers, hotdogs, veggie burgers, veggie dogs, chips, and soda were served at the Illini Grove on campus.
- Curtis Apple Orchard
  - Another much anticipated annual event that is held in the fall is the trip to our local apple orchard. Again, co-hosted between Keramos and MA, over 15 people attended. Attendees picked apples, went to the gift shop for donuts and cider and many pictures were taken. Once again, the rain played a role in postponing this event from its original date.
- E-Week
  - E-week is a weeklong competition of engineering students hosted by Engineering Council at Illinois to celebrate National Engineers Week. Keramos and MA had a joint team led by Keramos' own Herald, Talen Sehgal. The competition is a bizarre mixture of wacky athletics and engineering trivia. Some competitions include the E-Week Mile, Obstacle Course, Broomball (a made-up sport that is both a cross between field hockey and ice hockey and remains remarkably popular at the University of Illinois as a whole), Midnight Trivia, Darts, Water Pong and an online Oregon Trail competition. The Keramos/MA team was called Big Iron (a MatSE pun on pig iron) since the theme this year was Wild West. E-week is an opportunity for Keramos and MA members to bond with each other and compete to show their MatSE pride.
- Mentorship Program
  - Annually in the fall we start our freshman mentorship program. This program is co-hosted with MA and pairs up incoming freshman with upperclassmen mentors. Mentors give their freshman and transfer student mentees a new connection in MatSE as well as insight into what it is like to go to school at Illinois. Mentors provide career, academic and social advice to their mentees. This year there were 36 mentors and 47 mentees who signed up with 43 mentees showing up to the mentorship program kick-off event. Groups were created instead of the traditional one mentor-one mentee system in order for mentees to bond with fellow freshman in their group as well. Each group had 3 to 5 mentees and 2 mentors. Throughout the fall semester mentorship events are being set-up. Most of these events are social in nature and we encourage the freshman to turn up to some of Keramos' other professional and service events that occur outside the mentorship program. The most popular of these social mentorship events were the MatSE Olympics which took place on the University of Illinois' main quad. Qualitatively, there were noticeably higher level of



freshman involvement during the fall Keramos events than in previous years leading us to deem this year's mentorship program a success.

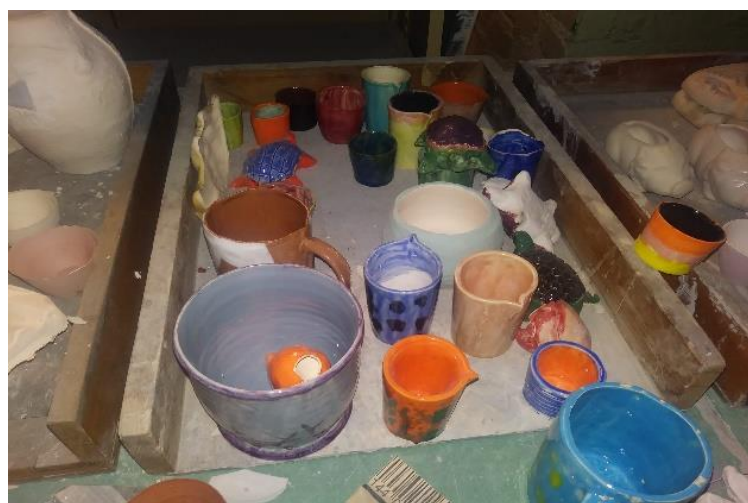
➤ **Women in MatSE Meetups**

- One of our re-occurring social events are the Women in MatSE Coffee Chats. Often co-hosted with MA, these coffee chats are casual meetups of undergraduate women studying Materials Science and Engineering at a local café. These chats are an opportunity for the women in MatSE to get to know one another, share stories and advice, and grow as a community. Often these meetups also serve as mentoring opportunities, as upperclassmen share their experiences with freshmen and sophomores to help guide them during their college journeys.



❖ **Play with Clay**

- Keramos at Illinois' crowning jewel in many of our executive board's minds is the weekly Play with Clay events hosted by our Heralds. No other event so perfectly espouses the values of Keramos as Play with Clay. The Heralds make clay slip from scratch in the days leading up to Play with Clay. Keramos members can then slip cast or use throwing clay to create whatever they want from the ever-expanding library of molds Keramos has in our ceramics lab. Keramos members glaze their creations and between Play with Clay sessions the Heralds use our brand-new Kiln to fire the pieces. Play with Clay is a time for Keramos members to socialize, bond together, learn about ceramics processing, unwind, and to live a part of Keramos tradition that has been going on about as long as the Illinois Chapter of Keramos has existed. Our Heralds are always working on new molds, for example a coffee mug mold. They are always perfecting their craft as well, and with our new kiln much more is possible. Our Heralds are starting on new methods for the mug drop competition and disk throwing competition. Finally, the last important role of the Heralds is to make ceramic 'professor pigs' to give to two MatSE professors who have exhibited excellence in their teaching and particular care with their students. The Professor Pig is certainly a talked about award among the MatSE faculty but this year, once again COVID-19 has cancelled the ceremony which normally takes place between Mid-April and March.



#### ❖ Keramos Graduation Cords

- This year Keramos at Illinois wanted to start a brand-new tradition in order to honor our graduating Keramos members. Keramos purchased 200 custom graduation cords for our Keramos members graduating this year who complete their required hours and for Keramos members graduating in the future. The cords are the official Keramos colors of cobalt and gold and each cord has a charm attached in the shape of the Keramos crest. We are very excited about this new development and heart-broken that we could not see it in action due to the University of Illinois' graduation ceremony being cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Cords will be shipped to Keramos members, who would have graduated this May, later this year.





### ❖ Keramos Initiations

- The Keramos Initiations at Illinois are all-afternoon events and possibly the most anticipated Keramos event of any semester. Keramos Initiation is the time to expand our Keramos at Illinois family. The events of initiation start with the candidates congregating to pay membership dues, followed by professional pictures of every candidate being taken and a group photo of all the candidates. Then the initiation ceremony occurs, strictly following the official Keramos ceremony requirements. After this, the candidates are given a tour of our ceramics lab by our Heralds and finally we eat a catered meal together. Keramos initiation, and therefore membership, has been growing every year for as long as our records go back! The school year of 2017-2018 saw 22 new initiates, the next year (2018-2019) saw 37 initiates. This year we have improved even on last year's incredibly high numbers. In the 2019-2020 school year Keramos initiation had 39 new initiates, a 5% increase from the previous year. It's a great time to be Keramos at Illinois!

