

Summer-Fall 2026

# THE RATTLE

OF THETA CHI FRATERNITY



**9/11**

REMEMBERING THOSE LOST 25 YEARS AGO

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## Published by

Maury Boyd and Associates, Inc.

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# FROM THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

## Now More Than Ever, Fraternity Matters

Brothers:

As my eight years serving on the Grand Chapter came to a close, including the past two years as International President, I reflected a lot about the state of our Fraternity in 2026.

From a membership standpoint, we have never been more successful. As recently as 2010, Theta Chi touted 5,726 collegiate members. Then last year—for the first time in our history—our brotherhood surpassed 9,000 collegiate members. You read that correctly—from 5,726 to over 9,000 collegians in just 15 years, despite a global pandemic in that span!

In the broader context of the interfraternal community, Theta Chi is a leader among our peers for the programming and services we provide as we pursue the development of Resolute Men. We are regarded as a key stakeholder and thought leader on fraternal policy as it is discussed and debated among our peer organizations and on campuses across the country.

But even as we celebrate our trajectory and our standing among fraternal organizations, there remain others who are raising more fundamental, existential questions about the role of fraternities in our modern world. Is the fraternity experience still relevant and meaningful today? Are the concepts of “fraternity” and “brotherhood” outdated in 2026?

Last November, Theta Chi was invited to participate in the National Symposium on Young American Men at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. This event convened policymakers, health care experts, men’s organizations, researchers, and education leaders to examine today’s social challenges and present evidence-based proposals to improve male well-being.

One of the most significant—and eye-opening—discussions at the symposium focused on recent polling data revealing that in today’s digital era, many of our country’s young men are disconnected and isolated. Specifically, this data from the respected national polling firm Cygnal revealed several key findings:

- 48% of Gen Z males (ages 14–29) can be classified as “low social,” spending between zero and five hours per week in-person with friends or participating in social activities. Even more troubling, that same percentage of Gen Z males (48%) reported having two or fewer friends, with 11% having no friends at all.
- In contrast, those men who belong to a fraternity on a college campus overwhelmingly report good mental health (53% positive, 14% negative) compared to young men overall (41% positive, 24% negative). They’re very likely to have a male mentor (71% fraternity, 42% non-affiliated) and maintain close friendships: 64% of fraternity men have three or more close friends, compared to 36% of non-affiliated men.

These data points provide a clear response to any existential questions about modern fraternities. In this context of the digital isolation crisis facing many of our young people today, whoever thinks the fraternity experience is irrelevant and outdated is ignoring the facts.

Indeed, the condition of many of today’s young men presents more than just an opportunity for Theta Chi—it is our calling. Now more than ever, we must advance our ideals of inspiring True Friendship and extending a Helping Hand to all who seek it. Now more than ever, if we remain committed to and are successful in this pursuit, we will truly serve our God, our country, and our fellow-man.

Now more than ever, I believe in Theta Chi!

Fraternally,

Tobin (Toby) Roth, International President (2024-2026)  
[troth@capitolresourcesllc.com](mailto:troth@capitolresourcesllc.com)



Toby Roth



## Zeta Omicron Extends Helping Hand to Local Police

October 13, 2025

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to you to inform you of something amazing that Theta Chi did this weekend. I am the point of contact for our town when someone has to do community service. I had been contacted by the President of the local chapter at Shippensburg University [Caeden Rogers (2026)] about needing and wanting to complete community service for their members. Full transparency, I normally get individuals who have been court ordered to complete community service. He explained that they each had hours to complete for their chapter as a giveback to the community and that this was not for any disciplinary actions or court ordered. I was excited that this was a true gift of service giveback to the community. I reached out to our local police department in town and asked if they would be interested in having work done around the police station. With the help of Caeden and the Chief of Police, the Fraternity completed the following tasks:



- Washed all police cars
- Pressure washed the sidewalks
- Edged the flower beds
- Pulled weeds in the flower beds
- Planted flowers
- Raked leaves and picked up sticks on the property
- Cleaned off the parking lot and carport



I wanted to reach out to show my gratitude to these young men and their organization. This group of young men not only gave something nice back to an organization that was more than grateful, but also showed a community what selfless service looks like. These young men engaged the police force in conversation, including the Chief of Police. They were respectful, well spoken, and just kind! The Chief of Police pulled me aside after they were done and ranted and raved about how nice it was that the young men did what they did. He also went on about the great character of people they are.

Job well done, Theta Chi, and thank you for having such a great organization!!!

Very Respectfully,

Shaun Rogers

[**Editor's Note:** Shaun Rogers is now the mayor of Shippensburg, PA.]



Chapter News



Alumni News

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### on the cover

Flags honor the 2,983 victims inscribed on 152 bronze parapets on the memorial pools at the National September 11 Memorial in New York City. Read about the brothers we lost and our initial response on page 6.



# Fraternities Know Men



CARSON TRAVIESO

MORGAN YANKOWSKY



Dear Brothers,

I'm proud to announce Theta Chi's participation in **Fraternities Know Men**, a national campaign from the Fraternity Forward Coalition, aimed at positioning the fraternal movement as the leading voice on the crises facing young men in America—and the proven solution to these crises.

The truth is hard to ignore. Young men today are struggling with widespread loneliness, declining mental health, and a profound lack of mentorship; however, Theta Chi brothers know something the broader culture is only beginning to understand—**fraternities work!**

An October 2025 poll of more than 1,000 young men revealed that **members of fraternities are 12% more likely to report positive mental health**, nearly **30% more likely to have a male mentor**, and are **significantly more likely to have three or more close friends than non-affiliated students**. It turns out the ideals our Fraternity holds close are exactly what young men are missing most.

**Fraternities Know Men** will make this case loudly and clearly through a national campaign, including research, media coverage, digital content, public events, and policy recommendations to our nation's lawmakers. At its center is a large-scale digital advertising campaign, designed to reach prospective members, parents, administrators, and the public.

Two brothers are featured in the campaign videos: Chapter President **Morgan Yankowsky** (Delta Beta/Georgia 2027) and rising sophomore **Carson Travieso** (Iota Theta/Central Florida 2029). Their stories represent what it means to be a Theta Chi, and we are grateful to have them as part of this initiative.

With more than 215,000 Resolute Men initiated since our founding, Theta Chi's mission and legacy of developing college-age men into successful students, good citizens, lifelong brothers, and resolute leaders is the most powerful proof point of this campaign.

I invite you to learn more and follow the campaign at [fraternitiesknowmen.org](https://fraternitiesknowmen.org) and on social media. Your Helping Hand in sharing the campaign's data and social posts is immensely appreciated and will make a real difference.

Fraternally,

Mike Mayer  
Chief Executive Officer



CEO Mike Mayer speaks to Chapter Presidents at the Sasser Presidents Conference.

# For the Brothers Who Carry Theta Chi Forward

*Refined apparel, travel essentials,  
and keepsake gifts made for alumni.*



## PREMIUM GOLF APPAREL



Peter Millar polos, quarter-zips, and layers built for comfort and class on or off the course.

## CANVAS DUFFEL



Rugged, timeless, and ready for every trip, from weekend getaways to lifelong adventures.

## ENGRAVED GLASSWARE



Raise a glass to brotherhood. Thoughtfully engraved glassware and mugs for home, office, and beyond.

## SILK TIES



Classic silk ties featuring the Theta Chi Badge or letters. A refined finishing touch for every occasion.

## DELUXE ROSEWOOD BOX



A distinguished keepsake box, expertly engraved. Perfect for watches, cufflinks, and memories.

## OFFICIAL FLAG



A favorite for alumni trips and photos from around the world.



# WE REMEMBER

Twenty-five years after the tragic terror attacks on September 11, 2001, we pause to reflect and remember those we lost and the heroes who stepped up in the face of insurmountable challenges.

*ABOVE: In 2014, the Grand Chapter and visiting brothers conduct a Memorial Ceremony at the National September 11 Memorial.  
BELOW: Flags honor the names listed on one of the memorials.*





## Craig M. Blass (Eta Kappa/James Madison 1996)

Age: 27

Born: New Hyde Park, NY

Residence: Greenlawn, NY

Employer: Cantor Fitzgerald | Stock Trader

Location on 9/11: One WTC (North Tower), 104th floor

Memorial: North Pool: Panel N-28

thetachi.org/craig-blass

Craig was a Rechartering Member and was installed as Vice President when Eta Kappa Chapter was reinstalled at JMU in 1995.

The Craig Blass Memorial Scholarship was established at JMU by Craig's classmates and chapter brothers and is awarded annually to a JMU student who meets GPA

standards and closely resembles the type of person Craig was.

*"We should always remember Craig laughing and smiling, joking, or simply moving along with an optimistic outlook on life. Craig took the good with the bad, never taking himself too seriously and always able to put things into perspective."*

—Jason Sfaelos (Eta Kappa/James Madison 1996)



*Eta Kappa President and Vice President: Tim Miller (1996) and Craig Blass*



*Craig and girlfriend, Crissy, at a wedding, August 26, 2001.*

## Mark A. Brisman (Kappa Xi/Albany 1989)

Age: 34

Born: Queens, NY

Residence: Armonk, NY

Employer: Harris Beach & Wilcox, LLP | Lawyer

Location on 9/11: Two WTC (South Tower), 85th floor

Memorial: South Pool: Panel S-45

thetachi.org/mark-brisman

As a collegian, Mark was an accounting major who was initiated with other members from the colony at the University at Albany who attempted to become a chapter in the late 1980s.

In 2001, Harris Beach posthumously made Mark a full partner in their firm. In 2002,

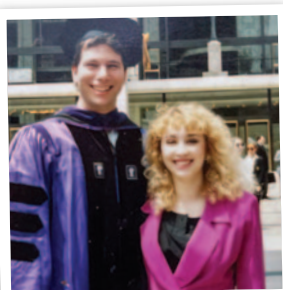
NYU Law School and his fellow classmates established the Mark Brisman Graduation Prize to be awarded annually to a graduating student who has shown excellence in and commitment to Moot Court.

*"Mark was a model for being a gentleman and a scholar. He was gracious, funny, and had a large spirit. He was well respected and followed."*

—Lee Miller (Kappa Xi/Albany 1991)



*Mark with Rachael and William.*



*Graduating NYU Law: Mark with his wife, Juliette.*

## TIMELINE

Using material collected from articles, obituaries, books, recollections, and other sources, this approximate timeline includes the 10 (currently known) Theta Chi brothers who were directly affected and involved on that horrific day. In each case, the facts are reported as accurately as is currently known and available, and with respect, sympathy, and care.

### Tuesday, September 11, 2001

6:00 a.m.

**Mark Schurmeier** (Gamma Omicron/Wake Forest 1979), director of strategic reengineering in funding and investments for Freddie Mac, departs Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C., bound for New York City.

7:30 a.m.

**Nick Humber** (Delta/RPI 1963) boards American Airlines Flight 11 in Boston and takes his seat in 22A. He is headed to Los Angeles for business.

7:59 a.m.

American Flight 11 takes off from Boston for Los Angeles.

8:00 a.m.

The Risk Waters Group hosts a financial technology conference at Windows on the World restaurant, located on the 106th and 107th floors of 1 World Trade Center. Attendees, including **Mark Schurmeier**, begin to gather for registration and breakfast on the 106th floor.

8:14 a.m.

Al-Qaeda terrorists hijack American Flight 11 and, several minutes later, reroute it toward Manhattan.

8:15 a.m.

United Airlines Flight 175 takes off from Boston for Los Angeles.

8:20 a.m.

American Airlines Flight 77 departs Washington Dulles International Airport for Los Angeles.

8:40 a.m.

The Risk Waters Group's first keynote speaker begins his presentation. **Mark Schurmeier** is among the 80 attendees.

8:42 a.m.

United Airlines Flight 93 takes off from Newark International Airport for San Francisco.

8:42–8:46 a.m.

Al-Qaeda terrorists hijack United Flight 175 and reroute it toward Manhattan.

(continued)

**8:46 a.m.**

Five hijackers crash American Flight 11 into floors 93–99 of One WTC. **Nick Humber** and the other 75 passengers and 11 crew members on board, along with hundreds inside the building, are killed instantly. The crash severs all three emergency stairwells and traps hundreds above the 91st floor, including **Mark Schurmeier**, **Craig Blass** (Eta Kappa/James Madison 1996), **Scott Coleman** (Iota/Colgate 1994), **Gary Lutnick** (Epsilon Rho/Rider 1987), **Bill Sugra** (Epsilon Eta/IUP 1993), and **Jon Vandevander** (Epsilon Beta/Lycoming 1979).

The offices of Carr Futures, Inc., a foreign currency trading firm, are located on the 92nd floor.

Cantor Fitzgerald's corporate headquarters and New York City office are located on floors 101–105, two to six floors above the impact zone.

**8:47 a.m.**

Learning of the crash, employees of law firm Harris Beach & Wilcox, LLP begin to evacuate the 85th floor of Two WTC (South Tower). Soon-to-be partner **Mark Brisman** (Kappa Xi/Albany 1990) is not among the early evacuees.

**8:49 a.m.**

Carr Futures Vice President **Jon Vandevander** uses his cell phone to call his wife and teenage son and explains that his whole group is trapped on the 92nd floor in a small office because of fire and smoke in the hall. He lets her know that they blew out the window for air.

**8:50 a.m.**

Staff members from Cantor Fitzgerald's Los Angeles office call the New York office to learn what is happening. According to Anne Davis' article in the *Wall Street Journal*:

"The Los Angeles staff, who then put the call on its in-house public-address system, heard a colleague in the New York office say, 'I think a plane just hit us.' While the phone call continued to be broadcast over the entire Los Angeles office, the New York office began filling with smoke and people began screaming. 'Somebody's got to help us. ... We can't get out. ... The place is filling with smoke,' a person in the New York office was heard to say. Shortly afterward, the connection was cut off."

**Gary Lutnick**, the younger brother of Cantor Fitzgerald CEO Howard Lutnick, calls 911 four times to calmly report on the situation: coworkers were jumping to their deaths from the windows. He calls his ex-girlfriend Ann, who was in Hawaii, and leaves a voice message: "Hey, baby. It's me. I'm in the World Trade Center and—a plane hit this building and I'm on the 104th floor and it's filling up with smoke. I love you very much, and I'm sorry that we had to go through what it is that we went through. Oh, my God. My life is

**Scott T. Coleman** (Iota/Colgate 1994)

**Age:** 31

**Born:** Brooklyn, NY

**Residence:** Weston, CT

**Employer:** Cantor Fitzgerald | Equities Broker

**Location on 9/11:** One WTC (North Tower), 104th floor

**Memorial:** North Pool: Panel N-30, next to his brother Keith Coleman

[thetachi.org/scott-coleman](http://thetachi.org/scott-coleman)

Scott played soccer at Colgate and became one of the leading goal scorers in school history. In 2000, Scott earned his MBA from Fordham University. Scott worked at HBO and American Lawyer Media before going to work for his older brother Keith at Cantor Fitzgerald.

In 2003, Colgate dedicated a new gateway to their soccer field in memory of Scott and other 9/11 victims. Scott

Coleman's family and the Westport Soccer Association (WSA) joined together to form the Scott Coleman Scholarship Foundation.

"I came to know Scott best in fall 1993 at Theta Chi, and the years after college living in NYC. I grew to respect him and always looked forward to seeing him."

—Dan Harley (Iota/Colgate 1994)



Uncle Scott with newborn niece Neva, nephew Vaughn, and his older brother Keith, who also died on 9/11.

**John W. Farrell** (Delta Gamma/WV Wesleyan 1982)

**Age:** 41

**Born:** Brooklyn, NY

**Residence:** Basking Ridge, NJ

**Employer:** Sandler O'Neill + Partners | Managing Director

**Location on 9/11:** Two WTC (South Tower), 104th floor

**Memorial:** South Pool: Panel S-51

[thetachi.org/john-farrell](http://thetachi.org/john-farrell)

Brothers gave John the nickname 'Huck' because they thought he looked like Huckleberry Hound. He endured a lengthy commute and long hours at work for what was most precious to him: his wife and children.

John's sister-in-law, Megan McDowell, established Heartworks in New Jersey, which offers hope and support to people experiencing a chronic illness with an acute need, an unexpected injury, a natural disaster, or unbearable grief.

"John Farrell was the epitome of character. He was one of the BEST guys ever—full of integrity, class, loyalty, leadership, smarts, and so witty."

—James Strawn (Delta Gamma/WV Wesleyan 1982)





## J. Nicholas Humber (Delta/RPI 1963)

**Age:** 60

**Born:** Ludlow, MA

**Residence:** Newton, MA

**Employer:** Brae Burn Management | President

**Location on 9/11:** Passenger on American Airlines Flight 11

**Memorial:** North Pool: Panel N-1

thetachi.org/nick-humber

Nick worked tirelessly for the environment beginning in 1971 when he joined the newly created U.S. EPA and co-founded the national waste-to-energy and recycling programs. As an adviser to the World Bank, a founder of Energia Global, and past president of BioMed of Boston, Nick's life and career were committed to improving the quality of the environment for current and future generations.

In 2003, Delta Chapter's class of 1963 dedicated a memorial plaque for Nick in the dining room of the chapter house. Over 20 Delta alumni from 1960–1966 contributed more than \$11,000 in Nick's memory to the Delta Chapter Theta Chi Fraternity Scholarship Fund.

*"We remember Nick fondly from the days of Theta Chi on Burdett Ave at RPI in Troy. He was so much fun and great with our first child, MJ. He has left us with many memories of long ago that were full of fun."*

—Curtiss (Delta/RPI 1957) and Cindy Beach



## Gary F. Lutnick (Epsilon Rho/Rider 1987)

**Age:** 36

**Born:** Syosset, NY

**Residence:** Manhattan

**Employer:** Cantor Fitzgerald | Partner, Trader on U.S. Agency Desk

**Location on 9/11:** One WTC (North Tower), 104th floor

**Memorial:** North Pool: Panel N-38

thetachi.org/gary-lutnick

Nicknamed 'Tex' by Theta Chi brothers, Gary was confident, generous, smart, quick-witted, and ambitious. From jet skiing in the Hamptons with friends to Saturday morning video games with his two nephews, he was a people magnet. He was a managing director and bond trader at Cantor Fitzgerald, where his brother Howard was CEO and his sister Edie worked a few floors below him.

The Gary Lutnick Memorial Scholarship Fund was established for the Rider University Model United Nations. In addition, Howard Lutnick had the new tennis and track center in the alumni field house of Haverford College named in Gary's memory.

*"I recommended that Gary give National Model United Nations (NMUN) a try and he did. He possessed a burning desire to succeed and was a master dealmaker in college and beyond. In fact, during the 1987 NMUN convention, I witnessed his ambition firsthand as he (representing Colombia) skillfully pumped the delegate from the USSR for support in passing one of his resolutions."*

—James Welsh (Epsilon Rho/Rider 1987)



Lutnick siblings: Edie and Gary

probably going to end very, very shortly. I love you, baby. Bye-bye."

Gary attempts to call his brother Howard and ultimately calls his sister Edie Lutnick, who happened to still be at home and not at her office on the 101st floor. He tells her that he is in a corner office with the door closed on the 103rd floor. He says that black smoke is pouring in and that he is having trouble breathing. Gary's voice goes silent and his sister cannot hear him breathing. It is possible that Gary passes away while on the phone with his sister.

All stairwells leading past the impact zone have been destroyed by the initial crash or are blocked with smoke, fire, or debris. Every employee who reported to Cantor Fitzgerald for work that morning perishes. In all, 658 of its 960 New York employees are killed, or 68.5% of its total workforce. Among the 658 are **Craig Blass, Scott Coleman, Bill Sugra, and Gary Lutnick.**

**8:51–8:54 a.m.**

Al-Qaeda terrorists hijack American Flight 77 and turn it back toward Washington, D.C.

**8:55 a.m.**

A Port Authority fire safety employee makes an announcement via the public address system in Two WTC (South Tower): "Your attention, please, ladies and gentlemen. Building Two is secure. There is no need to evacuate Building Two. If you are in the midst of evacuation, you may use the reentry doors and the elevators to return to your office."

Despite the announcement, **John Farrell** (Delta Gamma/WV Wesleyan 1982), a bonds trader for Sandler O'Neill & Partners on the 104th floor of Two WTC (South Tower), joins others from his department and evacuates, heading to the 78th floor.

**8:59 a.m.**

Port Authority Police Department (PAPD) issues orders to commence the evacuation of both towers.

**9:00 a.m.**

The PAPD expands the order to include all civilians within the WTC complex.

**9:02 a.m.**

A Port Authority fire safety employee makes an announcement via the public address system in Two WTC (South Tower): "May I have your attention, please. Repeating this message. The situation occurred in Building One. If the conditions warrant on your floor, you may wish to start an orderly evacuation."

(continued)

**9:03 a.m.**

Five hijackers crash United Flight 175 into floors 77–85 of Two WTC (South Tower), killing the 51 passengers and nine crew members onboard the aircraft and an unknown number of people inside the building, possibly including **John Farrell** and **Mark Brisman**. The impact renders two of the three emergency stairwells impassable and severs a majority of the elevator cables in this area, trapping many above the impact zone and inside elevator cars.

The New York City Police Department (NYPD) calls for a second Level 4 mobilization, bringing its total deployment to nearly 2,000 officers. The New York City Fire Department (FDNY) issues a fifth alarm for the South Tower, deploying several hundred additional firefighters to the disaster. Additional companies, off-duty personnel, and other individual first responders from across the metropolitan area travel to the scene, including **Patrick Versage** (Epsilon Sigma/Wagner 1990), who responded with his partner from the PAPD Emergency Services Unit from JFK Airport.

**9:20 a.m.**

Freddie Mac employees in Washington, D.C. receive a call from a colleague in New York indicating that he had received a call from one of his staff members, Mike Gann, who was also at the Risk Waters Group conference. Gann had told him that the conference room was filling with smoke, the elevators were not working, and the stairwells were impassable. Gann also mentioned that **Mark Schurmeier** was standing next to him. 911 is looped in, and based on their input, Gann and others begin breaking windows.

**9:28 a.m.**

Al-Qaeda terrorists hijack United Flight 93 and turn the plane toward the southeast.

**9:30 a.m.**

Freddie Mac employees in Washington, D.C. repeatedly call **Mark Schurmeier's** cell phone but do not receive a response.

**9:37 a.m.**

Five hijackers crash American Flight 77 into the Pentagon. The 53 passengers and six crew members on board perish. The crash and ensuing fire kill 125 military and civilian personnel on the ground.

**9:42 a.m.**

The Federal Aviation Administration grounds all flights in U.S. airspace.

**9:45 a.m.**

Evacuations begin in Washington, D.C. at the White House and U.S. Capitol.

**Mark E. Schurmeier** (Gamma Omicron/Wake Forest 1979)

**Age:** 44

**Born:** Carlisle, PA

**Residence:** McLean, VA

**Employer:** Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation

**Location on 9/11:** One WTC (North Tower), 106th floor

**Memorial:** North Pool: Panel N-22

[thetachi.org/mark-schurmeier](http://thetachi.org/mark-schurmeier)



Mark developed an interest in theater in high school but pursued a career in business and earned his MBA at American University. At the U.S. Treasury Department, he served on a three-person team that developed a system allowing online and telephone investment in treasury securities. He later made business deals as director of strategic engineering at Freddie Mac in Washington, D.C., and traveled to New York City the morning of 9/11 to attend a financial technology conference at the Windows on the World hosted by The Risk Waters Group.



*Mark (front left) on July 4, 1998, with family.*

The Mark Schurmeier 9/11 Peace Fund was established through the efforts of Theta Chi brothers at Wake Forest University and assists undergraduate students who are residents of the U.S., based on merit and need, with preference to students directly affected by 9/11.

*"Sherm became our Chapter President because of his leadership, respectability, and soft-spoken personality. His acting ability was useful when he was called into the dean's office to explain the latest hijinks of the Fraternity."*

—Rich Marvin (Gamma Omicron/Wake Forest 1980)

**William C. Sugra** (Epsilon Eta/IUP 1993)

**Age:** 30

**Born:** Allentown, PA

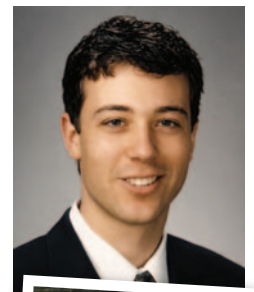
**Residence:** Manhattan

**Employer:** Cantor Fitzgerald | Network Administrator for eSpeed division

**Location on 9/11:** One WTC (North Tower), 103rd floor

**Memorial:** North Pool: Panel N-34

[thetachi.org/bill-sugra](http://thetachi.org/bill-sugra)



Following graduation, Bill worked at Productivity Point, Inc. in Allentown, PA, until he moved to New York City to work on the email system at Cantor Fitzgerald. Bill loved the Big Apple, and he rarely let a moment go to waste.

The Bill Sugra Memorial Fund was established to assist the needy and disadvantaged to improve their lives during times of difficulty. Nearly \$1 million has been donated via the Sugra Fund to organizations and individuals in the community.

*"Bill lived two doors down from me in the chapter house our junior year at TUP. He was one of the nicest people I had ever met.*

*His parents should be very proud that they raised a fine and outstanding young man who was always a gentleman and a great person."*

—Todd Rader (Epsilon Eta/IUP 1994)





### Jon C. Vandevander (Epsilon Beta/Lycoming 1979)

**Age:** 44

**Born:** Ridgewood, NJ

**Residence:** Ridgewood, NJ

**Employer:** Carr Futures, Inc.

**Location on 9/11:** One WTC (North Tower), 92nd floor

**Memorial:** North Pool: Panel N-62

[thetachi.org/jon-vandevander](http://thetachi.org/jon-vandevander)



Jon was an active member of Theta Chi and served as Secretary. During his senior year, he was a captain of the soccer team and continued his love of sports as president of the Ridgewood Junior Football Association.

The Vandevander Endowed Soccer Fund was established by several alumni at Lycoming College in memory of Jon and provides a permanent legacy for the soccer team.

*"Jon had such a draw, so friendly, so motivated, you just wanted to be his immediate friend. He often mentored the younger guys, which was so unique in our crazy college life."*

— Glenn Leaming (Epsilon Beta/Lycoming 1982)



### Patrick A. Versage (Epsilon Sigma/Wagner 1990)

May 19, 1968–October 3, 2014

**Born:** Queens, NY

**Residence:** Toms River, NJ

[thetachi.org/patrick-versage](http://thetachi.org/patrick-versage)

Patrick, known by his friends as Patso, was a retired Port Authority police officer from the Emergency Service Unit. He made headlines in 1998 after rescuing two men from jumping off the Bayonne Bridge, mere hours apart. As an active firefighter with Station 29 in Toms River, NJ, Brother Versage was a first responder during 9/11.

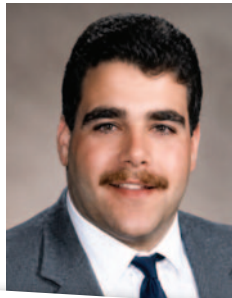
Sgt. John Flynn of the Port Authority Police Emergency Service (ESU) recalled, "Pat and I worked ESU together. On 9/11, while crawling around in the dark cloud of dust, Pat stood there larger than life with an SCBA mask for me. Pat worked at the WTC in some of the worst conditions imaginable without complaint."

Pat continued working at Ground Zero for more than a year and a half, assisting with the recovery efforts. Twelve years later, Brother Versage died from post-9/11 illnesses linked to toxic dust, asbestos, and pulverized building materials at Ground Zero.

He was a member of the New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association, Seaside Heights and Silverton Fire Companies, and also coached lacrosse.

*"Patso was a gentle giant and one of the kindest souls I ever met. I will always remember all of us hitting Brandy's on Thursday night for beers and table shuffleboard. He was always loud, boisterous, and made you laugh till you cried."*

—Past Grand Chapter Member Rich Santoriello (Epsilon Sigma/Wagner 1987)



### 9:59 a.m.

After burning for 56 minutes, Two WTC (South Tower) collapses in 10 seconds. More than 800 civilians and first responders inside the building and in the surrounding area are killed. If **John Farrell** and **Mark Brisman** had possibly survived the impact at 9:03 a.m., it is certain that they do not survive the collapse.

### 10:03 a.m.

Four hijackers crash United Flight 93 in a field near Shanksville, PA, after passengers and crew storm the cockpit. The 33 passengers and seven crew members on board perish. The crash site is approximately 20 minutes' flying time from Washington, D.C.

### 10:15 a.m.

A damaged section of the Pentagon's west-facing outer ring (E Ring) collapses.

### 10:18 a.m.

In another call placed to his wife, **Jon Vandevander** says, "I love you, and tell the kids I love them."

### 10:28 a.m.

After burning for 102 minutes, One WTC (North Tower) collapses in less than 15 seconds. More than 1,600 people are killed. Had they possibly survived the earlier impact and resulting fires and smoke, it is certain that **Mark Schurmeier**, **Craig Blass**, **Scott Coleman**, **Bill Sugra**, **Gary Lutnick**, and **Jon Vandevander** do not survive the collapse.

### 11:02 a.m.

Lower Manhattan is ordered to evacuate.

### 12:16 p.m.

The final flight above the United States lands, and U.S. airspace is closed.

### 8:30 p.m.

President George W. Bush addresses the nation from the White House.

Photo by Carl DeAbreu Photography



*The Survivor Tree at the 9/11 Memorial is a living symbol of resilience, survival, and hope.*



# LOOKING BACK

Recollections from staff and board members from September 11, 2001, along with messages shared 25 years ago.



A television was set up in our large conference room, and Dave Westol and I agreed we needed to reach our chapters in the New York City area, and we divided up the calls to the chapter houses and officers. The calls were brief and focused: confirm that every member was accounted for, remind officers to cooperate with and listen for instructions from their school officials, and make clear that if the chapter or any individual member needed help, they should not hesitate to call us at IHQ.

—Scott Thomas  
(Delta Kappa/Ball State 1997)  
Director of Leadership  
Development (2000–2002)



I was a senior in college and went to class. The professor arrived late and said classes were canceled across campus until further notice. Our Greek Adviser visited to check on us. Phone lines were jammed and no one could call their families. We all felt isolated, confused, and had very little idea of what was happening.

—Bill Russo  
(Epsilon Xi/Clarion 2002)  
Chief Housing Officer (2017–)

**From:** Theta Chi IHQ <[ihq@thetachi.org](mailto:ihq@thetachi.org)>  
**To:** "undefined" <undefined>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 11, 2001, 2:53:08 PM EST  
**Subject:** Lending a Helping Hand in the Wake of Tragedy

Dear Brothers:

We have all felt the impact of the tragic events of today which occurred in New York City, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania.

Many brothers have called or e-mailed asking what they can do.

As the Fraternity of the Helping Hand it is our duty to assist in all ways. As a partner with the American Red Cross, we have been advised of two ways that we can assist.

The first is to donate blood. A majority of the blood supply in New York City is collected by overseas donation centers and is flown in on a daily basis. With flight interruption, blood supplies will become very scarce. Members are encouraged to go to their local blood donation center, whether supported by the American Red Cross or another agency, and donate blood.

The second way to assist is to collect money and make a donation to the American Red Cross or local relief effort.

We also suggest that you contact your local American Red Cross chapter, or local relief agency, and ask how you can best assist and what help is needed. They will be the best source of information on how you can assist.

This e-mail is being sent out to you as a subscriber to the Fraternal Link, as an undergraduate chapter officer, a member of a chapter alumni corporation, a chapter advisor, or a member of the Official Family of Theta Chi Fraternity. We ask that each of you forward this message to other members of Theta Chi Fraternity.

Finally, we ask that you join us in our thoughts and prayers for those suffering from these tragedies.

From the Ceremony for a Deceased Brother, a Public Ritual of Theta Chi Fraternity:

"As in the world around us, so too in human life, darkness is followed by light and sorrow by comfort. Life and death are twins; grief and hope walk hand in hand. Let us put our trust in the undying spirit who calls us into life and who abides to all eternity."

Fraternally-

Scott Thomas, Director of Leadership Development  
on behalf of the Official Family of Theta Chi Fraternity

3330 Founders Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268-1333  
Phone: 317.824.1881  
Fax: 317.824.1908  
VM: 317.466.4943  
e-mail: [scott@thetachi.org](mailto:scott@thetachi.org)

I recall I was at Pi Chapter at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA. The rest of that year, being on the East Coast and visiting colleges, I met a lot of students who had personal stories and connections. Traveling in the wake of 9/11 was special because it was a time when everyone was coming together. Many chapters hosted blood drives for the American Red Cross.

—Cory Olson (Beta Kappa/Hamline 2001)  
Leadership and Education Consultant (2001–2003)





*Message prepared by then-International President James McEachern, III, for the inaugural issue of the Undergraduate Fraternal Link e-newsletter dated September 14, 2001:*



Brothers,

We have all certainly experienced many emotions over the past couple of days with the tragic events which occurred in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. Some of my emotions would include—disbelief, shock, tremendous sadness, empathy, hope, outrage, and anger, just to name a few.

None of us could have imagined the overwhelming, devastating acts of terrorism that have consumed us for the past two days. For any of you who may have friends or family members either directly or indirectly impacted by the events on Tuesday, allow me to offer our truly heartfelt condolences and prayers going forward. Please let us know what, if anything, we can do to assist you in your hour of need.

As the events began to unfold on television on Tuesday morning, I sat in a trance-like state not wanting to believe what was being broadcast. I spent most of the day yesterday talking to friends and co-workers, discussing the barbaric acts of so few, which impacted so many.

It's time to extend the Helping Hand gentlemen. Let's do all in our power to put petty differences aside and help bring our communities together. How about a quote from our Creed of Theta Chi—"I shall do all in my power to perpetuate its ideals, thereby serving my God, my country, and my fellow-man."

Gather all your co-workers, friends, or chapter members together, hold hands, and sing "God Bless America"—I did just that earlier today with a group of associates at the bank, and you would not believe how much better each of us felt by the time we sang the last few words.

We're going to get through this. Things may never return to what they once were, but we're going to prevail.

Let's be supportive of all the men and women in all of our armed forces, and let us remember that it is their work that will preserve the liberty and freedom we have come to know and cherish. May the Lord be with every one of them in their pursuit and subsequent elimination of those responsible for these heinous acts of terrorism.

Let us salute those who have worked, and those who continue to work, so diligently to rescue those that can be rescued and recover those that can be recovered. I cannot fathom the pain being experienced by the firefighters and other emergency personnel as they work around the clock to recover their own.

Let us stand together, proud, closer, and stronger than ever, with resolution to return to what we recently knew as normalcy as soon as possible.

God bless each of you, your families, and your respective communities which you call home, and most of all—God Bless America.

Sincerely and Fraternal I remain,

James Sterling McEachern, III  
International President, Theta Chi Fraternity



**I recognized one name:**

**Jon C. Vandevander (Epsilon Beta/Lycoming 1979). Back in 1979 when I was a Field Representative, I stayed in the dorm where all the brothers lived. Jon was Chapter Secretary and a friendly, gregarious guy. He was a senior and we were the same age.**

**—Wes Wicker (Alpha Phi/Alabama 1979) Field Representative (1979–1981) President, Foundation Chapter (1996–2002)**



**We communicated with the Grand Chapter, volunteers, chapter leaders, and the LECs and made website updates. I recall Dave [Westol] referencing that we likely lost some brothers in the tragedy. We stayed the full day, executing to the best of our ability with the uncertain and shifting details.**

**—Joe Wachs (Delta Kappa/Ball State 1998) Director of Chapter Services (2001–2007)**



**I was scheduled to travel to the University of Tampa to speak on campus and work with the men of our Epsilon Zeta Colony. After a surreal experience at the airport, I returned to the Headquarters and met with key staff to discuss contingency plans and to determine if any of our chapters had been directly affected.**

**We crafted an "All-Points Bulletin" email and asked for calm, patience, and to support all members, noting that young men often conceal their feelings and that meeting out of the regular sequence might prompt some thoughtful discussions. We also encouraged them to think local—to offer their services to campus or local organizations to assist in one way or another.**

**I called several other executive directors to check in and survey for anything that we hadn't considered under the circumstances.**

**Scott Thomas volunteered to pull together a document with the names of our brothers who lost their lives on 9/11. He did an excellent job that included contacting several other men's and women's national fraternities and sororities and sharing names and backgrounds of lives lost on that tragic day.**

**—David L. Westol (Beta Zeta/Michigan State 1973), Executive Director/CEO (1989–2006)**



# The Most Significant Case of My Career

BY STEVEN BENVENISTI, ESQ. (THETA BETA/TCNJ 1990)



*Brothers of Theta Beta Chapter at The College of New Jersey take a photo before departing for spring break in 1989.*

On March 20, 1989, six weeks prior to his graduation with high honors from The College of New Jersey, a 21-year-old student was enjoying spring break in Daytona Beach, FL, with his Theta Chi brothers. On the third night of the trip, while walking with his brothers, he was struck by a drunk driver. The impact crushed his legs, propelled his face through the windshield of the vehicle, and threw his body more than 70 feet.

First responders arrived and transported him to the hospital. He had sustained catastrophic injuries, including a severe traumatic brain injury, and remained comatose for 10 days with the lowest possible Glasgow Coma Score of 3. Additional injuries included crushed lower legs, a fractured clavicle, massive blood loss requiring transfusions, and extensive open wounds necessitating emergency skin grafting. His family was notified in the middle of the night and asked to consent to organ donation due to the severity of his brain damage and hemorrhaging. Physicians advised that he was unlikely to survive the next 24–72 hours, and that even if he did, there was no cure for any level of brain damage.

After he was hit, word spread immediately among the Theta Chi brothers in Daytona and back home in New Jersey. They made this brother their sole priority, visiting him around the clock and supporting his family throughout the crisis. His immediate family secured a room in the hospital so they could speak to him and play recordings while he was comatose, hoping to stimulate consciousness. After 10 days, he began to awaken. Upon regaining consciousness, he did not know his own name and did not recognize his sister. However, when asked which fraternity he belonged to, he responded, “Theta Chi.”

That brother was me.

To this day, I am convinced that I would not have survived without the resolute support of my Theta Chi brothers throughout my entire journey.

Weeks later, as I fully emerged from the coma, the extent of my brain injury became clear. I had lost the ability to comprehend reading, suffered from significant short- and long-term memory deficits, experienced other cognitive impairments, and was unable to walk. Based on historical data for survivors of severe traumatic brain injury and catastrophic orthopedic trauma, my condition was deemed permanent. I was devastated that a drunk driver had taken away my future.

Throughout my hospitalization and beyond, my Theta Chi brothers remained a constant source of support. Knowing I was surrounded by unwavering encouragement from my brothers, family, and friends, I made a pledge: if I was somehow able to achieve a full recovery—despite being told it was impossible—I would dedicate the rest of my life to ending drunk driving and helping those affected by brain injury.

After six months of inpatient care, 15 surgeries, and intensive physical, occupational, and speech therapy, I achieved a full recovery from both my physical injuries and my severe traumatic brain injury. I went on to graduate from law school and passed the New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Multistate Bar Exams on my first attempt, with scores high enough to waive into additional states.

I’m now a Partner at Davis, Saperstein & Salomon, P.C., where one of my partners is also a Theta Chi and a Charter Member of Theta Beta Chapter: **Paul Garfield** (1986). My practice is devoted to representing victims of car crashes, falls, drunk driving crashes, and individuals who have sustained traumatic brain injuries.

# Student injured in hit and run on spring break vacation

BY BOB SHULTIES

Steve Benvenisti, senior marketing major, was the victim of a hit and run while on Spring Break in Daytona Beach, Florida.

Medical Center with two broken legs and a broken collar bone. While there he was placed in an induced coma. An induced coma is one where the doctors, with the use of powerful drugs, place the patient into the

Benvenisti is not only a brother of Theta Chi, he is the Assitant Area Director of Cromwell and president of Blue Key. Blue Key is a national fraternity for honor students.

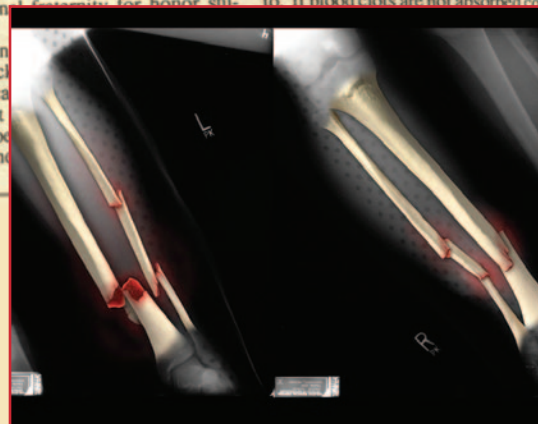
Preliminary CAT scans of his brain came back negative meaning that blood clots were being absorbed like they were supposed to. If blood clots are not absorbed complications



Advised that Steven's survival was not likely, Steven's family, including his brother, Bruce, remain by his side in support, hoping and praying for a miracle.



Steven presents anti-drunk driving programs throughout the year to students across the country and also serves as an international keynote speaker at various conferences, with all fees and honoraria waived or donated to charitable organizations. RIGHT: Steven is all smiles as he walks independently without a wheelchair for the first time! LOWER RIGHT: More than 30 years later, Steven is running three to four times per week!



Images of Steven's legs after being struck by a drunk driver.



In fulfillment of the promise I made upon recovery, I present an anti-drunk driving program approximately 20 times per year to students across the country. The program has successfully curtailed drunk driving at participating schools. Students receive a keychain and are asked to take a pledge [#ipledgeforlife] to never drink and drive. I also serve as an international keynote and motivational speaker at medical, legal, law enforcement, and educational conferences, sharing my recovery story and expressing gratitude to professionals dedicated to saving lives. One hundred percent of the honoraria I receive—totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars—has been waived and donated directly to charitable organizations.

I also wrote *Spring Break: A True Story of Hope and Determination* to help end drunk driving and provide hope to individuals, veterans, and families affected by traumatic brain injury—the silent epidemic of our time. All proceeds from the book are donated to nonprofit organizations.

I am so humbled to have received numerous honors, including Citizen of the Year, Businessman of the Year, a U.S. Senate Proclamation, the Brain Injury Excellence Award, and the Annual Law Enforcement Award. I'm currently serving as a National Ambassador for Mothers Against Drunk Driving and chair of the NY-NJ-PA Advisory Board; president of the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey; and on the board of directors of the Helen Hayes Hospital Foundation. I've been married for 27 years and have two children who are college graduates. I also run several miles per week.

I list these achievements and accomplishments not to brag but to recount my experience and show how far I've come because of the extraordinary support of my Theta Chi brothers. Their commitment, brotherhood, and Helping Hands were pivotal in my recovery and helped me become a Resolute Man. ■



## EXPANSION



XI/VIRGINIA



BETA IOTA COLONY/ARIZONA

### Current Colonies



Alpha Gamma Colony/  
Michigan



Alpha Eta Colony/  
North Carolina



Alpha Upsilon Colony/  
Nebraska



Zeta Omega Colony/  
West Chester



Eta Zeta Colony/  
Edinboro



Theta Tau Colony/  
Western Michigan

### Reinstallations



Xi/Virginia  
Charlottesville, VA  
Reinstalled: 4/18/2026

### Recent Redevelopments



Mu/  
California



Rho/  
Illinois

### Expansion Projects (FALL 2026)



University of Oklahoma

### New Colonies

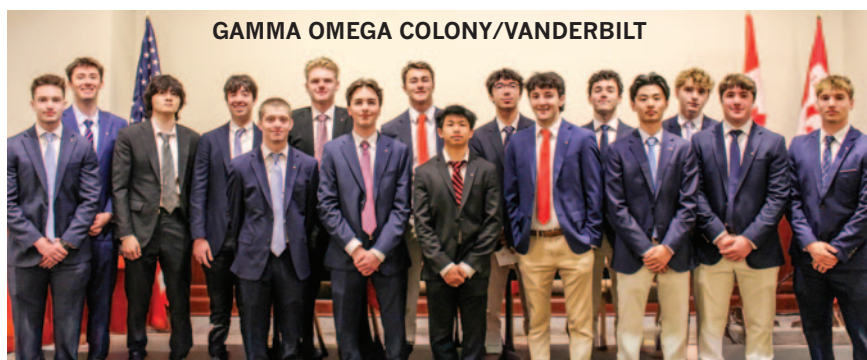


Beta Iota Colony/Arizona  
Tucson, AZ  
Recolonized: 5/2/2026



Gamma Omega Colony/  
Vanderbilt  
Nashville, TN  
Recolonized: 4/19/2026

Visit [thetachi.org/news](http://thetachi.org/news) for additional stories on our (re)installed chapters and new colonies.



GAMMA OMEGA COLONY/VANDERBILT

Please contact Interim Director of Growth Taylor Dahlem at [tdahlem@thetachi.org](mailto:tdahlem@thetachi.org) if you are interested in becoming involved with these groups.



## Hamline Brother Offers Hope

**[Editor's Note:** When **Cole Hanson** (Beta Kappa/Hamline 2013) swabbed his cheek and joined the marrow registry in 2017, he knew it could be a gift for someone else. When the call came, he was ready to donate his stem cells to an anonymous patient. He shared, "For me, Theta Chi was always about the Assisting Hand; extending it to those in need no matter who they are or where they might be. Whether at your local food shelf or volunteering for those in need, service to others is a calling from our Creed that we must embrace for our entire lives. I encourage every brother to sign up for Gift of Life because you never know when you could save someone's life."

Brother Hanson was featured in an article by the Gift of Life Marrow Registry, reprinted here with permission from Traci Ackerman.]

Although Cole Hanson knew about the stem cell and marrow donor registry, for several years he kept missing the opportunity to sign up. His chance finally came when he was visiting Israel and Gift of Life offered everyone in his tour group a swab kit during a presentation.

"I was on Birthright during the winter session in Jerusalem," said Cole. "It was still Hanukkah, and it was also New Year's Day 2017 at the same time, so joining the registry was like a gift for someone else, as well as a Happy New Year's for me."

Cole was contacted as a possible match in 2022, but he did not get to donate that first time. For some patients, several potential donors may be tested to see which is the best possibility for helping the recipient, so it's likely a closer one was found. But that wasn't Cole's last call from Gift of Life.

"I was hanging out at home when I got the second call," said Cole. "I still had the number saved in my phone, and I thought it must just be a follow-up call, but it was a new request, and I was so excited. Service to others is always important to me, and this is especially exciting—doing something for another person that no one else can do. It feels very special."

Cole matched a woman in her 50s diagnosed with leukemia, and his donation was scheduled during the winter months at Gift of Life's Adelson Collection Center in balmy Boca Raton, Fla.

"When I left Minnesota, it was 10 degrees below zero—I was happy to get to Florida and warm up," said Cole. "Most of my work as a SNAP-education teacher was shifted to other people for a couple days, and my supervisor told me not to worry about the time off. I don't think they even used any of my vacation days while I was gone."

Gift of Life arranged for Cole's travel, transportation, and accommodations at a beachside resort, and donors are encouraged to bring a companion with them, so he invited his girlfriend Caitlin to join him.

"She is a Ph.D. in animal science who works in healthcare and was excited to talk to the collection center staff about the equipment and the immune system; she had a blast," said Cole. "I had a very easy donation; it was seamless, fast and felt cozy. I was hanging out and chatting, played some games—I had brought my Steam Deck gaming console with me—and then suddenly I was done. It was uneventful."

But saying it was an "uneventful" visit doesn't tell the whole story. Preparing for the donation gave Cole the quiet time he needed to make a major decision.

"The woman who represents my city district had to resign earlier this year, and since I'm very involved in the community, people reached out to ask if I was planning to run," he said. "I wanted time to think about it, and going to Florida for a few days was exactly the respite and good feelings I needed. I made the choice to do it and began to prepare for the most challenging six months of my life."

Cole even got recognition on his way home with Caitlin.

"Our flight home was on Delta, and I was wearing my 'I am a Gift of Life donor' shirt," said Cole. "The air steward asked if I had just donated and told me her sister was saved by a marrow transplant. She offered to give me Delta's 'Saved someone on a flight' credit to my flight miles. Then she came back and said, 'We also fly this jet to Paris, so we have some special treats on board. Here are some of the good chocolates.' We really got incredible treatment the entire time—the hotel, the beach, everything about donating was made easy, I felt like I was the one who got the gift."

Cole is also mindful that there is another person at the other end of his donation, someone who now has hope of recovery.

"I was so excited to write them the anonymous letter," said Cole. "My recipient will never be alone because I was able to offer them something no one else could. I literally shared part of my body to help their body. It's better than miraculous, we can do this all the time—we just need more people to sign up."

Cole, a resident of St. Paul, has a daughter and is running for city council. He is a graduate of Hamline University in political science and has a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Minnesota. He is a member of Theta Chi Fraternity. In his free time, Cole is not only running for office, but he also runs about 10 miles a week, takes his daughter camping and likes to spend plenty of time outdoors.





John Berghoff  
Chief Development Officer  
317-848-1856  
jberghoff@thetachi.org

Here are some quick updates from the Foundation Chapter. We are grateful for your continued support!—John Berghoff, Chief Development Officer

## New Foundation Chapter Board Members

### Vance J. Hinton (Alpha Delta/Purdue 1980)

Vance graduated from Purdue with a degree in electrical engineering. An accomplished entrepreneur, he created numerous successful electrical manufacturing companies and branched out into other enterprises. In addition to his electrical and fabrication endeavors, he owns and manages a diversified real estate and investment portfolio. He also restored the historic Faust Hotel (prior to selling it in 2022), had a successful 16-year run with Faust Brewing Company, and is a co-owner of the Black Whale Pub, all located in New Braunfels, TX. His newest fabrication involved teaming up with his wife Priscilla to serve as executive producers of *The House of Abraham*.



### Brent D. Layton (Delta Beta/Georgia 1989)

Brent has built a distinguished career as a leader in healthcare and digital health innovation. He currently serves as chief executive officer of Sharecare, a leading digital health company, and sits on its board of directors. Previously, Brother Layton was president and COO of Centene Corporation, where for over two decades he helped grow the enterprise from \$300 million to \$144 billion in annual revenue. He also founded and managed multiple healthcare companies, including Avesis and Absolute Care Medical Centers. Today, he serves as chairman of Homeward, a public benefit corporation reimagining healthcare in rural America, and on the board of City of Refuge, a nonprofit serving Atlanta communities. A generous supporter of the University of Georgia, Brent and his wife Kelly established the largest endowment in its graphic design program's history.



### Philip C. Thornton (Gamma Theta/San Diego State 2005)

With over 20 years of experience in higher education, fundraising, alumni engagement, and strategic philanthropy, Philip recently joined the Kansas State University Foundation as the Associate Vice President for Collegiate Development following a successful revitalization effort as the Vice President of Advancement at the University of Indianapolis. With a bachelor's degree from San Diego State, Brother Thornton earned a master's in business administration from the University of Arizona. His involvement with his chapter includes service on the Gamma Theta Alumni Corporation, and he has worked for the International Headquarters on the Field Staff and as Chief Development Officer.



## Thank You to Retiring Board Members

The Foundation Chapter thanks **Vance Maultsby** (Delta Phi/North Texas 1974) and **Eric Jayaweera** (Theta Iota/UC-Santa Cruz 1991) for their service on the Foundation Chapter Board of Directors over the past eight years. During their time on the board, Brother Maultsby served as President (2021–2026) and Brother Jayaweera served as Treasurer (2023–2026). We appreciate their calm leadership and brotherhood and thank them for their Assisting Hand!



Assembled brothers rise in standing ovations to show their appreciation and gratitude as Foundation Chapter President Steve Mudder presents the Foundation Chapter Service Plaque to outgoing President Vance Maultsby (above) and outgoing Treasurer Eric Jayaweera (right).



## BELIEVE

Our Creed unites every member of Theta Chi Fraternity, starting with its very first words: “**I believe...**” To believe in Theta Chi is to **BELIEVE** in the Theta Chi collegiate experience and the life-changing work our alumni volunteers and International Headquarters staff are doing for today’s collegians, preparing them to be Resolute Men on their campuses and in their future communities.

Each brother should reflect and remember why he **BELIEVES** in Theta Chi and how Theta Chi **BELIEVED** in him.

Turn the page and you’ll see true leadership. Turn the page and **BELIEVE**.

**BELIEVE is the largest endowment campaign in the history of Theta Chi Fraternity, seeking to endow the Fraternity’s leadership education and training programs, alumni and chapter support initiatives, and the Museum, Archives, and History program.**

We’ll have more information about **BELIEVE** in the next issue of *The Rattle*, but now is the time to think about how you can leave a legacy and make a lasting mark on Theta Chi. This is your chance to give back to the Fraternity that has given you so much.

Please consider extending a Helping Hand by making a pledge to the **BELIEVE** campaign. Please encourage and challenge other brothers from your chapter to support Theta Chi in this historic campaign. Use the envelope provided in the center of this issue or visit [thetachi.org/give](http://thetachi.org/give).



Scan here to learn more about **BELIEVE!**

“This brotherhood—170 years in the making—was born of two Norwich cadets who believed in something bigger than themselves. They believed in Truth, Temperance, and Tolerance...”: Watch the full video at [thetachi.org/believe](http://thetachi.org/believe).



Scan here or use the enclosed envelope to make your gift!

## BELIEVE in Theta Chi's Future

BY DALTON FISCHER, CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Amongst a crowd of over 450 Theta Chi collegians and alumni from across North America, the Foundation Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity boldly announced historic news at the 170th Anniversary Convention in San Antonio regarding the future of our great Fraternity. **BELIEVE**—the largest endowment campaign in the storied 170-year history of Theta Chi—was publicly launched at Convention alongside a special livestream event across the Fraternity's social media channels.

The anticipation in the room was electric, as **Foundation Chapter President Steve Mudder** confidently announced **BELIEVE's** goal to raise **\$22 million** by the 172nd Anniversary Convention in Tampa on July 28, 2028. As attendees sat in silence, astonished and bewildered by this seemingly insurmountable goal, Brother Mudder calmly asked the alumni present who had already made a pledge to stand. Brother Mudder completed his recognition of the alumni and then boldly revealed **BELIEVE's** progress: **over \$15 million**. The assembled brothers were amazed and burst into rousing cheers and thunderous applause. Thanks to the generosity and forward thinking of **89 Theta Chi alumni**, **over \$15 million** had already been pledged as part of **BELIEVE's** Leadership Phase. Each of these brothers made a pledge because of their conviction and dedication to Theta Chi's ideals and its mission—to build Resolute Men.

The energy continued as **Chief Development Officer John Berghoff** then announced one of the largest gifts in the history of the Foundation Chapter: a **\$2.6 million** gift from Steve Mudder to endow the Fraternity's annual Our Sacred Purpose Conference to educate, train, and prepare each new Vice President of Health and Safety for their term. Thanks to the generosity of Brother Mudder, Vice Presidents of Health and Safety from each chapter and colony will continue to receive world-class training from the Fraternity's staff and accomplished volunteers for years to come, with all costs to attend covered by this new endowment.

**International President Toby Roth** then officially declared a renaming of Our Sacred Purpose to the Steven J. Mudder Sacred Purpose Conference and presented Brother Mudder with a framed logo of the conference as it was revealed for attendees.

**BELIEVE** centers on the Fraternity's need to support its growing collegiate membership—a figure that has continued to increase each year since 2010 (not including 2020/2021). Moreover, the Fraternity not only surpassed pre-pandemic collegiate membership totals in 2024 but also set a record in 2026 with a collegiate membership of 9,099 brothers and pledges—the largest census in the Fraternity's history. Fraternity leaders continue to plan for and accommodate this growth as young men continue to need and desire the positive outcomes offered by men's fraternities, and Theta Chi is poised to tackle growth goals for years to come.

To support this growth and provide members and chapters a world-class fraternity experience, **BELIEVE** seeks to endow the Fraternity's leadership education and training programs, alumni and chapter support initiatives, and its Museum, Archives, and History program. This critical and consistent education, service, and support will protect and preserve the Fraternity for future generations of Resolute Men.

With \$15 million of \$22 million thus far raised, Brother Mudder exclaimed at Convention, "The momentum is just starting!" and then challenged all alumni brothers: "Will you make a difference in the future of Theta Chi and the lives of our collegiate brothers?"

We need your support. We need your leadership. We need your Helping Hand. Visit [thetachi.org/believe](https://thetachi.org/believe) to learn more about the Fraternity's most consequential endowment campaign or use the attached envelope to make a pledge.



*In appreciation of his \$2.6 million gift, International President Toby Roth presents Steve Mudder with the newly revamped logo for the Steven J. Mudder Sacred Purpose Conference.*



# BELIEVE



Scan here or use the  
enclosed envelope  
to make your gift!





## CHAPTER NEWS



**EPSILON/WPI's John Ireland** (2027) completes his Army training in 2025 and continues to challenge himself in ROTC. John is a senior in WPI's B.S./M.S. aerospace engineering program.



**NU/HAMPDEN-SYDNEY** hosts the BEAT MACON Blood Drive, supporting a full day of blood donations and volunteer service.



**ALPHA LAMBDA/OHIO STATE** raises \$48,429 for pediatric cancer during BuckeyeTHON and wins the Miracle Cup.

### ALPHA MU/IOWA STATE

We held our annual Candlelight Vigil on campus for victims and survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.

### BETA RHO/ILLINOIS WESLEYAN

We were blessed to host alumni during 2025 homecoming, especially the class of 1975, who returned for their 50-year reunion. (See page 29.)



**OMEGA/PENN STATE's** Past Chapter President **Andrew Beans** (2027) runs the Philadelphia Marathon and is supported by several brothers.



**ALPHA DELTA/PURDUE** raises \$5,000 for the USO during their annual OXtoberfest.



### ALPHA UPSILON COLONY/NEBRASKA

We partnered with Phi Mu and visited the Children's Hospital and Rainbow House in Omaha, NE. The following weekend, Phi Mu and Theta Chi cooked and sold grilled cheese sandwiches and raised more than \$1,500 for these very worthy causes!

**Sgt. Jordan Gartner** (2026) receives an Army Commendation Medal for his expertise, outstanding performance, commitment to duty and leadership, and selfless service.





**GAMMA TAU/DRAKE** supports scholars in Belize through the James Arthur Albert Foundation. The foundation's mission is to improve the quality of life of the children by distributing goods and services, including scholarships for hundreds of students to attend high school. In a recent newsletter, their vice president, Kale Van Bruggen writes: "We come to Belize each January to meet the scholars that you support, and to present certificates to each student showing them how proud we are of their grit and determination to be educated. Many of them are Mayan descendants who live in remote villages in thatched huts with dirt floors, no electricity, and no internet. Their parents are mostly farmers whose incomes are so small that, for many families, sending even one child to school is impossible. **The scholarships at Corazon Creek are made possible in large part by the tireless efforts of the Theta Chi brothers at Drake University.** Today, we made sure the Corazon scholars knew exactly who helps keep them in school: students who themselves have so little but who give anyway. These scholars proudly held up their scholarship certificates and the Theta Chi flag."



#### DELTA THETA/TOLEDO

We teamed up with Alpha Chi Omega for Wrap Up Toledo, an annual event that raises funds to collect blankets for organizations across Toledo. We also partnered with Alpha Omicron Pi to build care packages for the Toledo Military Reserve.

◀ **Malachi Fruits (2025) and Nathan Simpkins (2025)** retire from their service as Rocky the Rocket.



◀ **EPSILON ETA/IUP's Fox Van Leer (2026)** is awarded the chapter's Heroes Memorial Scholarship for embodying the attributes of honor, bravery, and love of country through his academic work and as a member of ROTC. In addition, Epsilon Eta took home Chapter of the Year, Excellence in Community Involvement, Highest New Member GPA, and Chapter GPA of 3.0 or Higher at the fall 2025 Greek Awards.

#### BETA SIGMA/LEHIGH

We volunteered alongside Phi Sigma Chi to organize, stock, and help run the Hispanic Center Lehigh Valley Food Pantry.



▲ **BETA PHI/NEVADA** wraps up a month-long philanthropy campaign that culminates in their main event, "Cookies and Cocoa," and raises \$20,000 for the USO.

#### DELTA GAMMA/WV WESLEYAN

**Wyatt Burns (2026)** was named Greek Man of the Year.

#### DELTA RHO/NC STATE

We hosted a Parents Weekend tailgate before the Wolfpack's home game against Campbell.

#### DELTA UPSILON/ARIZONA STATE

We won first place in Delta Gamma's Anchorsplash and helped them raise more than \$30,000 for Service for Sight.

#### EPSILON MU/EASTERN MICHIGAN

We hosted a successful car wash fundraiser with Delta Zeta.

#### ZETA ALPHA/SLIPPERY ROCK

We attended "Greeks Give Back" and joined other Greeks to pick up trash and plant flowers.

#### ZETA SIGMA/ WISCONSIN-RIVER FALLS

We packed 120 boxes of food for Feed My Starving Children.



## CHAPTER NEWS

### ZETA KAPPA/OHIO NORTHERN

**Jack Courtwright** (2026) was recognized by ONU's IFC for his hard work organizing Rock the Tundra, gathering bands, and landing sponsorships, which created a very successful event. In addition, the chapter received awards for Outstanding Community Service and Outstanding Risk Management Program, as well as recognition as a Gold Star Chapter in ONU's Standards of Excellence program. They also partnered with Phi Alpha Theta History Honorary and extended a Helping Hand to the local Hardin County Historical Museum for their annual Haunted Museum event.



**ZETA PI/OLD DOMINION** volunteers at the golf tournament hosted by Virginia's Special Olympics chapter.

### ETA ALPHA/CLEMSON

We took first place in the 2025 Homecoming float competition.

### ETA BETA/EASTERN KENTUCKY

We helped serve at EKU's IFC Thanksgiving and following the event, we delivered the remaining food to the Richmond Police Department, the Kentucky State Police, Baptist Health, and the Richmond Fire Department. Brothers also volunteered at Daniel Boone Elementary's annual Fall Carnival by serving food and drinks, helping run games, and supporting a fun afternoon for local families. We are proud to report that we placed third in Alpha Omicron Pi's Lip Sync philanthropy event and that **Payton Stigall** (2027) was named as their "Pi Guy."

### ETA MU/FINDLAY

We wrote 350+ Christmas cards to the USO, Findlay nursing home residents, and UF faculty and staff during our Warm Wishes with Theta Chi event.



**ZETA UPSILON/HARTFORD** hosts Alumni Weekend at WeHa Brewing & Roasting Co. where collegians and alumni mix, mingle, and celebrate brotherhood.



**KAPPA PI/BOSTON** cohosts an event with **ETA DELTA/BABSON** to support Team IMPACT, an organization that matches disabled children with college sports teams.



**THETA OMEGA/APPALACHIAN STATE** organizes a neighborhood cleanup.

### ETA PI/EAST STROUDSBURG

**Gage Arnfeldt** (2027), **Gavin Ehlman** (2027), **Jack Glaser** (2027), **Zander Lynn** (2026), **Robert Nolan** (2026), and **Alexander Roberts** (2026) were inducted into Order of Omega.

### ZETA RHO/KENTUCKY

We hosted a family weekend which included a trip to Keeneland and a brunch.

### THETA EPSILON/KENNESAW STATE

We won the 2025 Philanthropy Event Award. **Cade Raker** (2026) was inducted into the KSU Fraternity/Sorority Life Hall of Fame, and **Jack Peak** (2028) won the Emerging IFC Leader Award.

### IOTA DELTA/SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA

We won IFC Week and the Chapter Excellence in Growth award.



**ETA DELTA/BABSON** resumes Couch-a-Thon, Theta Chi's annual philanthropy tradition at Babson that started in 1988. For 50 hours, at least seven brothers stay on couches set up on campus through cold and rain and raise \$5,414 to benefit the USO and Josie's Place.



**THETA RHO/McNEESE STATE** passes out red carnations on campus on Valentine's Day.



**KAPPA THETA/SUNY GENESEO** wins the intramural broomball championship.



**ETA OMICRON/NORTHWESTERN STATE** helps load 400 boxes of gifts and supplies for Operation: Christmas Child hosted at Natchitoches' First Baptist Church.



## Experts Teach Fire/Life Safety at Eta Gamma



Eta Gamma Chapter in Morehead, KY, had the opportunity to honor our Sacred Purpose with some hands-on fire and life safety education. Brothers learned how to prevent the start and spread of fires with our local Morehead Fire Department. Firefighters demonstrated how equipment for fire prevention and suppression works and filled our house with "smoke" to give us a walkthrough on how to evacuate in case of emergency. During the "smoke out," all the brothers went into the upper rooms of the chapter house and the firefighters timed us on our evacuation. — Brody Shearer (2028)

## IOTA KAPPA/NORTH ARIZONA

We volunteered at the Flagstaff Family Food Center Food Bank and Kitchen. We also hosted our inaugural Pickleball Smash, which included Pie-A-Chi.

## KAPPA GAMMA/NORTH FLORIDA

We won Fraternity of the Year during UNF's Greek Awards. Additionally, **Reese Williams** (2028) was named New Member of the Year, **Trysten Pujol** (2026) was named President of the Year, and **Braxton Neningar** (2026) and **Joshua Oehler** (2027) were among UNF's Top 10 Greeks of the Year.

## KAPPA OMICRON/TENNESSEE

We received the Adopt-a-Road Group of the Year award from Keep Knoxville Beautiful.



## 115th Anniversary Celebration at Epsilon

BY JAMES MELVIN (EPSILON/WPI 1985)

Since Epsilon Chapter's 100th anniversary celebration in 2009, we have celebrated our strong brotherhood on the campus of WPI every five years. Both our 105th and 110th anniversary events were wildly successful, with 200+ attendees and endless memories at both.

In 2024, Epsilon returned to the Grand Hall venue at Union Station in Worcester to celebrate 115 years. The event was planned and executed by a partnership between the chapter's collegiate Alumni Committee, chaired by **Carson Murphy** (2024), the committee Alumni Adviser **James**

**Melvin** (1985), and the overall event lead **Joseph Gugliemino** (1983). Google Drive docs and spreadsheets were used to manage planning and associated tasks and although expensive, Eventbrite was helpful with event registrations, emails, and more.

The event was planned to maximize time for alumni engagement with their fellow brothers. Hors d'oeuvres were served instead of a sit-down dinner, and speeches were limited to very brief comments so brothers and their guests could get back to reconnecting with their chapter friends and era peers. The fee schedule for the event really helped drive attendance. To encourage full participation, collegiate brothers and their guests paid \$10 to attend. Alumni had the opportunity to pay an early bird discounted rate of \$80, a regular rate of \$100, or a late registration/walk-in rate of \$120. The fee covered the hall, exhibits, and food, with a cash bar and an open soft drink bar. This effective strategy encouraged alumni to commit early, which helped set expectations with the organizers and simplify the food order.

With more than 230 brothers, guests, and special invitees in attendance, this was by far the most successful event in the chapter's history. Brothers from the classes of 1959 through 2027 attended, many with their significant others. In addition, we were honored to host **then-International President Creig Andreassen** and **Chief Development Officer John Berghoff**. Brothers were thrilled to provide them with a tour of the chapter house the day before the event. Also in attendance were several WPI dignitaries: Grace Wang, the new WPI president; Emily Perlow, Dean of Students; and Christine Ziev from Student Activities and Greek Life. Both Emily and Christine have been longtime friends of Epsilon Chapter.

Several exhibits were created by collegians and alumni for the event. Vintage photos of the house and brothers were shown on two separate projector screens. Over 25 composites were put on display for attending alumni to help refresh their memories of their classmates and era brothers. Some exhibits displayed throughout the venue encouraged alumni updates: chapter officer history, Big Brother/Little Brother family trees, chapter house room resident history, and the career networking strategy and plan. Other exhibits included: the monthly dinner calendar, current alumni board, donation information, a MyChapter ([mychapter.org](http://mychapter.org)) map showing alumni home locations, the chapter's capital projects and wishlist, and recently donated founder artifacts.

We are so very thankful to the many attendees, contributors, volunteers, and organizers who helped make our 115th Anniversary Celebration a tremendous success, well beyond expectations. Other than a booming echo during speeches (not necessarily a bad thing) and a shortage of free bottled water (definitely a bad thing), the event went very smoothly. The venue could not have been more accommodat-

ing, though the allocated four hours for the event was insufficient for many. There were informal after-parties in several nearby bars and hotel rooms. There was also a large group of alumni who returned to the chapter house for tours and reminiscing. There were so many memories revisited and friendships renewed. We cannot wait to organize the 120th in 2029.



(L–R): Mark White (1984), Mathew DeDonato (2009), and Andrew Bruno (1985).



**IOTA/COLGATE's Jim Carrier** (1984) was recognized with the Outstanding American Award from the National Wrestling Hall of Fame of the New York State Chapter, a testament to his enduring commitment to service beyond the mat and boardroom. A standout wrestler during his time at Sherburne-Earlville High School, Carrier was known for his leadership and work ethic under Hall of Fame Coach Pete Hausrath. Those values carried him through a successful career in investment management at Edgewood Management in New York City and inspired a lifelong dedication to supporting U.S. military personnel and veterans.



Carrier has been recognized with some of the highest civilian honors in service to the military, including the Navy's 2006 Bob Hope Spirit of Hope Award and the Department of the Navy's Superior Public Service Award in 2008. He has also served on the board of trustees for both the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund and the Fisher House Foundation.



ABOVE: **DELTA/RPI** class of 1985 holds their 40th reunion.



LEFT: **ALPHA CHI/SYRACUSE** alumni gather via planes, trains, and automobiles in New York City for their 26th Annual Chowfest to celebrate the holidays.

#### DELTA/RPI

Coach **Matt Patricia** (1996) helped lead the Ohio State Buckeyes to the nation's No. 1 scoring and total defense in NCAA football.



medical researchers investigating a series of disappearances on a remote island. Available at [scottlambridis.com](http://scottlambridis.com).



#### IOTA/COLGATE

The Green Bay Packers and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay announced the establishment of the Mark Murphy Endowed Director of Athletics position at the university. The endowment honors **Mark Murphy's** (1977) 17-year tenure as Packers president and CEO and has a fundraising goal of \$1 million to support the university's student-athletes.



#### XI/VIRGINIA

**Michael Lenox, Ph.D.** (1993) was tapped to serve as the interim dean of the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia.



**Scott Lambridis** (1999) published his debut novel *St. Ulphia's Dead*, which follows two disgraced

#### ALPHA IOTA/INDIANA

Defender Direct founder **Dave Lindsey** (1991) received the Fair Haven Foundation's 2025 Community Service Award in recognition of his support of their mission to provide comfortable and convenient places near hospitals in Indianapolis for patients and families to stay during treatment. Since its founding in 2007, Fair Haven has been a home-away-from-home for over 50,000 nights to 2,000+ families.



#### PHI/NORTH DAKOTA STATE

**Blake Griffin** (1998) celebrated 25 years as president of Communication Network Engineering, Inc.



A group of **SIGMA/OREGON STATE** alumni gather together prior to an Oregon State football game. (L-R): **Darryl Stockton** (1968), 1966/1967 Chapter President **Greg Jacob** (1967), **Dick Russell** (1968), **Mike Hornbeck** (1967), **Bryon Van Fleet** (1967), and **David Smith** (1965).

#### ALPHA PHI/ALABAMA

**J. Frank Barefield** (1968) made a \$35 million gift to the University of Alabama, and its College of Arts & Sciences has been named in his honor.



**James Lewis** (1975) was inducted into the Arkansas Insurance Hall of Fame for his contributions to the Arkansas insurance industry.



**Robert Abernathy** (1976) and his wife, Laura, were honored by the University of Alabama with the naming of the Robert and Laura Abernathy Theatre in the new Smith Family Center for the Performing Arts.



## Our Shared Time

BY JAMES E. "JIGGS" HAYNES, JR. (CHI/AUBURN 1976)



*Jiggs in 1976*

During a weekend in October 2025, I joined a group of boys who have grown into men. My friends, who became brothers through a shared experience at Chi Chapter at Auburn University in the 1970s, gathered 50 years later to celebrate our mutual time together. Instantly recognizing their speech patterns and voices as if no time had passed since our glory days, I visualized them as they appear in my memory. I looked past the lack of hair, lines on the faces, or changes in their gait. I will admit only one challenged my recollection until he spoke. Hearing that accent brought me back to college years immediately.

Flooding back came those tales about ourselves and others. Some humorous, others serious, and some built on that shared experience. We remembered those who have passed into the Chapter Eternal. Brothers unable to attend responded to our gathering, expressing their regrets and wishes.

We relived our college years through stories about being a brotherhood. Our discussion reveled in that time of shared hours. We spoke of Big Brothers, Little Sisters, Dream Girls, spring trips, winter formals, and even the status of our chapter. We inquired about missing members, those whom we lost touch with. Each person knew information about someone lost to others. Sharing recent losses and news of others steered a conversation back to times in the collegiate chapter. Remembering each one reminded us of a shared story. Homecoming festivities, game weekend parties, and weekly meetings all came to mind. Theme weekends that helped define our reputation on campus and in the community. Some great, others not so much. Gatherings in the past provided special memories shared by many. Watching each other's children growing to adulthood was special. We exposed our pride in each of them.

We shared our knowledge of the lives of those attending and those absent. We told of our meetings with other brothers. We related encounters with brothers in odd or strange circumstances: traveling around the country in far-flung areas during our career, even at our place of work.

Afternoons shared at the Casino, nights at the Supper Club or the Blocked Punt came freshly to mind. Building homecoming decorations in the front yard or preparing for a 'Wreck Tech' parade. Even 'Burn the Bulldogs' bonfires. Parking on our



*The former Chi Chapter House: a birthplace for brotherhood.*

corner of the Drill Field with other graduates. Date nights. Chapter meetings. Former flames. Late-night trips to either the Torch or Denny's. Halloween parties and some embarrassing costumes. Christmas came with all of the anonymous contributions of digs intended for members. New pledges brought fresh faces and new opportunities. We reminded each other of personality quirks that made each of us unique and memorable.

Welcoming each other back to school every fall and celebrating the graduation of members stand out as wonderful memories. Each of us had special memories of one another. All of these combined into the greater picture of our shared time.

We are all individuals yet still attached to one another through this life event.

A younger brother added a historical moment by sharing our original Roster Book. As we scanned the pages, locating ourselves, we remembered those adjoining names and the impressions made. Looking back to the past, placing us once again with those of our youth. Familiar names, each with a specific memory. Those who came before us, and those who followed, continue to build a legacy of brotherhood shared by us all. We came together to relive those times of joy, laughter, and sadness. It worked for us. Years from now, others will gather to remember those brothers *they* loved and cherished. Until the day I die, I will always be a Theta Chi...



**ALPHA GAMMA/MICHIGAN's Bill Diefenbach** (1972) writes, "Here's a photo from last homecoming of the 1965–1975 era of Michigan Theta Chi alumni who still get together for three parties: Friday night's memorabilia basement party; Saturday morning's tailgate before the game; and Saturday night's big party at Barton Hills golf club."



Two brothers are working for the city of Miami: **Christian Molina** (Iota Omicron/FIU 2021) (L) is deputy chief of staff to commissioner Ralph Rosado and former LEC **Jonathan Fernandez** (Tau/Florida 2008) (R) is a senior policy analyst.



#### **BETA ZETA/ MICHIGAN STATE**

Executive producer **Casey Brumels** (1998), co-owner of Ping Pong Productions, won the Daytime Emmy for "Outstanding Travel and Adventure Program" for *Expedition Unknown*. Brumels' extensive work in television has spanned nearly two decades, helping to create popular shows such as *Dr. Pimple Popper*, *Ghost Nation*, and more.

#### **BETA RHO/ ILLINOIS WESLEYAN**

A number of brothers from the class of 1975 attended homecoming for their 50th reunion and received the Golden Guard. (photo right)

**Brian Gegel** (1994) received the Distinguished Alumni Award for Excellence in Nursing from IWU.



#### **GAMMA THETA/ SAN DIEGO STATE**

Former Chief Development Officer **Philip Thornton** (2005) was honored at bbcon's Blackbaud Impact Awards with the Fueling Greatness Award for his role leading the advancement team at the University of Indianapolis in a record-breaking fiscal year.



**BETA RHO/ILLINOIS WESLEYAN's** 1975 brothers receive the Golden Guard.



**ALPHA OMEGA/LAFAYETTE's** "6 o'clock club" holds their monthly meeting at Porter's in Easton, PA, in November 2025. Club officers, amazed that so many can even find Porter's, continue to change the day of the week the club meets to further develop mental acuity for those members advancing in years, purely as a public service.



## Alpha Delta Celebrates 150 Years of Greek Life at Purdue

**[Editor's Note:** This recap of Purdue University's 150th anniversary celebration of their Greek life community originally appeared in the Winter 2026 Alumni Newsletter for members of Fraternity, Sorority and Cooperative Life (FSCL) organizations. Portions of this article have been reprinted with permission from Associate Dean of Students and Director of FSCL **Brandon J. Cutler** (Alpha Mu/Iowa State 2004), who led behind-the-scenes efforts for the 150th festivities and has served Purdue's Greek life community since 2013. Many Alpha Delta Chapter alumni joined Brother Cutler in supporting the events and also received due recognition from their alma mater.]

Alumni of Purdue's FSCL community gathered to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Greek Life at Purdue and its ongoing commitment to scholarship, service, philanthropy and leadership development.

Generations of Boilermakers have found their place in the FSCL community, beginning in 1875 with the founding of Sigma Chi. Today, Purdue boasts one of the largest fraternity, sorority, and cooperative life bodies in the country, with more than 6,500 students holding membership in over 90 organizations.

The celebration engaged and connected alumni and students alike. **Matthew Williams** (2025) served as a co-chair for the 150th anniversary steering committee as he continues at Purdue to pursue a master's degree in biomedical engineering. With recent experience as President of Theta Chi and associate chief justice of the Purdue IFC, Williams saw firsthand the power of the connections between students and alumni across diverse organizations.



"Something that comes up every year with council leadership and the chapter presidents is that they want to have more cross-council collaboration," Williams says. "This was a good stepping stone in that direction. It's hard to find events that cater to all councils because they're all so unique, but one of the main similarities is that they all have a sense of community that students are looking for. As different as the backgrounds of some of these organizations can be, there's still a common ground around community and leadership."

One major component of the celebration was the recognition of FSCL's 150 Most Influential Alumni. Honorees received recognition at the 150th anniversary banquet and, in some cases, at their organization's house.

**Rick Conner** (1976) received a welcome surprise when he was recognized by **Hugh Pence** (1954), seated center in the photo below, who had served on the house corporation board for Theta Chi when Conner was a student. A dedicated alumnus who served the chapter for over 50 years, Pence was instrumental in securing the current location of the chapter house and provided ongoing support to the brothers of Theta Chi. While Conner was grateful to receive recognition alongside fellow influential alumni, Pence's involvement made the honor even more special.



"I was humbled when he arrived at our chapter house to honor myself and the other Theta Chi honorees," Conner says. "There were three people on the alumni board as I was a student working my way up, and he was one of them. I took a few years off after graduating, and guess who was there when I came back? Hugh Pence. He's been a stalwart. He brought the Christmas tree for the house from his farm every year, and the

wood in the living room today is from a tree out of his walnut farm. It was amazing seeing him there at 94 years old, and he was so happy to be there."

Conner, who began his career at age 16 as an apprentice drafter and eventually became president and chief operating officer of the same company, continues to serve Theta Chi. His company, American Structurepoint Inc., employs more than 80 student interns—many of whom are Boilermakers. As he envisions what the next



*LEFT: Alpha Delta brothers and guests gather at the chapter house prior to Purdue's 150 Most Influential Alumni banquet.*



150 years of FSCL might look like, he believes alumni are crucial to shaping the future.

"None of these organizations last unless the alumni support them—and that's boots-on-the-ground type of support," Conner says. "It requires people of all expertise. You don't have to be great at finance or a maintenance guru to be on one of these boards. Whatever skills you have, there's a place for you. Students are absolutely thirsty for anything you can tell them or give them that would help them or show them how you got to where you are. They want to know what your journey was like, and you can give them some breadcrumbs to get them on the path of success."

In addition to Conner, four more Theta Chi brothers were recognized as one of FSCL's 150 Most Influential Alumni:

#### Rev. Phil Bowers (1975)

Father Phil was a fixture in the Purdue community and a spiritual anchor for countless Boilermakers. He came to Purdue and campus ministry work in 1972 and served selflessly at St. Tom's, as an adviser to Theta Chi, the student hospital, the football team, and many others. Few people have had the long-term impact of Father Phil. He also served on Theta Chi's National Board of Directors.



#### Michael Berghoff (1985)

Founder and president of Lenex Steel Corporation, Berghoff was appointed to the board of trustees in 2009 and served as chairman from 2015 to 2024. He also served as the chair of the Purdue Global Board of Trustees during the institution's formation in 2017.



#### Bill Oesterle (1987)

Founder of Angi (Angie's List) and its CEO from 1999 to 2015, Bill served on Purdue's Board of Trustees from 2005–2010 and was deeply involved with Purdue, his local community, and politics and leadership in the state of Indiana.



#### Brian Cardinal (2000)

"The Custodian" played under legendary coach Gene Keady from 1995–2000 before heading to the NBA for a 12-year career that culminated in a championship ring with the Dallas Mavericks. He has worked with the John Purdue Club to support student-athlete scholarships and resources.



**ALPHA UPSILON/NEBRASKA's Doug Weishan** (1980) shares, "During homecoming last fall, we included Alpha Upsilon's 100th anniversary in our celebration festivities. We rented an event space near campus and had around 50 people in attendance, including brothers, spouses, colony members, and guests. In addition, the sisters of Phi Mu allowed us to visit and tour our old chapter house on campus! A great time was had by all!"

(L-R): Past Grand Chapter Member **Eric Raasch** (1988) and **Jeff Jorgensen** (1971) explore the former Alpha Upsilon Chapter House.



**John Vawter** (Alpha Sigma/Oregon 1966) writes:

**Duane Owens** (Alpha Sigma/Oregon 1952) was a three-year letterman in baseball. During this year's "Oregon Baseball First Pitch Banquet" to kick off the baseball season, Coach Mark Wasikowski honored Duane by introducing him and elaborating that Duane's batting average his senior year was .429 and that he had been instrumental in mentoring many players, including some who became part of Oregon's special 1954 College World Series team. Duane then went on to have a distinguished 43-year coaching career in high school and junior college in Oregon. When Coach mentioned that "Duane is 96 years young," the crowd cheered and welcomed him with a standing ovation. Coach Wasikowski also presented Duane with a University of Oregon bat that was engraved with Duane's name and '1950–1952'.





## Alpha Sigma Celebrates a Century of Excellence at the University of Oregon

BY TREY CORNISH (ALPHA SIGMA/OREGON 2019)

In 2025, the brothers of Alpha Sigma gathered in Eugene, OR, at the University of Oregon to celebrate a milestone a century in the making. Theta Chi's centennial festivities became a profound reflection on 100 years of brotherhood, leadership, and service.

The event kicked off on a Friday with a true Duck tradition—brothers and alumni from across the country gathered for a massive tailgate before heading into the stadium to witness a thrilling victory over the University of Minnesota. The energy of the win set the perfect tone for the weekend as laughter and stories filled the air across generations of brothers—some returning to Eugene for the first time in decades to walk the campus they once called home.

The weekend highlights included welcoming back brothers from the chapter's storied history, including **Rechartering President Sam Michaan** (2019), whose leadership was pivotal in ushering in the "modern era" of Alpha Sigma. We were also honored to recognize the immense contributions of longtime volunteers **Kevin Horner** (1975) and **Dave Lingenfelder** (1976). Their tireless work leading alumni initiatives and their selfless gift of time have been instrumental in supporting our collegiate brothers and maintaining the high standards of our chapter.



*Trey Cornish (2019) welcomes brothers and guests to Alpha Sigma's Centennial Dinner.*



*International Historian Jim McMahon presents a commemorative resolution from the Grand Chapter to Chapter President Reese Stewart (2027).*

The heart of the celebration took place on Saturday during the Centennial Dinner. We were privileged to welcome **Theta Chi CEO Mike Mayer**, who shared inspiring words on the current direction of the Fraternity and how Theta Chi continues to lead the way in the Greek-letter world. We were also joined by **International Historian Jim McMahon**, whose presence helped us truly commemorate the historical weight of a century of excellence, **Chief Housing Officer Bill Russo**, and **Chief Communications Officer Dalton Fischer**.

Addressing a room filled with over 100 years of collective experience, the message from our guest speakers and alumni was clear: while we celebrate the achievements of the past, we are equally committed to the 'Next 100.' The evening served as a living bridge across the decades, as we looked back at the icons who built this chapter and recognized the Resolute Men who continue to uphold our traditions today.

As the celebration drew to a close, the sense of the 'Next 100' remained the prevailing sentiment. This centennial wasn't just a closing chapter on a successful past, but a vibrant prologue for our future. The bonds of Theta Chi are as strong as ever, and Alpha Sigma Chapter stands ready to continue its tradition of excellence in Eugene for the next century.



*Brothers gather to celebrate Alpha Sigma Chapter's centennial at the University of Oregon.*



**DELTA BETA/GEORGIA's Edward L. "Trey" Busch** (1994) opened Sleight of Hand Cellars, a winery in Walla Walla, WA. Trey is co-owner and winemaker.



Image Credit: Duke Athletics and The ACC

**GAMMA RHO/FLORIDA STATE's Manny Diaz** (1995) is head coach and helped lead the Duke Blue Devils football team to its eighth ACC title—and first outright ACC championship since 1962—during an overtime victory against No. 16 Virginia. Duke then defeated Arizona State at the Sun Bowl.

#### GAMMA RHO/ FLORIDA STATE

**Mark Hillis** (1964) received FSU's Seal of Spirit Award at the 31st annual Clock & Seal Dinner.



#### DELTA IOTA/NORTHWESTERN

**Steve Cahillane** (1987) was tapped as the new CEO of Kraft Heinz and brings a wealth of industry knowledge, having most recently served as chairman, president, and CEO of Kellanova.



#### ZETA KAPPA/ OHIO NORTHERN

**Brit Rowe** (1993) received the Outstanding Advisor Award at ONU's annual Greek Awards.



#### More Theta Chi Authors ZETA OMEGA/WESTCHESTER



**Joe Paone** (1999) wrote *The Baron's Daughter*, a tale of forbidden romance and

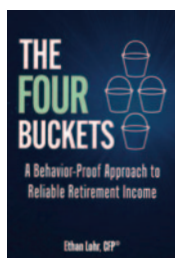


unbreakable courage, set against the backdrop of early 20th-century Italy. Available on Amazon.

#### ETA KAPPA/JAMES MADISON



Certified Financial Planner **Ethan Lohr** (2015) authored *The Four Buckets*, which advises retirees on how



to elevate their lifestyle, create a flexible plan that balances security and growth, and enjoy steady, behavior-proof income built to last. Available on Amazon.



#### GAMMA PSI/PUGET SOUND

After serving three years as the chairman of USA Bobsled & Skeleton, **Randy Aliment** (1977) joined Team USA in Milano Cortina for the 2026 Winter Olympics.

#### GAMMA SIGMA/DUKE

**Mick Tobin** (2025) was named to Forbes' 30 Under 30 for his political activism with his bipartisan nonprofit, Young People's Alliance.



#### DELTA KAPPA/BALL STATE



Former LEC **Steven Thomas** (2005) was named executive director of Table of Grace Pantry.

#### EPSILON SIGMA/WAGNER



**Gregg Gavioli** (1998) received Wagner's Kevin Sheehy Alumni Leadership Medal for consistent leadership and service.

#### EPSILON TAU/ STEPHEN F. AUSTIN

**Jermaine Merritt** (2015) is Southern Methodist University's associate director of undergraduate recruiting and co-lead for the Dedman College Scholars Program.



#### ZETA SIGMA/ WISCONSIN-RIVER FALLS

During our annual Cornerstone Banquet, we raised more than \$11,000 for our chapter scholarship fund through our auction. We also presented Theta Chi's Carnation Award to 13 outstanding women to show our appreciation for their continued support, involvement, and commitment. Many thanks to everyone who contributed. If you would like more information on the event, please contact **Dave May** at david.andrew.may@gmail.com.

#### ETA GAMMA/MOREHEAD

Theta Chi Distinguished Achievement Award recipient **Col. Rick Halbleib** (1974) was recently inducted into the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the Military Intelligence HOF, the U.S. Army ROTC National HOF, and the Morehead State Alumni HOF.



#### ETA LAMBDA/VIRGINIA TECH



Former IHQ staffer **Rob Bergeron** (1989) is now executive director of the Event Safety Alliance.



The **ETA NU/ALMA** spring 1989 pledge class reunites and restages an old photo. Eric Shaw writes, "Though Stuart transferred after initiation, the bond is still there. If you know us, you know us." (L-R): **Eric Shaw** (1992), **Ben Barber** (1992), **Raf Berardinelli** (1992), **R.J. Webber** (1993), **Stuart Tannehill** (Alpha Tau/Ohio 1994), and **Lee DeWitt** (1991).



L-R: Travis Warren and Kevin Craig



## ETA OMICRON/ NORTHWESTERN STATE



**Jim Gibson** (1981) was recognized by the International Impact Book Awards for Outstanding Literary Achievement for Book 1 of his series *The Last Wizard of Orth* under his pen name **J. Pierce Cummings**. He recently completed the series' third book. Available on Amazon.

## ETA RHO/CENTENARY



**Josh Johnson** (2012) was nominated for an NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series for his work on *The Daily Show*. In addition, HBO released his first stand up special, "Symphony," in May 2026, which received positive reviews from major media outlets.

## THETA XI/VCU



**Alex Hannah** (2004) was promoted to principal engineer-Webex Contact Center at Cisco.

## THETA OMICRON/MARS HILL

**Ryan Habich** (1999) led Watauga High School to the North Carolina 6A State Championship for the first time in 47 years.



## THETA RHO/MCNEESE STATE



**Scott Dougherty** (1998) was presented a Chief's Challenge Coin for exemplary work on a recent traffic fatality investigation. In a letter to the department, the victim's mother praised Dougherty's diligence, professionalism, and compassion.

## IOTA BETA/MISSOURI STATE



**Zach Brady** (2013) was named district activities director for Lone Jack Middle and High School.

## Eta Sigma Alumni Visit Norwich, VT

**Kevin Craig** (1985) shares, "I've lived in northern New Hampshire about 90 minutes away since 2012, and this is the first time I've taken the time to visit the Theta Chi monument. It's only two minutes off I-91, so don't hesitate to make a quick stop if you're passing through. There are no lunch spots in Norwich, so pop across the river to Hanover, NH, and have lunch right by the Dartmouth campus. It was a great time with my pledge brother **Travis Warren** (1985)."

## IOTA OMICRON/FIU

After spending the last decade developing the project for a run in New York City, **Erik J. Rodriguez** (2014), Theta Chi's 175,000th initiate, opened his original play about the early years of *Saturday Night Live* titled *Not Ready For Prime Time Off-Broadway*.



**Samuel Grossman** (2019) was tapped to serve on the City of Doral, FL's, Military Affairs Committee to provide support for the local military and veteran community.



**ETA KAPPA/JAMES MADISON's Joe McMinn** (2000) wins Vocalist of the Year at the 11th Annual Josie Awards.



## Theta Chi *Uproar* in Caribbean

BY RUSS "POPEYE" WHITFORD (ALPHA DELTA/PURDUE 1976)

When I was a collegiate brother at Alpha Delta Chapter, I used my parking spot, next to what we called the 'Leech Pit,' to store my 20' sailboat. Theta Chi and sailing have been my lifelong passions and recently those worlds came together.

After graduating from Purdue, **Larry Fortress** (1974) and I stayed friends throughout our lives. Larry has been on my boat, *Uproar*, several times in the Caribbean and Florida. Through Facebook, I was able to reconnect with **Jay Peterson** (1976), who is also a sailor, and we met for lunch in New Orleans. Jay and **Rick Loheed** (1978) were friends from high school and sailed together, so Rick and I reconnected. He is still immersed in boats and sailing as a profession and hobby.

The idea of all of us sailors getting together on *Uproar* for a Theta Chi cruise around the Grenadine Islands grew from a few emails to the four of us all meeting at the Grenada airport. Strangely enough, my wife opted out.

We spent the first night at the West Indies Brewing Company, the only brew pub in the Eastern Caribbean. Early the next morning, we sailed to Carriacou. After a quiet afternoon in Tyrrel Bay, we had dinner at the Slipway, a favorite restaurant in the Caribbean (along with Zanzibar in Martinique).

The trip continued with exploring or snorkeling around Sandy Island, Anse La Roche, Union Island, Tobago Cays, and then we went on to Bequia and spent three nights there. The passages between islands were ideal; some were on the boisterous side, but it was the kind of sailing we enjoy.

We had a great dinner at the Fig Tree in Bequia. There was endless entertainment, especially after I ignored a warning about the wet paint on the steps! The next night, we dinghied up to Bar One at Princess Margaret Beach.

L-R:  
Jay Peterson,  
Larry Fortress,  
Capt. Popeye  
Whitford, and  
Rick Loheed.



Getting together with old friends reminded us of something else: we are getting old. We don't move around like we used to—or perhaps it was just the tropical heat?

*Uproar* has only three double berths. Jay generously offered to sleep in the cockpit...until it rained, then he curled up on the settee, barely long enough. Clothing, snorkeling gear, and bags were everywhere. The boat looked like one of our rooms at the chapter house.

The memories were still with us, and plenty of time was spent telling old Theta Chi tales. By being together, we recalled even more memories and stories. With over 70 brothers, we had no shortage of material! Some of the more bizarre events are hard for even me to believe, but the four of us brought them back to life.

The tenets of brotherhood were foremost in our minds when we made our pledge to Theta Chi. How else do you get more than 70 guys to live together and operate a complex fraternity house? But there is so much more to it, and it is harder to describe. What I can say is that even after 47 years, we are still brothers. We cherish our experience at Theta Chi—and beyond! Theta Chi is for Life. It's not just a slogan.



We share the names of our brothers reported to the International Headquarters between October 11, 2025, and April 22, 2026, as passing to the Chapter Eternal.

## Former Foundation Chapter & Theta Chi Funds Board Member, Former Field Representative

**J. BRUCE HOFFMANN** (TAU/FLORIDA 1969)

*August 20, 1947–November 19, 2025*

BY PAST GRAND CHAPTER MEMBER AND PAST FOUNDATION CHAPTER PRESIDENT WARREN HOFFMAN (ALPHA IOTA/INDIANA 1976)



As a collegian, Bruce joined Theta Chi and served in various roles, became a varsity cheerleader, participated in other campus organizations, and was tapped for the Florida Blue Key, the most prestigious honorary at the University of Florida.

Following graduation, Bruce joined Theta Chi Fraternity's staff as a Field Representative and traveled the country, visiting chapters in 1970–1971. After he finished his travels, he returned to the University of Florida for law school and earned his J.D. in 1974.

With this strong background, Brother Hoffmann began his legal career and involvement with several volunteer organizations, including the Jaycees, Junior Orange Bowl

Committee, and Leadership Miami. He was later elected to the Florida House of Representatives and served two terms and was honored as Legislator of the Year by several organizations.

During this time, he met his wife, Marion Spiegel, and their love for each other and the University of Florida carried them to Gainesville for their wedding and reception overlooking Florida Field! Their son Travis was born in 1998 and the family moved to Tallahassee where Bruce became general counsel for the Florida Department of Revenue and, in 2011, became chief of staff for the Florida Lottery.

Bruce served as president of the Miami and Tallahassee Gator Clubs, Gator Boosters Scholarship Club, and the University of Florida Presidents Council. In retirement, he served as a Cub Scout and Boy Scout volunteer during his son's journey to become an Eagle Scout. It was also a very proud day when Travis was initiated into Theta Chi at Tau Chapter in 2016.

Throughout his life after college, he stayed active in Theta Chi Fraternity, serving for 15 years on the Tau Alumni Corporation. During his time in Tallahassee, Gamma Rho Chapter at Florida State ran into difficult times and, despite being rivals, Brother Hoffmann demonstrated true brotherhood and stepped up and helped to get them back on their feet.

In 2002, Brother Hoffmann joined the Board of Directors of Theta Chi Funds for Leadership and Education, Inc., a foundation created in 1986 to raise funds to support our Fraternity's educational programming. In 2003, the decision was made to merge Theta Chi Funds into the Foundation Chapter, and Bruce served on the merged boards until 2006. During these four years, Bruce was deeply involved in the development of a strategic plan that guided the Foundation Chapter for several years.

Throughout his life, Brother Hoffmann exemplified our Fraternity's motto of "an Assisting Hand" and was an example of true friendship and brotherhood to all. His leadership and presence will be greatly missed.



*Bruce in 1969*

### BETA

#### MIT

Rev. Thomas F. McMahon, Jr. (1953)  
Ragnar M. Olsen (1956)  
Frank W. Reichenbacher, Jr. (1954)  
Earl R. Smiddy, Jr. (1957)

### GAMMA

#### Maine

John C. Carpenter (1970)  
Arthur W. Henry, Jr. (1966)  
Edward B. Lavery (1970)  
David L. Roberts (1960)  
Stephen R. Sawyer (1962)  
William H. Sawyer (1968)+  
David M. Segee (1969)  
Milton E. Smith (1966)  
Dr. Neil J. Troost (1956)  
Jefferson L. Wilson, Jr. (1982)

### EPSILON

#### WPI

Rev. Richard E. Thompson (1959)

### ETA

#### Rhode Island

Robert A. Boucher (1959)

### THETA

#### Massachusetts

Paul Kollios (1958)  
Albert S. Marulli (1951)  
Joseph G. Moro (1963)

### IOTA

#### Colgate

Andrew C. Brummer (1985)  
Joseph E. Pearson (1954)

### LAMBDA

#### Cornell

Lee Bender (1984)  
Stephen Bender (1958)  
C. Lawrence Swezey (1944)

### MU

#### California

Pershing De Golia (1949)  
Wilbur R. Donaldson (1934)

### NU

#### Hampden-Sydney

Henry P. Custis, Jr. (1967)

### XI

#### Virginia

Bernard E. Borski (1951)

### PI

#### Dickinson

George E. Martinelli (1957)  
Harry B. Packard (1962)

### RHO

#### Illinois

Matthew L. Brown (2002)  
Charles F. Usborne (1966)

+ Past Regional Counselor

### SIGMA

#### Oregon State

George D. Herbst (1960)  
Jerry L. Plank (1958)

### TAU

#### Florida

J. Bruce Hoffmann (1969)

### UPSILON

#### NYU

N.R. Abitabilo (1958)  
Edward W. Keil (1959)

### PHI

#### North Dakota State

David J. Altstadt (1964)  
Peter L. Balkan (1952)  
Col. David B. Bartholomew (1954)  
Scott M. Burthold (1985)  
Dennis F. Campbell (1958)  
Kenneth S. Conroy (1958)  
Jon A. Dewey (1956)  
Roger A. Dustrud (1959)  
Duane A. Eriksmoen (1956)  
Jon D. Evert (2014)  
Donald C. Feist, Jr. (1982)  
Donald N. Folsom (1944)  
Nathan F. Germolus (1988)  
James L. Gompf (1951)  
Gary C. Heise (1967)  
Nathan L. Hust (2006)  
Russell C. Iverson (1951)  
Gerald R. Johnson (1950)  
Jerry G. Kingrey (1959)  
Timothy M. Kostecky (1971)  
John L. Kubousek (1970)  
Stanley E. Larson (1952)  
Byron K. Lysne (1950)  
Robert T. Molland (1948)  
Robert W. Myrdal (1951)  
Bjorne T. Naaden (1954)  
Clyde G. Payne (1962)  
Frank W. Powell (1966)  
Aaron E. Rash (1956)  
Earl A. Redmann (1973)  
David G. Stave (1957)  
James W. Swanson (1953)  
Steven D. Swanson (1998)  
Lavern E. Talley (1960)  
Todd E. Talley (1982)  
Morris T. Thingstad (1950)  
Robert F. Thomas (1961)  
Lowell C. Van Berkorn (1957)

### CHI

#### Auburn

Thomas F. Borst (1960)  
Charles S. Dunn, III (1994)  
Robert C. Hilton (1993)  
Harold J. Kolb (1956)  
John R. Sheffield (1990)

### OMEGA

#### Penn State

Craig E. Abel (1973)  
Alexis Barron, Esq. (1960)



John R. Bowman (1963)  
Ray M. Campfield (1950)  
Theophilus D. Collins (1950)  
Fred P. Fieni (1952)  
Richard S. Herman (1980)  
Raymond W. Midgett, Jr.  
(1946)  
Samuel K. Padjen (1965)  
Kenneth L. Page (1932)  
Joel K. Wells (1968)

#### **ALPHA GAMMA** *Michigan*

Jeffrey K. Haynes (1972)  
Theodore C. Tyler (1953)

#### **ALPHA DELTA** *Purdue*

Mark E. Pundmann (2015)  
Terry R. Schultz (1983)

#### **ALPHA EPSILON** *Stanford*

William M. Killen (1960)  
Gordon L. Pendegraft (1957)  
David M. Stoner (1963)

#### **ALPHA IOTA** *Indiana*

Col. Gordon C. Greider  
(1959)  
Mark D. Reed (1985)

#### **ALPHA KAPPA** *West Virginia*

Lt. Col. Kennis F. Snyder  
(1958)

#### **ALPHA NU** *Georgia Tech*

William L. Corley, Sr. (1954)  
Lawrence E. Duane, Jr. (1964)

#### **ALPHA XI** *Delaware*

Robert K. Pearce (1971)

#### **ALPHA OMICRON** *Washington State*

Kenneth L. Leinweber (1958)

#### **ALPHA PI** *Minnesota*

Lawrance M. Martin (1963)

#### **ALPHA RHO** *Washington*

James J. Martin (1971)

#### **ALPHA TAU** *Ohio*

John N. Meeks (1954)

#### **ALPHA PHI** *Alabama*

Richard Asker (1952)  
Thurmon F. Davis (1957)  
James P. Gracey (2027)  
Donnie L. Guinn (1977)  
Thomas E. Hamilton (1956)  
Richard C. Hassinger, Jr.  
(1970)  
Robert W. Meherg (1953)  
Adrian G. Palmore (1957)  
Hubert D. Parris (1973)

(continued)

## **Collegiate Brother**

### **JAMES P. GRACEY** (ALPHA PHI/ALABAMA 2027)

*August 18, 2005—March 17, 2026*

Jimmy served Alpha Phi Chapter as both Chaplain and Philanthropy Chairman. These roles reflected who he was at his core: a young man of deep faith, genuine care for others, and an abiding commitment to his brothers and his community. He was exactly the kind of man Theta Chi aspires to build—a Resolute Man.

During a spring break visit to Barcelona in 2026, Jimmy went missing. Driven by true devotion and fraternal love, his Theta Chi brothers who were also in the city searched tirelessly for Jimmy for several days, all while extending an Assisting Hand to Brother Gracey's family during unimaginable circumstances. These brothers perpetuated the Fraternity's ideals during a most difficult time and are to be commended.

Alpha Phi President Cavin McLay (2027) wrote, "As our Chaplain, Jimmy closed every chapter meeting in prayer, bringing us together in a way that reflected exactly who he was and how deeply he was loved and respected." He continued, "Jimmy always went out of his way for anyone who needed him, whether that was guidance in their faith, a shoulder to lean on, or simply someone to share a smile and laugh with. His smile and attitude were infectious and such a light in our chapter. He was a role model, a warrior of Christ, and the kind of man every one of us should aspire to be."



## **Theta Chi for Life**

### **WILLIAM H. SUTER** (BETA DELTA/RUTGERS 1943)

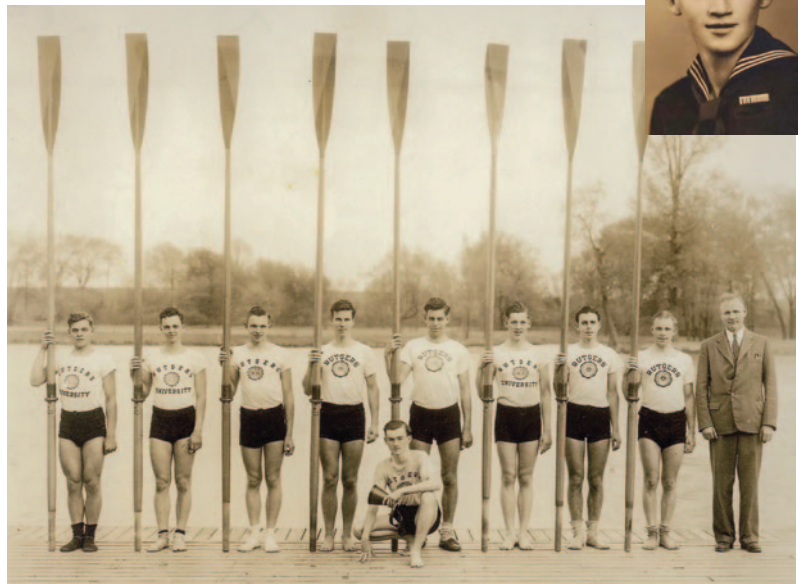
*May 18, 1922–November 2, 2025*

For decades, Bill Suter held the distinction of having the highest score on the Rutgers entry exam. He loved college life and joined Theta Chi while also participating as a bantam-weight boxer and coxswain of the crew team. After college, Bill was a proud WWII Navy Tin Can Sailor.

Bill was well known in the insurance business. His firm (Suter Claims Service) was, at one time, the largest independent insurance adjusting firm in Los Angeles County. He was president of the Southern California Adjusters Association and the National Society of CPCU (Los Angeles Chapter), along with holding positions in many other industry associations. He was also president of the Wilshire/Westlake Lions Club, a member of the Toastmasters Club, and a panel arbitrator with the American Arbitration Association.

Although slight of stature and physically very slender (never weighing over five pounds more than when in college), he was a larger-than-life character who was at home in any setting with any group of people. His true legacy is one of kindness and generosity.

Bill remained a strong supporter of the Fraternity, which he credited for much of his success in life, well into the final years, aged 103. Brother Suter reached the Foundation Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity's Board of Visitors Lifetime Giving Level, was a member of the Resolute Circle Annual Giving Club, and was a member of the Legacy Society, having established a planned gift with the Foundation Chapter more than 30 years ago.



1943 Rutgers lightweight crew team—Bill Suter (front).



## Former Faculty Adviser

**GARY C. STEINHARDT, Ph.D.** (BETA ZETA/MICHIGAN STATE 1966)  
September 13, 1944–December 12, 2025



Brother Steinhardt served as Faculty Adviser for Alpha Delta Chapter at Purdue University for over 20 years. He attended several International Conventions and served as the Alumnus Delegate for Beta Zeta Chapter. He was a devoted mentor to generations of leaders within the chapter and taught life lessons through quips, one-liners, and by his example.

Gary devoted nearly 50 years to the Department of Agronomy at Purdue University and retired in May 2025. In addition to his distinguished academic career, he was a proud 30-year U.S. Army veteran who served his country in both Vietnam and Iraq. Gary was a highly respected and dedicated member of the veteran service community in Tippecanoe County and served in numerous leadership and

service roles within organizations, including the American Legion, VFW, 40&8, MOA/ROA, and others.

His list of achievements and accomplishments both in and outside of academia is immense and eminent. Whether lives were touched within the field of soil science or in various community-based organizations, Brother Steinhardt always extended a Helping Hand and demonstrated that the most important steps are to get involved, be involved, and stay involved.

Ralph E. Shaw (1956)  
Julian E. Walker, Jr. (1966)  
Leon B. Walker, Jr. (1952)  
James D. Ward (1958)  
David F. Whelchel (1959)  
Audie V. White (1976)

### ALPHA PSI

*Maryland*  
Edward T. Barrett (1980)  
Donald B. Davies (1963)  
Robert D. Knapp (1969)  
Mark G. Turner (1977)

### ALPHA OMEGA

*Lafayette*  
Richard F. Engel (1974)  
Kirk T. Kissack (1971)

### BETA ALPHA

*UCLA*  
Maj. Don L. Morley (1952)

### BETA GAMMA

*North Dakota*  
William J. Johnson (1961)  
Paul J. McCann (1943)

### BETA DELTA

*Rutgers*  
George W. Boles (1945)  
Anthony C. Felicit (1997)  
Victor W. Hart (1954)  
David O. Krantz (1967)  
Joseph S. Nester (1949)  
Gerard L. Otten (1968)  
Alfred E. Rusch (1959)  
William H. Suter (1943)  
James R. Thompson (1944)

### BETA ZETA

*Michigan State*  
Lt. Robert J. Clark (1953)  
Gary C. Steinhardt (1966)

### BETA ETA

*Washington (MD)*  
Robert M. Cox, Jr. (1969)  
Edward F. Leonard, Jr. (1951)

### BETA THETA

*Drexel*  
Kenneth L. Paul (1963)

### BETA IOTA

*Arizona*  
G. Mike Howell (1952)

### BETA LAMBDA

*Akron*  
Vincent A. Deluca, Jr. (1969)  
John E. Oddo (1969)

### BETA MU

*Middlebury*  
Roger V. Raymond (1959)

### BETA XI

*Birmingham-Southern*  
John E. Cosper (1968)  
Jesse M. Hamby (1943)  
Paul M. Schabacker (1989)

### BETA OMICRON

*Cincinnati*  
Douglas A. Drewes (1983)  
Lee Huffman (1991)  
Ralph W. Stropes (1961)

### BETA PI

*Monmouth*  
William N. Walton (1951)

### BETA RHO

*Illinois Wesleyan*  
Rev. Kenneth L. Engelman (1949)  
James R. Kallembach, Jr. (1973)  
Glen C. Melton (1953)  
Tony M. Murphy (1998)

### BETA SIGMA

*Lehigh*  
Frank R. Scheid, Jr. (1958)

### BETA TAU

*Southern California*  
Richard S. Rogers (1957)

### BETA UPSILON

*Fresno State*  
Michael K. Luckin (1965)  
Anthony P. Perez (1991)  
Dr. James A. Perry (1964)  
Mike W. Rumley (1969)

### BETA PHI

*Nevada*  
Leland J. Virag (1952)

### BETA CHI

*Allegheny*  
William M. Gegenheimer (1962)

### BETA OMEGA

*Susquehanna*  
Rev. Gerald E. Moorhead (1951)

### GAMMA BETA

*Furman*  
C. Kenneth Cobb (1955)

### GAMMA DELTA

*Florida Southern*  
William R. Freeman, Jr. (1950)

### GAMMA ZETA

*Oklahoma State*  
Carl W. McIlroy (1958)

### GAMMA THETA

*San Diego State*  
Richard D. Foss (1962)

### GAMMA KAPPA

*Miami (OH)*  
Stanford J. Coston (1975)  
Ivar W. Mitchell (1961)  
Gene E. Palmer (1965)  
Dr. Thomas L. Weaver (1955)

### GAMMA LAMBDA

*Denver*  
Raymond G. Willsea (1960)

### GAMMA MU

*Bowling Green*  
Michael J. McCauley (1990)  
Thomas E. Wilkening (1966)  
Hudson D. Willse (1956)

### GAMMA XI

*San Jose State*  
Lt. Col. Donald L. Curry (1953)

### GAMMA PI

*Buffalo*  
Mark R. D'Archangelo (1966)  
Gregory L. Farry (1959)  
Hon. Wayne A. Feeman, Jr. (1957)  
Charles A. Gallagher, Jr. (1951)  
George F. Goebel, Jr. (1955)  
Oliver Hartwell (1950)  
Ronald G. Herdman (1953)  
Ronald D. Hettich (1957)  
John W. Lageman (1956)  
Raymond P. Lavery, Jr. (1958)  
J. Roger Lennartson (1955)  
David H. Lund (1950)  
Donald H. Luther (1957)  
Marcus R. Mabee (1959)  
Roger T. Marvin (1957)  
William D. Marx, Jr. (1967)  
Howard L. Meyer (1952)  
Paul B. Priest (1966)  
James M. Pyne (1958)  
James H. Quiggle (1963)  
Robert N. Rausch (1959)  
Fredrick U. Rorapough (1954)  
John H. Rosenbach (1949)  
Jerome T. Scholl (1957)  
William W. Stoddart, III (1959)  
Milton J. Strebel (1952)  
Irvin L. Terry (1936)  
Girard M. Ursitti (1961)  
Edward C. Weeks (1957)

### GAMMA RHO

*Florida State*  
Chuck Perry (1985)

### GAMMA SIGMA

*Duke*  
Dr. Edward F. Baird (1965)  
Robert N. Sadler, Jr. (1972)

### GAMMA TAU

*Drake*  
Alan R. Marthinsen (1961)

### GAMMA UPSILON

*Bradley*  
Charles E. Barthelme (1954)  
John W. Breitwieser (1953)  
Charles E. Ebeling (1966)

### GAMMA CHI

*Randolph-Macon*  
Dr. F. Edward Bentley (1953)  
John E. Brewster (1972)

### GAMMA PSI

*Puget Sound*  
Ray I. Gosney (1954)

### DELTA ALPHA

*Linfield*  
Kip S. Patterson (1972)  
Paul A. Post (1968)

### DELTA BETA

*Georgia*  
William T. Bradfield (1979)  
Patrick T. O'Neal (1987)  
Hugh M. Pearson, Jr. (1974)  
Melvin L. Shettle (1990)

### DELTA THETA

*Toledo*  
Jerry T. Nemet (1965)

### DELTA IOTA

*Northwestern*  
James E. Twyman (1957)

### DELTA KAPPA

*Ball State*  
Randolph I. Bayly (1980)  
Jerry E. Davenport (1954)  
Richard H. Devoe (1951)  
Louis B. Gillespie (1952)  
James H. Gooden (1954)  
Herman D. Jacobs (1953)  
Dan W. Kasdorf (1979)  
Bradley J. Leising (1994)  
Royce V. Martin (1943)  
Carl J. Moos (1968)  
David J. Neuhauser (1953)  
Richard L. Servis (1954)

### DELTA XI

*Valparaiso*  
James R. Cerny (1961)  
Gary M. Gilbert (1960)  
Charles W. Glick (1956)  
Wayne A. Kulat (1960)  
Michael C. Probst (1992)  
Paul D. Schrage (1957)  
Otto Teske, Jr. (1955)



## BUSINESS ICONS

### Two major leaders of McDonald's were Theta Chi alumni

#### PAUL D. SCHRAGE (DELTA XI/VALPARAISO 1957)

February 25, 1935—January 28, 2026

Paul was tapped in 1967 by Ray Kroc to develop and lead McDonald's first marketing department. Paul retired 30 years later as McDonald's sr. executive vice president and chief global marketing officer and a member of the board of directors. He made McDonald's one of the top brands in the world and is known as the Architect of the Golden Arches and the creator of the Happy Meal. Schrage was a recipient of the 1982 and 1992 American Marketing Association Achievement Awards, the 1988 Advertising Man of the Year Award, and was inducted into the American Advertising Federation Hall of Fame. He proudly served as chairman of the board of trustees for Ronald McDonald House Charities, which provides housing for families of hospitalized children. In 1978, he served as a keynote speaker during Theta Chi's 122nd Anniversary Convention in Chicago.



#### CHARLES E. EBELING (GAMMA UPSILON/BRADLEY 1965)

July 1, 1943—July 9, 2024

Chuck was a U.S. Army veteran who began his career in public relations and communications with stints at Allstate and Toyota before joining the Cooper-Golin agency in 1974. He became part of the leadership team managing the firm's biggest national client, McDonald's, and worked closely with McDonald's owner-operators on the expansion of the Ronald McDonald House program across the U.S. In 1985, Chuck joined McDonald's Corporation to head corporate communications and was later promoted to officer and chief spokesperson for the company. Chuck created and led McDonald's Global Media Center and was a founding member of the firm's Global Communications Council. In 2000, Chuck retired and held leadership positions on various nonprofit boards, including the Chicago Literary Club, Chicago Library Club, and the Lake Geneva Conservancy, and later led the preservation of Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay, WI.



#### DELTA OMICRON

Gettysburg

Noel F. Hamilton (1956)  
Robert A. Hengeveld (1968)

#### DELTA PI

Indiana State

Terry L. Heavilon (1970)  
Leonard H. Henneman  
(1982)

#### DELTA RHO

NC State

Joe T. Moore, Jr. (1953)

#### DELTA SIGMA

Clarkson

Michael J. Harrington (1978)  
Edward A. O'Connor (1962)

#### DELTA PHI

North Texas

Thomas L. Clark (1962)  
Paul R. Craft (1960)  
Billy K. Pruitt (1962)  
Dwight K. Stewart (1988)

#### DELTA CHI

Lenoir-Rhyne

J. Daniel Finger (1970)  
Robert H. Park (1978)

#### DELTA OMEGA

Ripon

Weimer K. Hicks, Jr. (1958)

#### EPSILON GAMMA

Widener

Fred C. Kuss (1957)  
Robert V. Leun (1958)  
Joel M. Pickelner (1964)

#### EPSILON DELTA

Youngstown State

James R. DeGregory (1955)

#### EPSILON THETA

Tufts

Leon J. Thal (1965)

#### EPSILON IOTA

East Carolina

Joseph L. Boyte (1965)  
Gatlan K. Thompson (2027)

#### EPSILON MU

Eastern Michigan

Leonard Capelli (1967)  
John E. Gleason (1971)  
David J. MacCarreall (1968)

#### EPSILON OMICRON

Waynesburg

Raymond L. Rozycki (1963)

#### EPSILON PI

Northern Illinois

Rev. Dr. Michael F. Gast  
(1966)  
Daniel B. Johnson (1966)

#### EPSILON RHO

Rider

Robert F. Galati (1979)  
Daniel C. Poorman (1970)

#### EPSILON SIGMA

Wagner

Paul G. Sandburg (1966)  
Marc M. Sirockman (1986)

#### EPSILON TAU

Stephen F. Austin

Thomas J. Arnold (1975)  
Harold F. Christmann, Jr.  
(1971)  
C. Raymond Lane, Jr. (1972)  
Dr. William D. Reed, Jr.  
(1970)

#### EPSILON UPSILON

Central Michigan

Todd E. Mercier (1988)

#### ZETA ALPHA

Slippery Rock

Dr. Donald F. Hannon  
(1964)  
David A. Hansen (1971)  
John H. Mooney (1965)

#### ZETA BETA

Adrian

Daniel L. Jones (1969)  
Brian A. Stahl (1968)

#### ZETA EPSILON

Long Beach State

Eric J. Oklar (1978)

#### ZETA LAMBDA

Westminster

Matthew C. Davis (2027)  
Steven P. Kokal (2007)

#### ZETA UPSILON

Hartford

Philip A. Saglimbeni (2012)

#### ZETA PSI

Western Illinois

Robert A. Schumaker  
(1974)  
Michael R. Wagner (1971)

#### ETA ALPHA

Clemson

Bruce W. Belding (1974)  
Joshua C. Gollither (2021)

#### ETA GAMMA

Morehead

Joseph P. Hancock (1973)  
Jerry T. Tackett (1980)

#### ETA ZETA

Edinboro

Timothy J. Bennett (1984)  
Terrance F. Pytlarz (1979)

#### ETA LAMBDA

Virginia Tech

Gary L. Kilgore (1973)  
Michael C. Weadon (1972)

#### ETA OMICRON

Northwestern State

Gary N. Digilormo (1970)

#### THETA ZETA

UNC-Asheville

Scott D. Alexander (1985)

#### THETA IOTA

UC-Santa Cruz

David J. Frischling (1989)

#### IOTA MU

Missouri

Charlie M. Wiegand (2017)

#### IOTA PHI

South Carolina

Kyle R. Benson (2019)

#### FRIENDS OF THETA CHI

John T. Scott

**PARENTS:** This magazine is sent to your son's home address; we hope you enjoy reading it before he does. If he has left college and is not living at home, please update us with his new mailing address by sending an email to [rattle@thetachi.org](mailto:rattle@thetachi.org). THANK YOU!



B1



B2



B3



B4



R1

# Wear Your Pride in Theta Chi



RP1



RP2

Official jewelry collection from the Fraternity's official jeweler:  
Legacy Deuteron.



P1

## LEGACY



L1

- B1 Official Plain Upgrade Badge
- B2 Large Plain Badge with Ruby Hilts
- B3 Large Plain Badge with Pearl Hilts
- B4 Large Pearl Badge with Ruby Hilts and Pearl Blades
- P1 Past Chapter President's Lapel Pin
- R1 Brotherhood Ring

- RP1 Recognition Pin – Greek Letters
- RP2 Recognition Pin – Coat of Arms
- Share your Theta Chi pride  
with a special someone!**
- L1 Greek Letters Lavalier
- L2 Heart Lavalier



L2

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