



SIGMA NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE ZETA PHI CHAPTER OF SIGMA NU

BRADLEY UNIVERSITY ▲ Spring 2018

ZETA PHI LAYS SOLID FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE *Chapter Welcomes New Advisor, Celebrates Leadership Accomplishments*

Inside:

Brothers Impact
on the
Community
p. 2



Welcome,
New Members
p. 3



Alumni Update
p. 4

Brothers, come to order... and welcome to the spring 2018 edition of *Sigma News*! After a very productive fall term, we have yet to take our foot off the gas. As you read through this edition of *Sigma News*, you'll notice that we are still making significant progress with our House Corporation administration and structure. Our undergraduates also continue to display model behavior for well-rounded fraternity men, school spirit and alumni engagement are on the rise, and we have welcomed a new chapter advisor!

As I wrote in the fall, the House Corporation has matured overall operations having implemented a new accounting platform, publishes annual financial statements, updated operating by-laws, and completed state and federal registrations. These foundational improvements have best positioned our organization for long-term viability. This also comes at a time in which we see increased engagement and participation in the House Corporation. Recent discussions centered on future capital improvement planning and securing a mutually beneficial partnership with Bradley for our future. I'm excited to share additional details on our vision and plans for our chapter facility soon.

When our former chapter advisor retired, we all knew the importance of selecting a successor that represents the values of Sigma Nu, selflessly willing to provide our undergraduates with guidance and mentorship. A search quickly commenced, and after interviewing several candidates, I'm happy to welcome Rick Sander as our new chapter advisor. Rick is a former marine and current director of communications and engineering services at Bradley. In my first conversation with

Rick, he simply stated, "Thank you all for this chance to change the lives of young men in a positive manner." I'm looking forward to working with Rick to help build our next generation of leaders.

Since the beginning of the fall term, I've made it back to campus several times, and with the recent success of Bradley basketball, school spirit is at an all-time high and we've seen an increase in alumni engagement. Our chapter also achieved some recent successes of their own, bringing home individual recognition for leadership, most notably **Chris Chaidez '19 (ZΦ1246)**, **Logan Welling '19 (ZΦ1239)**, and **Justin Limoges '20 (ZΦ1266)**. Collectively, the chapter presented the check to the Children's Hospital for nearly \$10,000 as the result of the annual Gameball Run philanthropy.

Unfortunately, our annual Sigma Nu Alumni Golf Outing on April 7 at Weaver Ridge in Peoria was canceled due to inclement weather. It would have been a great weekend of brotherhood and I'm looking forward to next year's event.

I encourage you to make it to Peoria to visit the chapter. Our undergraduate members would love the chance to meet you, introduce you to our new chapter advisor, and have you experience all the positive changes resulting from many campus improvements and increased school spirit!

Fraternally,
AJ Brown '06 (ZΦ1012)
President, Sigma Nu Housing Corporation
(309) 339-9184 | audiejbrown@gmail.com

A SOLID FOUNDATION WITH SIGMA NU The Right Direction for Michael Romano '73 (ZΦ389)



Life for **Michael Romano '73 (ZΦ389)** is far from the future he thought he would have when he began his college career at Bradley University. Michael was a confused teen, with a turbulent youth and on a uncertain path, but all that changed when he met the brothers of Zeta Phi.

"I just had this gut feeling that this was where I wanted to be. Zeta Phi accepted me with all my faults and lack of confidence. The men who were recruiting were the caliber of men that I aspired to be. Their seriousness with which they applied themselves to

academics was compelling, I felt comfortable around them, and I was swayed be part of all of it."

Sigma Nu set Michael on the right path. "My brothers modeled the traits and attributes that I wanted and previously didn't think I was capable of." Michael became a prosperous fourth-generation business owner of Romano Brothers Beverage, a prestigious wine and spirit distribution center that he sold in 2002. Since then, he has dedicated his time to giving back to his community and his brothers of Sigma Nu. "When I see a brother is calling and wants to meet up, I don't even look at my calendar, because everything else takes a back seat to my brothers."

(Continued on page 4)

Zeta Phi Brothers Further Their Meaningful Impact on the Community

Chapter Finds Philanthropic Success and Networking Opportunities

Since the last edition of *Sigma News*, the active chapter has had a very eventful time. Last semester, after renovations, the house was tasked with finding a new chapter advisor, as **Nial Johnson (ZΦ1049)** retired at the end of last school year. **Jim Bixby '64 (ZΦ254)** served as the interim advisor while the active chapter and the Housing Corporation worked together to find Nial's successor. After an extensive search, the chapter and House Corporation interviewed and selected Rick Sander, current Bradley faculty member, to serve as chapter advisor.

At the beginning of the year, I had the honor of attending College of Chapters in Roanoke, Virginia, where I worked alongside other Commanders and visited headquarters in Lexington. I brought back with me a better understanding of how to plan strategically, which will benefit the chapter as we work on our overall plan for the remainder of the year.

The chapter continues its community focus by volunteering in its neighborhood cleanups with other local organizations. Members help at Bradley's Service on Saturdays, and volunteered with the Illinois Valley Fuller Center for Housing with **Dick Van Norman '61 (ZΦ154)**, as they have requested for the past few years. We also sent four new members to Sigma Nu Institute, where they learned how to be future leaders in the chapter and made professional connections with other chapters. I represented the chapter at the Association of Fraternal Leadership and



Eminent Commander Christopher Chaidez '19 (ZΦ1246) visits Sigma Nu Headquarters in Lexington, Va.

Values (AFLV) with the Interfraternity Council, placing first in my division in the Order of Omega Case Studies competition, alongside a member of the Panhellenic Council.

Finally, the chapter has been very involved with the Braves men's basketball team and athletics. We held an open house, pregame, and reserved the Hy-Vee Red Zone at the Carver Arena for the basketball game against Drake. In return, the basketball team came out to the Children's Hospital for the end of the Gameball Run. This was the 20th year the chapter has participated in this philanthropic event for the Children's Hospital of Illinois, and to date we have raised more than \$200,000 for the hospital. At halftime of the basketball game against Illinois State, brothers took to the center of the court and presented a check commemorating the end of another successful Gameball fundraising year. We look forward to continuing to build on this momentum as progress forward and finish the year strong!

Fraternally,
Christopher Chaidez '19 (ZΦ1246)
 Chapter President
christopherchaidez@gmail.com



Undergraduates serve their community by cleaning up the neighborhoods around Peoria.



Brothers cheer on the Bradley Braves against the Drake Bulldogs in the Hy-Vee Red Zone.



Chapter members present the Gameball Run check at halftime of the Illinois State vs. Bradley men's basketball game.

Welcome, New Members

Lewayne Firerson '21
Chicago, Ill.

Jayson Podschweit '21
Morris, Ill.

Wyatt Gibboney '21
Aledo, Ill.

Anthony Ryan '21
Downers Grove, Ill.

Brett Griffin '21
Argyle, Texas

Avinor Saini '21
Aurora, Ill.

Andrew Haynes '21
St. Charles, Ill.

Michael Weeks '21
Wheaton, Ill.

Tyler Hess '20
Roscoe, Ill.

Devin Wheeler '21
Norridge, Ill.

Frank Jaeger '21
Chicago, Ill.

SPRING RECRUITS

Christopher Johnston '21
Downers Grove, Ill.

Kyle Miller '21
Lockport, Ill.

Jack Martinez '21
Coal Valley, Ill.

Rodrigo Ramirez '20
Chicago, Ill.



Christopher Chaidez '19 (ZΦ1246) and Camryn Kirkham, Panhellenic council member, accept their first place awards at the AFLV Order of Omega Case Studies competition.

Commander
Christopher Chaidez '19 (ZΦ1246)
christopherchaidez@gmail.com

Lieutenant
Nick Konow '19 (ZΦ1242)

Treasurer
Brycen Fischer '19 (ZΦ1245)

Recorder
Jake Breitenreiter '20 (ZΦ1257)

New Member Educator
Michael Tadros '18 (ZΦ1256)

Scholarship Chairman
Robert Harris '18 (ZΦ1232)

Leadership Development Chairman
Matthew Weeks '19 (ZΦ1253)

Recruitment Chairmen
Christopher Conrad '19 (ZΦ1240)
Parker Richmond '19 (ZΦ1243)

Gameball (Philanthropy) Chairman
Aidan Blassage '20 (ZΦ1261)

Alumni Chairman
Bryan Fouts '18 (ZΦ1233)

ALUMNI UPDATE

Chapter Eternal

Gregory S. Schmitt '76 (ZΦ450) entered Chapter Eternal on February 4, 2018, at Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne. Greg was a cardiac surgeon at Parkview Hospital in Fort Wayne, Ind. He graduated from Bradley University with a bachelor's degree in biology in 1976. Greg was the leader of BSA Troop 333, and coached 7th grade football at Woodside Middle School. Greg was a Cubs fan and loved golf; he was a USGA Rules Official. Greg was married to Jane Lowrey Schmitt for 36 years. He is survived by his wife and two sons, David and Michael. "What a beautiful and accomplished life Greg led. His dedication and service to others benefited so many lives. I'm so proud to have been his friend," **George J. Jasinski '76 (ZΦ441)** said.

Alumni News

Charles "Chuck" P. Sedgwick '58 (ZΦ066) is enjoying life with his wife, Cynthia, in beautiful Naples, Fla. They have been in Naples since 2014, but first migrated south to the Florida area in 1995. E-mail: ccsedgwick@yahoo.com

John W. Rowe '63 (ZΦ195) serves as senior warden of the Episcopal Church of St. Michael and St. George in St. Louis, Mo. He retired from being director of the Bethesda Health Group in 2013, but still serves on the board of directors. John spends his free time traveling, playing golf, and reading. He also reviews books with a group mailing list of 250-plus participants. "I enjoy the *Sigma News*. Keep up the good work." E-mail: jwrowe@bethesdahealth.org

John L. Wineapple '64 (ZΦ224) is retired and enjoying the good life in Williamsburg, Va. He plays golf three times per week and travels extensively with his wife, Pam.

William "Bill" R. Mattson Jr. '68 (ZΦ304) is making the best of life with his wife, Carol, in St. Louis, Mo. "My lovely wife of 48 years said I've failed at retirement. I'm happily working 30 percent of my time with Linden Capital, a healthcare private equity firm." Bill says his work is mostly done on the phone with limited travel, allowing him and Carol to spend time in their Texas home and travel. "Congrats to all my brothers who are Cubs fans—no more waiting!" E-mail: bill.mattson@outlook.com

SIGMA NEWS

SIGMA NU FRATERNITY

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Attention: This newsletter is intended for alumni and parents. If your son is still attending Bradley University, he will receive a copy at the chapter house. If he has graduated, please send us his permanent address. Thank you.

Michael Romano '73 (ZΦ389)

(Continued from page 1)

With the freedom of retirement, Michael serves on the board of two nonprofit and two for-profit organizations, picking and choosing where he devotes his time. He is able to collaborate with one of his daughters in her startup business, Windy City Nanny. He volunteers at soup kitchens, Catholic Charities in Chicago, and Girls in the Game. Girls in the Game is a sports and leadership program that helps young girls build confidence and teaches them to be leaders through peer example. "Being part of this program has been most rewarding to see the girls grow into becoming mentors and see the success stories of struggling inner city youth."

To the young alumni and Sigma Nu undergraduates, Michael urges, "Be a trustworthy man. Many men in power today are dishonest and the decisions made by such people are damaging and dangerous." He prompts the young men of Sigma Nu to find careers where they are so devoted, they would do for free, but reminds them to always have a Plan B. "If you are a 5'4" and dream of being a center in the NBA, I suggest you have a Plan B. Go for a career that you would do for nothing; do what you love and the money will come. And don't forget, wealth doesn't make you happy. I was asked once how

much my Maserati cost me; I astonished myself by replying 30 years!"

A dream came true for Michael when he interviewed and secured a broadcast position for a local hockey team. He is emotional when he talks about the time he spent as a broadcaster and cherishes the young men he was able to impact. He thinks he may have had a chance to announce for the NHL, but the sentiment he has for this experience exceeds any expectation he may have had in the sport.

"Sigma Nu gave me my foundation. Without Sigma Nu, I would be a shell of the man I am today. I was lucky to be accepted by my brothers—they saw in me gold that only needed to be refined." Michael preserves the relationships he has with his Zeta Phi brothers and regularly meets up with **Marty Ceranec '73 (ZΦ387)**, his best friend and roommate at Sigma Nu. Monthly, he tries to connect with **Sammy Pulumbo '75 (ZΦ446)**, who lives in the area.

Michael and his wife reside in Hinsdale, Ill., and see their four grown children often. To contact Michael, email him at michaelromano30@gmail.com.