

# the MUSE

FALL 2015

Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi Fraternity

[www.sigmapicornell.org](http://www.sigmapicornell.org)



Last June, Sigma Pi commissioned an aerial videographer to create an aerial tour of the Pi house. Head over to the Tour the House section of the website to see the Pi house as you've never seen it before: high above Cayuga's waters.

## Mu Chapter Website & Social Media Outlets



In the fall of 2014, the alumni board worked closely with its communications partner to completely update the Mu Chapter's website, [sigmapicornell.org](http://sigmapicornell.org). There were a number of requirements that were a part of the redesign process. The new website:

- increases the ability for our alumni to stay connected and to be kept up-to-date
- has a robust section for our undergraduate brothers to enhance new member recruitment
- has a section for parents to find the information they need, whether their son is a current or prospective member
- has better support for mobile devices.

With these factors, as well as the desire for a very aesthetically pleasing and highly functional site, a new visual design was created and new content was added.

We're sure those who have visited the website would agree, both visually and content-wise, the new site is a major step forward.

If you haven't visited the site, please go, check it out, and register for the members-only section to gain access to the full range of content.

**One fun element we've added is a link to Cornell's live campus cam. Just click on this icon (📹) at the top of any website page to check out the view from Barnes Hall.**

In addition, the alumni board is keen to make the most of existing social media channels. Please visit our current social media outlets.



**Facebook:**

[facebook.com/groups/SigmaPiCornell](https://facebook.com/groups/SigmaPiCornell)



**Instagram:**

[@cornellsigmapi](https://www.instagram.com/cornellsigmapi)



**Twitter:**

[@CornellSigmaPi](https://twitter.com/CornellSigmaPi)



**LinkedIn:**

[/groups/Sigma-Pi-Mu-Chapter-Alumni-4734302](https://groups/Sigma-Pi-Mu-Chapter-Alumni-4734302)

## Sorkin '99 Advises Brothers

By David DellaPelle '17

On September 20, **Andrew Sorkin '99**, a Gerald Leob Award-winning American journalist and author, skyped with the undergraduate brotherhood of Sigma Pi, using the newly unveiled Dick Cahoon '77 Tech Center in the Memorial Library. About 30 brothers attended



the teleconference on Sunday night to hear how the vice president of Sigma Pi in the late 1990s became a titan of financial journalism.

Sorkin first spoke about his ascent from Cornell to his current positions as a columnist for *The New York Times* and a co-anchor of CNBC's Squawk Box. He spoke about his founding of DealBook, a financial news service published by *The New York Times*. Many brothers are subscribers of the service and thus were very interested in hearing about it. Sorkin went on to talk about how he wrote the best-selling book, *Too Big to Fail* (2009). He also co-produced a movie adaptation of the book for HBO Films (2011).

When Sorkin's talk concluded, the brothers had a chance to ask several questions. When asked what it was like to break major news on mergers and acquisitions, he described the process of spending countless hours reaching out to all parties involved and eventually piecing the puzzle together to report a story. Sorkin also answered

a question about how he deals with the fame that his career has brought to his life, explaining that there are many positives that come with the prominence, but they are accompanied by negative aspects, such as comments on Twitter and Facebook. Lastly, he answered a question about what it was like to be on the front lines, reporting about the financial crisis of 2007–2008.

Sorkin gave the brothers some key takeaways about networking. He explained that persistence is more important to a successful career start than talent. If you reach out to a connection enough times, chances are that they will eventually respond to you. Once this happens, be sure to ask

*(continued on page 7)*

## Committee Launched to Explore Kitchen and Dining Modernization

By Jarett Wait '80

The Alumni Kitchen and Dining Committee, chaired by **Brian Finneran '81** and **Steve Pirozzi '80**, is forming a strategic committee to develop a much needed plan for modernizing and redesigning the fraternity's kitchen and dining infrastructure. We are reaching out to alumni who would like to be a part of the committee that will develop a plan to bring us up to date. Those with experience in the hospitality, restaurant, food industry, etc. are needed. If you are interested in joining the committee, **please email Brian Finneran (b.finneran@iecgny.com) or Steve Pirozzi (spirozzi1@nyc.rr.com).**

Today's undergraduate brothers require flexible, 24/7 access to the kitchen. We currently have 10 distinct meal periods weekly, Sunday through Thursday. In addition to the daily meals, the kitchen is also fully stocked with ready-to-cook frozen foods, cereals and oatmeal, milk and OJ, breakfast bars, breads, and a deli bar with vegetables,

deli meats, and salads. Dining facilities can accommodate 50 to 75 people at one time. Brotherhood dinners, during which the majority of the brotherhood makes time to eat together, occur on Sundays after chapter meetings and on Thursdays.

The kitchen and dining facilities have not been upgraded since the rebuilding of the fraternity after the fire in the early 1990s. Students' requirements for flexible dining times, modern/clean facilities, and flexibility on healthy menu options are becoming increasingly important for us to attract new brothers to the fraternity. Research from *Inside Higher Ed* suggests that 50% of college students today say that the dining program is an important factor in their decision to join a particular fraternity. Forty percent of college students today avoid consuming at least one type of animal product. Students are looking for menus designed to provide a variety of fresh/balanced options to meet their dietary preference. Two out of three students are regularly exploring new foods.

# Sage Report: Mu Chapter Achievements, Fall 2015

By **Fernando Cevallos '17**

The fall 2015 semester has been incredibly exciting for the **59 active brothers** of Mu chapter. We currently have **34 brothers living in the house**, split nearly evenly between sophomores and upperclassmen. We kicked off the school year with the Dick Cahoon '77 Tech Center reception, where we demonstrated the capabilities of the Tech Center and thanked **Dick Cahoon '77** for his generous donation. Along with the whole brotherhood, Dean Travis Apgar and Associate Dean Kara Miller of the Greek-life office, Dr. **Sandy Meek True '78** (Sweetie Pi and newly appointed to the Educational Foundation's board of directors), and Rebecca Joffrey (Dyson School director of Interactive Services) heard Dick reminisce on his time living in the Pi house and how it positively influenced the rest of his life. The reception was a huge success and was followed by a dinner with Dick and a group of undergrads.

The Tech Center has been a catalyst for improving contact with Mu Chapter alumni in various industries and has already helped brothers in their career goals. The inaugural alumni speaker was **Andrew Ross Sorkin '99**, who spoke to us about his memories at the Pi house and how he broke into the finance and journalism industry. **Kevin Kruse '79** will be the next speaker, along with **John Zimmer '06** who will speak to us in the coming months. Additionally, Tom Marino (CU'78), a senior MD at Barclays, spoke to a group of brothers regarding Wall Street careers and the recruitment process. If there are any alumni that are interested in participating, please don't hesitate to contact **David DellaPelle '17** at [david.dellapelle@gmail.com](mailto:david.dellapelle@gmail.com).

Mu Chapter brothers continue to distinguish themselves through leadership and



participation in various campus and community organizations. Brother **Connor Riser '16** is finishing up a very successful term as IFC president this semester. Similarly, **James Alvarez '16** is also concluding his involvement in IFC as the VP of the judicial council. Both Connor and James have been invaluable assets over the past four years. We also currently have five brothers serving on the executive board for College Mentors for Kids and another seven brothers involved in the organization as general managers and mentors. We look forward to our continued involvement in this organization.

At the end of the spring 2015 semester, we revived the tradition of holding a beach party, called "Oasis," in the parking lot, where we filled the entire bottom parking lot with sand. This proved to be a huge success, and we look forward to keeping the tradition for many years to come. As the fall semester winds down, the brothers look

ahead to our 11<sup>th</sup> annual Career Weekend in NYC, which has been a huge success in previous years, and to our annual Member campaign. We are also continuing our tradition of going to a Buffalo Bills game, where over 30 brothers enjoy an afternoon of football and tailgating.

Lastly, I'd like to touch on Mu Chapter's greatest strength: its bonds of brotherhood. There's nothing we appreciate more than having alumni visit and seeing the bonds that have been created stretch across generations of Pi men. I encourage you to keep up with us on the website or come visit in person, and I genuinely thank you for all the support you provide.



*2015 beach party.*



*Parking lot becomes a beach.*

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# Van Robinson '57 Elected Director Emeritus

By **Jim Keene '57**

At the annual meeting of Mu Chapter in late September, **VanNess D. Robinson '57** submitted his resignation as a director of Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi after more than 20 years of service to the alumni board. Van was elected a director emeritus, the second of only two such designations in the history of the alumni board. The fraternity is indebted to Van for his service and unflinching devotion to the fraternity.

Van came to Cornell from Edmeston, New York, where he still resides with his wife Carol. Van served for many years as chairman of the New York State Mutual Fire Insurance Co. (NYCM), headquartered in Edmeston. NYCM is over 100 years old. It was founded by a member of the Robinson family. Members of the Robinson family continue to manage the company.

Van's career of service to the fraternity began with his election as sage of Mu Chapter. Van agreed to serve as a director



*VanNess Robinson '59, Nick Reitenbach '56, and Dave Dewey '54 stand behind Jim Keene '57, Dick Pew's wife, and Dick Pew '55 at the New York City dinner in honor of Jim in 2011.*

of the alumni board when it was re-organized prior to the renovation and ultimate replacement of the chapter house. He took a special interest in the facility, coming from Edmeston on the morning the furniture arrived for the new house and helping to unload the truck and place the furniture. He took a special interest in the

importance of internet access for the undergraduates, personally supervising the installation of the original system, the upgrades, and the maintenance. For years, the Mu Chapter internet was maintained by a technical crew from NYCM that would come to Ithaca when needed (gratis!). Van was always with them.

Van was particularly influential during a very challenging time at Sigma Pi, lending his wise counsel to that of others of the alumni board in dealing with the problem. He was also always there for the celebrations, whatever they were over the years. In short, when the fraternity needed alumni involvement, Van was always there.

We will miss his active involvement and thank him for his service. There is something special about Mu Chapter; we are flourishing despite many set-backs and problems over the years. Why is that you may ask? It is because we have always had and continue to have concerned alumni who can be counted on, men like Van Robinson.

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## Significant Growth of the Educational Foundation

By **Aaron Klein '12**

This is an exciting time for the Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi Educational Foundation, given the outstanding year and organizational growth that we achieved.

Since our annual letter this summer, I would like to update our alumni and supporters on some recent developments.

I'd like to thank **Joshua Goldman '07**, who served as foundation VP and assistant secretary for his services on the foundation board. I'd also like to welcome two new board members: **Sandy True '78** and **Tom Silver '81** (see page 5).

The foundation achieved record fundraising for fiscal year 2014–2015, both in terms of amount raised and the number of donors. We continue to seek your support, and we continue to look for additional leaders who want to be involved in the foundation. Please contact me if you have interest in serving on the foundation's board (amk282@gmail.com).

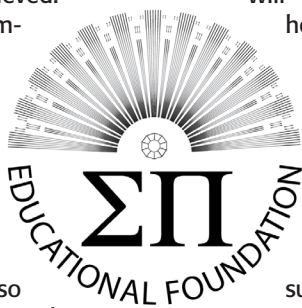
The foundation announced the creation

of internships, which are offered exclusively to existing Mu Chapter undergraduate brothers in good standing. These are paid internships and are estimated at approximately 10 hours per week, although there will be some weeks with fewer hours and other weeks with more hours, depending on activity levels.

The interns will support the Tech Center, as well as promote community programming and marketing for the foundation. Responsibilities will include managing and supervising the facility, creating a calendar of speakers, reporting on Tech Center activities to the board and community, supporting the foundation's investment in College Mentors for Kids by partnering with Sandy True to increase its community impact, working with the foundation president to prepare the foundation's annual letter and newsletters during the academic year, developing a social-media strategy for the foundation, supporting key programs, such as Cayuga Watchers, supporting the foundation fundraising with Sigma Pi alumni, assisting in identifying possible new

sources of donations, maintaining the donor database, and managing the Educational Foundation's web site.

For the 2014–2015 academic year, Sigma Pi had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest GPA out of the 41 fraternities at Cornell. This is an incredible achievement for the fraternity. This is a testament to the culture change which the foundation and alumni board are helping to nurture! Congratulations to outgoing sage, **Nick Wint '15**, the current sage, **Fernando Cevallos '17**, and to all the brothers of Mu Chapter!



*Ira Harris '16 and Jarett Wait '80 at Andrew Ross Sorkin's ('99) conference.*

# Annual Meeting & Election of Alumni Directors

By Jarett Wait '80

The annual meeting of Mu Chapter was held on Wednesday, September 30. This year, we made an increased effort to garner alumni proxies submitted electronically, which would provide the alumni corporation the needed quorum to conduct the annual meeting in accordance with our bylaws. **I am happy to report that we received 149 proxies, representing 14% of our active membership.** Thanks to all who participated.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the contributions of outgoing board members **Van Robinson '57** and **Trevor White '07**, who have stepped down from the alumni board at the end of their terms. We appreciate their efforts and thank them for their dedication. I am happy to report that Van will stay on as an emeritus director and be available to continue to provide insight and counsel to the alumni board as needed. Van's contributions to the fraternity have been immense, starting with his undergraduate leadership as sage. He has very much earned the honor of director emeritus. I am also delighted to report that **Rob Novo '79**, co-chair of the Alumni Career and Mentoring Committee, has been elected to the board. Rob brings a tremendous amount of experience from a long and successful career in consulting and human resources that will be invaluable to the board. Rob's passion for Sigma Pi is contagious.

# New Board Members

## New to the alumni board

**Rob Novo '79** is a graduate of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Currently, he is the chief administrative officer for Zep Inc., located in Atlanta, Georgia. In this role, Rob is responsible for providing human-resource, legal, environmental-health and -safety, risk-management, payroll, and compliance support to the organization.



Prior to joining Zep, Rob held a variety of roles in corporate America, having worked for General Chemical, Honeywell, Allied-Signal, Textron, and General Motors at various stages of his career. Rob is married to his college sweetheart, Michelle (Mel), and they have two daughters. Rob is excited about joining the alumni board, and he, along with **Tom Silver '81**, have been leading the Career Development Committee for the last two years.

## New to the foundation board



**Sandy True '78** received her BS at Cornell University (and was a Sigma Pi Sweetie Pi). She earned her RN, FNP, and MS from Pace University in 1981 and a PhD in nursing administration from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1993. She spent the last 25 years as a volunteer for non-profit agencies in Ithaca, focusing on fundraising, event planning, major-gift-program development, and capital campaigns. Sandy spent the last three years assisting Kurt Rasmussen and the current Sigma Pi executive board in bringing the College Mentors for Kids program to Cornell University. Sandy currently serves as the liaison between the Ithaca City School District, Caroline Elementary School, College Mentors for Kids National, and Sigma Pi. In 2015, the Cornell Fraternity and Sorority Awards selected Sandy True as the recipient for the Distinguished Alumni Service Award for her work with the College Mentors program.



**Tom Silver '81** graduated from Cornell University and went on to earn an MBA in marketing from New York University. His career in general management includes five years at Unilever, 10 years at American Express, and 12 years as part of the executive committee at Dice Holdings, an online recruiting site for technology professionals.

Tom currently serves as a board member and advisor for RallyBus, a start-up crowd-powered event-travel company, and also sits on the board of the Cancer Research and Treatment Fund, a non-profit organization focused on fundraising to advance the treatment of various types of blood cancers.

Tom was rush chairman, is currently co-chair of the Alumni Career Development Committee, and is a regular attendee at the Sigma Pi Procrasticup golf tournament.

# Treasurer's Report

By John Haggerty '78, Treasurer

Having eliminated the mortgage at the conclusion of the Centennial Campaign, Mu Chapter is now exploring strategic projects of much greater significance to the maintenance of the house without incurring debt. This fall, we began the installation of new high-quality windows for the entire third floor, a project long needed but not possible while we held the mortgage. Details of that project are described in the facilities committee report (see "Improving the House" on page 8). Our goal is to replace the remaining windows as funds become available.

We remain financially sound. Our financial model is predicated on having 35 to 45

brothers living in the house. This generates the revenue necessary to operate the main-tain the fraternity. Major changes or substantial repairs to the facility will require further fundraising. The finance committee is investing creating an endowment fund, in the event we are not able to collect rent for any reason. Approaches to this goal will be discussed over the next several months with the alumni board and will be reported in the spring *Muse*.



## Heritage Fund Annual Giving

*Fiscal Year 2014-2015*

**Total gifts: \$287,000**

**Number of donors: 199**

**New donors: 15**

**Class years participating: 54**

**Class with highest participation:  
1980, 88% participation**

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# The Richard Cahoon '77 Tech Center Dedication

By Jarett Wait '80

The Tech Center is a state-of-the-art video-conferencing system for undergrads to better interact with alumni, and it was **funded by a generous gift from Richard "Dick" Cahoon '77**. The Tech Center is housed in the Memorial Room of Sigma Pi in a custom-built cabinet made by John Kingsley Furniture in Ithaca.

On August 21, we welcomed Dick to the house for the dedication ceremony. In attendance were all of the undergrads, alumni, Dean of Students Travis Apgar, and assistant Dean of Students Kara Miller of Cornell's Greek-life office.

Dick offered the following during his dedication: "Today's college students have more and faster access to everything than any generation prior. In order for Sigma Pi to continue its positive trajectory, we need to make certain that all the benefits available to today's students are available at the Pi house. It is why your alumni board and education committee wanted to make this investment, and it is why I made the gift."

## The Richard Cahoon '77

**Tech Center** will allow for one-to-one and one-to-many webcasts between alumni and undergrads. One of the most frequent requests from undergraduates when they speak to alumni is for assistance with career planning, internships, mentorships, and job placement. They also want advice from alumni regarding graduate school and/or post-graduate degrees. **The Tech Center** will play a pivotal role in Sigma Pi's focus on career and mentoring by providing the undergraduates with the opportunity for mentoring and networking. **The Tech Center** directly aligns with the Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi Educational Foundation's mission.

As part of the Educational Foundation's mission to provide Sigma Pi brothers with opportunities that enhance their undergraduate experience, the board has approved the creation of two paid



*Richard Cahoon '77 addresses the group. Cabinet carpenter John Kingsley is in the background.*

internships. These internships will enhance our current investments in the new **Tech Center**, as well as help us expand our community programming, marketing, and development efforts. In addition, the interns will also benefit from direct interaction and mentoring from foundation board members.

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## Honor a Deceased Brother with a Memorial Gift to Educational Foundation



Honor a deceased brother through a tax-deductible \$5,300 gift to Mu Chapter Educational Foundation in his memory. Most of the memorial plaques have been funded by groups of alumni. The two most recent plaques were erected to the memory of **Dave LeFevre '60** and **Alexander Holiat '06**. Both were funded by solicitations to large groups of brothers, who responded with varying donations that totaled the required \$5,300 (\$5,000 gift and \$300 for the plaque). In each case, a brother stepped forward to lead the drive to raise the money.

Please visit the Educational Foundation's website to learn more about making a memorial gift ([musigmapifoundation.com](http://musigmapifoundation.com)).

## New Educational Foundation Interns

By Mike Vernick '83

**David DellaPelle '17** is the manager of the technology and alumni-speaker programs. Originally from Morristown, New Jersey, David is a junior in the ILR school and expected to graduate in May 2017. He is currently the executive vice president for College Mentors for Kids and the Sigma Pi brotherhood chair. He is also a member of the ILR Student Government Association and the Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity. David is responsible for the physical access and security of the tech center, coordinating with the speakers participating in the Alumni Speaker Series, managing the speaker schedule, and creating a synopsis of each speaker event.

**Yordanos Goshu '18** is the Tech Center's operations manager. From Chicago, Yordi is a sophomore in the arts school, majoring in computer science. Entering Cornell, Yordi was awarded both the Bill Gates Millennium Scholarship and the Posse Foundation Scholarship. Yordi is responsible for the physical components in the tech center, setting up the video conferences, recording and uploading speaker events to our web site, and setting up a

Q&A/blog part of our website.

In addition, both David and Yordi will be working on future tech projects, including keyless entry into Sigma Pi, a wireless speaker system, and a private social-media network for all undergrads and alumni

**Justin Bredahl '17** is the foundation's community-programming, marketing, and development manager. Originally from Orange County, California, he's a student in the School of Hotel Administration, with an expected graduation date of May 2017. His position is responsible for a variety of different aspects relating to the overall management of the Mu Chapter Educational Foundation. This position works with **Sandy True '78** and **Kurt Rasmussen '80** to increase the community impact of Mu Chapter through the continual support of College Mentors for Kids, as well as through other programs and causes on Cornell's campus. This intern also partners with the foundation president to prepare the foundation's annual letter and two newsletters throughout the year. Raising awareness of the foundation both in the Ithaca community and to all brothers of Sigma Pi Mu Chapter is also a key component of the position.

# Alumni Support Undergrad Mentoring and Career Search

By Rob Novo '79 and Tom Silver '81

Now that the fall semester has started and the undergraduates are back at the house, the Alumni Career Development Committee, chaired by **Rob Novo '79** and **Tom Silver '81**, is busy preparing for the upcoming recruiting season. With the help of **Mike Vernick '83** and the Technology Committee, we were pleased to see a very solid turnout for the first speaker in the Sigma Pi Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series, featuring **Andrew Sorkin '99**. Approximately 30 brothers filled the room and were able to gain first-hand interactive experience from a successful alumus for nearly 45 minutes. We will be looking to complete the fall schedule with an additional 2 to 3 webinars with other prominent alumni before the end of the fall semester. If any one is interested in sharing his experiences with the undergraduates, please contact either Rob or Tom.

Elsewhere, we are looking to further expand the mentor program and build upon the successful pilot program that was

implemented last year. In January of 2015, more than 20 undergraduates were matched with alumni, and almost all reported to have had contact that led to productive meetings and conversations.

At least one internship was offered, and some relationships continue. Based on the positive feedback we have received, the program will be expanded this year. We are happy to see that 23 current brothers provided their profiles and are interested in participating. Rob and Tom will work to initiate and facilitate the mentor/mentee introductions. After that, the relationships evolve on their own. If you were involved last year, please confirm that you are interested again this year. *We need more mentors*, so please let us know if you are interested.

Our goal is to have mentor relationships assigned in the fall. Thanks to **Jarett Wait '80** for taking the lead and creating the



opportunity for brothers to meet alumni in their work environments and casually over dinner to better formulate their respective future career plans. These meetings will also include discus-

sion and guidance on some of the basics of job search, including cover letter and resume writing, interview skills, and other parts of the job search process.

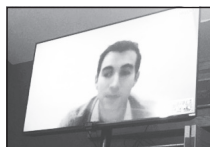
We appreciate the help and support from all alumni. We're looking for mentors and volunteers for the Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series, because the undergraduates are very interested to hear about your career, how you got started, and any other advice you can provide. We also hope to see alumni at the Undergraduate Career Night dinner on November 5 in New York City.

**Please contact Rob Novo (robn1979@gmail.com) or Tom Silver (tsilver10359@yahoo.com) if you would like to learn more.**

## Sorkin '99 Advises Brothers

(continued from page 2)

insightful questions so it is clear that you are not wasting their time. He explained that you should always prepare diligently when reaching out to connections by being able to illustrate your knowledge of their firm and/or career through the questions you ask. If you are persistent, ask good questions, and provide a good reason for him/her to talk with you, Sorkin noted that the connection will likely take the conversation to the next step. Although you might be an undergrad with little real-world experience, you want to prove that they should "bet on the underdog."



## Chapter Expands Philanthropy Efforts

By George Chalhoub '16 and Will Murphy '18

Sigma Pi Mu Chapter is really trying to expand our philanthropic efforts this year. This fall, we have a large list of events that are geared toward multiple facets of philanthropy. In the middle of October, we partnered with Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority in sponsoring the first Fiesta Friday, where all proceeds support **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)**. CASA helps children struggling in the foster-care system by assigning them a trained volunteer whose sole mission is to make sure their child ends up in a safe, happy home. This is a great cause, and we are more than happy to help raise money for it.

On Saturday, October 24, we sent a team to **Into the Streets**, the largest Cornell-wide community-service event. Every Greek fraternity/sorority, club, or team sends groups out to do volunteering in the Ithaca community in support of it. We have participated annually and are looking forward to joining the cause once again.

On Sunday, October 25, we had our first **College Mentors for Kids** 5K. This event benefits Sigma Pi Mu Chapter's College Mentors for Kids. College Mentors for Kids is a national organization that we, with the help of our gracious alumni, brought to Cornell and

that is now one of the most well-known organizations on campus. Mu Chapter involvement in CMFK is strong on every level, and this year, we decided to have a large philanthropic event in the form of a 5K in Cornell's Plantations. This 5K event was followed by food, drinks, music, and some entertainment. Wristbands were sold throughout campus, and we used social media as a means to spread the word via photos and fliers. Because it was less than a week before Halloween, costumes were highly encouraged, and there were prizes for best costume, funniest costume, etc.

On a slightly more humorous note, November is a month-long event known as **Movember**. This is an event that is near and dear to us as active members of Sigma Pi Mu Chapter. Every year we all grow out our 'staches in the hopes of raising awareness for men's prostate and testicular cancers. We send out updates every few days, asking our family and friends to donate to our Movember pages, and this becomes a fun way for our brotherhood to bond together as we all sport thick, beautiful (some would say horrifying) 'staches by the end of the month. We urge all alumni to join our official team: Sigma Pi Mu Chapter ([us.movember.com/team/1980805](http://us.movember.com/team/1980805)).

We have been updating the brotherhood on philanthropic events throughout the semester, such as blood drives.

# Cornell IFC President's Report

By Connor Riser '16

As I look back on my two years on Cornell's Interfraternity Council, I am pleased to see the current state of the Greek system. The IFC currently has **36** chapters, with three more expected to be added in the next year. In January, Zeta Beta Tau returned to campus after three years of closure. This past year, for the first time in a long time, no chapter has lost its recognition at Cornell (as of press time).

The Cornell Greek system remains vibrant. Delta Tau Delta and Delta Chi both celebrated their 125<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. Lambda

Chi Alpha completed a \$2.8M renovation to their chapter house. **Sigma Pi opened up a new Tech Center in their Memorial Library.** Donations from Cornell's Greek alumni are up for almost every chapter.

The IFC has had some exciting new initiatives as well. For the first time in many years, Greek Week returned to campus. It was a week-long Greek competition of athletics, philanthropy, races, and more. The eventual winner was Theta Delta Chi, with a second place finish by Alpha Zeta Fraternity. The IFC is also continuing its New Member Dues Program for a second consecutive year. The dues program sets

out to help five new rushes pay for their first year of chapter and national dues with a \$1,000 stipend. Last January, Sigma Pi Brother **Yordanos Goshu '18** was a recipient. The Beta Upsilon Chapter of Order of Omega, Cornell's Greek honor society, took a tapping class of 47 members last spring and this fall. Brother **James Alvarez '16** and Brother **Michael Adelstein '16** were among those 47, allowing them to join me as Sigma Pi's three current members. Looking back on my Interfraternity Council presidency, I am glad to know that the Greek system—and Sigma Pi—has a bright future ahead!

## Calendar 2015–2016

November 25–29, 2015  
**Thanksgiving break**

December 4, 2015  
**Last day of fall classes**

December 5–8, 2015  
**Fall study period**

December 9–17, 2015  
**Fall exam period**

December 18, 2015–January 27, 2016  
**Winter break**

January 2016  
**New-member recruitment**

March 26–April 4, 2016  
**Spring break**

May 8, 2016  
**Grateful Dead day**

May 11, 2016  
**Last day of spring classes/Slope Day**

May 12–15, 2016  
**Spring study period**

May 16–19, 2016  
**Spring exam period**

May 29, 2016  
**Commencement**

June 9–12, 2016  
**Reunion Weekend 2016**

## Sigma Pi National Regional Director Visits Mu Chapter

By Fernando Cevallos '17



Joe Turck, Sigma Pi National director, visited the brothers of Mu Chapter in mid-October. During the visit, he met with every member of the executive board and every member of the minor board to make sure they were not only following the standards of the national fraternity but also doing the best that they could do for Mu Chapter.

Mr. Turck met with all of the undergraduate

leaders. The highlight of his visit was a presentation on antihazing and best practices for member recruitment. In this presentation, he taught the brothers of Mu chapter how to better formulate a new-member education plan that allowed new members to learn about our chapter but also not feel too much pressure. The information he gave us in the meeting will help us better formulate an effective new-member education plan for the upcoming spring semester. Overall, Joe's visit was fantastic, and we are very glad he was able to come and see us!

## Mu Chapter House Improvements

By John Morrison '75

The Facilities Committee is pleased to report that there have been very few incidents of abuse or problems of neglect since our last report. We implemented a formal monthly safety inspection of all bedrooms and common areas by the RA and sage. Also, in collaboration with the Brotherhood Committee, a plan has been put in place to educate all new members on the importance of respecting the physical property and its contents.

The committee purchased new furniture with the majority of the funds coming from the Educational Foundation. The new furniture includes study desks with chairs and lamps for each bedroom, chairs and study tables for the Memorial Room, as well as West Lounge sofas, arm chairs, and a few tables.

In an effort to increase security and reduce

vandalism by outside parties, a wooden fence was installed around the back of the lower parking lot to eliminate foot traffic through the area, a video surveillance system was installed to monitor exterior walls and the kitchen, and external lighting was enhanced.

Replacement of the third-floor windows began on November 9. The eventual goal is to replace all of the windows in the house. In addition, damaged windows on the other floors are currently being repaired as needed. As part of the Tech Center project, new windows and shades will be installed in the Memorial Room. These windows will be installed over the holiday break and are being paid for by the Educational Foundation.

Finally, I'm pleased to report that **Peter Wright, '77** has joined the Facilities Committee to assist with the important work of maintaining and planning for the future of 730 University Ave.



## Sigma Pi Cornell Legacies



Last July in Rochester, Steve Novak '83, Joe Ruocco '81, and John Stewart '83 celebrate Joe's retirement from Goodyear.

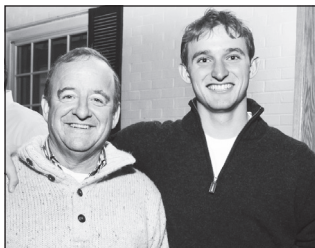


Jim Vanicet '55 and his wife, Sally, visit the house for Reunion 2015



Matt Wigsten '80, John Haggerty '78, Jim Franz '77, and Joe Dervay '80 are joined by the Big Red Bear at a Cornell lacrosse game last spring.

Many of our children and grandchildren are interested in attending Cornell. As a service to our alumni, the Sigma Pi Alumni Relations Committee held a conference call in mid-September to discuss Cornell's application process. **Jarett Wait '80, Kurt Rasmussen '80, Andy Kantor '79, Tom Cherner '80, Steve Ryan '77, Jon Petee '81,** and Amy Motchweiler '80 offered their sage advice to callers.



Steve '77 & William Ryan '14.

- Some key points from the discussion:
- Cornell takes legacies very seriously, and it can be an advantage to applicants. About 14% of incoming freshman are legacies.
  - If possible, it's a good idea to get a letter of support from a Cornell faculty member.
  - Cornell now limits applicants to applying to only one college or school (Eng, ILR, Arts); no more one application for multiple colleges.
  - Cornell is also striving for more geographic diversity.

• Early-decision can greatly increase your chances of admission.

Do you have a child or grandchild currently attending Cornell as either an undergraduate or graduate student? Please send his/her name, parent/grandparent name, college, and email address to **Kurt Rasmussen '80** ([rasmussen\\_kurt@lilly.com](mailto:rasmussen_kurt@lilly.com)).

lege, and email address to **Kurt Rasmussen '80** ([rasmussen\\_kurt@lilly.com](mailto:rasmussen_kurt@lilly.com)).

### Current legacies on campus:

#### Class of 2016

**Will Petee** (Arts) – **Jon Petee '81**

#### Class of 2017

Blair Bosshardt (Hum Ec) – **Kurt Bosshardt '83**

#### Class of 2018

Charlotte Leape (Eng) – **Gerry Leape '82**

#### Class of 2019

**Jack Kantor** (ILR) – **Andy Kantor '79**

**Jackson Cherner** (Arts) – **Tom**

**Cherner '80**

Jack Burger (CALs) – **John D. Burger '84**

## Historic Video Found

Sigma Pi received an email that contained a link to a remarkable historic video from 1958. The film shows some parties, a drive through Cornell, and a snow

ball fight. We believe it includes footage of Calvin (Hound Dog) Ruffin and other acts. View the whole video in the History section of our website.



# Brother of the Year

By Fernando Ceballos '17



Nicholas Wint '15, former Mu Chapter Sage, was voted by the undergraduates as the class of 1980 Adolphus C. Hailstork Prize Brother of the Year Award recipient for 2015.

Nick constantly demonstrated what it means to be a brother of Sigma Pi, through his numerous selfless acts throughout his past four years as a leader of Mu Chapter. Nick strived to make every brother's experience in the house special, and for that, the brotherhood was keen to recognize him with this special award. Nick served numerous roles in the fraternity since becoming a member (steward, alumni secretary, and finally sage), always giving to the house while expecting nothing in return.

Nick was a member of the ROTC program at Cornell, where he served as battalion commander. He never let his time-consuming involvement get between him and his service to the house. As a senior living in the house, his institutional knowledge and mentorship to younger brothers was unmatched in the fraternity.

Nick's service went beyond the call of duty. Nick was always the first to volunteer to do any brother any favor. His service, leadership, dependability, and love of Sigma Pi set him apart and set a very high bar for all undergraduates to aspire to. Nick wholly deserves this prize, and we cannot thank him enough for his dedication to Mu Chapter and his future service to our country. Congratulations Nick!



Brothers Jay Sacco '80, Neal Douglas '80, Jon Fordin '80, Rick Bosshardt '80, Luc Chabot '80 and 2010 Sweetie Pis.

Class of 2010 at Reunion.



## Mu Chapter Alumni Involvement on the Upswing

Mu Chapter alumni involvement has been on a significant upswing over the last few years. This trend was firmly established on the back of our very successful centennial celebration in 2013. This past year, a number of events brought alumni together with undergraduates in record turnouts. The NYC Career Forum last November was our largest and most successful to date, both in terms of alumni participation and undergraduate attendance. In the spring, a group of West Coast alumni, spanning four

Reunion 2015 was the 35<sup>th</sup> for the stellar **class of '80**. Twenty brothers from that class were joined in Ithaca by **12 brothers** and five former Sweetie Pis from the class of **2010**. **Mike Sheinkman '80** journeyed from Thailand for the event! **Brothers also returned from the classes of '55, '65, '70, '79, '03, and '05**. Approximately **40 brothers** in total visited the house over the course of the weekend. The **class of '80** formed an informal reunion committee to help plan logistics, including beverages, munchies,



The class of '80: Rick Bosshardt, Kurt Rasmussen, Neal Douglas, Theon Smith, Jarett Wait, Jon Fordin, Steve Perozzi, and Luc Chabot celebrate their 35<sup>th</sup> Reunion at the house.

decades, put together the first West Coast alumni dinner, which was a huge success.

Another encouraging development is the record turnout for this year's annual meeting and election of directors to the alumni board; **149 alumni** returned proxies, representing **14%** of our active membership. We also have benefited from a continued upswing in alumni financial support of both Mu Chapter Alumni Corp. and Mu Chapter Educational Foundation. **Over 54 class years supported the fraternity and foundation through their generous donations!**

logistics, including beverages, munchies, coolers, folding chairs, a tent for the porch, tunes, etc. A local food truck provided Thursday night's dinner. Saturday saw a Collegetown tour (complete with a pub quiz and stops at Ruloff's, The Nines, and Dunbar's), tent parties, campus tours, visits to the parks, etc.

On Saturday of Reunion weekend, almost all of the 2010s were able to make it to Glenwood Pines with friends/loved ones for a pledge-class dinner. Many of them spent the early afternoon basking in the good weather on Libe Slope. They also had a smaller group get-together for pizza and wings at The Nines and a walk around former annexes. Of course, they all spent late nights at the house on the Beach and in the basement (depending on weather), as well as getting to know some of the brothers currently living at the

(continued on next page)

## Mu Chapter Alumni Involvement on the Upswing

*(continued from previous page)*

house, who were very hospitable. A major highlight for the class of 2010 was swapping stories with brothers from the classes of '79 and '80.

The venerable Procrasticup was held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, in October. Fourteen brave Pi men battled the rain and flooding for the event. In the key match-up, the team of **Mike Vernick '83** and **Dennis McNamara '83** were able to come from behind to tie the team of **Joe Ruocco '81** and **Tim Hawes '81** on a dark 18<sup>th</sup> hole Saturday night. While P-cup attendees were only able to get in 45 holes of golf over 5 days, anyone who has attended the Procrasticup knows that this annual event is not about the golf .... it's about the stories, the abuse, the fun, and the long-standing friendships. This year's P-cup was once again amazing!!!

In a "Big Chill" kind of deal, a group of **'77 alumni** gathered with their wives on Block Island to celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> birthdays. **Mike Anderson '77** and his wife, Allison, hosted the event at their home, which featured spectacular ocean views. Everybody brought something, and the group enjoyed a combination of cooking-in and going-out. There were plenty of beverages and Cuban cigars and a couple of rare appearances: a bottle of 1955 Armagnac (their birth year) and a bottle of 1977 Sandemans Vintage Port (their graduation year).

In August, **Steve Mongeau '78** joined **Mark Sullivan '77** and his family for the "Knuckleballs to Wall" challenge with Tim Wakefield at Fenway Park. Each member of the party took turns batting against Wake (8 pitches each) and then rotated from left to right field to shag hit balls. Steve said he missed the knuckleballs by more than a foot,

but Sully had better luck at the plate! Wake also sat in the stands with them for lunch.

Last June, there was a first-rate mix of older and younger alumni at Yankee Stadium in New York City. **Mike Vernick '83**,

**Tom Best '80**, **Zach Smith '13**, **Adam Cherubini '13**, and **Justin Bredahl '17** enjoyed a their time in the right-field bleachers while watching the Bronx Bombers on a cool summer evening.



*Tom Silver '81, Joe Ruocco '81, Jim Garr '82, Luc Chabot '80, George Rocklein '87, Mike Feiertag '83, Steve Novak '83, Dennis McNamara '83, Mike Vernick '83, John Stewart '83, John Roche '82, Tom Cherner '80, Tim Hawes '81, and Eugene McKenna (CU'81) gather at the 2015 Procrasticup.*



*Clad in their yellow jackets, Sally Binetti, Janice Mazzamaro, Glenn Mazzamaro '77, Mike Anderson '77, Chris Garavente '77, Allison Anderson, Carol Garavente, Maria Clark, Charley Clark '77, Todd Hasselbeck '78, Barb Hasselbeck, and Craig Binetti '77 celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> birthdays on Block Island.*



*Steve Mongeau '78 and Mark Sullivan '77 pose with three Red Sox World Series trophies at Fenway Park in Boston.*



*Zach Smith '13, Adam Cherubini '13, Mike Vernick '83, Tom Best '80, and Justin Bredahl '17 enjoy a game at Yankee Stadium.*

# Mu Alumni News & Notes

After leaving Cornell, **Paul Reszel '51** continued his education in New York University and Bellevue Medical, where he graduated in 1954. He interned in Buffalo, New York, in 1955 and took up a surgery residency in the Buffalo VA Hospital until 1956. He transferred to the Mayo Clinic soon after, but enlisted in the U.S. Navy from 1956 to 1958, where he served in Japan on the *USS Ajax*. On his return from service, he eventually returned to the Mayo Clinic to complete his orthopedic residency. He practiced in New Rochelle, New York, for three years before moving to Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he practiced orthopedics until 1998, when he retired. Paul now lives in Fort Wayne and has five children and ten grandchildren. Reconnect with Paul at 1618 Autumn Run, Fort Wayne, IN 46845.

**Vincent Crane '52** shares with us: "One of my fondest memories was when we formed a 15- or 16-piece band with brothers and other musicians we knew. We had open houses on two nights and featured the band. This was probably between 1948 and 1951. I can't remember who in the house was in the band, except for **Dan Cadiz '51**. Fun times for sure!" Share some of your stories with Vincent by writing him at [vincentcrane01@comcast.net](mailto:vincentcrane01@comcast.net) or at 535 N. Lewis Run Rd., Apt. 807, Clairton, PA 15025.

"We've been living in Haymarket, Virginia, for the last eight years," writes **Richard Ragold '53**. "Not far from the Blue Ridge Mountains. Nice Country. Golf, fishing, and painting keep me busy." Dick keeps in touch with **Skip Leach '53** every so often and visited him last year. Get back in touch with Dick at 15211 Royal Crest Dr., Unit 402, Haymarket, VA 20169.

Jeanette Gianfagna Shamblen, daughter of **John Gianfagna '60** started Creating Hope, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works directly with cancer patients. John and wife, Tina, continue Jeanette's mission of providing ways to use art to reduce pain and anxiety for those on their cancer journey. "We volunteer at the I.U. Simon Cancer in Indianapolis. We also give coloring meditation workshops to organizations serving patients and caregivers. Our website tells the complete story ([www.creatinghope.us](http://www.creatinghope.us))." Get in touch with John at 13897 Rue Royale Ln., McCordsville, IN 46055.

"Still living and enjoying my retirement in Boca Raton, Florida," writes **Richard Kubiak '68**. After graduation, he served a tour in Vietnam before taking advantage of the GI Bill to become a pharmacist. After 30 years of work, he retired due to a vision problem. "Now I cut my grass, grow flowers, travel, and enjoy my five children. Hope to hear from you!" Let Dick hear from you; write to him at [rwk923@comcast.net](mailto:rwk923@comcast.net) or at 8281 Cedar Hollow Ln., Boca Raton, FL 33433.



*Peter and his wife, Linda, in Sedona, Arizona, overlooking Cathedral Rock.*

with Peter at 400 E. Date St., Apt. 212, Cottonwood, AZ 86326.

**Robert Bernstein '77** sends his congratulations to Sigma Pi for organizing the West Coast Alumni Gathering. "As the elder statesmen at the event, it was interesting to meet many of the more recently graduated brothers, and to note the similarities to the Pi house of my time. I found myself saying 'He is just like...' more than once during the evening. Somehow, Sigma Pi remains an eclectic collection of live-and-let-live brothers that are quite different from each other, but still feel a bond." After finishing his engineering degree at Cornell, Robert wandered a bit before going to architecture school. "I tell people I did not become an architect to design what I have already seen. The result is that my designs are quite different." Write Robert a letter at 1030 El Monte Ave., #A9, Mountain View, CA 94040.

**John Mennell '82** is the founder of Magazine Publishers Family Literacy Project, a not-for-profit charitable organization that is the first and only global literacy campaign for children and families. "Change the world, one magazine—one reader at a time."

**Stu Strumwasser '88** had his first novel, *The Organ Broker*, published in May 2015

**Pete Hellmold '70** returned to Cornell for his 45<sup>th</sup> reunion this past June, his first visit since his reunion in 2000. He was eager to tour the house and to greet the brothers during the barbecue. Keep in touch

## Deceased

**David W. Lippert '33**

**Myron W. Osborn Jr. '36**

**M. Dudley Smith Jr. '48**

January 4, 2015

**Richard W. Avazian '59**

July 14, 2015

**William A. Swartzman '77**

May 23, 2015

*Honor a deceased brother with a memorial plaque.*

and celebrated with a private release event in New York City. Stu performed a reading from the novel and held a Q&A about the book, as well as the underlying socio-political issues. He also performed in a short acoustic appearance with Channeling Owen, his old band

Congratulations to **Jordan Turner '06**, who married Andrew Damhuis on September 12, 2015, in Lake Placid, New York at the Lake Placid Lodge. Brother **Matthew Greenberg '06**, a pledge brother of Jordan, was also in attendance. Jordan is a plastic surgery resident in New York, and Andrew is an associate at Goldman Sachs in its investment management division. The two



live together in the West Village with their dogs Griffin and Chase, the house mascot during Jordan's residence at Sigma Pi.

Congratulations to **Giorgio Roccaro '07**, who married his girlfriend of over five years, Jessica Chudey, in Thompson, Connecticut, this past September. He also completed his first year of fellowship in gastroenterology and hepatology at the University of Pennsylvania and began a masters in clinical gastroenterology research in July. Send your well wishes to [giorgio.roccaro@gmail.com](mailto:giorgio.roccaro@gmail.com) or to 1527 Pine St., #3R, Philadelphia, PA 19102.