



CROSSROADS



A Publication of Gamma Chi Chapter of Sigma Chi, University of Maryland

March 2018

HOUSE CORPORATION

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Treasurer

Matt Young '10

Phil Robling '79

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Golf Classic Friday May 18, 2018

Join us at the University of Maryland Golf Course for a day of brotherhood and fun. Captain's Choice Format, which means all skill levels welcome

Prizes for lowest score, longest drive, closest to the pin and more...

- **Banquet:** \$35 alumni, \$20 undergraduate
 - **Undergrad Golf Sponsorship:** \$40
 - **Undergrad Banquet sponsorship:** \$20
 - **Hole Sponsorship:** \$125
 - 1:15 pm check-in
 - 1:45 pm Shotgun Start
 - 7 pm Alumni Banquet
- Visit www.sigmachimaryland.com

Initiation

Saturday March 31, 2018

Noon, St. Andrew's Parish Hall, College Park.

SIGNIFICANT SIGS

We are proud to announce that **Mark Updegrove '84**, **Robert Facchina '77** and **Mike Luzio '98** were among the Significant Sigs selected in 2018. Congrats brothers!

ALUMNI CHAPTER

Scott Werber '86
scott@ddminsurance.com
President

Phil Robling '79
Treasurer

DERBY DAYS

Did You Know Derby Days Serves a Dual Purpose?

While Helping Children in Need, Sigma Chis Also Build Critical Life Skills

When **Scott Werber** asked **Chris Kennedy '85** to reintroduce Derby Days to the Gamma Chi Chapter in 2012 (following the chapter's recolonization), Chris didn't hesitate to become the Derby Days Alumni Advisor.



Having served as the undergraduate Derby Days Chairman back in 1984-1985, he knew how important it was to bring this event back to bolster Sigma Chi's identity on the University of Maryland campus.

While the purpose of Derby Days is first and foremost to raise funds for Children's Miracle Network to support children receiving treatment at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., it also provides Sigma Chi brothers with a one-of-a-kind opportunity for personal growth and development. The experience of organizing and executing this year-long fundraising effort is one that few other college graduates can put on their resume.

"Derby Days gives these undergrads the penultimate internship experience," Chris explains. "I'm of the firm belief that there's no better internship opportunity to cultivate life skills than the time, people, and money management skills Derby Days gives them. These young brothers will fall back on those skills in whatever career they choose. Real life challenges of convincing people to donate thousands of dollars for your events, going into a corporate office and making a persuasive presentation, being able to close the deal—these are great skills to acquire. Those who serve as the Derby Days Chairman often go on to law school, get MBAs, get great jobs—partly because of the skills they learn."

Chris, a local attorney, plays a central role in Derby Days each year, acting as an alumni advisor and guide for the undergrads and intervening as needed. He attends biweekly meetings at the chapter house, but

also participates in conference calls that are held over the summer break to continue planning and organizing Derby Days events. Chris is one of the few lucky alumni who have the opportunity to build relationships with the undergrads, so he's careful not to overstep his bounds.

"It's great to get to know these guys, but I don't want to become someone they don't want hanging around," he explains. "I try to stand back, observe, and intervene only when it's really necessary, such as when a suggested event could unintentionally result in an injury. It's important not to usurp the undergrads' role—I want these guys to learn to conduct business meetings on their own."

It's skills like this that will set a Sigma Chi apart from others in a job interview or other important moments in their careers.

"Organizing Derby Days is like running a business in many respects," Chris says. "They have to meet deadlines, overcome obstacles, plan events, implement goals, recruit participants and volunteers, and close sponsorship deals. There aren't many college internships that can offer as much or compare to this one. I tell these guys to seize the day—to look at it as a rare opportunity to learn critically important life skills that they will undoubtedly fall back on for the rest of their careers."

Read the rest of the story at:

www.sigmachimaryland.com

ALUMNI REPORT

Brian Allen '86 Finds Support from His Brothers After Losing His Father



From L to R: Rick Wilson '87, Ted Devers, Pat Cardwell '85, Rich Thometz '87, Mike Carmody '86, Tony Thometz, Duffy Welsh '85, Brian Allen '86, Chris Kennedy '85, Mike Yeganeh '86, Nick Abid '85, Scott Werber '86, John Warther '85

These are the kind of pictures that can really pull on your heart strings and remind you what brotherhood really means throughout life. When **Brian Allen '86** recently lost his father Alexander Allen at age 93, a group of his devoted Sig brothers showed up to give their respects. Mr. Allen was a WWII vet who flew 30 missions in his career starting on D-Day. This also serves as a reminder to all of you to keep your brothers close. Our hearts go out to Brother Allen and his family.

ALUMNI PROFILE

How Sigma Chi Still Leaves a Mark on James Finlay

For **James Finlay**, Sigma Chi Maryland was his home away from home the second he stepped foot into the house back in his second semester of freshman year, in 2000.

“That sounds cheesy, but it’s the truth,” Finlay said. “**Nick Devine, Rudy Gersten** and **Steve Simmons** really made me feel comfortable and want to join the house. [There was no] pretense or any other ‘nerdity’ — just great fellowship.”

Finlay’s days at Sigma Chi gave him memories to last a life-time, whether it be trips like a get-away weekend at Ocean City and spring break at Daytona Beach, or the simple things, like eating lunch with his brothers.

“That hour before going to Bentley’s while all the Jersey kids nair’d their backs, playing basketball— [that’s what gives] me the biggest laughs and the best thoughts,” Finlay said. “That stretch of life was incredible.”

After Finlay graduated from Maryland, he moved into a job in sales. He then went to graduate school in Georgetown, only to then hit the reset button on all his plans.

Finlay chose to switch his sales career into one in media.

“I eventually landed in the D.C. media covering sports,” Finlay said. “Through hard work and a little luck, I am now living a childhood dream covering the Redskins

Throughout it all, Finlay’s bond with Sigma Chi is still ever-present.

“I wasn’t a particularly focused student at Maryland, but I learned a lot about interacting with different people,” Finlay explained. “On a professional level now, sharing the Sigma Chi bond with a friend



and mentor like **Chick Hernandez** means a tremendous amount.”

Hernandez, a fellow Sigma Chi brother, was an important role model for Finlay, when the latter began working as the beat reporter in *Redskins Insider*, for NBC Sports Washington.

“Hernandez is such a professional on TV that I’ve learned a lot just from watching his approach and preparation,” Finlay revealed. “Personally, he’s helped me with the more nuanced tips coming in and out of breaks and teases.”

But those tips aren’t what holds the most value to Finlay.

“More importantly, he’s been a good sounding board when things pop up, both good and bad,” Finlay said. “He’s somebody I can trust.”

Finlay works with news and analysis across multiple platforms, including television, podcast and various social media for the Redskins. His twitter is full of sports information and updates, and he has 14.1k followers

“Wherever they go, I go,” he said.

But something else always goes with Finlay — his connection with the guys of Sigma Chi, his best friends.

“We’ve shared life: growing up, being in each other’s weddings, meeting each other’s kids. We all get together for at least one Terps hoops game a year,” Finlay said. “When my father died last year, the guys I pledged with and lived in the house with came in from all over the country for his funeral.”

To Finlay, it meant the world.

It wove Sigma Chi into his family and into his heart.

“That’s real friendship,” he said. “It’s brotherhood.”

If you think you or someone you know from the Gamma Chi Chapter would make an interesting alumni profile, please let us know at www.sigmachimaryland.com and click on “Contact Us” tab

ENDURING BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

A Closer Look at How the '70s Era Brothers Stay Connected

"We are united in the strong and enduring bonds of friendship and esteem." These enduring bonds, described in The Jordan Standard, are



Gary Courtois and Carl Sutkus



Greg Droege, Steve Bradshaw, Mike Aiken and Terry Bradshaw



Phil Robling and Dunkle

Although RSVPs are encouraged, there always seems to be a few extra who show up.

"Somehow they get the news about

by far the biggest benefits of being a Sig. No matter how many weeks, months, or years go by, you know you'll receive a warm welcome among brothers. We see it every year at the Gamma Chi golf outing — happy reunions despite many years gone by — but it's also noticeable at smaller gatherings, like the party held at **Ross Swope's** house every January.

As **Robert Lehmkuhl** (better known as **Dunkle**) tells it, Ross called him up out of the blue over a decade ago and simply said "Let's have a party." That first year drew in about 40 attendees. Since then, it's become an annual tradition, typically bringing together about 75 people: brothers from the late '60s through the early '70s along with many of their wives.

The party, usually held the first Saturday in January, includes a potluck style dinner and runs from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. (to accommodate their desire to turn in earlier these days, Dunkle jokes). You can count on lots of storytelling and reminiscing.

"They get better each year as the memories change," Dunkle laughs.

the party, but don't always RSVP," Dunkle explains. "But it's a nice surprise. We're always glad they showed up and have plenty of food to go around."

Most of the regular attendees are those who live in Maryland. However, each year, there are usually a few alumni who travel in from out of state.

Although it's not an official event, it's something that people look forward to each year and an opportunity to catch up. It's also served as inspiration to another era of alumni. Scott Werber, alumni president, now hosts a similar event for graduates of the '80s at his place. Hopefully, it can continue to serve as a reminder for other eras to make similar efforts. It's these friendships that keep our fraternity and tradition strong. If you're putting together an event and need contact information for brothers in your era, please contact Scott Werber. He'd be happy to help!



Unearthing Lost Items

Some important items were recovered recently from the 4600 Norwich House that had been stored in a warehouse since 2002. The plaque pictured was among the more note worthy items retrieved: **Active of the Year from 1972-89.**

The items that were salvageable were placed in the two display cases we have at the Chapter House, along with the memorabilia that we have collected from our alumni. These items that we retrieved last week did *not* include, unfortunately, any **All Sports Trophies** or other athletic trophies from our three decade IFC Intramural dynasty.

ALUMNI MEMBER HONORED

Capt. H.R. "Ron" Squiers Receives Wright Brothers Award

The New York Times recently published an article about the retirement of the world's first jumbo jet; the Boeing 747. With the cost of operating these planes becoming too expensive they have been moving the remaining planes to a storage area in the arid climate of Pinal Airpark, between Phoenix and Tucson to prevent corrosion.

Gamma Chi's very own **Capt. H.R. "Ron" Squiers '64**, spent a good part of his career as a commercial pilot flying 747s. He also recently received the prestigious Wright Brothers Award by the FAA. The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award is the most prestigious award the FAA issues to pilots certified under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 61. This award is named after the Wright Brothers, the first US pilots, to recognize individuals who have exhibited professionalism, skill, and aviation expertise for at least 50 years while



piloting aircraft as "Master Pilots."

Brother Squiers shared a little about the fate of one of the last 747s that he flew:

"I think I mentioned before, my last big flight as a real captain was a delivery of an off-lease Singapore 747-400 from Changi to Tuscon (17+40 hours) and then, after clearing customs, on to Pinal, 20 minutes away. The airplane had been bought by a Russian oligarch (they wouldn't give us his name). They were going to do the big modifications to the interior...hot tubs, king bed, and who knows what else. I was in on the initial development of the latest 747-8. They are actually selling (mostly freighters) to UPS, Qatar, Lufthansa and Cathay Pacific.

Let's all congratulate Brother Squiers for making Gamma Chi proud!

The Gamma Chi Foundation for Education

One of the truly great stories about the resurgence of the Gamma Chi Chapter is the Gamma Chi Foundation for Education. Seeded with funds from the sale of the Chapter's property at 4600 Norwich Road, and a very generous bequest from Brother **Jack Stringer '57**, the Foundation's endowment now stands at right about \$1.05M. It is a great asset for the Chapter.

As with all foundations, the goal is to spend some of the earnings each year without invading the principal. After doing considerable research we elected to use DHK, a specialized investment firm, to manage the funds. DHK invests funds for foundations similar in size to our own. The benefit is that with all the pooled investments that DHK manages, we receive tremendous expertise at a very favorable price. As you can imagine, our initial investment was very well-timed – as the funds were transferred to DHK in the early Fall of 2016 so they have caught a great ride. However, as many of us have experienced, what goes up can come down – so we need to keep that in mind as we move forward.

To date, the funds have been used for a couple of things – primarily based on input from those very close to the Chapter. One of the challenges in today's fraternity environment is keeping upperclassmen living in the Chapter house. As the students get older, they seem to prefer to live in

an environment with fewer rules. We are awarding scholarships that cover Chapter house board for brothers who have exhibited strong leadership skills to stay in the house and provide role models for the younger brothers.

We are also in talks with the Student Affairs group on campus to help sponsor some leadership training for the Greek system. One idea is to focus it on the college experience in the social media age. Many of us have seen how the impact from a spontaneous moment can travel around the world in a matter of hours or minutes, creating an association with individuals and organizations that can last for a very long time. We hope to get that wrapped and determined in the Spring.

A second area we are working toward finalizing is a scholarship for a Vet attending Maryland on the GI Bill. There is a shortfall of about \$5,000 a year in the funds provided and the actual cost of attending the University. This was a small part of our 75th Anniversary Celebration and we received some very generous seed funding for it. The next newsletter will have greater detail as we fully launch the drive to endow this scholarship in memory of our founders.

The Chapter was initially founded during World War II and many of our founding brothers saw their college careers bifurcated by military service – returning to Maryland

and the Chapter after winning the war. We believe that honoring their memory and sacrifice by helping to educate a Veteran would be a great way to recognize their service. A key element of the scholarship would be an evening where the Vet would come down to the Chapter House and share their experience with actives and alums.

So the news is good and the plans are ambitious – however we do have some needs. We need some volunteers. This is fun work – not as intense as other areas. Good governance is important so we need to formalize the board and meeting process. In addition, we always need to constantly review how we are spending the earnings so that we have the greatest impact – so there is the need for members of a scholarship committee. Finally – we want the endowment to grow – not only organically through investment but through our brothers' generosity so we also need a fundraising committee. Our goal is to send each alum and brother an annual report this spring – be on the look out for that.

In the interim, if you would like to volunteer to serve in a role on the Foundation drop me an email at BarryDesR@gmail.com or give me a call at 443-852-0688.

In hoc,

Barry DesRoches

SIGMA CHI POLICY CHANGES

Sigma Chi International Fraternity Creates New Policies to Enhance Health and Safety Measures Across Chapters

Sigma Chi International Fraternity, one of the nation's largest collegiate fraternities, today announced five new policies aimed at improving the fraternal experience for its undergraduate members. These policy changes address important issues affecting the fraternal industry and are designed to help foster a safe and healthy environment at more than 240 Sigma Chi chapters around the world.

Over the past several years, alcohol abuse and hazing have been top concerns on college campuses across North America. Fraternities especially have been engulfed in controversies around these issues, and in 2017, media coverage was dominated by stories about dangerous behaviors at fraternal organizations.

Sigma Chi's Executive Committee recognized a need to make significant changes to the fraternity culture and took action. After completing an extensive review of its existing policies, the organization developed a plan to tackle the issues of alcohol abuse and hazing, and help protect members and pledges from encountering risky and potentially tragic situations.

Sigma Chi's policy changes and action steps include:

1. Reinforcement of its policy on the presence of alcohol in connection with recruitment and pledging events to reaffirm the position that alcohol is banned at these events.
2. Prohibition of hard alcohol in chapter facilities, effective Feb. 1, 2018.
3. Mandate that chapter pledge education programs not exceed a period of five weeks in duration, effective Aug. 1, 2018.
4. Elimination of alcohol at social events during the period when chapters are undergoing recruitment or pledging, effective Aug. 1, 2018.
5. Cap on the size of social events by limiting the number of guests that each undergraduate can bring to them to three people, effective Aug. 1, 2018.

For more information about the new policies, please visit www.sigmachio.org/policychanges.