

The Theta Record

The Theta chapter of
the Chi Phi Fraternity

Fall 2011

Inside this issue:

Alpha	2
Delta	3
Public Relations	3
Gamma	4
Beta	5
Social	6
Epsilon	7
Eta	7
Congress Report	8
Philanthropy	8
Zeta	9
Alumni	9

A Year to Remember



100 years and still standing.

It's been a great year for the Theta Chapter. Recruitment has brought us some great new pledges. We've once again been accredited as a 5 star fraternity by RPI. This year we celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of our main house located at the corner of 15th St and Sage Avenue.

The 100 year celebration went off to great success with a large number of alumni mak-

ing the trip to Troy to join in the celebration.

A couple of work weeks this year have resulted in numerous improvements to the house, and a lot of junk that had accumulated in the attic of Stroud Hall was disposed of. During one of these work weeks, a number of well preserved documents relating to our history were discovered, and are now being sorted for display. Some of these documents seem to go all the way back to our original founding in 1878.

Given how the past year has gone, and looking at the brotherhood right now, the future of the Theta Chapter seems bright.

Thanks to all the alumni who made it out to RPI for the 100 years celebration. It was great to have so many of you here, and hear how everything is going. Hopefully you were able to meet people you knew from your own time at RPI. Hopefully we'll see you again next year.

From the Desk of the Alpha

The Theta chapter has seen sustained success in this past year, continuing many of the positive trends discussed in the previous issue of "The Theta Record". Thanks to the efforts of our brothers and the work of Public Relations chairman Br. Michael Pawlak compiling the 5-Star Application, we received the honor of being named a five star house for the second year in a row. This achievement reflects the work of brothers in many areas including but not limited to academics, philanthropy, inter-Greek relations, campus involvement, and risk management.

Nine brothers were initiated into the ranks of the Theta Chapter this year. In addition, we also hosted the initiation of the Lambda Theta Chapter (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth). It was great to be able to meet other Chi Phi's as well as lend a hand to a chapter in need of assistance. Several brothers attended Chi Phi's Regional Leadership Alliance in the spring, including all of the fall initiates and spring candidates for membership who were available. All brothers who attended were able to learn a great deal about topics such as house management, recruitment, and risk management to name a few. Additionally, Brothers Josef Saltz and Michael Pawlak attended Chi Phi Congress in Orlando, Florida.

The brothers of the Theta chapter continue to achieve academically, as we posted a house GPA of 3.13 in the previous term. This rates

Chi Phi 11th out of 29 total fraternities and above the All-Men's average of 3.09. Additionally, five brothers have taken Co-Ops with various engineering companies in the past year, with another brother studying abroad in Denmark in the spring term.

House involvement in philanthropy has also seen continued improvement over the past year. The tradition of Chi Phi Live continued with the 3rd annual event being held in the fall. Donations of money and cans were collected to benefit Joseph's House in Troy. In the spring term, due to a great deal of effort from our Philanthropy chair Br. Robert DeFelice, we were able to perform an average of 7.5 hours of community service per brother. This includes total participation by the brotherhood in Relay for Life, which raises money to support the fight against cancer.

The Chi and Annex have also seen improvements over the past year. Br. Saltz and Br. DeFelice performed significant renovations to their rooms in the Main house and Annex respectively. Both projects took a great deal of effort, with these brothers taking time both over the previous summer and during the semester to complete them. These renovations were greatly aided by Br. Kent Worden, who provided both direction and physical assistance for both projects. We are hoping for other brothers to take on similar projects over summer breaks in the future to ensure



Brother Alston

continuous improvement of both houses.

This fall we celebrated the centennial of our house at 1981 15th street. We thank all the alumni who made the trip to attend the event. We hope to see you all again next year.

The brothers of the Theta Chapter continue to work hard to improve and reinforce the reputation of our house and that effort will not waiver in the year to come.

Fraternally,
Benjamin Alston
Alpha '11



Brother Michnewich

For another year the Theta chapter's finances are staying strong and making improvements. We have been using RPI's Bursar Billing service to charge all necessary dues and living fees for two semesters now, and it is by far the most successful resource for obtaining funds from active brothers. Since the service ties a brother's financial responsibility to the school, which can block registration if bills are unpaid, collecting dues and charges associated with living in the house is no longer an area of

The Cash Register

major concern. This also allows the house to run smoother on a budget based more accurately on expected income, and gives the active brothers the necessary funding for all living expenses, social events, and house improvements.

Along with Bursar Billing, our savings account and house credit card have been a benefit to the financial strength of the house, giving us a cash reserve and allowing us to make purchases more conveniently. Our financial improvements over the year have not been without road bumps, however, and late filings of our 2006, 2007, and 2008 taxes incurred significant debts owed to the IRS. Working with Brother Todd Sadler's company, Sadler Financial Group, LTD., we managed to get the IRS to eliminate our tax penalties and avoid a serious reduction of our house coffers.

One lasting problem that our house continues to face is that of the existing debt some of our alumni have with the house. This issue was fully addressed and analyzed through discussions with the Alumni Association, and some progress has been made in bringing the issue into light and reducing debt. Addressing the root cause of alumni debt, I worked with the graduating actives of Spring

'11 during the semester and am proud to say that none of the most recent additions to the Theta alumni have any outstanding debt to the chapter. I will carry on this effort in the Fall semester as well, and hope to continue to have a similar outcome until alumni debt becomes a thing of the past.

One last major development is the closing of the HSBC branch in the RPI student union. We have been maintaining all of our account with HSBC, and its location in the student union has proven extremely convenient. Since the spot in the union will be taken by SEFCU, our house will seriously consider moving our accounts over to them if their services are suitable. Problems arising from moving our accounts will be taken into consideration, but if we do decide to change financial institutions, I am hopeful for a smooth transfer of all our accounts. The financial future of the Theta chapter is looking bright as we continue to improve and adjust to changes.

Fraternally
Matthew Michnewich
Delta '11

Publically Relating to You

Our standing in the eyes of both our National Office and the Dean of Greek Life at RPI has never been better. We have shown ourselves to be a model Chapter to both of them. Once again we have been selected as a 5 Star house on RPI's campus as one of only eighteen fraternities/sororities on campus achieving this accomplishment.

Our experiences with RPI's 5 Star accreditation program have been very useful and have set us up to succeed when it comes to the newly implemented accreditation program through Chi Phi's National Office. In the two trial runs this past Fall and Spring the Theta

Chapter has been among the chapters achieving excellence within the Chi Phi Fraternity and has been among the model chapters in both trials. We stand to do well in the upcoming year's accreditation reports for both RPI and Chi Phi National due to the outstanding work of our Active members as well as our dedicated Alumni who continue to give back to the House.

Goals for this upcoming year include once again being a 5 Star house within the new requirements coming out at the beginning of the Fall Semester and continuing to show ourselves as a model Chapter within Chi Phi

and the RPI campus as a whole. Another goal for this year is to get our name in The Polytechnic and in the regular newspapers by highlighting our philanthropic events like Chi Phi Live and our work with other philanthropic organizations like the Food Bank and PBS.

Fraternally
Michael Pawlak

Gamma Report

As the fall semester approaches, the Gamma gets busy! It's time to ensure we're up to date with our correspondences to National and encourage our Brother's to focus on their studies in this fresh academic year. Early last semester we were visited by Chi Phi Field Executive David Ebner, Delta Zeta 08'. During his visit he met with the house as a whole as well as the officers individually. We were fortunate to have him visit us. It provided valuable insight and advice for conducting our positions and our chapter effectively.

Communications these days with National are very "green". The Gamma's responsibilities lie along the lines of keeping the Chapter in good standing with the national office by completing and executing paperwork. "Paper" is no long a part of the equation! Nearly all of the Gamma's functions are done by the means of E-Forms via national's website (www.chiphi.org)! Unfortunately, this all

means that the Gamma's primary interaction with paper turns out to be sorting the Brother's mail (next to homework!).

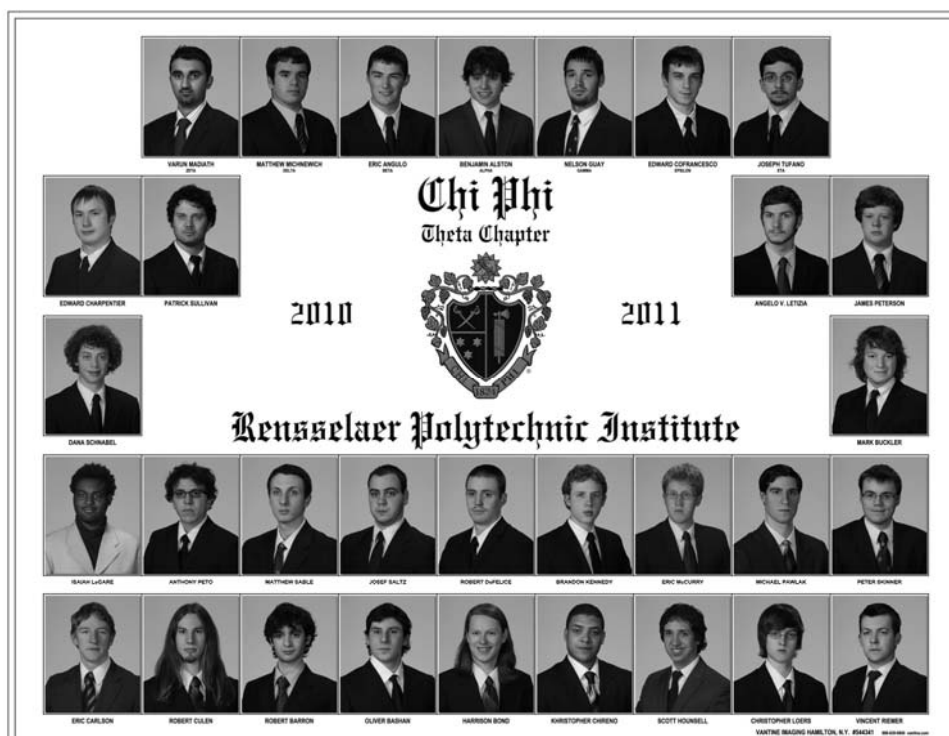
Maintaining a Chapter GPA above the all men's average is no light task here at RPI. We began brainstorming incentive programs after having some dialogue with other Chapters at RLA. We absorbed ideas from them and have since decided to expand the scope of the upcoming incentive system. While the initial performance criterion was slated to be academic, the system will now include several chapter functions on-top of commendable acts which earn recognition. For example, Br. Tufano executed double the Brother required amount of philanthropy hours for the spring '11 semester! This sort of effort should be somehow recognized and this program will motivate our Brothers to succeed in all areas! We also believe that the incentive system will help promote the brotherhood toward a



Brother Guay

stronger and healthier Chi Phi!

Fraternally
Nelson Guay
Gamma '11





Brother Angulo

There has been some change with IFC since the last newsletter. We recently gained a new Greek Dean, Matthew Hunt, as our contact within the school. With the new Greek Dean, there has been many changes to what is expected from our house and other Greek houses. A big change that is in the works is a document called the "Commons Agreement" which outlines what the school expects from the Greek system. We ratified the mission

Beta Report

statement on the documents purpose last semester. This document though is not fully finalized yet such that the details are not fully worked out but should be completed within the fall semester. Also due to how large IFC is, we are looking into adopting small groups within IFC based on regions such that we can be able to better communicate with our neighbouring Greeks and learn from others on similar problems we are facing. We also now have to submit a form with an Alumni signature on it for us to be able to have a party at the house. These new changes have been readily accepted by our house and our house is in good standings with the school after receiving another five star award.

Within the Theta chapter, we started off the new officer year running. Within our first weeks of coming into our new positions, we met together with the old executive board and came up with our goals for our position of what we want to accomplish within them. Looking to next semester, we have a couple very exciting activities approaching at the be-

ginning of the school year. We are going on a retreat to Lake George the weekend before work week with the whole brotherhood. We can use this time to further look at our goals and make sure as a brotherhood we are happy with the direction the house is going. Also during work week, we have 10 brothers that are going to go over and help move in freshmen. This is a great opportunity to gain personal connections with the incoming freshmen and to introduce them to Greek life here at RPI. Due to me being also sports chair, I wanted to send out the word that last fall our intramural hockey team won D league with having most of the players never ice skating before.

As always, we look to Alumni to help guide us in our jobs of continuing the Theta Chapter so if you have any thoughts or you want to know more about something please feel free to contact myself or any other brother.

Fraternally,
Eric Angulo
Beta '11

New Member Educator

Spring typically results in smaller pledge classes, and this spring was, unfortunately, a typical one. The Nu Deuteron class started with 3 signed bids, but we lost one before pledge meetings began due to already shaky and uncertain reasons for joining.

The two remaining pledges, John Bartlett and Robert Lundin, dutifully learned about the history and traditions of Theta of Chi Phi and the Chi Phi Fraternity at large, and were better at recalling what they learned than most previous classes. A jeopardy that was held between big brothers Varun Madiath and Eric Angulo and their littles (Pledges Bartlett and Lundin, respectively) underscored their ability to re-

call what they were taught, and the pledges would have won if it was truly between big and littles. Alas, Br. Madiath had other obligations, so Br. Eric McCurry, the grand-big of pledge Robert Lundin and one of the most knowledgeable Brothers, took his place via Skype from Denmark. It should be noted that the pledges showed more knowledge about executive meetings and meeting proceedings than the lettered officer who was competing. Br. Eric McCurry isn't a lettered officer.

Initiation was held on May 7 and operated very smoothly. We now have two newly initiated brothers undertaking some of the most difficult engineering programs that RPI offers.

I have no doubt they will make excellent contributions to Theta before moving on to making equally excellent contributions elsewhere. Congratulations to Brothers John Bartlett and Robert Lundin.

Fraternally
Edward Charpentier
New Member Educator Spring '11

The Times They Are a-Changin'

Since I came into this position we have had quite an eventful time at the house with our social events and especially with newly enforced regulations by the school. Next semester also holds a very important event for the house; The 100 Year Anniversary of the Main House.

The 100 Year Anniversary was held on the weekend of October 22nd, with our main event starting Saturday the 22nd at 3PM, which included a brief photo and drinks period, followed by a dinner at the Hilton Garden Inn in Troy. Festivities at the house will followed the dinner. The celebrations went very well, with what was possible the largest number of alumni in recent history in attendance.

Over the past couple years we have been maintaining a very healthy relationship with the Hilton Garden Inn for our formal events. Unfortunately this year scheduling problems have prohibited us from conducting our normal formal at the Hilton and it was moved to an the Desmond in Albany. To ensure that

future formals go smoothly, we are striving to also maintain connections with a secondary option to the Hilton.

With our school making great strides at becoming a more renowned institution, our Greek life organizations have been put under much more stress and regulations to avoid any and all bad publicity by eliminating all risky activities.

These new regulations make the house more heavily register, document, and approve activities that involve alcohol, allowing our house to better protect itself against allegations that are not true and potential situations that are risky to our continual existence.

On the downside of these new changes, social events at The Chi will no longer be able to be what almost all of our previous alumni have had the chance to experience. Newly enforced regulations include no kegs, no mixed drinks, no distilled spirits, no social events with alcohol from the day classes stop for reading days in May to the day rush ends in the fall, and no drinking games of any kind.

As many of you know, these rules have existed on campus before under past Greek Deans, but have been very relaxed. In this past semester alone we have seen multiple Greek organizations (including us) suffer not only suspensions or the threat of suspension, but also killing blows. For our paramount goal of continual existence, house leaders are learning to adapt and deal with these new regulations to protect our chapter.

I am personally nervous but excited to see how our house will learn, grow and adapt to this new way of life that



Brother Peterson

is being imposed on us, but I am also confident that any outcome our actives and alumni strive for will protect both the continual existence of our house and our livelihood.

Faternally,
James Peterson
Social '11



Brotherly Love at the annual Chistmas Party



Brother Cofranceso

This past semester we finished up a few ongoing projects. Two rooms were fixed up over the summer of 2010, one on the second floor of the Main House, and the other in the back of the first floor of the Annex, and over the

Preserving the house for the next 100 years

year they were almost completely finished, with only the ceiling remaining in the Main House room, which will be done this coming work week. They both look great and we're hoping on tackling more rooms in the future. With great effort from many brothers in the house, we also put in a new stone walkway going from the front porch of the Main House around the side of the house to the gate.

Our new boilers are working great, and we had new safety controls added to bring them up to New York's code. In addition, the old boiler has been removed from the boiler room, thanks in large part to the efforts of Brother Jim Hanley in taking the time to get everyone together and help. We also made a huge improvement in the repair of the Annex front door, which had gotten to the point of not being able to be used. The side of the door was cut down and replaced with a steel bar, which

is extremely solid and should last us a decent amount of time with proper maintenance.

For this coming work week, we're planning on cleaning out both the Annex attic and basement. We'll be getting rid of garbage and things that are just taking up room in the attic, and organizing everything in the basement so it can be a useful work area. Surplus money might then be spent on fun power tools to put down there for everyone's use.

On a final note, I would like to again thank Brother Kent Worden for his invaluable assistance on many of the major projects done this year.

Fraternally
Edward Cofranceso
Epsilon' 11

Keeping us safe

In the past year the Theta chapter of Chi Phi has made progress the safety of both houses by fixing multiple things, and thus staying up to code for fire inspections and providing a safer environment for the active brothers. Among the repairs were changing a few junction boxes in some rooms, and new smoke detectors for the fire system in the main house. Other electrical work was done in the basement of the annex, such as cleaning up some light fixtures, removing stray wires, and making sure the exhaust fan is connected properly. Many of the other improvements made in order to keep both houses up to code were much simpler, such as moving items away from boilers and getting rid of excess wood stored behind the house. We also now have storage for any of our flammable items to avoid any accidents in the house. In the past semester all of our fire safety systems and boilers have been inspected and

cleaned if necessary keeping all of those utilities in working order. In addition to the boilers and other safety systems, each of the fire extinguishers has been inspected and replaced if necessary. Small repairs are to be made soon to the fire suppression system in the kitchen which is also the last sizeable change needed to make both houses completely up to code. We have also started running fire drills again, starting with the two performed in the past semester.

Aside from a few dead batteries, an exit sign that needs to be removed, and the repairs the fire suppression system in the kitchen, both houses did very well on our last fire inspection. In the coming weeks all of these changes will be made and by the next inspection, both houses should be 100% up to code and safe for all of the active brothers.



Brother Tufano

Fraternally
Joseph Tufano
Eta' 11

Congress' Florida Fun

This year's Congress was held in sunny Orlando, Florida and the Theta Chapter was in attendance. Our Chapter was well represented with actives Michael Pawlak and Josef Saltz, and alumni Steve Chao, Christopher Sammut and Stephen Hamm as our alumni representatives. All of us had an amazing time meeting Brothers from chapters across the country and a wonderful time at Universal Studios. However, Congress wasn't all fun and games. Br. Saltz worked with the Committee on Heritage and Traditions, while Br. Pawlak worked with the Committee on Accreditation.

A few of the major things Congress has

passed this summer is that the Accreditation program for this Fall will no longer be in its trial phase, Liberty is now a core value of the Fraternity and a brand new Alumni Installation ceremony was created. Another major resolution insures Chi Phi's continual growth, this time directed at the West coast and hopes to bring back chapters we had lost there. We look forward to next year and another successful Congress next summer.

Fraternally
Michael Pawlak



Brothers Saltz and Pawlak at the 146th Chi Phi Congress

- Donated clothes to Goodwill
- Mentored middle school students using Lego Mindstorms once per week in January
- Sorted food three times for Regional Food Bank
- Assisted at an elderly home to help residents play bingo
- Helped WMHT with an "Antiques Roadshow" style event
- Worked with other RPI Greeks to clean up Riverside Park
- Sorted recyclable cans twice for the Mohawk and Hudson River Humane Society
- Helped clean up one of the Troy Community Gardens
- Full house participation in Relay for Life



Brother Alston assisting with the registration for Relay for Life.

Chi Phi gives back

The entire house was very active with philanthropy in the spring semester. We participated in thirteen different philanthropy events from mentoring middle school students with Lego Mindstorms, to cleaning up Riverside Park with other members of the RPI Greek community. We also made a donation to Goodwill which came to a few full garbage bags of clothing. A few brothers really got into the spirit and found some opportunities themselves such as shoveling the sidewalk for a neighbor and helping RPI plant its new "Green Roof" at the Union. Our goal for the semester was to attain 217.5 total volunteer hours (that was 7.5 hours per brother). It took a late push, but we were able to attain over 221 hours this semester, a great achievement for us. A special recognition should be given to brothers Tufano, Pawlak, and Madiath for all garnering double digit hours for the semester. On the left is a full list of the activities we did last semester.

Finally, we would like to thank all of the alumni who assisted us in the spring semester with philanthropy. Hopefully your assistance was as rewarding for you as it was for those you helped.



Brother Madiath

Rediscovering our past

This year has been a great year in historical terms. During the work week before the Fall semester of 2011, a number of documents related to the history of the Theta chapter were found in the attic of Stroud Hall. These documents go back all the way to the original founding of our chapter and include meeting minutes, newsletters, and pictures of the brother, some of which are over a hundred years old. I'm currently in the process of sorting through all this to best display relevant portions, and organize the rest of it.

At our most recent Theta Alumni Association meeting, we had a rather large turnout, on account of the large number of alumni that

visited for the 100 year celebration. A number of the alumni who attended were from before our re-chartering.

A new chapter website is in the works and nearing completion, and when that is deployed more frequent updates about the status of the chapter will be made.

With a history as great as ours, the outlook on our future is promising.

Fraternally

Varun Madiath

Zeta '11

Theta Excellence Fund

With the Theta Excellence Fund active our first goal is to provide a semesterly scholarship in honor of brother, Andrew Colditz, who passed away in 2005. The scholarship is for a new member in each pledge class who met a minimum GPA requirement and was found to best represent the values of Chi Phi as a new member to the organization. Also the scholarship fund has been so successful we have been able to establish a second scholarship for leadership in honor of Stephen 'Rusty' Gordon. This scholarship would be for any brother showing leadership through his activities with the house.

It is also my pleasure to announce the first two scholarship winners for 2011. The winner for the Andrew Colditz memorial scholarship is Brother Scott Hounsell. Still new to the organization Scott stepped forward as rush chair and brought in 8 new pledges for our fall class and has showed continued leadership in the organization.

The winner for the Stephen Rusty Gordon scholarship is Brother Ben Alston. Ben Alston has consistently served as a leader among the actives with and currently serves as the chapter president. Brother Alston has done exception work in his present role and also in his previous role as Delta, where he championed the chapters transition to RPI's bursar billing system. This system has led to a significant drop in unpaid dues making and thereby keeping us in great standing financially. As a member of the Theta Alumni Association I can only hope that we have such fine examples of gentlemen deserving of these scholarships going forward.

If you would like to help the chapter through donating directly to the Theta Excellence fund please follow the instructions on back page.

Theta Excellence Fund

Andrew Colditz Award

Scott Hounsell

Stephen 'Rusty' Gordon Scholarship

Ben Alston

Chi Phi

Theta of Chi Phi
1981 15th St
Troy, NY 12180

Phone: 518-271-6376

Check out our website at thetaofchiphi.org

Your Return
Address

Postage

Chi Phi Educational Trust
1300 Sixth Avenue
Columbus, GA 31901
Fax: (404) 237-5090

Pay To: Chi Phi Educational Trust
Amount in Dollars

\$ Amount

Theta Excellence Fund

↑
Important



Active members and Candidates for Membership at the 2011 Fall Formal.