

# THE THETA RECORD

Official Newsletter of the Theta Chapter of Chi Phi Fraternity

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# STATE OF THE CHI

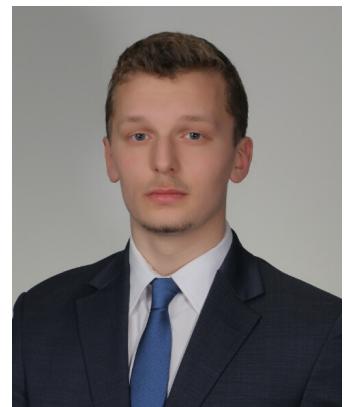
Br. Daniel Celic '21, Alpha

With the Fall 2019 semester over, I am glad to reflect on the accomplishments we've made as a house and excited to take on our future endeavors. Our goals for this semester were to improve the lives of our community and increase the longevity of our Chapter as a whole. We approved additions to the by-laws in order to reflect house operations for Summer Arch, hosted an incredible alumni weekend, and prepared ourselves to tackle the Spring with high hopes for recruitment and philanthropy.

Our biggest obstacle at the moment is adapting to new policies instated by the Institute. Upon the immediate implementation of deferred recruitment shifting the culture of the school, our task was to change how we meet and recruit for better results. We need to continue to get more involved on campus, reach out to the community, and meet new people. We've had to sustain the expenses of Arch, to which we've altered budgeting for future semesters and are now currently taking steps to benefit the house financially. There is no longer an OGLC staff, though we are maintaining frequent contact with the Interim Greek Dean, Wendy Wheeler, and the Director of the Union, Charlie Potts to get something beneficial done within our short time together.

This semester, we oversaw a huge push for house improvements. A new shingle roof was installed on the Annex and the Main bathrooms were demoed and restructured with the help of Br. Worden to install two new showers. Additionally, every public space is cleaner than it was last semester due to the productive bunch of Actives here for the summer work parties. As a result, our house inspection scored 92.6 and 91.5, with no immediate issues needed to be mitigated. At Congress this summer in Indianapolis, June 21-23, 2019, our chapter won Outstanding Service to the Boys and Girls Club of America, Outstanding Campus Involvement, and the Thomas A. Gehring Award for Chapter Excellence for the third year in a row; not seen from a Chi Phi Chapter in over 20 years.

We also congratulate our newly elected Theta Alumni Associate alumnae, Tim Janas, and new Housing Corp President, Robert Spicer, and Vice President, Brian Dunn, elected at the last Alumni Weekend September 28th. We are always improving as a Chapter and I am proud of how much we have accomplished this past semester. We will continue to strive for excellence in both depth and breadth. I am thrilled to see what we will achieve with the high potential from our elected executive board for 2020 and the outstanding effort by all of our Brothers. They are pushing us not only to be an example for Fraternities on campus, but for all Fraternity men nationwide and for Chi Phi everywhere.



Br. Celic

# AND BY MY AXE!

Br. John Owens '20, Beta

With the Fall semester drawing to a close, I look back on an extremely productive year with this executive board. In the face of increasing hostilities with RPI, we have continued to excel with both national and local recognition, but this has not been without challenge. Full summer-arch implementation has seen our active brother numbers drop to 28, the lowest in recent years.

Although this has strained our financial and recruitment efforts, we are confident that this house will endure continual existence through these trials. With regards to the Fall, this semester has seen a consistent restructuring of our bylaws to accommodate for regular summer semesters. We learned quite a bit from navigating the Summer Arch pilot, and have updated our bylaws to more safely structure and organize our Brotherhood for the summer thanks to the efforts of a dedicated judicial board led by Br. William Perkins.

I also made an effort to expand the scope of our faculty dinner by inviting professional acquaintances, community members and alumni. I hope that we continue to expand this event as I felt it was an extremely effective addition. Finally, I would like to thank this executive board and the Brotherhood as a whole for their unrelenting dedication to the principles of the Fraternity.

We have had the distinct pleasure of engaging with a very supportive Brotherhood and an alumni network that has continued to strengthen and become more involved in many ways. I look forward to a smooth transition between our Spring 2020 officers, and I look forward to helping the next Beta, Br. Justin Underwood, and the next executive board in any ways that I can.



Br. Owens



# FOOTNOTES FROM THE GAMMA

**Br. Daniel Klee '22, Gamma**

This past semester as Gamma I have been putting in the work to improve the house in the ways that I can. With the wisdom from the past Gamma, Br. Sheldon, I was able to utilize and improve our communication network. As of this semester, we are encouraging alumni to join our Slack; there is an open group to which all are welcome and multiple other channels where you can be added. Outside the house our relations are only strengthening. In these challenging times we must continue to put our best foot forward and maintain excellent relations with the Greek community and our school. With a combination of the Brotherhood's and my own ideas, I was able to construct meaningful and genuine sorority gifts. As of now, I am looking forward to finishing the semester on a good note by maintaining the house's communication and helping my brothers in any way that I can. I look to Br. Swan, who has been elected the next Gamma, to take the mantle. I believe that I am leaving the position in better hands than my own, and I wish the best of luck to Br. Swan.



**Br. Klee**

# SMOOTH SAILING

**Br. Anton Kapitman '21, Eta**

This semester has been an overall accomplishment. In terms of risk management, the houses are not only in amazing shape, but also the Brotherhood has seen a great deal of progress. We got off to a excellent start when the Fire and Life Safety Inspection scores resulted in record highs of above 90% for both houses; though there are some issues to address, it is evident that we as a Fraternity have shown strong motivation to pursue perfection. The inspectors were happy to be updated on any major repairs that took place; our dedication to maintaining a safe house and good line of communication with them seemed to have put us on their good side. As always, I look forward to working with everyone to eliminate any outlined issues and setting up the newly elected Eta for a great head start in the upcoming semester. On the topic of member education, there was a multitude of extremely useful educational programs that took place. From Bystander Intervention, to TIPS, to CPR training, brothers were offered the opportunity to educate themselves on life-saving knowledge that would help them take control and mitigate a risky situation. Bystander Intervention and TIPS are similar programs that allow individuals to assess a situation and reduce any dangers instead of letting them spiral out of control. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation is an emergency procedure that can save one's life if their heart has stopped working. I am proud to announce that as of now, over three-quarters of the house is Bystander Intervention trained, we have a fully TIPS trained executive board, and nearly half of the Brotherhood is CPR certified. With financial assistance from the Educational Trust, I was able to educate so many brothers on key skills that they can carry with them for life. With my term coming to an end, I plan to use the remainder of my budget to grant the houses First Aid kits, and I would like to further maintain an excellent level of risk management. It has been a great pleasure to serve as the Risk Manager, and I look forward to passing off the torch to the future Eta. I am certain that if we continue our current state of mind, there is no risky business that can slip past us and we can continue keeping our Fraternity safe.



**Br. Kapitman**

# FRATERNAL FINANCES

Br. Connor Hanggi '22, Delta

Careful planning, a smooth transition, and a lot of thought all contributed to a financially sound semester. As expected, Summer Arch had an impact on how we distributed and spent money this fall. A lower number of active brothers meant a lower income. This was offset by slight increases in dues and parlor fees, the addition of the Epsilon Triton pledge class, as well as setting aside a slightly lower percentage to our savings account than previous semesters.

Some notable changes in the budget this semester include the merge of Zeta and Alumni Relations budgets to account for bylaw changes and a much needed increase in the Wiring budget. Some other budget adjustments included an increase for Delta to help pay for stationary and one hundred set aside for Chegg, since that was not included previously. At this point in the semester, the expenses seem to be on a good track so there should not be an issue with exceeding our income or going over budget at all.

On another note, the new roof of Stroud Hall was paid for through our savings account, while a careful look and some minor adjustments to the entire budget allowed us the leeway to purchase a new freezer, replacing the old one.

Looking into the future, next semester's income is expected to rise, thanks to the return of brothers on Arch. Additionally, I am actively looking into transitioning to a high yield savings, where we would be making closer to 1.90-2.00% interest, rather than the current 0.25%.

Long term, I have started researching index funds, which is something very possible for the next Delta to look into, somewhere down the line.

Finally, I would just like to say thank you to previous Delta, Br. Yashodhan Joshi, for a smooth transition and continued help as a committee member since I took over the position.

I am confident that the Fraternity's finances will continue to remain in order for the coming semesters and for years to come so we can continue providing valuable programming socially, academically, and educationally for our Brotherhood.

Budget	Expected
Alpha	\$0.00
Beta	\$150.00
Gamma	\$300.00
Delta	\$400.00
Epsilon	\$4,850.00
Zeta	\$800.00
Eta	\$300.00
Theta	\$500.00
Iota	\$5,000.00
Philanthropy	\$600.00
Social	\$1,900.00
Sports	\$200.00
Wiring	\$600.00
Steward	\$21,020.00
Brotherhood	\$600.00
Public Relations	\$100.00
National	\$4,000.00
Taxes	\$13,500.00
Insurance	\$13,500.00
Utilities	\$9,000.00
TV/Phone/Internet	\$3,000.00
Housing Corp	\$10,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$90,320.00</b>



Br. Hanggi

# A STATE OF PERPETUAL REPAIR

**Br. Marc McDonald '20, Epsilon**

I am proud to say that this semester has been one of the most productive semesters in recent memory. Over the summer, through the guidance and dedication of Br. Worden, in addition to the large number of Summer Arch actives in the house, we were able to begin demolition and replacement of both the M2 and M3 showers. As the main project of the semester, work on the bathrooms has included replacing both walls on the hall sides of the bathrooms, changing the layout of M3 so that it is a mirror image of M2 as opposed to the prior z-shape, repairing and replacing of all water damaged materials, instillation of 2 new fiberglass showers, and all plumbing and electrical associated with the task. Once the instillation of the showers was completed, all tile work was contracted out. In addition to the bathrooms, the semester's



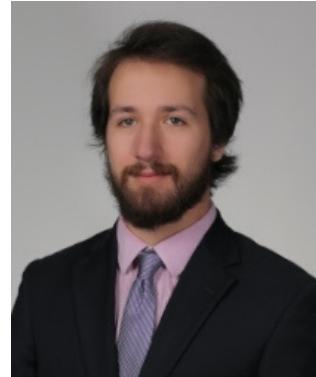
**Br. McDonald**

Fall work week was very successful, and saw extensive grounds keeping to remedy the effects of the flash flooding the week prior. We also began the first step of Br. Farrell's 4-stage process with the repainting and installation of chair rail and trim on the first floor of Stroud hall. The greatest potential improvement to the Brotherhood this semester, however, came from the active involvement of the alumni. Br. Worden has been invaluable through his work and knowledge. Br. Hammond graciously donated and installed new lighting in the Dining room, and thanks to Br. Montembeault, who organized the replacement of the roof of Stroud hall, just completed this week. While this past year has been fantastic for the houses, there continues to be a list of projects on the docket. We are committed to resuming the yearly renovation of rooms. Given the extensive damage to the ceiling of M35, it is the obvious candidate to start this process. The plan includes installing a new ceiling, insulated walls, and updating electrical systems. I look forward to working with the newly elected Housing Corp and the newly elected Epsilon, Br. Fishbein, to make the transition as smooth as possible and maintain this semester's momentum far into the future. Again, I would like to thank Br. Worden and all of our alumni that have contributed to the Fraternity in recent years.

## STAYING SOCIAL

**Br. Jacob Szottfried '21, Social Chairman**

The continuing sanctions on greek life at RPI have not stopped us from thriving socially. We have had two excellent mixers this semester; the first being with Alpha Phi at the start of the semester. Six teams, each with three brothers and three sisters, participated in a campus-wide scavenger hunt packed with fun activities and conversation starting opportunities. Afterwards, we hosted an ice cream social in the Chi. In October, we brought the sisters of Alpha Gamma Delta to Indian Ladder Farms for a day of apple picking. The weather was perfect, the cider donuts were to die for, and everyone in attendance thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Formal dinner this semester took place at La Serre in Albany. Brothers and their dates had a wonderful time taking pictures and mingling at dinner. This semester, I appointed Br. Carlos Salgado as the Brotherhood Chairman. Carlos has done a great job bringing the house together with events. Weekly movie nights in the chapter room have become increasingly popular throughout the semester. As the Sports Chairman, Marcello Degani has motivated brothers to both attend and participate in intramural sports on campus. Soccer has definitely been the strong suit of the house. I have collaborated with Br. John Owens this semester to update our social event policy. The new policy was written in accordance with the sanctions implemented last spring. Future events can be organized safely by referencing this policy. On the topic of future events, the Social Chairman position for next semester will be less orthodox than it has been in the past. Br. John Farrell and Br. Brian Sposato will be working together to fulfill the position. Either one of the two would have made excellent candidates on their own, but the tag-team will certainly bring us a unique semester chock-full of events.



**Br. Szottfried**

# GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

**Br. Eddie Weisser '21, Philanthropy Chairman**

This semester, the brothers of the Theta Chapter have been thoroughly involved within our community to give back to those around us. We began this semester helping move freshman into their dorms, assisting them in the stressful beginnings at RPI. We have also been helping at the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York, sorting through donated produce from local grocery stores and markets and packaging the produce to give back to those in need.



**Br. Weisser**

The regional food bank provides over 35 million pounds of food a year to 1000 local food pantries and other agencies around northern New York. It has been a fantastic experience being able to give time to a worthwhile group. We also volunteered at the local Mohawk Hudson Marathon, directing runners along a difficult course through the Schenectady and Niskayuna area. We made thank you cards for active service men and women as well as veterans.

We continue to help at the Troy Boys and Girls club and will be donating a large portion of the philanthropy budget to this fantastic organization. We plan on ending this year with some fun by hosting a public Spelling Bee with Sheer Idiocy in the Union, with all proceeds from entry going to the Boys and Girls Club.

While coordinating events and finding times that work best for brothers has been tough this year, the entire Brotherhood has been eager to be involved within the community. I hope under Br. McDonald's leadership next semester, we can continue this eagerness with strong philanthropic events such as continuing to work with the St. Baldrick's organization and many other charities in the local community.

## MEET THE ZETA TRITON

**Br. Lucas Sheldon '20, Theta (New Member Educator)**

Despite the ongoing changes to fraternity recruitment, we initiated 4 new members from the Epsilon Triton pledge class last semester. These young men actively participated in philanthropy and rush this semester, which has led to the recruitment of one new member to our Fraternity. This semester marks the first semester of deferred recruitment, so freshman where unable to rush.



**Br. Sheldon**

The emphasis in this year's education was placed on the mission, vision, and creed, which outlines the values we live by and reasons for joining Chi Phi. As part of this change, the creed was discussed over several meetings and the new member had the opportunity to describe what the creed specifically means to him. Our new member is extremely dedicated to our Fraternity and has shown great pride in all of the work and efforts he has made thus far.

I would be proud to call this new member, Christian Winicki, my brother. He is a dual major in Chemical Engineering and Computer Science. He is also a member of RPI's chamber choir. With Summer Arch and sanctions affecting Greek Life, it is crucial that we continue recruiting passionate members who demonstrate all the positive aspects of being in a fraternity. This next rush will really be a sink or swim moment for our Brotherhood, but I am sure that our Chapter will rise to the occasion and recruit better.

# INTERACTING WITH ALUMNI

**Br. Kai Hagmann '21, Alumni Relations Chairman**

Overall this has been a great semester as far as all of our alumni outreach programs are concerned. Some notable highlights include our 20th Anniversary Re-Chartering Banquet held this past September; which saw over forty of our esteemed alumni in attendance representing the Brotherhood dating back as far as the 1960's. At this event alumni were given the chance to reminisce about their time in the house and reconnect with the brothers who they shared it with. Many alumni also celebrated their ten, twenty-five, and fifty year anniversaries since graduation and were commended for all the contributions that they have made to the Brotherhood in that time. We thank our alumni greatly for their contributions to the Fraternity. In addition, the semesterly Theta Alumni Association meeting also took place that same weekend where a number of important elections took place. Most notably, the election of Br. Tim Janas, one of the five original members involved in our re-chartering, to the position of Member at Large on the TAA. Looking forward I plan to aid in any way possible the future Alumni Relations Chairman Peter Gramenides '20 in the continued implementation of the various alumni programs which are so crucial to the success of our chapter. Our chapter loves engaging with our alumni in any way we can. In particular, the future development of our capital campaign will help to guarantee that the future Brotherhood is able to maintain the house to the highest possible standard. Also, the continued outreach to our entire alumni base, both of New and Old Theta, will prove essential to the future of our relations programs. We must expand our reach in order to see further growth in the years to come.



**Br. Hagmann**

# KEEPING A POSITIVE IMAGE

**Br. John Owens '20, Public Relations Chairman**

Once again I am happy to report that Theta has been honored with the distinction of Thomas A. Gehring Award for Chapter Excellence, for the third consecutive year no less. With all we have achieved this Fall and all that we look to achieve as we transition officers into 2020, I plan to keep this train rolling and see Theta recognized as a Gehring Chapter for the fourth consecutive year this Spring. At the most recent Congress, Br. Brian Sposato motioned to form a review committee on the Chi Phi Accreditation process. We look forward to offering our opinions on the overall process and areas for improvement, especially seeing as we very recently submitted accreditation for the 2019 calendar year. We are optimistic that we will score very highly. Regarding 5-star, the Spring saw us named one of four 5-star chapters here at RPI. I have very recently begun working with Dr. Charlie Potts on revising 5-star at RPI to more fairly and reasonably assess Chapter health and function, and we all look forward to submitting 5-star under its current rubric for the last time this upcoming Spring. I would also like to specially recognize Br. Peter D'Almeida and Br. Daniel Celic for their efforts as Scholarship chairmen having been awarded the Chi Phi Academic Chairman of the Year award at the most recent congress. I look forward to working with the next PR Chairman, Br. Noah Prisament, and seeing all that this house will accomplish under new leadership.



**Br. Owens**

# RUSH CHI PHI

## Br. Eddie Swan '22, Iota (Recruitment Chairman)

This semester brought a new challenge we have never experienced before. This was the first semester that we have dealt with the restrictions of deferred recruitment. This made it so that we had to change our philosophy a little in how we rush. Our main goal this semester was to make meaningful relationships with freshman who could possibly rush next semester. This doesn't mean we totally ignored recruitment for this semester.



**Br. Swan**

We still held many of our large events like a BBQ, Lobster Fest, and Wingstock. Also we tried to make sure that there were more opportunities for 1 on 1 interaction with Brothers and rushees. This would help build those meaningful relationships that we coveted. This also made it so that there were some smaller events like hiking and cliff jumping that would have a lot of 1 on 1 time. With all these changes this led to our Fall recruitment being smaller than usual making our Spring recruitment the main priority for the Brotherhood. Even though it wasn't our big recruitment semester we still met and bonded with plenty of freshmen, with about 25 on our contact list. We weren't allowed to recruit them though so we ended up with a pledge class of 1. The house is also planning events throughout the semester to get more names and hope to get a step ahead for the next semester.

These events are normally called names drivers where we do a small tabling event and then get names and phone numbers from participants. This rush was made a lot easier by my committee and a lot of the older brothers including Br. Brian Sposato, Br. John Owens, Br. David Nice and plenty of others that weren't included. Those guys went above what was expected, but the whole Brotherhood really helped out. Here's looking forward to a great Spring Recruitment.

# FOCUSING ON ACADEMICS

## Br. Peter Strbik '20, Scholarship Chairman

This semester, Br. Paul DeBassio joined me as one of the scholarship chairs for the house. The overall Brotherhood GPA currently sits just 0.1 points shy of the All Men's Average. While this is slightly below our goal, we believe the steps we've taken this semester will help bring that number back to above the All Campus GPA. Our primary focus was on assigning personalized academic plans for struggling Brothers and to incentivize Brothers to be high achievers academically. These plans required Brothers to attend study hours that are held at the house or on campus classrooms in order to get away from any distractions and focus on succeeding in Brothers' academic endeavors. Study hours were held multiple times per week in order to give Brothers the opportunity to attend even if they had demanding schedules.



**Br. Strbik**

Brothers were encouraged to aid one another in academics through review sessions held by older brothers who went material for the house's more populated courses and answered questions, as well as through one-on-one tutoring, which both award brothers based on the point system. Brothers were strongly encouraged to attend ALAC Drop-In Tutoring and Success Labs which gives helpful advice regarding motivation, organization, and finals preparation. In addition to providing these academic resources, there was still an emphasis on rewarding academic improvement and excellence. The house GPA growth has stagnated a bit due to situations arising from the Arch, but Br. DeBassio and I hope to guide the house to academic success in the semesters to come.

# BUILDING A HISTORICAL COMMONS

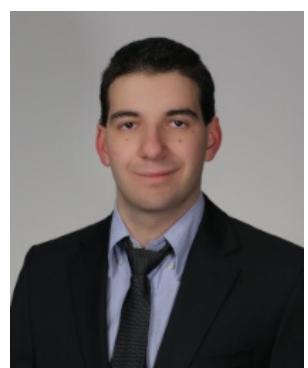
Br. Peter Gramenides '20, Zeta

This semester, I worked to make sure that our chapter replenished essential ritual supplies, had the proper materials needed to conduct all rituals, and that our chapter better performed all rituals required by the National Fraternity. Prior to our Fall membership retreat, our Brotherhood held a ritual retreat in which members performed the triple origins and candle ceremonies to practice and become more acquainted with our ritual. In addition, I went over the significance of our ritual, the songs of the Fraternity, and secret handwriting with the Brotherhood. Overall, the event was very successful, with high attendance across all cohorts and positive feedback from the Brotherhood for future ritual retreats. In the future, the chapter plans on making the event more organized and potentially inviting members of the Fraternity's national office to participate.

This was also an important anniversary year for our Chapter. In September, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the rechartering of the Theta Chapter and held a banquet, in addition to meetings of the TAA and Housing Corporation which were held at the Chapter House. Over 30 alumni from over 10 states traveled to Troy to attend, making this alumni weekend the most successful we've had in recent memory. I would like to greatly thank all alumni that attended for participating and hope you continue to remain active in the Chapter. I plan to work with the next Zeta to ensure that alumni relations continues on a strong path next semester.

Several capital donations and efforts were also made to the house by alumni, including the renovation of the main house bathrooms by Br. Kent Worden '69 and the replacement of the ceiling fans in the foyer with LED light fixtures by Br. Charlie Hammond '04. Thank you to these brothers for their generous donations to the Fraternity. Your contribute helps ensure the improvement of our facilities and a better experience for current and future Brothers as well as alumni.

I am confident that the newly elected Zeta, Br. Aidan Weathers '22, will continue on a positive trajectory to continue improving and expanding the Zeta position. He is a deliberate and dedicated brother that cares greatly about our ritual, history, and customs. Congratulations to Aidan on being elected and thank you to the Brotherhood for giving me the opportunity as Zeta to expand my own leadership and involvement in the Fraternity.

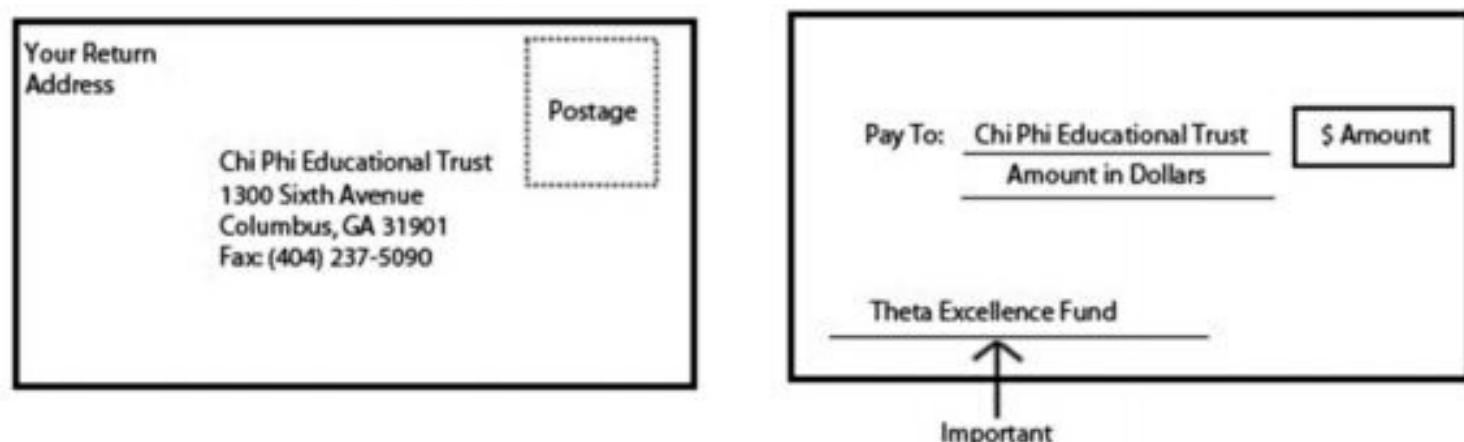


Br. Gramenides

**LEFT: CHI PHI ALUMNI  
DURING FALL 2019  
REUNION & HOMECOMING**

# THETA EXCELLENCE FUND

With the Theta Excellence Fund active our first goal is to provide an annual scholarship in honor of Brother Andrew Colditz, who passed away in 2005. The scholarship is for a new member in each pledge class who was found to best represent the values of Chi Phi, and met a minimum GPA requirement. 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 is for any Brother showing leadership through his activities with the house. If you would like to help the chapter through donating directly to the Theta Excellence fund please follow the instructions below:



## CHAPTER DONATIONS

Want to have a direct impact on the chapter? Please contact the Alpha, Kevin Porrecca, at [kporrecca@gmail.com](mailto:kporrecca@gmail.com) to discuss room dedications and contributing to housing renovations in the Chi or Stroud Hall. Recent contributions from alumni include Br. Kent Worden '69 renovating the main house bathrooms and Br. Charlie Hammond '04 installing new lights in the dining room. All donations from alumni towards housing renovations are honored with plaques and room dedications for contributions and generosity. Get involved and invest in the future of our chapter!

## ALUMNI UPDATES

Adam Federschnieder and Michele were wed in September.

Robert Rouhani and Ann were wed in November.

Matthew Vogus and Kimberly were wed in December.

Robert Spicer was elected the new Theta Housing Corporation President

Brian Dunn was elected the Theta Housing Corporation Vice President

Tim Janas was elected the new Member-at-Large on the Theta Alumni Association