



SPEACONN

The SigEp @ UCONN Alumni Newsletter

A PUBLICATION OF SIGMA PHI EPSILON AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

WINTER 2019

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For photos from the 2017 chartering banquet, visit our Facebook page, "SigEp at UConn Alumni."

For the chartering story in the SigEp Journal, visit www.sigep.org/sigepjournal/category/fall-2017-print-edition/



CT ALPHA RETURNS TO UCONN

The Connecticut Alpha Chapter received its original charter in 1956 when Iota Nu Delta, a local fraternity at the University of Connecticut, petitioned to become SigEp's 51st chapter. The group initiated 323 brothers before the Vietnam era ushered in challenges for the Greek system that ultimately led to a temporary closure in 1972. SigEp returned to campus in 1980 and enjoyed great success for decades, earning four Buchanan Cups and producing many local and national volunteers for the fraternity. When under-performance led to a second period of dormancy in 2008, Connecticut Alpha alumni committed to breathing new life into the chapter.

SigEp's new chapter development team arrived on campus in Fall 2014, interviewed over 600 men for the Balanced Man Scholarship and recruited 61 students to help re-establish SigEp at Connecticut. Within two years, the group grew to 92 men with an average GPA of 3.33, well above the all-campus and all-Greek averages.

The new brothers worked to improve their Balanced Man Program and, with the support of an active alumni and volunteer base, moved into the school's Greek housing complex, Husky Village. New furniture was purchased, and composites and other memorabilia were dug out of storage, repaired and

cleaned, and displayed proudly throughout the house.

After two years of continuous growth, the chapter submitted a successful chartering application in fall 2016, and celebrated with a banquet in Hartford on April 1, 2017. Hosted by **Paul DeAngelis '16** and **Samad Khan '17**, over 280 brothers and guests attended the event, including members of the school's administration, SigEp staff, and alumni from every decade of the chapter's history.

Several new scholarships were announced at the banquet. The Gildhouse Brotherly Love Scholarship Fund was unveiled by its sponsor, **Vern Gildhouse, CT A Renaissance '87**. Established to recognize altruistic members who promote brotherly love within the chapter, this fund will also support chapter-wide activities that foster fellowship. The Alumni and Volunteer Corporation presented its Outstanding Sophomore Scholarship to **Ryan Jarnutowski '19**. **Joseph Langella '83** and **Steven Chaneles '83** spoke about the lifetime experience of brotherhood and announced five Conclave scholarships had been established for the 2017 Grand Chapter Conclave.

We are indebted to the generations of brothers who built this chapter and who continue to support CT Alpha through high times and low.

Welcome to the first CT Alpha newsletter since our return to campus in 2014! Dedicated alumni and volunteers have been working diligently with our undergraduate brothers on building a stable chapter with a strong culture of success and accountability. While that work continues, it is time to re-engage our alumni. There are now close to 1,300 initiated brothers in CT Alpha, spanning graduating years from 1956 to 2018!

Let's Connect!

Our new annual alumni relations program is designed to help our members stay in touch and to cultivate awareness and involvement in SigEp at UConn. There are several elements that are key to the program's success:

(Continued on page 4)



Giving Back to My Fraternity

WHY JOSEPH LANGELLA '83 GIVES BACK TO CT ALPHA



Joe was honored as a Distinguished Alumnus in 2008, and, in 2016, was an inaugural recipient of the Sigma Phi Epsilon Exemplary Service Award, which recognizes SigEp volunteers who have tirelessly served the Fraternity and modeled the way for others for at least 20 years.

Joseph Langella '83 came to UConn from Hamden, Conn. He was a late bloomer, joining SigEp the second semester of his sophomore year. But Joe knew he wanted to get more out of his college experience than just hanging out in his dorm room and going home on weekends. Joe shares, "Joining SigEp was a great experience and one of the most fortunate things that has ever happened to me." As recruitment chairman in his junior year, Joe was able to get to know the new brothers "one-on-one" and that helped him forge a special bond with all his brothers.

From the very beginning of his time in SigEp, Joe recalls, "The camaraderie we enjoyed was very strong—and still is." He remembers, "Some of the best times we had were working together toward accomplishing the same goal—raising money for a charity, participating in Homecoming, playing intramural sports or just enjoying each other's company."

After graduating, Joe stepped in to the role of Regional Director with SigEp. Joe credits his chapter and Regional Director experience with

helping him develop skills that he uses to this day in the varied sales career he's had. With his "SigEp wisdom," Joe learned that professionally, a person's success largely depends on how they treat people.

Joe's passion for SigEp has been decades in the making. "My time as a SigEp undergraduate and HQ staff member opened a lot of doors for me and the lifelong friends I've made in SigEp have given me a very rich life." Joe has been paying it forward for SigEp for most of his life—and when it came time to go to bat for CT Alpha, Joe was there. "Given my experience and position in the fraternity, I was in a good position to help petition the school for our recent return to campus. I felt I owed it to all of our alumni brothers to have a chapter and house to come home to." Joe does wish he could snap his fingers and have CT Alpha's beloved home at 9 Gilbert Road reappear, but he recognizes that now is the time for all CT Alpha brothers to work together toward solidifying CT Alpha's future.

To reconnect with Joe, reach out to him at jwlangella@logancapital.com.

A Connecticut Family Farmer Backs Our Undergraduates

Andy Kelly, University of Arkansas '00 Dedicates His Time

Andy Kelly, University of Arkansas '00 serves as chapter counselor for CT Alpha. He joined SigEp at the University of Arkansas after bumping into a national officer near his dorm room. "After we got to talking, he mentioned I may be interested in SigEp and described the Balanced Man program." To Andy, his idea of what a fraternity should be aligned with the SigEp program. Andy was a founding father to the recolonizing AR Alpha chapter before graduating in 2000 with a B.S. in electrical engineering.

Andy served in the Air Force for 11 years before separating from active duty with the rank of major and transitioned to his service to the Air National Guard. After earning his master's in engineering management in 2009, with a certification in project management, Andy and his family settled on their farm in Connecticut. He began working for the University of Connecticut and currently is the associate director of operations and distribution. "I have many students working in my office. One day I saw a student with a SigEp

shirt on and mentioned I was a SigEp too." He was surprised to find he worked with many CT Alphas in his very office. "I was then approached to serve as faculty/staff advisor and in 2018 accepted the role of chapter counselor."

"It feels good to be involved with men that are just starting off in their collegiate and career paths. I see SigEp as an incubator for growth in interpersonal communication, organization, and time management." Andy's philosophy when working with the undergraduates is to let them learn through missteps or errors. "Allowing for failure lets them grow and take ownership of their own paths."

Andy has to juggle a few balls in his life to be able to help the young CT Alpha foster an environment of maximum growth for the members. First and foremost is his family; Andy and his wife



have two very active daughters. They own about four acres of land that is home to chickens, pigs, and turkeys. And with a full-time job at UConn, Andy still serves his country with his Air National Guard commitments (as Lt. Colonel).

With keeping a tight schedule, Andy makes time to attend most chapter meetings.

Andy is aware of how pivotal collegiate years in a young man's life can be. "My undergraduate years were especially rewarding for me through SigEp. I lacked social and other life skills that I was able to learn through my interactions at the chapter house and the Balanced Man Program. Diversity cultivated growth in areas I lacked and built my foundation while surrounded by a group of dynamic men." He is proud to be witness to the caliber of men and the incredible rise in GPA. Andy can be reached at andy.kelly@uconn.edu.



The SigEp Open golf tournament has been running for over 20 years, thanks primarily to the stewardship of **Paul Summers '87**. With the chapter back on campus, interest has increased, and this year's tournament was significantly larger than in past years and included over a dozen undergraduate brothers. We are looking forward to an even larger turnout next summer!

Get Social with CT Alpha

alumni. So far, we've been to Hartford, New Haven, and Stamford, and keep this going in 2019.

For more information, please see our Facebook group at SPEatUConnAlumni or LinkedIn at CT Alpha Alumni of Sigma Phi Epsilon and request to join the group.

We have also been hosting a rotating Third Thursday Happy Hour in a different location each month. These casual gatherings are open to all

We are always looking for volunteers to help coordinate social events. A Hartford Yardgoats game over the summer? A local brewery tour? Rentschler Field tailgates? Please let us know.

Alumni Stand Up for CT Alpha

Alumni volunteers work with chapter leaders across chapter operations, help officers develop goals and action plans to achieve their objectives and serve as career and community mentors.

A number of our key volunteers working with the chapter are not native to CT Alpha. SCSU Professor Jonathan Wharton, past Chapter Counselor and current advisor to our Residential Learning Community team, comes to us from NJ Alpha (Stephens Tech). Balanced Man Steward (and new father!) Derek Stanley hails from CT Epsilon (Quinnipiac University), and our current Chapter Counselor, Andy Kelly (see page 2) was a Founding Father of Arkansas Alpha. We are incredibly fortunate to have these men devoting their time to CT Alpha.

The generosity of our alumni have enabled us to provide financial support to our undergraduate brothers. We have been fortunate to send two members each summer to the Ruck Leadership Institute, the fraternity world's premier training academy for rising leaders, and have had one member attend the exclusive Tragos Quest for Greece. Over 40 brothers have attended the yearly Carlson Leadership Academy, over 45 have attended Life After College, and close to 20 have represented CT Alpha at Conclave in 2015 and 2017.

CT Alpha brothers have benefitted from national competition scholarships supported by our Educational Foundation. With 200+ chapters and more than 14,000 current members, these awards are very competitive, and since returning to campus, our members have been awarded the Zollinger Outstanding Senior, general National Competition Scholarship, and the Rader Memorial Wrestling Award. Each of these has come with a monetary award from either national or CT Alpha Education Foundation funds.

VOLUNTARY ALUMNI DUES

Connecticut Alpha's alumni program, our *SPEACONN* publication, and the ability to support our undergraduate chapter, are made possible through the generous support of alumni and friends like you. In years past, the alumni association requested regular donations to our operating funds through a Voluntary Alumni Dues (VAD) program. Funds raised through alumni dues are separate from scholarship donations and are used for both undergraduate chapter support and AVC operations.

Contributions made over many decades have afforded us the opportunity to support our chapter financially through our colonization and chartering, and allowed us to spend significantly more than our interest income alone might allow.

With the successful return of CT Alpha to UConn's campus, it is time to start the VAD program again.

Items financed through alumni dues include:

- Publishing the newsletter
- Maintaining address files
- Supplies and postage for mailings
- Chapter memorabilia maintenance for Husky Village
- Undergraduate support for retreats and national leadership events
- Governance costs (fees and insurance)

All contributions for Voluntary Alumni Dues are appreciated. Please consider making a gift of \$40, but all amounts are valued and needed. Contributions to Voluntary Alumni Dues or to any Connecticut Alpha Scholarship Fund will be recognized in this newsletter.

Please make checks payable to "CT Alpha of Sigma Phi Epsilon AVC" and mail to: Larry Carboni, AVC Treasurer, 78 Summer Lane, North Haven, CT 06473

MANAGING CT ALPHA ASSETS FOR OUR FUTURE

Since returning to campus, the AVC has provided nearly \$10,000 in financial support for chapter members attending SigEp's regional and national leadership events and contributed \$2,350 toward the overall amount that CT Alpha has awarded through our Balanced Man Scholarship, which recognizes men across the UConn campus who best demonstrate our ideals of Sound Body Sound Mind.

When CT Alpha moved back into Husky Village in 2015, AVC funds provided the \$10,000 deposit on the residence, and more than \$28,000 going to common room and study/office furniture and repairing or reframing composites and other memorabilia, some back to our 1956 Founding.

Other than a small amount kept in a local bank account, AVC operating funds are held in an interest earning equity management fund with the SigEp National Housing Corporation. Scholarship funds are separate, and are held in funds restricted specifically for CT Alpha to use at the SigEp Education Foundation. Earned interest may be drawn off for scholarship purposes each year based on fund totals. We currently draw almost \$1,700 each year from these funds. Alumni contributions over many decades have afforded us the opportunity to support our chapter financially in many ways, and we are grateful for this generosity.



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Connecticut Alpha Chapter
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UNDERGRADUATE REPORT

Since our return to the UConn campus in 2015, Connecticut Alpha has remained focused on growing internally and ensuring that we have a strong foundation for the future. We initiated 14 new brothers in the fall semester, bringing us to 89 active members this January. The semester ended with officer elections where we welcomed the new executive board leading our chapter in the future.

With 43 seniors expected to graduate in May, recruitment continues to be a priority. We are working hard to expand our recruitment efforts to year-round recruiting and are committed to using our annual Balanced Man Scholarship to ensure we are actively seeking undergraduates who share our values. At last year's Balanced Man Scholarship banquet on November 1, we recognized 12 finalists and made scholarship awards to five undergraduate men. We remain focused on ensuring that our younger members have the necessary knowledge and mentoring to lead our chapter in the coming years.

Our 3.42 GPA in spring 2018 was the highest among IFC fraternities and was an increase from the previous semester's 3.34 and our highest since coming back to campus in fall 2014. This jump was largely due to revamping our academic plan with different levels of support and expectations dependent on GPA to guide members back to academic good standing.

CT Alpha also saw a large increase in money raised for charity in 2018, mostly through the chapter's participation in HuskyTHON and Movember activities. SigEp raised \$12,000 for HuskyTHON, a dance marathon fundraiser organized by UConn students to raise money for Connecticut Children's Medical Center, and almost \$4,000 for Movember, a national effort to raise awareness for men's health focusing on prostate and testicular cancer, mental health, and suicide prevention. Our hope is to increase these numbers in 2019.

We earned a good share of awards and recognition in 2018! At SigEp's Carlson Leadership Academy in February 2018, CT Alpha took home the Donald McCleary Excellence in Member Development award, Frank Ruck Leadership award for recent alumnus **Samad Khan '18**, Outstanding New Volunteer for Chapter Counselor **Andy Kelly, Arkansas '00**, and Distinguished Alumnus for AVC President **Ed Kaplan '88**. On the UConn campus our chapter won Chapter

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



The 2019-2020 CT Alpha executive board.

of the Year and Living the Ritual awards at the annual Fraternity and Sorority Life Arête Awards Ceremony, and brother **George Andrews '19** took home Greek of the Year and Greek Scholar awards.

We continue to work with the AVC to encourage alumni involvement and build undergraduate and alumni connections. From food outings to golf tournaments, these events allow undergraduates to meet alumni and help us gain a better understanding of the big picture of SigEp and think in a more long-term mindset. Our Husky Village home is a clean and welcoming place for alumni and parents, and we encourage you to come by the house or attend a chapter meeting and meet our active members.

We are grateful to all the alumni who have helped us achieve success this year. I am thankful for the opportunity to have served as chapter president for CT Alpha and I welcome our new chapter president, **Timothy Specht '20**.

Fraternally,
Ryan Jarnutowski '19, Past President
ryan.jarnutowski@uconn.edu

Stay Connected

(From page 1)

We will mail two newsletters each year with alumni news, information on upcoming events, and reports on chapter activities.

Once a year, we will send out a biographical update to allow alumni to update the information we have on record. In fact, many of you have received this mailing already! The updates are a vital tool in maintaining our records and our ties with one another.

Connecticut Alpha's current mailing list includes 866 alumni, and another 166 on our lost address list. Only 500 have valid email addresses. You can help our effort to keep our alumni database current by keeping your information up to date and by locating "lost" brothers. Please submit address changes to ctalphaspe@gmail.com.

Your AVC

As an organization, the CT Alpha Alumni and Volunteer Corporation helps train and retain alumni volunteers to serve as mentors and advisors for undergraduate members. The AVC manages and grows alumni assets, including scholarship funds held by the Sigma Phi Epsilon Educational Foundation. The AVC is also tasked with promoting the social interaction of CT Alpha alumni and cultivating a strong relationship between alumni and undergraduate SigEps.

Fraternally,
Edward Kaplan '88, AVC President
(203) 415-5402 / edkaplancta@gmail.com