September 2010

Dear Sigma Nu Alumni:

On behalf of the active members of Sigma Nu Beta Chi Chapter, welcome to the inaugural issue of *The Sigma News*! Through this newsletter, we hope to strengthen the bonds of the Beta Chi community by sharing the achievements and stories of both active and alumni Sigma Nus.

For those of you who haven’t been around recently, Sigma Nu today is a dynamic hub of campus activity. Housed in the heart of campus at 557 Mayfield Ave, we pride ourselves in playing integral roles in campus leadership, social life, and service. Whether we’re writing and directing Gaieties, running for ASSU Senate, hosting military appreciation BBQs, or building huge trusses for the upcoming Splash, we have a host of fantastic traditions and hard-working members. Today’s active members embody the strong Sigma Nu tradition that began years ago. We’re driven, we’re creative, we’re entrepreneurial, we’re fun-loving, and we’re changemakers.

The Sigma Nu that I know subscribes to a belief that it’s cool to care. It’s cool to care about each other, about the Stanford community, and about issues and people around our world. I’m excited to earnestly extend that mantra to each of you in our alumni network via this newsletter and the alumni events we have planned for the months ahead.

We look forward to continuing to reach out to our alumni and providing the opportunity for our alumni to reach out to each other. Please help us grow our alumni network by searching “Stanford Sigma Nu” from your Facebook homepage and joining our Beta Chi Alumni group, or by emailing our Alumni Advisor, Mikey Lee ’04, at Alumni@StanfordSigmaNu.com with your most up-to-date contact information.

I want to give a special thanks to Preston Hammer ’89, a Sigma Nu alumnus and Beta Chi founder, for inspiring this newsletter and for working tirelessly with our dedicated Alumni Chairs to bring it to life. Thank you all for putting us in the position to carry on the Sigma Nu legacy, and I hope you enjoy the contents of this inaugural newsletter.

Sincerely,

Michael Terrell

*Eminent Commander*
Sigma Nu Activities

SOCIAL
Sigma Nu is a place to meet new people, spend time with friends, and socialize with other members of Stanford's fraternities and sororities. Each member not only spends time with other members, but also goes out with friends from freshman year, hosts Thursday hang-outs with folks from around campus, attends wine tasting events, senior pub nights, and on-campus musical and theatrical performances.

Along with the long-standing tradition of the Splashes, Sigma Nu organizes a tremendous number of events, including BBQ’s, faculty nights, cocktail parties, sorority functions, an annual formal, and a ski trip.

**Moonsplash and Sunsplash**
Both Moonsplash and Sunsplash remain the most highly anticipated Sigma Nu parties held during fall and spring quarters. Though the shapes, sizes, and themes have changed over the years, Splashes remain amongst the largest social events on campus. Moonsplash and Sunsplash are hallmarks of Stanford Sigma Nu: The parties are not only a fraternity tradition, but have also become a tradition amongst all Stanford students!

CULTURAL
Sigma Nu hosts a number of cultural events that foster a strong sense of community within the fraternity and the Stanford campus. When Sigma Nu was re-colonized in 1988 and then re-chartered in 1989, one of the visions of the founding group was to create a fraternity of diversity – whether it be cultural, political, racial, religious or artistic. To that end, the “Sigma Nu Arts and Poetry Slam” was created.

**Sigma Nu Arts and Poetry Slam (SNAPS)**
“SNAPS” is a quarterly showcase that highlights art and creativity from around campus. Student artists, poets, and musicians are invited to the front lawn of the Sigma Nu house to showcase their talents for the Stanford community. Sigma Nu provides food, drink, and a wonderful atmosphere for attendees of this special cultural event.

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Stanford Sigma Nus strongly believe that it’s important to give back to our communities, our country, and our world. Members are affecting change on both the local and national levels. Over the years, among many service projects, Sigma Nus cooked breakfast for the homeless, took on construction roles for Habitat for Humanity, and initiated “The Safeway Sleepout,” a canned-goods drive to collect food for the hungry.

In addition, Stanford Sigma Nu members have recently participated in Relay for Life, an event to raise money for cancer research; hosted a Memorial Day barbecue to honor U.S. military personnel and send care packages to troops overseas; created a Halloween Party for East Palo Alto children called “Sigma Boo,” and organized and hosted “Snowchella,” a benefit concert to help fight HIV and AIDS in Africa.

**Sigma Boo**
The fraternity started “Sigma Boo,” an annual Halloween festival thrown for the fourth-grade class of the East Palo Alto Charter School. In conjunction with the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, members picked up the costumed young students from the school and hosted them at the Sigma Nu house for a day of food, fun, games, and prizes.

**Snowchella**
“Snowchella” was Sigma Nu’s first-ever benefit concert. In January 2010, the fraternity assembled a massive, one-night festival complete with corporate sponsorships and three live bands. Sigma Nu raised over $4,000 for Support for International Change, a charity that works to help fight HIV and AIDS in Africa.
Joe Critchfield serves as Founder and Chairman of Critchfield Mechanical Inc., one of the leading mechanical contractors in the nation. His company designs and builds HVAC (heating, ventilation, air-conditioning) and plumbing systems. Critchfield Mechanical has completed a number of award-winning projects, including the Hawaii Convention Center and the Oracle World Headquarters.

Preston Hammer serves as a Founder of SAMBA Development Group, a real estate development company headquartered in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Along with a fellow Stanford Sigma Nu, he established the company in 2007 and served as its CEO and a member of its Board of Directors. SAMBA Development Group is currently building and selling 114 beachfront condominium/hotel units spread over 12 buildings and 3 complexes in Carilo, Argentina, an exclusive beach-resort town.

Preston has founded a number of businesses, including an Internet e-commerce company and a packaged foods business. He has raised nearly $14 million in angel and venture capital financing for two of his start-ups.

What's the story behind the Splashes?
I thought we needed to make a big first impression on campus. My idea was to have a huge party - the size and scope of which had never been seen before.

I imagined a huge celebration, similar to the famous Reggae Sunsplash festival, complete with a concert stage, professional sound and lighting system, palm frond-covered beer huts, tiki torches, chef-prepared food, and a band, Zulu Spear, that played upbeat African tribal music and danced in traditional tribal garb. A lot of guys in the house thought that it was crazy to spend so much money for just one event – and none of them had even seen the band. After hours of discussion, we voted to move forward. The party was held outdoors, during fall quarter, when the sunsets are early and the moon shines brightly. So, I named it “Moonsplash.” The event was such a huge success that other houses ended up canceling their parties and coming to ours!

For spring quarter’s “Sunsplash,” we started the celebration about 4 hours earlier, had a pre-party with two of the top sororities, and had an even bigger crowd. Even though we had a lot of other events, the Splashes really helped the fraternity take flight.

Preston parlayed the event skills he used as Senior Class President and Sigma Nu Social Chairman to produce over 10 sold-out benefit events/concerts in San Francisco that have raised tens of thousands of dollars to support worthy causes.

For his business endeavors and charity work, he has appeared on local television newscasts, including Bay Area CBS News and NBC News, and has been profiled in a number of newspapers and magazines.
Why did you end up choosing Sigma Nu?
I had a lot of friends at Sigma Nu, and the people there that I got to know were great. Also, I had freshman relationships with friends that were rushing who decided to join Sigma Nu.

What was your greatest memory from Sigma Nu?
I had many. I remember that our initiation week was memorable, and I really bonded quite closely with my pledge brothers. Also, we had a platform on the top of the old Sigma Nu house and we had some epic water balloon fights using a sling with our neighbors in the Delt house.

We had this incredibly huge “Baby Party” that was a campus-wide event where everybody dressed up in diapers and bibs. You entered the house down a slide and at the bottom everybody welcomed you by shouting “Happy Birthday, Baby!”

How has Sigma Nu made an impact on you?
The main impact in being a Sigma Nu was building confidence of involvement in social settings. Fraternity life was a very important social network on campus back then. For me, as a prospective businessman, learning to get along with my peers and gaining a fluidity of interaction with new people were both positive byproducts of being a Sigma Nu. Most importantly, I have friendships that go back more than 50 years as a result of being a Sigma Nu!

Tad Taube serves as President of the Koret Foundation and Founder and Chairman of Taube Philanthropies. He is also Founder and Chairman of the Woodmont Companies, a diversified real estate investment and management organization. Tad has served as a Trustee for the University of San Francisco and Notre Dame de Namur as well as Governor of The Hebrew University in Jerusalem. In 2007, he was named Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland.

At Stanford, Tad is member of the Board of Overseers and on the Executive Committee of the Hoover Institution, and has served as Chairman of the Advisory Board for Stanford’s Institute of Economic Policy Research and the Stanford Athletic Department.

Why did you choose to join Sigma Nu?
At the time there were popular housed fraternities and then there were the unhoused ones. The unhoused fraternities usually had a tougher time attracting the same types of folks as the housed fraternities. But at the same time the housed fraternities had become complacent. We got really serious about making the fraternity be the best – even though we didn’t have a house. We also had a vision that we would get a house someday, so it gave us the extra drive to make a difference.

How did it all start?
The first guys who really made it happen were guys like Preston, Matias Bulrich, Mike Wyatt, Scott McManigal, and Mike Fodor. I joined about six months later. At the time we were kind of like a start-up. Everyone worked their asses off!

The first party in the fall, Moonsplash, was controversial, because it cost like $300 per person, which was a quarter’s worth of dues. But it was a massive hit (over 35 kegs!). Sunsplash followed in the spring. The success of the Splashes caused us to get a level of attention and enthusiasm that spilled over into rush. It gave us that victory psychology and victory on campus. We were off to the races!

What was one of your greatest memories from Sigma Nu?
There were so many! But a lot of them would not be appropriate to print. One of things we did was “Rocks and Roses.” Rocks for bad things. Roses for good things. It always got to a point to where you talked about women! What went right, what didn’t go right, and so on. Sometimes it got pretty explicit.

Did you ever try to get a house?
From the beginning we very desperately wanted to get a house, but at the time, the University seemed more interested in getting rid of the housed fraternities.

As the Lieutenant Commander, I often talked to one of the heads of housing. Here’s our reason, here’s our grades, here’s our community service. We would always get shut down. I remember thinking that, one day, things will go in our favor, and we’ll finally outlast him. It took like 15 years or so – but we did!

Mike Maples, Jr. serves as Founder and Managing Partner at FLOODGATE (formerly Maples Investments), a unique “Super Angel” fund that invests in early stage start-ups. Mike’s investments include Twitter, Digg, Chegg, Weebly and Solarwinds (now public). Before becoming a full-time investor, Mike was an entrepreneur and operating executive.

Mike is a frequent speaker at industry conferences and a guest lecturer on entrepreneurship at Harvard Business School, Stanford University, Princeton University, and the University of Texas. Fortune Magazine recently named him as one of “8 Rising VC Stars,” and Business Week listed him as one of the “Top Angels in Tech.”
News You Can Use

Today, Sigma Nu remains a top fraternity at Stanford. Almost 200 students rush the house annually for one of a coveted 21-25 pledge offers that have a nearly 100% acceptance rate. The house’s reputation is that of a diverse group of amicable, highly motivated, well-rounded individuals who strive for excellence; from top athletes to campus leaders, its members are winners, achievers, visionaries, and innovators.

It’s incredibly difficult to convey all the achievements and accomplishments of the nearly 800 Stanford Sigma Nu alumni. Amongst many professions, Stanford Sigma Nus are successful entrepreneurs, businessmen, venture capitalists, doctors, lawyers, professors, politicians, non-profit leaders, and professional sports players.

The following are just a few of the many academic, athletic, philanthropic, and leadership highlights of Sigma Nu members since 1989:

ACADEMIC

* Sigma Nus are intellects
  * Highest GPAs in the Greek System
  * Numerous Phi Beta Kappas
  * Six Mayfield Fellows
  * Two Marshall Scholars
  * Haas Fellowship Award Winner
  * Mitchell Scholar
  * Presidential Scholar
  * Toyota Community Scholar
  * Stanford Engineering Fellowship Program Founder (Tsinghua Fellows)

PHILANTHROPIC

* Sigma Nus maintain a tradition of service and charity
  * Four Recent Military Veterans
  * Three Recent ROTC Students
  * Tad Taube ’54, MS ’57 has made generous gifts to Stanford, including funding the Taube Center for Jewish Studies, the Taube Tennis Center, and the Taube Family Tennis Stadium
  * Charles Schwab ’59, MBA ’61 funded the Schwab Residential Center, home to 230 Stanford MBA students and a location for Stanford Graduate School of Business events

ATHLETIC

* Sigma Nus are top scholar-athletes
  * Stanford Football Star Quarterback
    Steve Stenstrom ’94 (played for the NFL)
  * Stanford Football Star Running Back
    “Touchdown” Tommy Vardell ’91
      (played for the NFL)
  * Stanford Football Star Running Back
    Jon Volpe ’91
      (played for the Canadian Football League)
  * 1998 NCAA Pole Vault Champion
    Toby Stevenson ’00
  * 2007 NCAA Track Champion
    Zach Chandy ’10
  * 2010 NCAA Gymnastics Champion
    Nick Noone ’10, MS ’11
  * Numerous Intramural Sports Championships

LEADERSHIP

* Sigma Nus are leaders and motivators
  * Eight Class Presidents
  * ASSU Presidents and Executives
  * Seventeen ASSU Undergraduate Senators
  * InterFraternity Council (IFC) Chairman
  * President of Hillel
  * President of the Jewish Students’ Association
  * Largest Number of RAs at Stanford
  * The Tree (’06-’07, ’09-’10)

Alumni Schedule

FALL QUARTER

**September 25, 2010**  11:30AM–6PM  **“HOUSE BUILD AND BBQ”**  Alumni are invited to assist with house repair/build projects and enjoy a relaxing afternoon barbecue. Bring workman’s gloves and a case of beer!

**October 23, 2010**  10AM–12:30PM  **BETA CHI ALUMNI HOMECOMING PRE-TAILGATE**  Visit the new house, catch up with old Beta Chi brothers, and meet the current members! Drinks and snacks provided.

SIGMA NU FRATERNITY

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