

THE ETA NEWS

OHIO ETA CHAPTER • SIGMA PHI EPSILON
MIAMI UNIVERSITY • SPRING 2016



Letter to Alumni

The past year was a defining time for Ohio Eta. Undergraduate brothers responded well to a re-energized resurgence of Sigma Phi Epsilon's values and principles. A coordinated effort from chapter leadership, alumni and national advisors gave new life to Ohio Eta, a chapter struggling to attain a high level of success others expect from Miami.

Many of you read or heard about the challenges facing Greek life in Oxford. Unfortunately, Ohio Eta also had a taste of unfortunate situations. Based on concerns primarily related to student safety, the university made efforts to end this trend.

The chapter performed well in some areas and made progress with key initiatives; however, there were indications Ohio Eta did not operate as it should and engaged in activities which resulted in university action. Ultimately, the challenges facing the chapter were not grave enough to warrant closure, although the university placed the chapter on probation and revoked permission to house sophomore members in the off-campus fraternity house.

Ohio Eta remained vigilant and took responsibility for these shortcomings. With help from alumni volunteers, Sigma Phi Epsilon National Headquarters and Miami University's Cliff Alexander Greek office, Ohio Eta embarked on a quest to re-infuse the Balanced Man philosophy and position the chapter for success. The environment and culture at Miami and in Oxford remain challenging, but the future of the chapter remains where it always has, in the hands of chapter leadership and brothers of Ohio Eta.

As an alumni brother and on behalf of the Volunteer Corporation (AVC), we are focusing on three main avenues of support and structure: the Leadership Development Council (LDC), the Housing Committee and Alumni Relations.

The LDC, headed by **Bill Greer '81** and **Dave Chittock '80**, organizes opportunities and meetings with the chapter

in Oxford and focuses on activities that incorporate living our values and values-based leadership development opportunities. These efforts improve the chapter and support the Balanced Man Program, which is particularly important in the current environment.

The focus of the Housing Committee is on improved operations and management of the house due to the challenging environment and housing culture in Oxford. The committee involves resources from Sigma Phi Epsilon National Housing as well as begins discussions and provides creative and innovative ideas with Miami's Greek Affairs and Student Affairs offices.

Alumni Relations continues to organize alumni events, engage alumni in various capacities and stay up-to-date on what is happening with the undergraduate chapter. Please check out www.ohioetaalumni.com for excellent information on current initiatives and join, "THE OFFICIAL Ohio Eta (Miami) SigEp Group" on Facebook for more frequent happenings. The chapter and Miami need your support more than ever to ensure the undergraduate chapter and Miami's Greek community stay on a sustainable path.

"We are a very good fraternity, perhaps the best fraternity. But we are not yet a great fraternity. Greatness is achieved through consistent excellence over time – excellence for an extended period. We can only be successful if everyone – undergraduates, alumni and staff – works together in a coordinated effort." - Jim Robeson

VDBL,
Joe Hornsby '06
Alumni President

Update: As of February 15, 2016, Ohio Eta Chapter earned sophomore live in exemption. This reverses a previous decision from the university and is a step in the right direction for the future of Ohio Eta.

2016 Reunion Weekend

The 2015 Reunion took place at the Sig Ep Chapter House on June 13, 2015. More than forty-five brothers, ranging from the classes of 1965 through 1969 all the way to 2005 and beyond, came to mingle and reminisce. Brothers enjoyed the open house, taking the time to mix and mingle and to graze on light refreshments. Overall, brothers noted, the weekend was a great success and hopes for even more participation in 2016.

Mark your calendars, as the date for the 2016 Reunion is set. Join us Thursday, June 9 through Sunday, June

12 in Miami. Events include a formal dinner and alumni awards, along with plenty of time to catch up with brothers, discuss the active chapter and devise plans for the future of the chapter.

Event Details: Join us Friday, June 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Marcum Inn for cocktails and dinner to follow. The cost of the dinner is \$30 per person.

Join us Saturday, June 11 at 11:00 a.m. at the Ohio Eta House for the Event in the Tent. Lunch and drinks will be provided by the ACB.

Tentatively, brothers will stay in

Miami dorms. Please stay tuned for more details to come regarding this exciting event.

As a reminder, the year 2016 marks reunions for the following classes:
Class of 1966 – 50-year Reunion
Class of 1976 – 40-year Reunion
Class of 1991 – 25-year Reunion
Class of 2006 – 10-year Reunion

Send RSVPs to Mark Durket at mdurket@rsanet.com by May 13. Please look for more details via email as the event gets closer.

**2016 Reunion
Weekend
June 9-12**

2015 Ohio Eta Executive Board

President

Blake Suponcic
Akron, OH
*Psychology, Pre-medical
studies Major; Minor in Spanish*

VP of Programming

Ryan Prescott
Cincinnati, OH
Finance Major

VP of Finance (fall semester)

Joe Reibel
Columbus, OH
*Business Analytics, Supply Chain
and Operations Double Major*

VP of Finance (spring semester)

Connor McDermott
Chicago, IL
Accounting, Finance Double Major

VP of Recruitment

Danny Herrle
Pittsburgh, PA
Marketing Major

Chaplain

Chad Sonkin
Cleveland, OH
*Sports Management Major
Minor in Political Science*

VP of Member Development

Cameron Stair
Cincinnati, OH
*Information Systems Analytics,
Computer Science Major*

VP of Communications

Nick Warwavesyn
Cincinnati, OH
Marketing Major

VP of Operations

Danny Kowalski
Denver, CO
Marketing Major

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Active Chapter Update

The quality young men that compile the active chapter today are smart, involved in campus activities and participate in philanthropy events campus wide. These men spent the fall semester planning and pursuing initiatives to make Ohio Eta a stronger entity on the campus of Miami University.

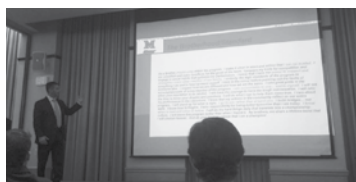
Sophomore, **Connor McDermott '17**, ended his elected term as the Vice President of Finance for the Interfraternity Council in December 2015. Thank you, Conner, for a job well done.

The chapter elected Junior, **Jack Pfeifer '17**, to the Recruitment Committee for the Interfraternity Council. He will serve in this role until formal recruitment ends in 2016.

Brothers also took the time to participate in Delta Gamma's Anchor Splash philanthropy event. The team, compiled of new members, competed in synchronized swimming and diving events. In the end, SigEp finished in first place with a winning routine and a few tired swimmers.

Chapter Hosts Successful Balanced Man Scholarship Banquet

The 54th Grand Chapter Conclave held August 12-16 in Nashville, Tennessee, made history as SigEp became the first fraternity to abolish the pledging process, replacing it with the Balanced Man Program (BMP). In response to recent events, Ohio Eta saw an opportunity to create positive change for Greek life at Miami University. The chapter formed a comprehensive risk management plan based on the BMP. The chapter centers the program's philosophy on continuous development and single-



Enrico Blasi presents, "The Brotherhood Standard."

tiered membership. The BMP is what distinguishes Sigma Phi Epsilon from other fraternities and is now the highest priority of Ohio Eta.

Scholarships are one of the main values expressed by the BMP and to show their dedication and commitment to this

program, the chapter hosted a scholarship banquet at the Shriver Center ballroom. The chapter awarded two scholarships to Miami freshmen who exhibited alignment with Sigma Phi Epsilon's fraternal values. Head Men's Hockey Coach, Enrico Blasi, was the keynote speaker. In addition, Chapter Faculty Advisor **Rocco Manzo, Alex Bracken '16** and **Ryland Puzzitiello '17** shared remarks with attendees. Bracken stated he was pleased with the turnout at the event and excited about the future of these young leaders.

Sam Becker '17 Encourages Others to 'Live Without Fear'

Brother **Sam Becker '17**, like 800,000 children and adults in America, has cerebral palsy. The neurological disorder permanently affects body movement and muscle coordination. In the fall of 2015, Sam received an opportunity he could not pass up: a semester abroad in Europe. With this invitation, Sam saw something far greater than just a trip. He decided to document his experience to encourage others with the disorder to live without fear or discouragement.

Sam created a Kickstarter Campaign coined, "Pave Your Path Project." On the campaign home page, he shared his experience with cerebral palsy and the inspiration he gained seeing children living with the disease in doctors' offices and waiting rooms. Sam explained, "In return for their inspiration I want to pay forward that inspiration with the gift of hope." The entire Ohio Eta Chapter rallied behind him as he raised \$3,565 and shared blog posts as he trekked through countries such as Belgium, Luxembourg, Amsterdam, Rome, Paris and Slovenia.

Sam not only shared his daily and weekly adventures, but he also dedicated each post to those who shaped his life. His words offered encouragement, motivation and optimism to all readers. "My advice to you: take advantage of all life has to offer. Don't get tunnel vision on one goal, just take it all in and make the most of the experiences that may define you."

To check out the campaign page or read Sam's blog posts, visit:
<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/402629616/the-pave-your-path-project>



Sam poses in front of the Colosseum, one of his favorite moments of the trip.

Financial Update

The chapter house showed improved occupancy for 2014-2015; however, the 2015-2016 school year will be a financial challenge as we now face a year with no brothers living in the house. In late April, the University placed the chapter on disciplinary probation for 12 months, which revoked our sophomore year exemption status for this school year.

The Board committed itself to maintaining the house, and to attempt to find other sources of revenue to minimize operating expenses where it is prudent to do so. While there are legal limitations on alternative uses for the house while brothers are not living there, the Board is investigating opportunities that fall within those constraints. For example, the Board rented our building to Beta Theta Pi's national office for four weeks over the summer to house members coming to Oxford for a national leadership program. They left the house in good shape, and we received almost \$18,000 in non-budget revenue.

The House Corporation (the Alumni Board or AVC) is current on all its financial obligations and has sufficient resources to cover the mortgage, property taxes, insurance and other expenses for more than two years.

Financial Balance as of August 26:

Checking Account	\$20,790
Savings Account	\$150,483
Rainy Day Contingency Fund	\$130,864
Mortgage Balance	\$609,315

Ohio Eta Volunteers

Alumni President
Joe Hornsby '06

Secretary
Cary Dice '73

LDC Directors
Dave Chittock '80
Bill Greer '81

Advisor
Rocco Manzo '86

Housing Director
Kyle Stadtmiller '06
Tony Terrell

Balanced Man Steward
Nate Miller '08

Of Counsel
Paul Revelson '07

Director Alumni Relations
Brant Smith '01

Alumni Reunions
Mark Durket '76

VP Financial Operations
Dan McKenzie '94

Trustees
Graham Mitchell '73
Herb Glasgow '74
Brad Young '05

Carlson Leadership Academy

Each year, Sigma Phi Epsilon hosts leadership events to complement the learning experience already enjoyed at colleges and universities across the nation. As explained on the national fraternity's website, The Carlson Leadership Academy (CLA) is just one of many opportunities, providing interactive officer training to over 2,600 undergraduates and volunteers each year.

Each February, the CLA occurs in conjunction with officer elections, which allows each chapter the opportunity to subject new officers and volunteers to valuable training. While there, the Academy teaches officers the skills necessary to carry out the duties required from their office and ultimately

give them the tools to make their chapter's goals and visions come to life. Each officer attends meetings with training specific to their office. Training in this type of group setting gives brothers a chance to interact with officers from other chapters and share their personal experiences. These training sessions not only guide participants through their active experience in SigEp but for the workforce and beyond.

This year, seven new Ohio Eta members attended CLA. They mostly enjoyed learning about aspects of their office previously unknown to them and engaging with brothers from other chapters.

Alumni Support Fallen Brother



Brothers gather to support friends and family of Kelly Boe on Miami campus.

The undergraduate chapter took part in a memorial tree planting for Brother **Kelly Boe '81**, who died tragically in April. Kelly was on a bike ride with his wife when a drunk driver crossed the centerline and fatally struck him. He was the manager of the central biomass heating plant at Middlebury College and passionate advocate for alternative energy initiatives. His wife, Kathleen, is a partner in the law firm English, Carroll and Boe in Middlebury.

The active chapter supported alumni who returned to Oxford for the memorial ceremony held directly outside the west entrance to Armstrong. The notes of kindness and support from alumni regarding the undergraduates present for the ceremony were truly touching.

Special Thanks to Tony Wendeln '75

Ohio Eta would like to formally recognize **Tony Wendeln CPA** who graciously completes and files taxes for the chapter each year. This great service is worth upwards of \$1,500 per

year. Thank you for taking the time and effort to extend this service to Ohio Eta. The chapter previously recognized Tony with a volunteer excellence award.



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 PO Box 2187, Columbus, GA 31902.

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 Graduation Year _____
 Address _____

 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____
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Alumni Spotlight

Tim Lu '11

18 of the Last 9 is a distinction given to 18 Miami young alumni who graduated in the last nine years and made a significant impact in their chosen professions. Whether they started a business, created a movement, or broke new ground in their field, the nominees chosen in 2015 consisted of founders, doctoral students and directors to name a few. The Miami University Alumni Association chose SigEp alumnus, **Tim Lu '11**, for his involvement with Operation Smile. The organization exists to provide children in more than 80 countries with free surgical procedures that will help to correct facial birth deformities such as cleft lips and cleft palates.



Hometown: Waynesville, OH
Current City: Virginia Beach, VA
Major: Bachelor of Arts - East Asian Languages and Culture
Profession: Operation Smile Program Officer, overseeing activities in Thailand and Vietnam

According to his biography on the Miami University Alumni Association website, Tim planned and pioneered international medical programs in partnership with national governments and health professionals from countries including China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nicaragua and Myanmar. He currently works as a programs officer overseeing the strategic and programmatic activities of the organization in Vietnam and Thailand. Serving the underserved is Lu's goal, one he likely refined as an active brother of SigEp. Tim is a great example for the chapter and shows it is possible to make an impact on local and global communities alike.

Bill Greer '81

On October 11, 2015, Brother **Bill Greer '81** participated in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon to raise funds for a very special cause—the children of Mercy Home for Boys & Girls.

On Greer's website (mercyhomehero.com), he explained the purpose of Mercy Home, "... to give abused, abandoned and neglected children a safe home to shelter them from the storm, therapy to heal their emotional wounds and education to build brighter futures."

Bill reached, and exceeded his monetary goal to raise \$1,000 for this phenomenal organization. He finished with a time of 04:05:03. Ohio Eta is proud to see the tradition of giving back to others does not cease, even after completing time as an active brother.



Bill poses with his wife before a race.

Visit

www.ohioetaalumni.com
the official Ohio Eta
website to:

- Search for alumni
- Update your address, phone number and email address
- Post noteworthy accomplishments (a new baby, a recent marriage, a recent promotion, etc.)
- Check out newsletters from the past and present
- Read up on our chapter's history, as far back to 1922
- Learn about our Chapter Initiatives
- Connect with us on social media
- Utilize our Online Leasing and Brother Portals for housing