

A stylized, flat-design illustration of a sunset over a body of water. The sky is composed of horizontal, wavy bands of color: red, purple, yellow, and orange. In the middle ground, a suspension bridge with two towers and cables spans across the water. The sun is a small yellow circle on the horizon, with its reflection shimmering on the water's surface. On the right side, a tall, tan-colored tower with a pointed top and a circular window is visible. The foreground is a dark purple band.

# A IN THE SIDE A

June/July 2017 Issue: Alumni & Undergraduate

# A 10 Year Retrospective



*Jeff Szumanski, Gamma Iota at EMU, recognized for his ten years of service to Alpha Kappa Lambda by the newly elected President of the Fraternity Executives Association (FEA) Board of Directors, Krystal Slivinski.*

*Front Cover: Illustration of the setting summer sun between the two headlands and Golden Gate Bridge at UC Berkeley.*

*“My story starts like a lot of people who join a fraternity; my roommate asked me to tag along to a meeting. I didn’t leave the dorms that day expecting to join a fraternity but ended coming back in charge of recruitment. As a lifelong introvert up until that moment, the immediate nature of taking on a leadership role was foreign to me. Looking back, it seems even more peculiar because this was only the second meeting of the colony. To say we had little idea what we were doing wouldn’t be out of place. We learned, and that day forever changed my life.*

The National Headquarters was recruiting me to join headquarters staff for at least a year before I left Eastern Michigan, a fact I didn’t realize it at the time. I worked in restaurants throughout college, I was pursuing a degree along same lines, and as far as I knew, that what I was supposed to be doing. When I accepted the role of traveling consultant in 2007, I knew people were normally in the position for a year or two and then left. Somehow, “a year or two” turned into me celebrating my ten-year anniversary.

Since joining headquarters staff, I have seen the evolution of Alpha Kappa Lambda through different lenses: dozens of staff have come and gone, the physical building has changed, national events have grown exponentially larger, and sadly, some chapters

have closed their doors for the foreseeable future. With all this happening, I have always sought to keep the fraternity’s focus on one major component... keeping its members engaged and connected.

In preparation for this piece, I was asked my favorite Alpha Kappa Lambda memory. Scenes play out in my mind like a movie and it has proven extremely difficult to pinpoint one program or event that stands out. My involvement in my colony and chapter is too plentiful with experiences to begin listing them. Certain chapters I feel a fondness with because of how involved I was with their formation. For other chapters, ten years has allowed me to gain a wealth of enjoyment recalling the times we have shared. I think this speaks volumes about my experience with Alpha Kappa Lambda as whole because while the events and programs are great, the members themselves are what I recall most vividly. The human interactions are what stuck with me and what I hold closest to my heart.

These interactions and shared connections are what has shaped my entire view of this fraternity. The same idea can be applied on a larger scale when looking at chapters and colonies who are able to perform at a higher level because members stay involved.

*Article continued on following page...*

# A 10 Year Retrospective Continued

The value of institutional memory is underestimated, but the human interactions sharing that institutional memory with younger members can prove to be extremely worthwhile. Occam's Razor, in its most basic interpretation, is the simplest explanation is usually the right one. After ten years, I can look back and say the simplest explanation is our fraternity has been most successful when members are active as an undergraduate, and stay engaged and connected in their post-college lives.

I am proof that Alpha Kappa Lambda doesn't end after college. When speaking to undergraduate members, I often bring up that the time spent in school makes up only 10% - 15% of when you can be involved. This is my job, one that I care deeply about and have worked hard at for ten years.

Membership in this fraternity extends far beyond the college timeframe. When the parties are over, the mixers stop, and 10 - 30 of our best friends may not live in the same house anymore, that is when the people we connect with and share a bond are most important. When we look beyond the facts and figures, when we go deeper than surface level interactions, my fraternity experience can only truly

be measured in human capital; how closely have I stayed connected to those people who share Alpha Kappa Lambda with me.

Life changes. As simple as it seems, it is one of my personal philosophies that is hardest for most to disagree. The Fraternity of Alpha Kappa Lambda, ever-changing, will continue to exist through the ebb and flow of time because of its members. After ten years, I can't imagine a world where I wasn't doing what I am now. The members, both young and old, I have interacted with since joining staff and earlier have shaped not only my experience in Alpha Kappa Lambda but who am I as a person. My hope is that by forging on for another ten years that in some small way I can return the favor; by sharing my experience, and my story with members, so they develop the same connections and love for this fraternity, and all its members, that I have.

*Jeff Szumanski (Gamma Iota, EMU) now serves The Fraternity of Alpha Kappa Lambda as Chief Operating Officer. Since joining National Headquarters staff in 2007, he has served in multiple roles.*



**“Membership in this fraternity extends far beyond the college timeframe...My fraternity experience can only truly be measured in how closely have I stayed connected to those people who share Alpha Kappa Lambda with me.”**

# You Say Goodbye, I Say Hello

*On behalf of the of the Fraternity of Alpha Kappa Lambda*, we would like to thank Kyle Martin for his hard work on staff as we bid him adieu. Kyle, Beta Nu alum, graduated Virginia Commonwealth University in Spring 2015 and joined staff soon after as a Chapter Services Consultant before transitioning to Gamma Chapter Manager at Illinois in Spring 2016.

“Being in a fraternity is all about the relationships you make and working for one is no different.” Kyle recalled when leaving staff. “Through AKL, I was able to meet people around the country who were passionate about AKL and developing into Men of Character and I’m fortunate enough to have done so. I’m thankful for my two years on staff and excited to see it grow. To everyone I met, please stay in touch and I’ll see you in the Bahamas.”

Filling the role as Gamma Chapter Manager is Chris Peck, another Beta Nu alum. As an undergraduate member, Chris studied Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. He served the chapter as President, Risk Manager, Philanthropy Chair, and New Member Educator.

“Excited to be back in the swings of things with AKL,” said Peck when asked about his recent welcome to headquarters staff. “I never had a better time in college then when I was with the fraternity. I’m going to do my best to help these great gentlemen at Illinois become the men and the chapter they want to be and know they can be.”



*Kyle Martin on his last day on National Headquarters staff.*



*Chris Peck settling into Carmel, Indiana.*

# Awards & Recognition

*Congratulations to Gamma Xi Chapter at Clayton State University on finishing a strong spring semester! The chapter stole the show at the university's Fraternity and Sorority Life Achievement Awards receiving the Overall Scholastic Achievement Award, Outstanding Event of the Year with Blue Laker State, and Outstanding Community Outreach Program with Adopt-A-School at Cotton Indian Elementary.*

"Blue Laker State was a week long fundraising event on main street in the University Center," explained Chance Morgan, the chapter's treasurer. "It was spearheaded by brothers Bobby Fiely and Khiem Ha, who ran and organized most of the events."

Events included a two day long "AKLTraz" where members of student organizations volunteered to be placed in "jail" on campus until their "bounty" was paid. The other two days held "Don't Egg Me Bro!" Brothers volunteered themselves to be egged by people that paid a donation. All proceeds raised from the events went directly to a cystic fibrosis charity, specifically benefiting a mother and her son.

In addition to the chapter's fundraising efforts, they also saw a continued partnership with local Cotton Indian Elementary with Adopt-A-School. This year, brothers participated in their "Read Across America" day. "We send several members there to read to the students. This has been traditionally headed by Bobby Fiely as well," said Chance.

Gamma Xi saw continued success when awarded the Scholastic Achievement Award. This award recognized the chapter for having the highest average GPA among fraternities on campus. One member in particular, Nic Burran, was recognized individually with the Excellence in Academic Achievement Award for his perfect 4.0 GPA.

Chance had this to say of the chapter's Academic Plan, "Our current President Joshua Dookie and brother Nic Burran orchestrated multiple study sessions on campus where brothers were encouraged to get together and study. Our previous President, Bobby Fiely, encouraged them to do so and helped when he could. These study sessions were generally on Friday afternoons and provided a pretty low stress atmosphere for members to study and do work in. We also have several members that are pretty far into the curriculum for a CIMS degree, so they can be excellent tutors for other members."

Congratulations again to the entire Gamma Xi Chapter for their hard work this semester!



*Past President Bobby Fiely and current Vice President Darnell Lewis Hurt with members of the university's administration at the Fraternity and Sorority Life Achievement Awards*

# Leadership Opportunities



*The Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute (UIFI)* is the NIC's premier interfraternal leadership program. This event aims to "bring together undergraduate members of fraternal organizations as they explore and elevate their leadership in their chapters and communities."

Multiple five-day sessions are offered throughout the summer hosted on the campus of Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. The program follows a curriculum that explores what it means to be a fraternity or sorority leader and prompts attendees to define challenges within the community and how to create change.

Each year, the Fraternity Alpha Kappa Lambda offers numerous scholarships for our undergraduate members to attend through donations from the AKL Education Foundation. Donating to the foundation is an investment not only in our emerging leaders but the future of our organization as well.

This year, Alpha Kappa Lambda supplied scholarships for six chapter and colony leaders. Adam Niedbalski, Gamma at Illinois. Micheal Patterson, Indiana University Colony. Alec Walberg, Lambda at Emporia State. Joseph Ortiz, Gamma Rho at Arizona State. Christopher Eglund, Beta Tau at SIU-E. And Salvador Fierro, Texas Tech Colony.

Michael Patterson, Indiana Colony's Vice-President, will be attending a session later this summer. When asked what he's looking forward to, he said:

"Meeting all of the other participants from other universities. I think getting to hear their experiences, goals, and challenges is really eye opening. I love to be involved in things, and anything that will help my chapter out more in the future is an honor for me and makes me happy to be a part of."

Salvador "Sal" Fierro, Texas Tech Colony's President, who will also be attending a later session looks forward to the unknown. "I'm not quite sure exactly what skills I'll learn or enhance" Sal said. "But I'm excited to absorb everything UIFI has to offer and bring that information back to the members of the colony."

For members considering applying for AKL's UIFI scholarship in the future, "The scholarship was not difficult to apply for," assured Michael. "It was fairly easy to complete and I am very thankful that I can be a part of this experience."

Sal added "The scholarship process was fairly simple and straight to the point. Overall, the application was easy to complete."

# Recruit Like Apple

*One of the key reasons why some organizations are drastically better than their peers is that they recruit exceptional talent that align with the goals and culture of the organization. Apple is a great example of an organization that is laser focused on exactly who is an A-player and then works tirelessly to recruit, develop and retain them.*

Oftentimes organizations with far fewer employees than Apple struggle with “quality control” when hiring young talent, yet Apple is able to do this with 115,000 employees because of their crystal clear understanding of what they know represents an A-player in their organization.

Here are the 5 key things Apple CEO Tim Cook looks for in his talent:

## **Brilliance.**

“We look for wicked smart people,” said Cook. But being smart really isn’t enough. “Put that aside for a second. There are a lot of wicked smart people.”

## **Determination.**

“We look for grit and determination,” he said. It’s that ability to stick with it and bounce back when you encounter obstacles.

## **Obsessive curiosity.**

“We look for people who are curious because, many times, you don’t really know what to do, but you are curious enough to start pulling the string to see where it takes you,” Cook said.

## **A team focus.**

“We look for people that are very collaborative because nobody – even somebody who has an S on their chest and a cape on their back – can do everything alone,” he said. “So we look for people that believe that by working with others they can amplify what they do.”

## **Agitated idealism.**

“We look for people who won’t accept the status quo, people who aren’t satisfied with the way things are, that really want to change the world and sort of put all of themselves into doing it,” said Cook.

## **What can your organization learn?**

- 1.** Have extremely high standards if you want top talent working in your organization.
- 2.** Know exactly what characteristics/experiences you are looking for in a candidate
- 3.** Determine how you will evaluate if a candidate has those characteristics/experiences
- 4.** Share this everywhere to attract top talent (the right candidates will want to work for you more because they know it is a great fit and the wrong candidates will remove themselves from the process because they know they don’t fit)

# -Tom Healy

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[www.tom-healy.com](http://www.tom-healy.com)

# Four Years For Life Alumni News & Events

## Looking Ahead: National Conclave 2018

Stay on the lookout for more information in upcoming editions!



**Atlantis Paradise Island Resort**  
**August 1–4, 2018**

**Don't Forget Your Hotel!**  
Reserve [here!](#)

**Don't Forget Your Passport!**  
Easily apply [here!](#)

**Beta Psi Chapter at Missouri State University** will be holding its 25 Year Alumni Reunion this fall in Springfield Missouri.

Mark your calendars for Friday and Saturday, September 22nd and 23rd. Out for drinks on Friday with Saturday spent at a local park and a banquet in the evening from 5:00 - 10:00 pm. The banquet will be held at an event venue located 319 Walnut Street Springfield, MO.

Tickets can be bought online [here](#). \$45 for Saturday day events and evening banquet. Gifts will be optional in \$25 increments in advance.

Hotel Rooms can be booked [here](#) online at the University Plaza. Or call (417) 864-7333 and reference Alpha Kappa Lambda for a discount of \$102 plus taxes per night.

**Planning an event?** Let us know so we can feature your details in the next issue of "Inside AKL" by emailing [info@akl.org](mailto:info@akl.org) or clicking [here](#) for our online event/article submission form.

# AKL INSIDE AKL



*Top Right: Gamma Nu at Mansfield brothers volunteering at a local Christian Church Camp. Top Left: Gamma at Illinois brothers spending time doing medical and volunteer work in Honduras. Bottom: Gamma Pi at UCONN brothers enjoying their summer break.*

InsideAKL is a monthly educational and alumni publication by the Fraternity of Alpha Kappa Lambda. Brothers and friends are encouraged to submit news, articles and photographs of chapter events, philanthropy and service projects as well as other notable achievements. Correspondence can be emailed to [info@akl.org](mailto:info@akl.org) with "Inside AKL" in the subject line.

[Online Event/Article Submission Form](#)

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### ***Statistics***

Active Chapters & Colonies: 44

Undergraduates: 1,600+

Alumni: 25,149

Spring New Members: 257

Fall New Members: 554

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