



The Delta Penn

Pennsylvania Delta Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon University of Pennsylvania
Established 1904 / First Undergraduate Editor — Stuart R. Trottmann Jr. '39

Upcoming Event

110th Anniversary and Homecoming Celebration
November 1, 2014

Please join us at the chapter house (4028 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.) for beverages and hors d'oeuvres to celebrate our 110th year as a chapter. Food and beverage service will begin after the game (around 3 p.m.) until 6:00 p.m.

RSVP online by going to www.pennsigep.com and check out the list of other alumni who already signed up! No payment necessary, we just want alumni to RSVP so alumni can see the list of brothers who will be there! Families and friends are welcome. The more the merrier!

Direct questions to **Dan Olson '99** by calling 610-805-6148 or by email at dolson04@hotmail.com.

Fun Fact!

As we celebrate our 110 years on Penn's campus, important to note that we are the longest continually running SigEp chapter in the country. Many others, most notably, Mother Alpha (University of Richmond), started before Penn Delta in 1904. However, all the other chapters have either been shut down or recolonized at least once in their histories. But not us! We continue to thrive, which is another reason to celebrate with us on November 1!

We'll see you there!!

Alumni Association Report

7 Great Reasons to Renew Your Participation with SigEp This Fall

Alumni Association Offers Plenty of Ways to Uphold Your Connections to Penn Delta

By Brett Danko '90, President, Pennsylvania Delta Foundation

There are plenty of reasons to maintain your connections with Sigma Phi Delta long after graduation, and I thank the brothers who have remained active in their alumni years. For those of you who may have fallen away from the fraternity, we've compiled 7 great reasons to make this the year you renew your commitment to Penn Delta.

- 1. We've been around for 110 years and are still going strong.** As Penn Delta celebrates its 110th birthday this year, we have the power to preserve our longstanding legacy for another century and beyond.
- 2. Our active chapter is thriving on campus.** As you'll read on page 2, the active chapter is coming up with new, innovative ways to better themselves as individuals and to improve the chapter as a whole.
- 3. We like to party.** From the annual McCron Dinner and Alumni Weekend gatherings to our upcoming 110th Anniversary Celebration at Homecoming, our organization offers plenty of opportunities for you to reconnect with longtime brothers and new friends each year.

4. We're a more than generous group.

Thanks to strong alumni participation, we've been able to raise funds each year to maintain a thriving alumni relations program and endow scholarships and leadership awards for undergraduates. Read Dan Olson's heartfelt message to alumni on the enclosed letter for more

perspective on why our alumni relations program is so important.

5. We're building balanced men. SigEp teaches young men that they do not need to choose between academic success and the close personal relationships that make life meaningful. Our fraternity instills values that allows brothers to maintain a balance throughout their life. Read page 4 for how one successful alum, **Chris Simmons '95**, is doing just that in his successful Indycar career.

6. We offer plenty of ways for you to reconnect with old friends and with Penn Delta Chapter. From our alumni events, this newsletter, and our online community, there are great and fun ways to find old friends and make new ones.

7. You're the key to our past, and the link to our future. As an alumni association nearly 1,000 strong, we boast generations of brothers that have contributed to our rich history. We have collectively preserved traditions, enriched lives of young men, and kept a great organization going strong at Penn for 110 years. You have a unique place in that history and are asked to maintain your connections to pay it forward for future generations.

We've got a strong alumni association, a thriving active chapter and a 110-year legacy at Penn. If you haven't been involved in the past few years, I personally invite you to renew your participation this fall. As you can see, there's no reason not to.

Chapter Eternal

Remembering Jeremy

Brothers Mourn and Honor the Memory of Jeremy Valentine '97, Involved in Tragic Car Accident this Summer

Jeremy W. Valentine '97, age 39, passed away on July 20, 2014 in a car accident in Indiana. Jeremy was traveling with his wife, Seana, and their young children Luke and Molly. As the school year begins, Molly and Luke have returned to good health. Seana continues her courageous recovery in the hospital.

Jeremy was born in Westminster City, Calif. and was raised in Spokane, Wash. He attended the University of Pennsylvania where he was the chapter house manager for Penn Delta. He was also active in the Army ROTC during his college years. He was a passionate craft beer brewer along with one of his close friends in Pennsylvania.

Brothers of Sigma Phi Epsilon will remember him for his loyalty as a friend and brother. He was the type of guy that would drop everything he was doing to help someone else. He was a house manager that was devoted to making sure the house was well maintained for everyone to enjoy and brothers often saw

him doing chores around the house that no one else would do. Ten of Jeremy's brothers attended his funeral services.

Jeremy was employed for many years as a Network Engineer in the Technology Department at the Lower Merion School District in Ardmore, Pa. and was recently at the Center for Research in Security Pricing (CRSP) at the University of Chicago, Booth School of Business, Chicago, Ill.

Jeremy was bright, assertive, detail-oriented, and creative. He had a fantastic sense of humor and a contagious smile. He was brilliant, funny, hard-working, loyal and exceptionally talented. He was also an active and engaged resident of the community, who enthusiastically volunteered his time to support efforts like Alex's Lemonade Stand and the Girl Scouts.

A website has been set up to keep friends and family updated on the Valentines at www.caringbridge.org/visit/valentinefamily.

In addition, several brothers that were close to Jeremy are working together to establish a fund for Molly and Luke. Details will be provided at a later date.

Jeremy will be missed greatly by all those who knew and loved him. He leaves an indelible, positive mark on this community and his legacy will live on for generations.



Jeremy with his SigEp friends (L to R): Frank Catrickes '98, Nick Bhuta '96, Doug Hoerster '96, Matt Silk, Brendan Gibbons '96, Tolga Latif '97, Rez Daugherty '95, Paul Godinez '96, Rich Steinmeier '96, and Steve Gresdo '96.

Preserving "Sigma Phi Epsilon's Soul"

Endowment of Jack Shores Memorial Sigma Phi Epsilon Scholarship Announced

Contributed by Frank Catrickes '98

After the passing of Jack Shores three and a half years ago, a group of brothers determined to find a way to best memorialize Jack's life and his impact on our lives and fraternity. What would honor the life of such a revered brother and perpetuate his virtues of love, kindness, and respect?

In the words of the eulogy delivered by **Brett Danko '90** at Jack's funeral, Jack was "Sigma Phi Epsilon's soul."

What would demonstrate to his family and the broader Penn community how much we loved Jack and how much he meant to us? Even better, how could we take what Jack has given us and pay it forward? Because he left such a positive imprint on our lives, it would only be fitting for us to have a similar impact on the lives of others.

We decided that a scholarship would create an everlasting tribute to Jack,

forever connect him and all of our brotherhood, convey our love for Jack to the broader Penn community, and ensure that Jack's soul will continue touching the lives of others.

On behalf of the brotherhood, **Nick Bhuta '96, Paul Godinez '96, Josh Thimons '98**, and I would like to announce the establishment of the Jack Shores Memorial Sigma Phi Epsilon Scholarship. A group of brothers from the classes of 1996-1998 has generously committed to endow this Scholarship with a minimum of \$150,000 in commitments over the next 5 years.

In deeper tribute to our beloved Jack, the Scholarship agreement specifies that it will be awarded to a student from Jack's North Philadelphia neighborhood. Thus, every four years, a student from his neighborhood will be touched by Jack and the SigEp brotherhood.

The most exciting aspect of the scholarship's creation is that any brother can contribute any amount of money—no matter how small or how large—at any time! Therefore over time, the scholarship will grow and contribute an even greater share of its recipients' tuition.

You can contribute by check (made out to "The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania") or credit card (include credit card number, type, name and expiration). Specify that the check or credit card donation be designated to the "Jack Shores Memorial Sigma Phi Epsilon Scholarship Fund." Mail it to: Shannon Erdie, Franklin Building, Suite 635, 3541 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

Alternatively, you can simply call Shannon Erdie at 215-898-8482 and she will take your credit card information for your donation.

May Jack's memory be eternal.

Chapter Report

“We Want Every Man Who Walks Through Our Doors to Come Back Out a Better Man”

Penn Delta Launches Initiatives to Achieve Academic Excellence and Engage the Campus and Community

Contributed by Tadas Antanavicius '16

This academic year, we are primed to refine and solidify our past ventures and chapter operations while moving into paths untraveled with approaches that, a year or two ago, might not have seemed possible. This year is the perfect time to mold our permanent identity on campus and really hit home what it means to be a SigEp.

This summer, we sat down and developed a well-defined vision for what we want to become, focusing on three main points: community engagement, self-betterment, and innovation. We see this approach as the most effective to not only grant us the most fulfilling college experience, but also to build a desirable culture of respect on campus. These strong foundational concepts have led to many new, exciting initiatives that has the whole Penn Delta community extremely eager to see what we can make of this year.

Our newfound focus on philanthropy is sure to bring in substantial contri-

butions to various charities, service-learning experiences for our brothers, and a general campus presence for our chapter and the causes we support. Our two main philanthropic focuses this year will include mental health support and awareness, as well as engaging the less fortunate community around West Philadelphia. These are causes that we as a brotherhood can identify with and serve with a genuine passion.

We've adopted and have made tangible progress toward this idea: “we want every man who walks through our doors to come back out a better man.” Most notably, we've structured a “Sound Mind Competition” inspired by our desire to raise our middle of the fraternity pack GPA. The brotherhood will be split into four even teams, working together to achieve the highest GPA increase within each team. The Alumni Board is sponsoring a grand prize award of a \$1,000 dinner for the winning team. This competition is sure to inspire a

stronger academic culture throughout the house, and we'll know by the end of the semester just how effective a simple but well thought out program like this can be.

In the spirit of our innovative mindset, we hope to inspire a culture of collaboration rather than competition with the rest of campus. Working with other student groups on various projects brings us new channels for recruitment, relationships with students we would otherwise never meet, and an enhanced campus presence. Similarly, collaboration with other fraternities and sororities speaks for itself: the influence and manpower these organizations have means we can accomplish so much more than if we isolated ourselves and made an attempt merely to compete with the rest. Already, we've hosted social events with other groups, joined SAE in one of their annual philanthropy events, and are in talks with other organizations to do more of the same.

Building Our History

Who Is In Your Family Tree?

Over the past few months, a number of active brothers on the undergraduate communications committee have begun working on digitalizing and correcting the information for the SigEp Penn Delta lineage tree. They are using the website familyecho.com to complete this task. They believe that this project is important for maintaining relationships within the brotherhood through the big brother system. They also figured that the alumni would find it entertaining and meaningful.

Currently, undergraduate VP of Communications **Doug Yamamoto** is asking for some help in order to piece together information anywhere from 3 years ago and out. If anyone would be willing to help him out and fill in some blanks, please contact him by email at yamamoto.doug@gmail.com.

Alumni Updates

John Venusti '89

(29 Selwyn Avenue, Unit 3, Elwood 3184, Melbourne, VIC Australia; john_venusti@yahoo.com) Mardi, Mia, Ally, and I moved to Australia over the summer. I'm working for Goldman Sachs, and Mardi finally got her chance to return home.

You've told us time and time again that the alumni updates section is your favorite part of *The Delta Penn*. So why did only one brother take the time to share his news? If John can send an update from halfway around the world, then you should be able to, too!

This is your opportunity to brag about your family, share career accomplishments, relive funny memories, praise your lifelong friendships through stories of recent reunions, or show us pictures of any of the above.

To submit your materials for the next issue of our newsletter:

- Enclose them with your gift using the provided envelope,
- Email content@affinityconnection.com (mention SigEp Penn),
- Or upload them to www.pennsigep.com.

Alumni Profile

The Need for Speed

Indycar Mechanical Guru Chris Simmons '95 Has an Engineer's Dream Job

Thank you to **Chris Simmons '95**, who landed quite the gig in his post-Penn years, for participating in this Q&A...

So you've got a pretty cool job (one that might be dubbed "an engineer's dream job"). Tell us a bit more about what you do, and how you got to this point in your career.

I work for Chip Ganassi Racing Teams (CGRT) as a Lead Engineer on the #10 Target Indycar. In a nutshell this means I am responsible for specifying all of the mechanical, electronic, and aerodynamic settings for the racecar. I am kind of the offensive coordinator for the team and I have a group of engineers, mechanics, and technicians that I work with to get the most out of the driver and the car. To be honest sometimes managing the driver and his psyche is more important than the actual car setup, but it takes both to win. As a team we have had a lot of success, although we got off to a slow start this season... but we managed to finish the season by winning the three of the last four races.

What has been the most exciting part of your career?

There have been a lot of exciting races through the years, but the most exciting was winning the Indy 500 in 2012. We got hit from behind and spun backwards on our first pit stop and went all the way to last place. After that it was a steady climb back through the field to win from last place. Dario was able to hold off a charge up the inside on the last lap. The work we did as a team through practice leading up to the race, recovering from the spin, and passing cars in the pits and on the track was even more rewarding having come from

last place. The Indy 500 is like our Super Bowl and to win it in that exciting fashion is an unbelievable rush.

How have the skills and values you learned at SigEp helped you in your career success?

The Balanced Man philosophy has served me well through the years. As a team we are focused on accountability and continual improvement, but a big part of my job is also mentoring. Just like at Penn Delta, at CGRT we are only as strong as our weakest man, and we have to support each other and help each other improve.

I also learned some tricks at the pool table with Jack Shores that I was able to use against some of our competitors on a day off on the road just a few weeks ago.

What is your best memory from your fraternity days?

I have a lot of great memories, everything from late night studying, to parties, to dinner with Jack. I don't know if this is my best memory, but when I was the house manager one winter we had a pipe burst under the porch and water came into the house. It took three of us to push the door open at the time, the water was so high inside. I knew where the shutoff valve was, but with three of us in there with flashlights and icy water spraying everywhere, it took us a good 10 minutes to realize that the pipe had broken before the shut-off valve. This was way before the ice bucket challenge, but we were all soaked in cold water. Once we realized there was nothing we could do, we rescued everything we could from the basement (there was one



bedroom down there back then) and moved it to higher ground. We called the university and the water company, and of course there were hundreds of pipes broken across the city from the cold; it was hours before anybody could get there to turn off the water main. The water eventually spilled over the wall in the courtyard and into the driveway. It was about a week before we could move back into the house, and the basement took considerably longer to clean up, but we all found places to stay and helped our fellow brothers out. It was one of those situations where everyone worked together to make the most of a bad situation.

Tell us more about your life outside of engineering race cars (family, hobbies, etc.)

I have been married to Joyce for 13 years and we have two daughters, Amelia, 7, and Arianna, 5. We have a wakeboarding boat that we do not get to use very often. We also enjoy camping, ice skating, and Colts games. Both girls have gotten into skiing and we try to take a ski vacation or two every winter.

Brothers can contact Chris at csimmons01@gmail.com. Read the full profile, including how Chris got his start in racing, at www.pennsigep.com.