



THE GAMMA-CHI GAZETTE

KAPPA SIGMA FRATERNITY AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | FALL 2025

EXPECT NOTHING LESS THAN EXCELLENCE

A LEGACY OF BROTHERHOOD AND CHANGE

In the spring edition of *Gamma-Chi Gazette*, we highlighted that for Gamma-Chi to continue its resurgence as one of the top fraternities at K-State, change was necessary. While old practices needed to be updated, our rich history of brotherhood and shared experiences remains a cornerstone of our identity and something that can never be taken from us.



Since our last edition, we have made significant strides:

Enhanced Communication: Our communication program has been modernized, allowing us to reach alumni more efficiently.

Newsletter Launch: The *Gamma-Chi Gazette* has been successfully launched, keeping everyone connected and informed. **Undergraduate Expansion:** The Chapter has grown in both size and visibility on campus. The name Kappa Sig is increasingly recognized as a Fraternity on the rise—one that commands respect.

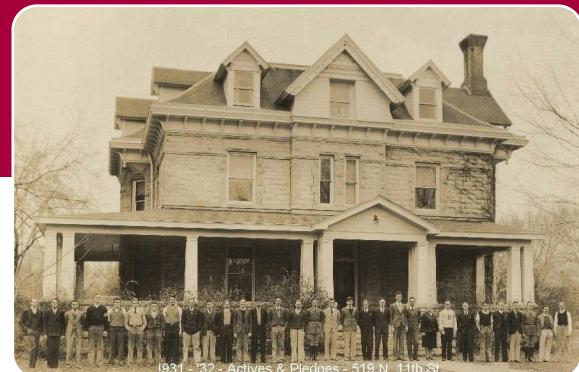
New Website Development: Working with Pennington & Company and the undergraduate Chapter, we are developing a website to house key documents, assist with recruitment, and showcase our successes.

Parents Club Formation: A Parents Club has been founded to support the Chapter through initiatives like Welcome Back Packages and purchasing essential items. This group has made a remarkable positive impact on the Chapter in a very short time, welcoming both members and their families into the Gamma-Chi community.

These improvements have not been without challenges, but our brotherhood has weathered them and grown stronger. Go Kappa Sigma!

THE PATH TO EXCELLENCE

While celebrating our progress, we cannot remain idle. With the Chapter's growth comes the need for a new housing scenario. At the recent alumni meeting during Pig Dinner Weekend 2025,



several housing options were discussed:

- Extend our lease at 505 Denison.
- Become an unhoused Fraternity (highly frowned upon).
- Reacquire our old property at 1930 College Heights.

The decision was overwhelmingly in favor of reacquiring the 1930 College Heights Chapter House from K-State—a step that is both exciting and a little daunting. While we understand that this choice may bring a mix of emotions, it is believed that the timing is right to move forward—or, in this case, back.

Further details on this plan will be shared in an upcoming email, including ways alumni can contribute to making this vision a reality.

STAY CONNECTED

The Alumni Board hopes everyone enjoys the new *Gamma-Chi Gazette* and looks forward to the upcoming website launch. For more information about the plan to reacquire 1930 College Heights, please contact me at (816) 935-0701 or via email at gardnermilo3@gmail.com.

AEKDB,
Mike Gardner '82

Welcome, New Members

Drew Bestwick | Sabetha, Kan.

Shep Borchering | Overland Park, Kan.

Ben Brogan | Kansas City, Mo.

Amare Campbell | Lindsborg, Kan.

Coleman Campbell | Olathe, Kan.

Tyler Carleton | Greenwood, Ind.

Jackson Casey | Basehor, Kan.

Jerli Cruz | Dodge City, Kan.

Blake Evans | Kansas City, Kan.

Logan Forbes | Basehor, Kan.

Jayden Gilchrist | Wichita, Kan.

Wyatt Heideman | Wamego, Kan.

Andy Hitchcock | Olathe, Kan.

Enghuoth Hou | Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Jace Hull | Casper, Wyo.

Joseph Jacobs | Overland Park, Kan.

Tyshawn Johns

Kelton Kerns | Salina, Kan.

Cody Layton | Kansas City, Kan.

Lincoln Mainelli | Overland Park, Kan.

Waylen Miller | Kansas City, Kan.

Camden Patyk | Cedar Bluffs, Neb.

Henry Perere | Olathe, Kan.

Julian Sides | O'Fallon, Mo.

Logan Smith | Westmoreland, Kan.

Zachary Spence | Olathe, Kan.

Noah Strickert | Wichita, Kan.

Luke Pitman | Emporia, Kan.

Mike Ragsdale | Emporia, Kan.

Grant Rastorfer

Gabe Roper | Overland Park, Kan.

Please give a heartfelt welcome to the fall pledges of Gamma-Chi Chapter.

LEARNING TO TAKE RISKS

RYAN URBAN '19 ON FRATERNITY MEMORIES, RECENT K-STATE RECOGNITION

When **Ryan Urban '19** joined Kappa Sigma as a graduate student, he appreciated the opportunity to form new bonds with fellow Wildcats. He credits Gamma-Chi Chapter and former Grand Master **Matt Hockersmith '17** for pushing him to embrace new opportunities with the Fraternity and beyond.

KAPPASIG CONNECTIONS

"I was looking for a way to connect with people at K-State," Ryan said. He stayed busy with various jobs and organizations but made time to contribute through PR/website, merch, and alumni relations chairman roles. He also developed a strong bond with pledge dad **Jake Meyer '14**.

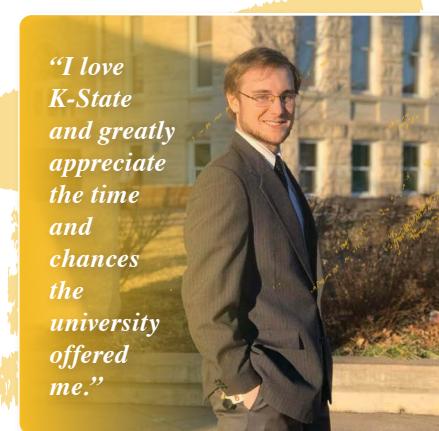
Ryan fondly recalls one night playing cornhole with Jake at Yard Bar, and Jake lifted him around the bar after Jake made the game-winning toss. "Another brother explained he had never seen a closer set of pledge dads/sons. I laugh every time I think of that night."

Kappa Sigma membership taught Ryan to take risks and not let anyone dim his fire. Serving as PR chairman lined him up for a communications internship with Kappa Sigma HQ, which led to a campaign management internship with Intouch Group. Ryan's work on *Gamma-Chi Today* also earned him a writer role for *The Caduceus of Kappa Sigma*. "I like to think Matt Hockersmith ultimately launched my career."

CAREER VENTURES

After earning his graduate degree, Ryan entered a tight advertising job market and worked in email marketing before teaching at KU. He then did contract work with GEHA, spending half the time with Corporate Social Responsibility and half with the Kansas City Chiefs and Baltimore Ravens.

Ryan received a second master's degree from KU and worked with the Kansas Department of Commerce on the *Love, Kansas* campaign. He



"I love K-State and greatly appreciate the time and chances the university offered me."

currently holds several responsibilities as the marketing manager for Naturion, a mitigation banking company working to repair damaged environments like wetlands. Ryan also teaches two courses at UMKC, and he refines his stained-glass skills in his spare time.

A DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

This year, K-State honored Ryan as one of two Distinguished Young Alumni. He appreciates the numerous opportunities that have come from his college years, and Ryan considers K-State one of the best universities in the country.

"I'm excited to see what all goes into this award, and I've discovered I have to give a keynote speech at K-State in October. I'm looking forward to talking—something we all know I do way too much."

Beyond *Caduceus* contributions, Ryan stays engaged with Kappa Sigma as a National Communications Commission volunteer and as the Assistant Alumnus Advisor for Upsilon-Psi Chapter at UMKC. He maintains social connections with Jake Meyer and **Brad Crooks '83**, and Ryan appreciates the lifelong impact of fellow alumni like **Brian Bednar '79**, **Mike Gardner '82**, **Justin Hockersmith '83**, and several others.

"I have learned a lot from WGS **Dan Tierney, Theta-Nu '99**, who took a gamble on me as an intern, and Communications Commissioner **Brandon Leung, Rutgers '11**, who kept taking a gamble on me. I have to thank **Michael Malenic, Pi-Rho '16** up at HQ, who continues to take a gamble on me—you'd think they'd learn. I'd also like to extend a deep thank you to Jakob Kurtz, who connected me to my current role. He's a rock, and a rockstar."

Ryan stays grounded through his family support system and his extensive network of Kappa Sigma brothers. You can connect with him at ryan.urban@umkc.edu.

ALUMNI NEWS

Jacob E. Mertz '63 lives in Topeka, Kan., with his wife of 55 years, Carole Weigel. He retired in 2005 from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas. They have two daughters in the Kansas City area and six grandchildren. Email: jakemertz@att.net

Gary L. Petry, M.D. '73 shared that his sons, **Austin '02** and **Justin '02**, are also Kappa Sigma alumni. Gary is a semi-retired family physician splitting time between Leadville,

Colo., and Centralia, Kan. He spends most of his winters in the mountains snow skiing. Email: gpetrymd@yahoo.com

Steven E. Sterling '75 is the CEO of Value Added Products. He lives in Alva, Okla. Email: stevesterling56@gmail.com

Christopher D. Patzell '76 is retired and enjoys golfing from his home in East Canton, Ohio. Email: patnpat@sssnet.com

Braden M. Turner '06 was engaged to Sadie Sciaro (a 2014 K-State graduate) in June 2024. He was included in Who's Who of Top Executives for Expertise in Engineering and Management that year as well. He also received the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award for Service in Military and Nonprofit. Braden lives in Maryville, Tenn. Email: braden86ksu@outlook.com

CHAPTER CELESTIAL



Brothers traveled to Dublin, Ireland, to watch the Kansas State Wildcats football team play Iowa State in the Aer Lingus College Football Classic, including Stuart Scott '81, Alan Fankhauser '80, Mike Moore '85, Steve Dunaway '72, Miles Kotay '69, Bob Landon '70, Bill Lehman '73, Mike Gardner '82, and Scott Munk '82.



A SEASON OF SUCCESS

Highlights from the Undergraduates

The 2024-25 academic year marked an unprecedented period of growth and achievement.

NEW FACES

Over the course of the year, we pledged 40 young men and proudly initiated 23, reflecting both our Chapter's impressive expansion and unwavering commitment to excellence in Champion's Quest.

STRENGTHENING GREEK LIFE AND COMMUNITY

Under the guidance of Philanthropy Chairman **Aidan Steenkamp '24**, our Chapter co-hosted two philanthropy events with Zeta Tau Alpha, strengthening collaboration across Greek life and deepening community ties. Our participation in K-State's annual Greek Week also highlighted Gamma-Chi's renewed visibility and commitment to excellence.

BROTHERS IN ACTION PROGRAM

BIA Chairman **Sam Sivils '24** brought in distinguished speakers, including motivational speaker John Hatfield and State Senator Doug Shane. John returned in the fall to lead a transformative "Culture Workshop," providing valuable insights on leadership and Chapter development we are already implementing to elevate our internal culture.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

The Chapter received multiple awards, which reflect the dedication, leadership, and unity that define Gamma-Chi, including:

- Wildcat of the Year – **Byron Sides '22**
- IFC President of the Year – **Connor Leach '23**
- 100% Ritual Proficiency – all members with one Ritual Certificate
- 200% Ritual Proficiency – all members with at least two Ritual Certificates (*awarded to only seven chapters*)
- Outstanding Executive Committee awards for each EC position
- Outstanding Communications Award (*awarded to only three chapters*)



Left: Jack Seal '24, Zach Miller '24, Nate Starke '23, Morgan Hastings '15 (Former AA), Jordan Blanchat '23, Pat Donnelly '24, Ty Bleckinger '24, Adam Ebenstein '23, Chase Sipiora '24, and Ethan Carey '23 hold the individual and chapter awards earned at the 75th Biennial Grand Conclave in Las Vegas, Nevada, in July. Top: The Back to School Cookout is always a hit with brothers and pledges alike. Bottom: Brothers enjoy "Pig Dinner" and the Alumni Reunion at the Chapter House in April.



A NEW YEAR BEGINS

Even before fall recruitment officially started, we began the 2025-26 school year with 24 pledges, a testament to the quality and character of our new members and the strong foundation laid by our leadership. Much of this success is due to the outstanding efforts of Chairmen **Ty Bleckinger '24** and **Chase Sipiora '24**, who are continuing the legacy of our former recruitment chairman, **Jordan Blanchat '23**.

IN CONCLUSION

As we celebrate these accomplishments, Gamma-Chi's momentum is stronger than ever. The combined efforts of our members, officers, and alumni continue to build a Chapter that thrives in leadership, service, and brotherhood. Looking ahead, we are energized to maintain this standard of excellence and to continue shaping a vibrant, successful future for the fraternity.

Fraternally,
Nathan Starke '23, Grand Master





TOP THREE GOALS FOR 2025-26

WIN THE FOUNDERS AWARD OF CHAPTER EXCELLENCE

Last year, we came close to earning the FACE Award. With increased effort and participation from undergraduates, we are confident we can achieve this milestone this year. Our all-men's GPA surpassing expectations and greater involvement in Chapter affairs demonstrate this renewed dedication.

EXECUTING A WELL-PLANNED PHILANTHROPY WEEK

Our Chapter's growth allows us to implement large-scale philanthropy events. A successful Philanthropy Week this November will strengthen our standing within the Greek community and across campus.

SURPASS 85 UNDERGRADUATE MEMBERS

With our current pledge class of 24 men, we are on track to exceed 85 members, further cementing our Chapter's growth and presence on campus.

WHY NEW MEMBERS CHOOSE GAMMA-CHI



THE KIND OF MAN YOU'D STAND BESIDE

PERSPECTIVES ON BROTHERHOOD AND BELONGING

Our newest members give a glimpse into the qualities that make our fraternity so meaningful:

"Gamma-Chis are the nicest and most sincere guys I know."
—Anthen Arheart '25

"I met some of the guys at the Chapter House, and I was instantly hooked by the sense of brotherhood that was there."
—Jason Kitts '25

"The recruitment chairmen treated me very well, and when I met the rest of the Chapter, I knew I wanted to be part of this Fraternity."
—Isaac Graves '25

Think of the men you'd trust in your corner—the ones who...

✓ SHOW UP ✓ LEAD BY EXAMPLE ✓ MAKE OTHERS BETTER

That's the kind of man we're looking for to join Gamma-Chi.

If you know a young man who fits that description, we want to meet him! Please send his info to **Ty Bleckinger '24** at (816) 274-1246 or **Chase Sipiora '24** at (949) 677-4108 so we can get in touch and show him what our brotherhood is all about. Alumni who wish to refer potential new members are encouraged to send their name, email, and phone number as well as why you think he'd be a good fit.



UPDATE YOUR
CALENDAR!

Football Season Is Back!

ALUMNI TAILGATE FOR K-STATE VS. TEXAS TECH GAME

Date: November 1

Time: TBD

Where: The RV parking spot of **Mike**

Gardner '82 (46 NW corner of the West Lot)



THE GAMMA-CHI GAZETTE

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
OF GAMMA-CHI
P.O. Box 172
TOPEKA, KS 66601-0172

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Above: From left, Curtys Kingston '24, Connor Leach '23, Charles Keenan '25, Tanner Samyn '23, Creighton Moes '23, and Nathan Lowen '24 dress to impress at Formal in May.

THANK YOU, ALUMNI SUPPORTERS

2024-25 ANNUAL DUES PARTICIPANTS

We extend our sincere gratitude to all alumni who contributed Annual Dues for the 2024-25 fiscal year and those who have already submitted for the current fiscal year, which began July 1. Your support sustains Gamma-Chi's brotherhood through alumni events, communications, and undergraduate programs.

ALUMNI

Wendell "Alan" Wright '53
David J. Fiser '58
Kenneth Ingram '58
Martin R. Connell, DVM '60
Frank Lynn Markel '60*
Durward D. Dupre '62
Rick J. Eichor '62
Ronald L. Boyer '64
Philip D. Gettig '64
Frederick J. Wulff '64*
Prof. Ward V. Wells '65
Robert C. Matthews Jr. '66
Michael B. Adams Jr. '68*
Scott L. Chapman '68
Maurice E. Kancel '69*
Robert B. Landon '70
Paul F. Zimmerman '70
Donald R. Bonewitz '72

Roger D. Commer '72
Stephen M. Dunaway '72
Stephen L. Sollner '72
William J. Jauernig '73
Steven E. Sterling '75*
Stephen R. Stoltenberg '75
Christopher D. Patzell '76
Martin J. Murphy '78
Mark A. Boxberger '79
Thomas D. Rinner '79
Bradley E. Hedrick '80
D. Keith "L.J." Johnson, DVM '80
Bradley N. Polson '80
Steven R. Hook '81*
Scott A. McMillen '81
Stuart Scott '81
Paul D. Campbell '82
Michael Gardner '82
Mark C. Porter '82

Alumni who have generously participated in Dues Plus—giving beyond their standard dues to further support events, communications, and recruitment—are identified with an asterisk (*). Your extra support makes a meaningful difference for the Chapter and strengthens our alumni community!

Please send your 2025-26 dues (and catch up on 2024-25 if you missed it!) by going online at kappasigmakusu.cauevox.com or mail a check to: Alumni Association of Gamma-Chi, PO Box 172, Topeka, KS 66601.

Justin A. Hockersmith '83
John C. Kuenzi '84
Kent M. Rettig '84
Douglas A. Steele '84
Karl J. Kunz '85
Dodge L. Wendler '91
Steven L. Flones '93
Chad B. Allsbury '94
Clinton A. Simon '95
Matthew J. David '96
Jason E. Leach '97
Michael W. Burson '99
Todd Noelle '02
Christopher Maldonado-Martinez '04
Andrew S. Maness '06
Braden M. Turner '06
Aleksandar G. Lange '08
Nathaniel E. Gardner '09

Gregory A. Martin '10
Eric Conner '12

YOUNG ALUMNI
Those initiated within the past 10 years
Skyler Kring '16
Keegan I. Bean '21
Braydon T. Miller '21

**\$19,300 was awarded to the
undergraduates as scholarships
in fall 2025.** If you'd like to
support the undergraduates
education efforts through the
Kappa Sigma Scholarship
fund, visit givecampus.com/campaigns/17409/donations/new