



# THE GAMMA-CHI GAZETTE

KAPPA SIGMA FRATERNITY AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | SPRING 2025

## Gamma-Chi Revamps Alumni/Chapter Communications Program

### WHAT TO EXPECT

**C**HANGE. When change is mentioned, what comes to your mind? Is it fear, skepticism, excitement, or even optimism? I feel that to change just to change is not a positive thing—and eventually, the organization will divert back to old or comfortable ways.

What if the Shamrocks had not petitioned Kappa Sigma to become a Chapter at Kansas State University back on June 7, 1919? Or if Kappa Sigma Nationals did not promote overall Chapter growth each year? Planned change can improve things like alumni and Chapter communications and other social opportunities, increase technical awareness and scholastic improvement, and promote overall Chapter growth and brotherhood opportunities.

Our Chapter has experienced a considerable amount of change over the past years, some good and some not so good, but TODAY it is experiencing very good things. Along with Chapter improvements, the alumni/undergraduate communication program must evolve. Over the past 24 years, **Justin Hockersmith '83** has been the keeper of Gamma-Chi's history/policies, as others were before him. Were it not for him and some other key brothers, we would have lost our colorful history when the College Heights house was lost. During that same period, our previous alumni association ceased functioning effectively. Despite this, Justin continued to provide communication and promote brotherhood, and other ad-hoc groups of alumni were formed. We thank our previous alumni association members for their service.

Today, the undergraduate Chapter is hungry to renew a strong relationship with alumni. Both groups could have seized opportunities to strengthen it over the years, but let's focus on the FUTURE! Let's come together and make Kappa Sigma the strongest fraternity at K-State. The undergraduate numbers are growing, and campus presence is increasing. A Chapter House, a strong KSU Foundation Endowment Fund (see Scholarship Section for more details), and a newly formed alumni association are just a few of the positive things happening at K-State.

To improve awareness of what is happening with both groups, we have partnered with Pennington & Company on Chapter communications. Justin will still be point, but we will have Pennington assist with mailings and other communications, like this twice-annual newsletter, as well as donations to keep our brotherhood strong. I am still amazed at how much Justin has done over the years and how much he knows about our Chapter.

As we welcome our new relationship with Pennington, don't forget the Gamma-Chi brothers who contributed so much over the Chapter's existence. I will leave you with this challenge: "Think about that brother that helped you while you were in school and repay that brotherhood by helping one undergraduate or brother in the future."

AEKDB,  
**Mike Gardner '82**

Contact **Michael Gardner '82** at [gardnermilo3@gmail.com](mailto:gardnermilo3@gmail.com), if interested in serving on the Alumni Board.



Brothers gather at the Falcon Valley Golf Course in Lenexa, Kansas, for the 18th annual Kappa Sigma/Gamma-Chi Golf and Social on June 21, 2024. Hope to see others at this summer's event!

## ALUMNI BOARD MEMBERS



President

**Mike Gardner '82**  
(816) 935-0701

Vice President/Treasurer  
**Stuart Scott '81**

Secretary

**Justin Hockersmith '83**

Risk Management  
**Karl Kunz '85**

Alumnus Advisor  
**Morgan Hastings '15**

Members

**Brad Crooks '83**  
**Doug Steele '84**



## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

*The fall 2024 pledge class gathers after initiation.*

# Fraternity, Family, and FUTURE

## Justin Hockersmith '83 Shares His Kappa Sigma Story

I arrived at Kansas State University as a farm kid with little knowledge of fraternities beyond TV stereotypes. I had no intention of joining one, but during my first year in Haymaker Hall, I realized that some fraternities weren't what I expected. Walking up the Kappa Sigma sidewalk during an "Elm Tree" party made a lasting impression, and after enjoying a formal dinner, I knew Gamma-Chi was where I wanted to be.

I was proud of the diverse backgrounds of the brothers in our Chapter and the exposure to so many different personalities. I appreciated the structure—meetings, accountability, study hours, a housemom, etiquette lessons, and campus and community involvement. These experiences broadened my horizons and prepared me for life after college. As an alumnus, my proudest moment has been seeing my son **Matthew '17** join our Chapter at KSU and become Grand Master.

With a Chapter our size, there was always something going on. If I ever felt bored, I would walk down the hallways and end up in someone's room, having a great time! Serving as an officer taught me responsibility and how to handle differing opinions—skills that have been invaluable in my career and personal life.

I earned a degree in radio/TV, inspired by a childhood dream of being a DJ. I worked at Bushwackers in Aggieville and interned at TV stations during college. However, by graduation, I had decided to go in a different direction. I earned a CIS degree from DeVry Institute at night and have now been in IT for 25 years, the past 10 as a software engineer at Security Benefit in Topeka.



Justin '83 and Matthew Hockersmith '17 enjoy a trip to the towers in Bologna—an unforgettable highlight for any Kappa Sig!

Kappa Sigma truly shaped my life in profound ways. Everything about who I am today stems from my time at KSU. It's how I met my wife, and many of my closest friends are Kappa Sigs. After initially being uninvolved, I eventually wanted to give back. Interacting with undergraduates and alumni reminded me of how similar our Fraternity experiences were, no matter the age.

To any alumni considering getting involved in 2025, I say don't hesitate! Our alumni group may not always have an immediate answer to "What can I do to help?" but don't let that stop you. Let us know your background, and we'll find a way to get you involved. It starts with getting in touch, attending meetings, and sharing how you'd like to contribute. When I look at composites or lists of brothers from my era, I am struck by how many I haven't seen or heard from since college. It's easy to lose touch, but even a small effort to reconnect will lead to finding brothers who are happy to reminisce about the good ol' days!

I now live on seven acres in the country, where I enjoy upkeep and outdoor projects. I'm a "car guy," passionate about racing, including NASCAR and NHRA, and I love '70s Pontiac muscle cars. I moved to Kansas City after graduation, got married in 1991, and have two grown children. Spending time with family and enjoying my hobbies brings me great joy.

If you'd like to catch up or find out more about you can get involved as an alumnus, email me at [jah4ksu@yahoo.com](mailto:jah4ksu@yahoo.com).

## Kappa Sigma Scholarships

Gamma-Chi has a scholarship fund set up with the Kansas State University Foundation that is valued at approximately \$390,000. Scholarships valued at \$21,115 were awarded last fall semester, followed by \$20,250 this spring. Those recipients are listed below. This helps our undergraduates with their education efforts and is a valuable recruiting tool. If you would like to donate to this tax-deductible fund, visit [givecampus.com/campaigns/17409/donations/new](http://givecampus.com/campaigns/17409/donations/new).

### EVAN L. DAVIS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Troy Robinson '22  
Adam Ebenstein '23  
Connor Leach '23  
Creighton Moes '23  
Tanner Samyn '23  
Nathan Starke '23  
Brogan Willcott '23  
Patrick Donnelly '24  
Tanner Gooden '24  
Makao Groneman '24  
Curtsy Kingston '24  
Sam Schellhase '24  
Jack Seal '24  
Chase Sipiora '24

### STAR AND CRESCENT COMMUNITY SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Byron Sides '22  
Zander Arheart '24  
Patrick Donnelly '24  
Tanner Gooden '24  
Makao Groneman '24

### CHAMPION QUEST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT Jordan Blanchat '23

### JOHN COVERT BOYD HOUSE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT Brogan Willcott '23

The **Stephen Alonzo Jackson Brotherhood** and the **Larry "Silent Sam" Sutton Most Improved Brother Scholarships** are annually given and will be announced at this year's Pig Dinner on **April 26**. We would love to see you there!

# Thank You, STACY!

**A**t the spring 2025 Pig Dinner (April 26), Gamma-Chi is excited to be recognizing beloved Housemother **Stacy Shaffer** for 20 years of dedicated service. Thank you for everything, Stacy! We're so grateful you're a part of our Chapter's success story. Look for an upcoming eblast outlining her years of dedication.

Troy Robinson '22 with Coach Jerome Tang holding "Tangy" Sunny D Orange Juice! (Get it?)



Winners of the 2024 Zeta Tau Alpha Big Man on Campus Philanthropy Week.



Our brothers proudly show off their awards at the 2024 Leadership Conference last summer in New Orleans. Awards won that night include Outstanding Communication and (for the third-consecutive year) 100% Ritual Proficiency.



KSU Yell Leader Byron Sides '22 with his grandparents, Karen and Jerry Sides, Gamma-Nu '64.



Proud of our Student Senators! From left: Mitchael Casement '22, Daniel Polanco '23, and Byron Sides '22.



Renzo Canzano '23 (center) "getting some air" as the brothers practice their annual serenades performance.

# SERVING AS LEADERS

## Undergraduates Highlight Current Success

Over the past year, Gamma-Chi has continued rebuilding the Chapter through great efforts.

### NEW MEMBERS

The work of then-Recruitment Chairman **Jordan Blanchat '23** led to 33 new members in 2024, doubling our membership from the previous year. We currently have seven signed bids for spring 2025 and are still recruiting. Recruitment Chairman **Ty Bleckinger '24** and Assistant Recruitment Chairman **Chase Sipiora '24** have begun recruiting for fall far earlier than we did last year, with three fall 2025 bids signed already.

### HELPING OTHERS

The Chapter raised over \$22,000 toward philanthropic causes as well as completed 1,540 hours of community service (28 per member) in 2024. We held and competed in multiple events, one of which was Donuts for a Difference with Chi Omega, which raised \$400. We also won Zeta Tau Alpha's Big Man on Campus philanthropy week and were the 2024 Homecoming Week champions.

### DEVELOPING LEADERS

Our most notable Brothers in Action event was hosting KSU Men's Basketball Coach Jerome Tang!

The coach spoke at a Chapter meeting, discussing leadership and how the values in his basketball program could be applied in our Chapter. Other Brothers in Action events included a career and résumé workshop from the Kansas State Career Center, a Beers Aren't Bad speaker, the Green Bandana Project for mental health, and a basketball tournament.

### ACADEMICS

At the end of 2024, Gamma-Chi averaged 2.37 Ritual Proficiencies per brother, which was over the 2.25 benchmarks for maximum points toward a FACE Award. In the classroom, 44 percent of members achieved at least a 3.25 GPA.

It was a positive year for the Chapter, and with so many freshman and sophomore members, our ceiling for growth in the next few years is quite high. It has been exhilarating to see the Chapter's growth and progress over the last year alone, and I cannot wait to see what is to come.



AKDB,  
**Nathan Starke '23**  
Grand Master

## CHAPTER GOALS FOR SPRING 2025

1

Obtain **14 spring pledges**, which is double the current spring recruitment record and hits our HQ recruitment goal of 40 pledges for the school year.

2

Surpass K-State all-men's GPA of **3.32**.

3

Increase Chapter participation in other Greek campus events by **25%**.

Pigeons eating grain from Stuart Scott's '81 hands in Milan, Italy.



**Robert "Ed" Schultz '58** shares, "My grandson, Kevin, is a Kappa Sigma who was initiated at the University of Colorado chapter." Email: schultzep@sbcglobal.net

**Jim W. Price '59** moved to his hometown of Baxter Springs, Kan., in December 2024. Email: jpntop@hotmail.com

**F. Lynn Markel '60** recently marked 24 years at Koch, the last 13 as CFO. He is pleased to be married to his K-State Sweetheart for 62-plus years. "We're both healthy and enjoying our four children, seven grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. We spend two months every year in Maui, Hawaii. I have great memories of Gamma-Chi college years." Email: flmarkel@yahoo.com

**Rick J. Eichor '62** shares that he is retired now and helped start a chapter at the University of Hawaii (Omicron-Zeta) in 2005, further serving

as AA for 7 or 8 years. The O-Z chapter is doing well! Email: reichor@yahoo.com

**Phil D. Gettig '64** is enjoying retirement with his wife and former Stardust Queen, Pam. They've been married for 58-plus years. Email: philip.gettig@att.net

**Prof. Ward V. Wells '65** retired after 40 years in Architecture at Texas A&M University. He was the 2004 KSU Alumni Fellow (Distinguished Alumni) and is in the University of Oklahoma Architecture Hall of Fame. Currently, he is a fundraiser for seven community centers and is a member of the Rotary Club of College Station. Email: ward\_diane\_wells@me.com

**Robert C. Matthews Jr. '66** spent 42 years with Commerce Bancshares (HQ in KC/STL), 22 of those as a chief credit officer and risk

# ALUMNI NEWS



officer. He retired in Naples, Fla. "K-State and Kappa Sigma created incredible opportunities for me. AEKDB."

Email: rematthewsjr@aol.com

**Greg E. Frank '74** will retire in December 2025 after 42 years in the insurance business. Email: gfrank@centerplainsagency.com.

**Brian Bednar '79** lives in Scottsdale, Ariz., and after working for 29 years with Salt River Project, he will be retiring in May 2025. Brian will remain involved on the Fiesta Board of Directors, K-State Foundation Trustee Board, and with Kappa Sigma's Desert Southwest chapters.

**D. Keith "L.J." Johnson, DVM '80** shares, "I'm still busy working/running my small animal vet practice in Naples, Fla." Email: ljksuvet@gmail.com

**Rev. J. Doug Burford '81** is now counseling couples as trained by the Gottman Institute. Email: doug@dougburford.com

**Jim Lipari '82** lives in Ft. Worth, Texas, with his wife, Mimi. Both of their sons, Mike and Alex, have families. Jim is a proud grandfather of three grandchildren. He has worked in wealth management for over 38 years and is currently a senior VP at United Bank of Switzerland.

**Shaun Roberts '90** lives in Lenexa, Kan., with his wife, Hope, and their five kids. He is a data architect for BJC Health System.



Mike Gardner '82 alligator hunting in Florida! This crossed off another "bucket list" item since Mike's retirement in May 2022.

# Why Kappa Sigma?

Hear from Some of Our Newest Members

*"I became friends with three members, and through them I realized it was the right brotherhood for me."*

—Colin Scarbrough

*"I knew some Kappa Sig alumni growing up, and they gave me a strong first impression."*

—Alec Bray

*"For the networking opportunities and to be a part of something bigger than myself. It also helps that our guys are nice."*

—Zach Miller

*"I enjoyed getting to know these brothers the most, and I felt they really cared about getting to know me too."*

—Makao Groneman

*"I could see the brothers were truly committed to their philanthropy and service events, and I always felt at home as I was visiting them."*

—Jack Seal

## CHAPTER CELESTIAL

**Ronald V. Anderson '52** – April 15, 2023

**Calvin J. Nickols '54** – January 8, 2023

**Roger L. Flint '55** – April 21, 2024

**Larry F. Crown '59** – April 21, 2024

**James "Jimmy" Gardner '59** – March 11, 2017

**Larry "Sam" Sutton '60** – August 3, 2024

**Arthur F. Schmidt Jr. '66** – April 31, 2024

**Daniel M. Hazzard '75** – December 11, 2023



WE'RE PUTTING  
OUT THE  
WELCOME SIGN!

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

Grand Master

**Nathan Starke '23**

Grand Procurator

**Dayne Balmer '23**

Grand Master of Ceremonies

**Jordan Blanchat '23**

Grand Treasurer

**Jack Seal '24**

Grand Scribe

**Zach Miller '24**

Know Someone Who  
Should Be Here?

We're always looking for promising young men to bring into Gamma-Chi and would appreciate recommendations of men you know who would be a good fit.

Send their info to **Ty Bleckinger '24** at [tyb1@ksu.edu](mailto:tyb1@ksu.edu) or (816) 274-1247.

# GAMMA-CHI HAS SOMETHING NEW GOING ON!

**E**njoy the first edition of our new newsletter, *The Gamma-Chi Gazette*.

Inside, you'll find:

- Updates on alumni.
- A spotlight article on a featured alumnus.
- What the undergraduate Chapter has been up to recently.
- Information on our new communications partnership.
- Ways you can be involved in this new Chapter for Gamma-Chi.

We can't wait to strengthen our connections throughout our brotherhood!

## SAVE THE DATES

Our **2025 Pig Dinner** is on **April 26**.

Join us for this summer's **19th annual Kappa Sigma/4Gamma-Chi Golf and Social** (and check out a picture from 2024's event on page 1!). Date and more info to come.

**September 27, 2025**  
Alumni Football Tailgate  
*KSU Wildcats vs UCF Knights*



# THE GAMMA-CHI GAZETTE

**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
OF GAMMA-CHI**  
**PO BOX 172**  
**TOPEKA, KS 66601-0172**

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## THANK YOU, LOYAL ALUMNI

### YOUR DUES SUPPORT GAMMA-CHI

**W**e are extremely grateful to the following alumni for their annual dues payments in 2024. These financial contributions support alumni events, alumni directory maintenance, and future mailings through our Pennington partnership.

Young alumni can participate by contributing \$50 annually, with older brothers giving \$100.

Larger or additional contributions to our Dues Plus program are also appreciated. You can give online at [kappasigmaksu.causevox.com](http://kappasigmaksu.causevox.com) or mail a check to:

Alumni Association of Gamma-Chi  
PO Box 172  
Topeka, KS 66601-0172

If you feel an error has been made in recording your gift, we sincerely apologize. Please advise our campaign coordinator at [jwhite@penningtonco.com](mailto:jwhite@penningtonco.com) so that we may make a correction. Thank you for your support!

#### Young Alumni (\$50)

*Those initiated within the last 10 years*  
Skyler Kring '16  
Bean Keagan '21

#### Alumni (\$100)

Wendell "Al" Wright '53  
Ken Ingram '58  
Martin Connell '60  
Lynn F. Markel '60  
Rick Eichor '62  
Ronald Boyer '64  
Phil Gettig '64  
Fred Wulff '64  
Robert Matthews '66  
Mike Adams '68  
Scott Chapman '68  
Maurice Kancel '69  
Robert Landon '70  
Paul Zimmerman '70  
Don Bonewitz '72  
Roger Commer '72  
Steve Dunaway '72

Steve Sollner '72

Bill Jauernig '73  
Steve Sterling '75  
Steve Stoltenberg '75  
Mark Boxberger '79  
Tom Rinner 79

Keith "LJ" Johnson '80

Scott McMillan '81  
Stuart Scott '81  
Paul Campbell '82  
Michael Gardner '82  
Mark Porter '82  
Justin A. Hockersmith '83  
Kent Rettig 84

Doug Steele '84  
Karl Kunz '85  
Steve Flones '93  
Chad Allsbury '94  
Clint Simon '95  
Matthew David '96  
Jason Leach '97  
Mike Burson '99  
Todd Noelle '02  
Chris Maldonado-Martinez '04

Andrew Maness '06  
Braden Turner '06  
Aleks Lange '08  
Nathan Gardner '09  
Greg Martin '10  
Eric Conner '12

#### Dues Plus

Lynn F. Markel '60  
Fred Wulff '64  
Mike Adams '68  
Maurice Kancel '69  
Steve Sterling '75  
Stuart Scott '81  
Michael Gardner '82  
Todd Noelle '02



SCAN  
HERE!