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# Gamma Zeta News

Gamma Zeta Chapter of Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity

University of Illinois

[www.atoillinois.com](http://www.atoillinois.com)

May 2016

## UNDERGRADUATE LEADERSHIP REPORT

### Chapter Makes Strides to Reclaim ATO's Reputation

#### *Undergraduate Members Continue to Excel Academically, Philanthropically, and Athletically*

This semester, Gamma Zeta underwent necessary and beneficial cultural changes to reclaim Alpha Tau Omega's reputation at the University of Illinois.

Following the membership review last semester, I was elected Worthy Master. After accepting this position, I made it my responsibility to redirect the chapter. Our newly elected executive committee and I acknowledged the seriousness of our situation and the necessity to eliminate the harmful cultural habits regarding hazing.

Specifically, we have developed a new member program which helps and supports our new members as they acclimate to the demanding academic requirements and many new opportunities and challenges of university life. Our program's focus is completely changed. Our goal is to teach our new members how to leverage all of the resources of the fraternity to be more successful at the University of Illinois and in life rather than forcing them to "earn" their way into the fraternity. Hazing of any kind is no longer involved. I can personally vouch for the remaining core membership that we are all men who aspire to lead and not belittle. We are committed to building upon the rich history of Gamma Zeta rather than merely living off of it.

We have also refocused our efforts on academic, philanthropic, athletic and campus leadership excellence. We're proud of what we've accomplished this semester and have



**Members of the Gamma Zeta Chapter at Theta Hoops event**

included highlights elsewhere in this newsletter. We hope you will be proud of the direction we have taken our chapter too.

Overall, the attitude and culture has shifted within Gamma Zeta as we aim to be recognized as positive leaders on campus and in the community. I know I can speak on behalf of the current members that we are more motivated than ever to continue to excel.

We also intend to recruit members who can uphold our new attitudes and values. This is where we can use your help. If you know of young men who will be attending the University of Illinois next fall who you believe have the potential to be future leaders of our fraternity, our campus and the community, please contact our Rush Chairman [Chris Klos](mailto:cklos45@yahoo.com) ([cklos45@yahoo.com](mailto:cklos45@yahoo.com), 630-880-7747) or me [Austin Okuno](mailto:austinokuno@gmail.com) ([austinokuno@gmail.com](mailto:austinokuno@gmail.com), 847-204-6931) with their information and we'll reach out to them.

Ultimately, the strides we have taken this semester should not be overlooked as the achievements exemplify our changed attitude and culture. I cannot thank everyone enough for their continued support with recruitment, the mentorship program, donations and overall upkeep of our chapter. We hope you share our excitement for the future of Gamma Zeta!

VTL,

[Austin Okuno '18](#), Worthy Master

## Chapter Raises Thousands of Dollars Through

### Philanthropy

In the past year, the Gamma Zeta chapter has expanded their philanthropy efforts significantly. Events this year included a Casino Night on Dad's weekend, a blood drive with The American Red Cross, and an afternoon barbecue to help benefit the Service Dogs Organization on campus.

Members also continued their signature event, the Alpha Tau Omega-Pi Kappa Alpha Hockey Game, and held their yearly auction during Mom's weekend in the spring. One new event members instituted this year was the Relay for Life Walk, where current members paired up with the Tri-Delta sorority to help with the fight against cancer. The external philanthropy chair of the house has also improved relations with other philanthropy chairs around campus in an attempt to get our members to participate in more events held by other houses. The internal philanthropy chair also organized a new program with the Hope Center, the local food pantry, to send current members there twice a week to volunteer. Each member dedicated five hours this semester to serving at the food pantry.

We have also raised \$21,000 to host our new Signature Event next fall with Feed My Starving Children and 400 other fraternity and sorority members. We also held a blood drive with American Red Cross and the Illinites at our chapter house. This event was so successful that the facilitators ran out of supplies to collect blood. To continue, we held our third annual Alpha Tau Omega vs. Pike hockey game, which raised over \$2,500 for Wounded Warriors. We also recently hosted our first Alpha Dog event that allowed students to relieve final exam stress with Illini Service Dogs and hot dogs.

### Academics

A main goal of the Gamma Zeta chapter this year was to improve the academic standing of current members. This semester, 12 members made the Dean's List, an award given to students with a GPA greater than 3.70. Additionally, 10 members made the Honor Roll, which is given to students who earn a GPA of



**Gamma Zetas participate in the PriceWaterhouseCooper Challenge Case Competition**

3.50-3.70.

Throughout the year, members also participated in several case competitions hosted by several corporations. These included the PriceWaterhouseCooper Challenge Case Competition, where members earned runner up for their efforts, and the KPMG case competition, where they earned a Top 6 team title for their work.

Each year, the best academic members of the chapter are also awarded with scholarships, which are given by a number of alumni from the chapter. This year's winners were, **Matthew Stemper '18**, who was awarded the Richard V. Clausing Scholarship, **Jerry Huang '17**, the David S. Timson Scholarship, **Alex Schwartz '15**, the J.D. Sinnock Scholarship, **Sam Selby '17**, the Fredrich C. Philbrick Scholarship, and **Mitch Talbot '17**, the Matt Heldman Scholarship.

All this hard work paid off, because during the spring semester, members were notified that they had earned the highest average GPA of all fraternities on the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign campus. **Brandon Gilligan '19** was also awarded Academic All-Big Ten as a part of the Illinois men's wrestling team.

### Sports

This year, members of the Gamma Zeta



**Gamma Zetas take 3rd and 4th place at Kappa Delta Dodgeball tournament**



**Gamma Zetas take second place at Alpha Chi Omega paintball event.**

chapter participated in a number of sporting events, including the Theta Hoops Challenge, where current members took first place, and Kappa Delta Dodge ball, where they took the 3rd and 4th places. They also participated in the Alpha Gamma Delta Volleyball tournament, taking home the runner up title, the Phi Sigma Sigma Golf outing, taking home first place honors, and Alpha Chi Omega paintball, taking home second place.

Additionally, members played in the UIUC Men's Intramural League and made it to the Elite 8 round of the competition. Among the numerous awards received by members this year, **Brandon Gilligan '19** participated, with the Illinois wrestling team, in the Joe Parisi Open, earning a 1-2 record in the tournament. He also earned Academic All-Big Ten for his academic efforts during this past year.

## Philanthropy Events, Maintains Strong GPA.



**Members of the Gamma Zeta Chapter participate in the ATO Pursuit Program in April.**



**Gamma Zetas participate in Stride for Survivors Walk.**



**Gamma Zetas participate in Leadership Academy.**

### Mentor Program

The Mentor Program has also taken strides in the past semester that have surpassed the goals set by previous semesters. As of now, 75% of Gamma Zeta members are currently in-touch with their respected mentor. The other 25% are currently in the process of getting new mentors, as previous arrangements did not work out. Gamma Zeta takes pride in this program because many members have been given incredible offers as a result of it. **Chris Klos '18** has received an offer to job shadow at Rolling Stones. **Matthew Stemper '18** obtained an internship at Draper and Kramer. **Joe Grazioso '16** has been offered an internship at Strata Decision Technology. **Matthew Kovatchis '18** has also received an offer for an internship from Harmer and Associates.

Along with these offers, mentors have also been critiquing their mentee's resumes. Some mentors have even been sending emails to the Gamma Zeta chapter with interview tips and other lessons to be learned as members begin to enter the professional world. These relationships are getting stronger by the week, and we hope they will continue to grow as we move forward.

### Campus Leadership

Gamma Zeta has shown more leadership this year among campus groups than the past few semesters combined. Our chapter has several members in the RSO: "Chief Investing Group." We even hold three of the head positions in this RSO, which are president, vice president, and treasurer. These positions are held by **Matthew Grens '18**, **Matthew Stemper '18**, and **Austin Okuno '18** respectively. We also propagated a "Stride for Survivors" walk around the quad which was for all those affected, directly or indirectly, by Sexual Assault. Additionally, members of the Gamma Zeta Chapter participated in the ATO Pursuit program on April 2. During the program, both active and alumni members gained valuable self-awareness skills and learned how to connect with brothers in the chapter.

Our very own president, **Austin Okuno '18** attended the president's retreat for not only UIUC but also for Alpha Tau Omega Nationals. We also have four members on our leadership team, including **Bobby Dunn '19**, **Sean Ewert '19**, **Colin Michaels '19**, and **Daniel Reinke '19**. Along with these accomplishments, we had four members participate in an all-day leadership conference for fraternity and sorority affairs. These members were **Justice Odom '19**, **Chris Klos '18**, **Nick Taylor '19**, and **Quinn Gaughan '19**.

Several Brothers Receive Distinguished Honors, Mission Trip

Bill Barry Named Chicago Illini of the Year



Bill "BB" Barry is named 2016 Chicago Illini of the Year during a celebration at the University Club



On March 8, we came together to celebrate Bill "BB" Barry being named one of the 2016 Chicago Illini of the Year at the University Club. BB is the 5th Gamma Zeta to receive this honor, joining Ron Bess '68, Jack Klues '77, Tom Tunney '77, and Cary McMillan '80. Former winners, Ron and Tom, were there to congratulate BB, along with about 25 other brothers. It was also announced that the event received the largest turnout in its history.

Gold Star Memorial: "Brothers By Choice, Not By the Accident of Birth"



October 3 dedication of a memorial for the 22 Gold Star Gamma Zetas who sacrificed their lives for our country.

On October 3, we dedicated a memorial to the 22 Gold Star Gamma Zetas who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country while serving in the military. Rear Admiral William Masters '65, retired, and Norm Bilsbury '92 presided over the ceremony. Brian Grant '65 took the lead in developing the plaques.

On each of the plaques, the phrase "Brothers by choice, not by the accident of birth," was inscribed. William Masters made remarks during the ceremony, and noted that each of the men being honored chose to become a member of the Gamma Zeta Chapter and that experience contributed to their decision to put themselves in harm's way in order to defend their country.

New Display Case to Honor Bruce Capel



Bruce Capel display case in the main concourse of the athletic complex

The Capel family is pleased to share that University of Illinois now has a display case featuring our Gentle Giant, Bruce Capel '65, who was a second lieutenant and made honorable sacrifices during his time in the service 50 years ago. The display is currently located in the athletic complex in the main concourse.



2nd Lieutenant Bruce Capel

The athletic director is adding large plaque featuring nearly 50 recipients of the Bruce Capel Award of Courage along with a short description of the award to be placed on the

wall beside the display case. Bruce continues to participate in recruiting for the Fighting Illini.

25th Annual Holiday Happy Hour



Gamma Zetas enjoy the 25th Annual Holiday Happy Hour at the Highline Bar and Lounge in Chicago

Gamma Zetas gathered at the Highline Bar and Lounge in Chicago last night for our 25th Annual Holiday Happy Hour. Thanks to Craig Nadborne '78 for coordinating and to Matt Menna's '93 crew at the Highline for taking great care of us. Everyone had a great time, and the appetizers were a big hit.

Craig Nadborne Inducted into Midwest Real Estate News' Commercial Real Estate Hall of Fame



Craig Nadborne

We're thrilled to announce that Craig Nadborne '78, Senior Managing Director of Bradford Allen Realty Services/TCN Worldwide, was recently inducted into Midwest Real Estate News' Commercial Real Estate Hall of Fame.

Craig joined Bradford Allen in 2007, bringing more than 30 years of experience with him. During his career in real estate, Craig was extremely successful, closing over 600 transactions, which valued over \$36 million.

In addition to this award, Craig has also

## to Honduras a Success, March Madness Results, and More!

been given several other distinguished titles over the years. These include, Board Member of Chicago House and Social Service Agency, President of the Chicago Business Network, and President of Chicago Networking Group.

“We are honored to announce that Craig Nadborne has been inducted into Midwest Real Estate News’ Commercial Real Estate Hall of Fame,” said Ross Ford, president and CEO of TCN Worldwide. “Craig’s commitment to underrepresented organizations and over three decades of success as a real estate professional have set him apart as one of the industry’s most impressive leaders. TCN Worldwide is honored to count him among the most esteemed representatives of our membership. Congratulations, Craig!”

### Gamma Zeta Alums Help Save Children in Honduras



**Dr. Tom Sullivan '78 and Dr. Seth Berl '78 pose with students during their mission trip in Honduras.**

**Dr. Tom Sullivan '78** and **Dr. Seth Berl '78** recently returned from a medical/dental mission trip to Honduras. Gamma Zeta alumni donated over \$2,000 towards medications for it, and without this support, the trip wouldn't have been possible. Seth said that the donations were originally supposed to send one or two extra members to Honduras, but due to a lack of interest, the money was used to purchase extra medicine.

“We normally buy about \$14,000 in wholesale medicine that would cost about \$258,000 in retail. We buy through specific mission organization and buying more medication turned out to be a very good decision,” he said. He also noted that the group

usually sees roughly 1000 medical patients and 200 dental patients per week. “Week one this year we saw 1191 in medical clinic. The amazing thing was in week two, we saw 1650, and by far the most we have ever seen in my 13 years of going,” he said.

This means that if the group hadn't had the money to purchase extra medication, and they would have only been able to treat half of the patients that came in week two. “Your donations prove that we stick together when something is important. Thank you again my brothers for your generosity. Trust me when I say that, without some of your donations, many kids in southwest Honduras would be dead before we returned next year,” Seth said.

### Which of Your Brothers Have Received the Bronze Tablet Award Over The Years?



**The Bronze Tablet has been recognizing students who received university honors since 1925.**

The University of Illinois began the tradition of inscribing Bronze Tablets with the names of students receiving University Honors back in 1925. A new tablet is hung in the Main Library each year, and the inscriptions on them recognize sustained academic achievement by undergraduate students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. According to the Student Code, students must have at least a 3.5 cumulative grade point-average through the academic term prior to graduation and rank in the top three percent of the students in their graduating class.

The following Gamma Zetas have received this distinguished award over the years:

- Thomas R. Crews '49**
- Robert E. Vogele '50**
- Michael W. Sonnemaker '71**

- William T. “BB” Barry '77**
- Robert J. Tolliver '78**
- William D. Forsyth '86**
- Rodney L. Anderson '90**
- Stephan M. Hoppe '02**
- Anthony R. Pedota '12**

If you know of other Gamma Zetas who have been recognized with the Bronze Tablet, please email [daneluhrsen@gmail.com](mailto:daneluhrsen@gmail.com)

### Rob Rugg Inducted into Redhawk Athletic Hall of Fame



**Rob Rugg '79 (left) pictured with his family after his induction into the Redhawk Athletic Hall of Fame.**

We'd like to congratulate **Rob Rugg '79** on his induction into the Naperville Central HS Athletic Hall of Fame! On Friday, January 22, an induction ceremony took place at the end of the sophomore boys' basketball game vs. Wheaton North. Congratulations, Rob!

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual March Madness Bracket Raises Over \$1,200 for Traditions Fund

Congrats to the winners of our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Tau Madness NCAA Tournament Bracket Challenge. The lucky guys are listed below. We'd like to thank everyone who participated. While having a little fun, we managed to raise over \$1,200 for our traditions fund.

- 1st - **Jim Vainisi '17** and **Jack Klues '77** - \$750
- 2nd - **Bill “BB” Barry '77** - \$312.50
- 3rd - **John Amyond '80** - \$187.5

## Zach Matseshe '13



**Zachary Matseshe**

Zachary James Matseshe, born May 8, 1991 in Lake Forest, passed away March 7, 2016 in Chicago. Zachary attended Stevenson High School, and then went on to receive his bachelor and master degrees in accounting from University of Illinois. He

obtained his C.P.A. and worked for EY in Chicago.

Surviving are his parents Dr. John and Diana of Lincolnshire; his MorMor Betty Lieberman of Libertyville; siblings Alex and Hanna Matseshe of Lincolnshire, Lily (Peter) Wegasa of Austin, Tx, Carolyn Matseshe Crawford of Chicago and Andrew (Julie) Matseshe of California; his Aunts Christina Beska of Elmwood Park, Brenda (Michael) Walton of Austin, Tx, Michelle Lieberman of Arlington Hts; and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews.

## Charlie Palmer '53



**Charlie Palmer**

Charles "Charlie" Palmer, 84, died at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana on January 13, 2016, after suffering from a stroke at the Windsor of Savoy, where he had been living for a little over a year.

Charlie went to the University of Illinois for his undergraduate and law degrees, with military service intervening in his legal education. He served in the Army and spent time in an intelligence unit in Alaska.

Although he spent most of his 53-year legal career in private practice at the Champaign firm, which bore his name, Franklin, Flynn and Palmer, he also served as an assistant Champaign County state's attorney, an assistant city of Champaign attorney, and as outside counsel to the University of Illinois.

## Tom James '74



**Tom James**

Thomas C. James, 63, of Owatonna, Minn., passed away at his home from natural causes on November 24, 2015. He is survived by daughter Lauren, sons Andrew and Curtis, brothers

Mark, Brian, David, and Michael, step-mother Phyllis, step-brother Todd, step-sister Diana, along with several nieces and nephews. His mother, Shirley Tomlin, and father, J. Robert James, preceded him in death.

Born on December 27, 1951 in Taylorville, Ill., Tom was an avid athlete and dedicated student. He graduated from Taylorville High School in 1970, where he lettered in basketball and was a starter on the team. Tom went on to earn a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of

Illinois in 1974, where he played basketball and was an active member of ATO. He also served on the Executive Board for the university's Panhellenic Council, a leadership group overseeing fraternities and sororities on campus. He went on to pursue a career in banking and finance. A lifelong sports fan, Tom was also known for his culinary skills and big appetite. True to his motto, nobody ever left his house hungry.

## C. Donald Ainsworth '42



**C. Donald Ainsworth**

C. Donald Ainsworth, who was initiated as a member of ATO Gamma Zeta in 1939, passed away in November. Don was a great guy and a loyal and active member of our fraternity for his whole life. Last

spring, we presented him with his Diamond Circle Certificate at a luncheon in St. Louis. The certificate was extremely special, as it symbolized his 75 years of membership to ATO.

Ainsworth graduated from Illinois in 1942, after which he served as an FBI agent and a cryptographer for the U.S. Navy. He then graduated from the Washington University Law School and went into the insurance business, where he served as the insurance commissioner for the State of Missouri. In addition, he has served on the Kirkwood, Missouri City Council, as president of the Kirkwood Chamber of Commerce and various other boards and committees.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES



### Can You Caption This Photo?

We found this throwback photo on our ATO Facebook page, and we'd like to see if you can caption it. Are you in this photo? Do you know who is in it? Let us know by sending an email to [alumninews@affinityconnection.com](mailto:alumninews@affinityconnection.com) and be sure to send us your own throwback photos!