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G-O LITE

SUMMER 2024



Collecting awards and recognition from the SEC at the annual banquet

Gamma-O Awarded 5th-Straight FACE Award

New Orleans, LA – Gamma-Omicron has had another exceptional year, the fifth straight year in which the chapter has earned the coveted FACE award. The Founder’s Award for Chapter Excellence is awarded to the top 10% of chapters in the fraternity that have distinguished themselves across such programs as Champion Quest (recruitment), A Greater Cause (community service and philanthropy), ritual excellence, scholarship, and more. In July, several chapter undergrads and alumni attended the Leadership Conference in New Orleans for a weekend of training and an awards dinner at which they brought home the chapter FACE award, recognition as a top 25 recruiting chapter, certificate for 100% ritual proficiency, as well as individual awards for Outstanding Grand Treasurer (Bryce Renfro), Outstanding Grand Scribe (Hayden Toubia), Outstanding Grand Procurator (Luke Billingsley) and Outstanding District Grand Master (Cory Sims).

Some key stats about your winning Gamma-Omicron chapter in 2023-2024:

- Chapter GPA – 3.35 (all-men’s average is 3.15).
- 100% of members have one certificate of ritual proficiency; 97% have 2 or more.
- More than \$20,000 donated to charity.
- \$5000 raised for the chapter scholarship fund; 100% of undergrads donated.
- 70 new pledges; Kappa Sigma is the largest fraternity at the University of Kansas.



We need more hands for all this hardware!



Our undergrads enjoying the sights in New Orleans

Published by Gamma-Omicron of Kappa Sigma, founded May 18, 1912 in Lawrence, Kansas.

Please direct all news for the G-O Lite to P.O. Box 25251, Overland Park, Kansas 66225 or e-mail KappaSigma@Gamma-O.org

UNDERGRADUATE OFFICERS

Grand Master

Hayden Toubia '22

Grand Procurator

Luke Billingsly '22

Grand Master of Ceremonies

Gavin Mcaftery '22

Grand Scribe

Waseem Mansi '22

Grand Treasurer

Bryce Renfro '22

ADVISORY BOARD

District Grand Master

Cory Sims '04

Alumnus Advisor

Justin Cohen '05

HOUSE CORPORATION

President and Chairman

Nick Lombardi '02

Vice President

Dave Steen '68

Treasurer

Todd Witt '07

Secretary

Justin Cohen '05

Board Members

Tom Robinett '69

Bob Robinett '70

Mike Clay '71

Dave Gast '79

Robert Hagg '98

Billy Brandtonies '02

Brian Harrison '05

Robert Lutz '05

Daniel Heady '07

Educational Foundation Board

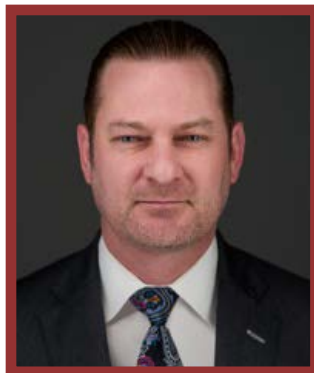
John Davis '62

Ed Grass '77

John Hanahan '87

CHAIR house corporation REPORT

Nick Lombardi '02, President & Chairman



Greetings brothers,

The end of this academic year marks a continuation of the standard of excellence we have thankfully come to expect from the men of Gamma-Omicron. The Chapter has also forged a path of independence as we have disaffiliated from the University of Kansas and joined the Kansas Fraternity Leadership Council (KFLC) as a replacement to IFC. KFLC is comprised of the largest fraternity chapters at KU and is focused on student-centric leadership with the guidance of engaged alumni. That guidance has been helmed

in part by our brothers Dave Steen and Tom Robinett without whom this monumental shift could not be accomplished. This effort to strengthen the leadership core of KU's fraternities is long overdue and will provide a significant impact for our officers and the Chapter at large.

We're all very proud of the chapter winning its fifth-straight FACE award, and we are now the largest fraternity at the University of Kansas in terms of active membership on campus. This has been accomplished by the dedicated work of the undergraduate rush team over the past year and the tireless efforts of our former Alumnus Advisor, now District Grandmaster, Cory Sims. The draw of Gamma-Omicron reflects directly on the quality of leadership of the undergraduates, the irreplaceable charisma of our House Director, Patricia Harbaugh, and the implementation of the ideals of Kappa Sigma.

This summer we will be renovating doors, flooring and many of the systems of the Chapter House in order to ensure quality operations for years to come. These improvements are not possible without high numbers of membership and we continue to reinvest in our Chapter House so that it may continue to be a gathering place for the actives and alumni of Gamma-O. If you have not been by the house recently, I invite you to pop in next time you are in Lawrence— the undergrads love it when alumni show up and it's vital to the legacy of Gamma-Omicron -- alumni are always welcome!

To that end, if you are interested in volunteering for the betterment of the Chapter, I encourage you to contact me directly to get involved and make an impact on the lives of these young men. Not only is it a worthwhile experience, but the beneficial influence of Kappa Sigma is truly a wonderful thing to see in action. I hope you and your families have a wonderful summer, safe travels if you are vacationing and we look forward to a successful fall semester!

A.E.K..B.
Nick Lombardi, '03
Chairman
Gamma-Omicron, Inc.



GRAND MASTER REPORT



Hayden Toubia '22, Grand Master

The Gamma-Omicron Chapter at the University of Kansas had a great 2023 year, initiating 42 gentlemen into our brotherhood, with the 2024 spring pledge class sitting at a Gamma-Omicron record high of 19 young men. The newly initiated freshman and sophomore class are already taking leadership roles, contributing to various positions like kitchen manager, t-shirt chairman, rush, social, philanthropy, and community service committee. The new 2023-2024 executive committee is composed of Grandmaster Hayden Toubia, Grand Procurator Luke Billingsley, Grand Treasurer Bryce Renfro, Grand Master of Ceremonies Jack Osterman, and Grand Scribe Jake Reed.

Gamma-Omicron had the privilege to host the 2024 District Conclave in Lawrence Kansas at the KU Alumni Center. Lead and put together by District Grand Master, Cory Sims, Gamma-Omicron members networked with other Kappa Sigma brothers, listened to guest speakers like Stephan Simmons, Justin Cohen and Worthy Grand Treasurer Lionel de la Houssaye about Kappa Sigma rush process, the code of conduct, and rituals. Gamma-Omicron helped sponsor the philanthropy event by providing necessary materials. Brothers of Gamma-Omicron chapter also just finished our annual participation in the Stephen Alonzo Jackson weekend reaching 100% participation in undergraduate for the past 3 years, placing 22nd among all Kappa Sigma chapters.



NATURAL TIES



Gamma-O hosted the KU Natural Ties community at the chapter house. Natural Ties is a student-led organization that establishes friendships between KU students and members of the Lawrence Community with developmental disabilities. Brothers built a bonfire for s'mores, painted the letters with the community, played catch, and socialized. We love Natural Ties and have been a part of the organization for the last couple years. Andrew Guinan and Jack Carden, are two brothers who serve as the co-president and recruitment chair for Natural Ties. We are looking forward to the next event, and can't wait to host again!





Gamma-Omicron was honored to host the second annual Heart of America District Conclave in Lawrence on February 10 at the newly expanded and renovated KU Alumni Association.

DISTRICT CONCLAVE



ROVELTO ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT AFTER 32 YEARS AS DIRECTOR OF CROSS COUNTRY/ TRACK AND FIELD

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Legendary track coach Cliff Rovelto '75 announced Tuesday (May 14) plans to retire at the end of the 2024 outdoor season after 32 seasons as Kansas State's Director of Cross Country and Track and Field.

"It has been an honor and blessing to have had the opportunity to coach at K-State for the past 36 years," Rovelto said. "My life has truly been enriched by the relationships developed over the years with our student-athletes and members of our staff. Our student-athletes and staff have always represented our university in a manner in which K-Staters can be proud. We have had some teams who have experienced tremendous successes in cross country, indoor and outdoor track and field but I am even more proud of their academic performances and honors earned over the years. K-State is a special university and I have always been appreciative of the support that wonderful K-Staters have given our student-athletes and our program."

Read more at <https://www.kstatesports.com/news/2024/5/14/track-field-rovelto-announces-retirement-after-32-years-as-director-of-cross-country-track-and-field>



Gamma-Omicron celebrates 2023 Hall of Fame Inductees

This past Fall, on September 22nd, 2023; we celebrated with Gamma-Omicron Alumni and Undergraduates to honor the newest inductees to the Gamma-Omicron Biannual Hall of Fame Reception and Dinner.

At the Adams Alumni Center, connected to the University of Kansas' newest building the Jayhawk Welcome Center; pledge classes ranging from the 60's to the 2020's came together to cheer on our distinguished brothers as they were award their Gamma-O Hall of Fame commemorative plaques.

Brothers: James "JW" Youngblood '67, Skip Gast '72, Bill Johnson '80 and Craig McMonigle '80.

Master of Ceremonies and Housing Corporation Board President – Nick Lombardi '03, welcomed attendees and guests during the Crimson and Green Reception before dinner. Grand Master – Will Harnett '22, updated Alumni on the current state and affairs of Gamma-O and was met with resounding applause for his leadership and chapter updates. Finally, State of Kansas District Grand Master & Alumni Committee Member – Cory Sims '04, presented the evening's awards to the honorees.

Throughout the evening, food and drink, hardy-handshakes, and of course laughs were shared. The spirit of Gamma-O is alive and well. A.E.K.D.B.



K I N *Memoriam*



HELEN LIERZ

Helen E. Lierz, a cherished member of our community, passed away on December 30, 2023, leaving behind a legacy of love, dedication, and profound impact. Among her many roles and contributions, Helen's involvement with Kappa Sigma Fraternity in Lawrence stands out as a testament to her nurturing spirit and unwavering support for others.

Born in Kelly, Kansas, on April 21, 1931, Helen's life journey led her to become a dedicated Housemother at Kappa Sigma Fraternity for 15 years. Her sons, Mark and Steve, had both been members of the fraternity during their college years at KU, fostering a deep connection to the organization and its values.

Helen's presence at Kappa Sigma was more than just a role; it was a reflection of her caring nature and commitment to fostering a sense of community and belonging. She provided guidance, encouragement, and a comforting presence to countless fraternity members, creating a home away from home for those under her care.

Beyond her duties at Kappa Sigma, Helen was a pillar of strength in her family and community. As a successful business owner and devoted mother, she embodied resilience, determination, and compassion in all aspects of her life. Her passion for education, family values, and service to others left an indelible mark on those fortunate enough to know her.

In celebrating Helen E. Lierz's life, we honor her legacy of kindness, generosity, and unwavering support for Kappa Sigma and the countless lives she touched. Her memory will continue to inspire us as we strive to emulate her spirit of love and dedication.





MARK HANNIFAN SUN PARTNERS:

Mark Hannifan '74 graduated from the University of Kansas in 1977 with a degree in Architecture and Environmental design, soon earning his Master's from the University of New Mexico in 1979. Today, he resides in Kansas City with his wife— Pam— and enjoys kayaking and spending time with his three children.

Mark is currently the Director of Strategy and Siting for Plug Power, a green-hydrogen company working to build out the new hydrogen industry. This position is well-earned after years of specialization in the field. "My first job out of college was with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado. Of course, their focus was on renewable energy— wind, solar, biomass, etc— so I got into renewable energy in the late 70s," says Mark of the early days of his career. He moved on to achievements such as building large, utility-scale wind farms throughout the country in 2007 with Trade Wind Energy, amongst several additional projects and positions with a focus on sustainability. After over 30-years in the industry, his experience and dedication both on and off-site have led him to great success.

In addition to his day job, Mark is also the Founder and President of Sun Partners International— a non-profit volunteer organization that provides engineering and funding assistance to deploy solar power systems and promote health, education, and economic development worldwide. "Back in the nineties,

I got involved in seven dental mission trips to Latin America and Guatemala. Somewhere along the way I decided I would



have higher value if I were to do what I know best— because I'm not a dentist— and use my knowledge about solar power to help communities that are mostly off-grid," says Mark of his inspiration to start the non-profit— and he did just that. Since their founding in 2013, Sun Partners International has provided services such as clean water and renewable power for schools and hospitals in East Africa, South Africa, Zambia, and inner Kansas City.

Mark kept himself busy during his undergraduate career. Spending his first year as a Kappa Sigma at Colorado College, he transferred to the University of Kansas and joined the brotherhood there— as well as the university's varsity baseball team. He continues to stay involved with Kappa Sigma as an alumnus, attending chapter functions and checking in on the house whenever he's on campus.

"Kappa Sigma is a great way to meet, get associated with, and grow really close to so many brothers," says Mark, who gives the following advice to any current undergraduates: "Whatever you do, relate it back to energy and the environment. The planet is under stress. So whether you're studying accounting, or engineering, or architecture, or medicine... try to somehow weave what you do with helping planetary issues. Serve other people and protect our planet."

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ALUMNI PROFILES!



TODD WITT

Todd Witt, from Prairie Village, Kansas, embarked on his journey with Gamma-Omicron in 2007 and graduated in 2011 with a degree in Accounting and Finance from the University of Kansas. Growing up in Prairie Village, Todd has always had a strong connection to his community and now resides there with his wife, LeeAnn Witt, and their children, Todd Witt Jr. (TJ), and a little brother expected in July 2024.

Professionally, Todd is a Partner at Lockton, a global commercial insurance broker. In this role, he collaborates with a diverse clientele to manage risk and provides strategic insurance advice. Beyond work, Todd enjoys golfing, supporting the Jayhawks and Chiefs, and traveling with loved ones.

During his undergraduate years, Todd was actively involved in GT, GS, and Alumni Relations within the chapter. Gamma-Omicron holds a special place in Todd's heart, as he witnessed the lifelong friendships forged by his father, uncle, grandfather, great uncle, and other family members during their time at 1045 Emery Rd. This legacy inspired Todd to create his own cherished memories and bonds within the fraternity.

His advice to undergraduates is to savor the fraternity experience and its rich history at KU, emphasizing the unique opportunity to live among a close-knit brotherhood at 1045 Emery Rd.

Todd Witt's journey exemplifies a deep-rooted connection to his community, a passion for his alma mater, and a commitment to building lasting relationships both personally and professionally.

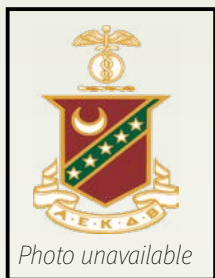


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FRED LEPORT, JR '61

Fred Leport Jr, known as Fred, initiated in 1961 and graduated in 1970 with a major in Business. He embarked on a successful career as a Purchasing Manager, dedicating 32 years of service to Procter & Gamble before retiring. Fred's expertise and contributions were instrumental in the company's operations and growth. He now enjoys a well-deserved retirement with his spouse, Irma.



LOUIS UNREIN '88

L. Tim Unrein, Captain U.S. Navy (retired), was initiated in 1988, graduated in 1991 with a major in Political Science, and then served a distinguished 30-year naval career. In 2021 he returned to the Kansas family homestead and now works with draft horses, operates a sawmill, and sub teaches on the side at county high schools. He is happily married to Stacey and they have two grown children..



ROBERT HAGG '99

Robert Hagg, known as Rob, is an esteemed alumnus who initiated in 1999 and graduated in 2002 with a major in Communications. He has risen to a prominent position in the field of National investment advisory, currently serving as the Chief Executive Officer at Fortis Capital Advisors. Rob's leadership and expertise have been instrumental in driving the company's success and strategic growth initiatives. He enjoys a fulfilling personal life as he is happily married to Jessica.



NICK BURCHSTEAD '12

Nick Burchstead, an alumnus who initiated in 2012 and graduated in 2016 with a major in Business Administration, has built a successful career in Private Wealth Management. He currently serves as a Senior Investment Manager at Creative Planning, leveraging his expertise to provide strategic financial guidance to clients. Nick enjoys a fulfilling personal life as he is happily married to Sara.





Gamma-Omicron Chapter
Kappa Sigma Fraternity

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SAVE THE DATE FOR HOMECOMING WEEKEND, OCTOBER 18-19 KANSAS CITY

EVENT DETAILS TO FOLLOW

Please email Skip Gast at sgast1@kc.rr.com with nominations for the 2024 Hall of Fame.

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