



Winter 2018

An Update on Continued Issues with KU

Many readers are aware of at least some elements of our experiences with Kappa Sigma National and mainly KU, the latter seeming to be unending. A lot has happened since the last G-O LITE, so this review will hopefully bring everyone current. A summary of our first experience with KU is probably warranted.

In summer of 2014 KU was the subject of a scathing article in The Huffington Post about its handling of a sexual assault. The next September social media rumors stirred about sexual assaults at a Kappa Sigma freshman party, and without any investigation, Vice-Provost for Student Affairs, Tammara Durham, suspended the entire chapter. In December, KU and G-O reached a resolution which involved no punishment to anyone. Many months later, the District Attorney concluded that there was no evidence of sexual assault or of drugging and closed the case. Our national organization, through an outside investigator and within a couple weeks after KU issued the suspension, had made the same determination as the DA about no evidence of assault or drugging, but that alcohol policies had been violated. The main theme here being no punishment or even evidence once due process was followed, after flagrant dishonesty by KU.

In September of 2017, KU notified our National that it had reports that pledges were required to be on campus wearing coat-and-tie by 7 a.m., and were not allowed back "until late in the

evening". National understandably suspended chapter operations until an investigation could occur, after which the suspension was promptly lifted. Why was it lifted? Other than the coat-and-tie and campus presence, KU's description was, once again, a fabrication. But KU's Student Affairs office persisted, claiming that hazing had occurred. KU Student Conduct Officer Watson ruled that hazing had occurred following a hearing at which KU's only witness was his own supervisor, Jane Tuttle. Tuttle refused to answer some of our counsel's pointed questions during the hearing, and Watson didn't require her to answer. We appealed to the University Judiciary Board, which held unanimously in our favor this past July. The theme here also being (i) dishonesty by KU Student Affairs in fabricating claims that were never made by any witnesses, and, (ii) once due process concluded, a finding in our favor. By pursuing the matter we avoided inclusion on a webpage listing university organizations found to have hazed, but the economic consequences approached \$40,000 due to loss of the canceled chapter operations and legal fees, none of which would have occurred had KU behaved fairly.

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Shortly thereafter, KU's Student Affairs office persisted by notifying National in March 2018 of a hazing report, and again National, under its liability protection commitments, suspended the chapter. In communicating to National, KU chose to omit that then Corp Board Chair Skip Gast had, months earlier, notified KU that the board had become aware of misbehavior, investigated, and evicted five men without notice.

The District Grand Master investigated and agreed that violations had occurred and that evictions and removals from Kappa Sigma were warranted. Gamma-O attended a disciplinary hearing in June, with most of the Exec, board members and advisors, and House Director Patricia Harbaugh in attendance. The general feeling was that the SEC's approach was fair, fact-based, and focused on punishing problem individuals rather than punishment across-the-board, a distinct relief after our experiences

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UNDERGRADUATE OFFICERS

Grand Master
De'Riece Burse '17

Grand Procurator
Raef Steffan '16

Grand Master of Ceremonies
Tyler Toman '17

Grand Treasurer
Mason Uhrig '17

Grand Scribe
James Clifford '17

ADVISORY BOARD

Alumnus Advisor
Cory Sims '04

Assistant Alumni Advisors

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Andy Whitehead '06
Derek Hoefler '06
Cory Bell '08
Tyler Setter '08

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Nick Lombardi '02

Secretary
Bobby Lutz '05

Treasurer
Todd Witt '07

Board Members
Dave Steen '68
Tom Robinett '69
Mike Helbert '70
Robert Hagg '98
Brian Harrison '05
Daniel Heady '07

Educational Foundation Board

Ed Grass '77
Lloyd Hanahan '56
John Davis '62

Corp Board Chair Report:

The Corporation has had an interesting twelve or so months while we have dealt with the culture inside the house, an adversarial University and a call to restructure our operations from Nationals. Throughout this time, it has been Brothers Skip Gast and Cory Sims who have kept the Gamma-Omicron Chapter afloat — particularly with Skip's efforts to create programming for the betterment of the active membership and set a foundation for success in the years to come. Cory has done the yeoman's work of working individually with the active Executive Committee, restructuring the Pledge Program and building a basis for a stronger brotherhood in the house today. This fall semester, we have been extremely fortunate to have a strong core of active leaders in the Chapter who have restored order and put Gamma-Omicron back on the path toward growth and success. We are indebted to both and should you see them out and about, I suggest you spring for an adult beverage — or at the very least, a cup of coffee.

The University continues to be combative not only with our Chapter, but with the entire Greek System in general. Dave Steen has worked tirelessly on behalf of the Chapter via KFLL to countervail those efforts and extol the virtues of Gamma-Omicron and our fellow fraternities. To make that statement into a finer point, Gamma-Omicron continues to have a higher GPA average than the All Men's average, a higher graduation rate as per non-Greek male students and provides an unequalled experience for young men while in their undergraduate years. An adult beverage for Brother Steen would be in order as well ...

As for the Corporation and our structure — this is something that has undergone significant

change. Nationals has taken charge of more direct involvement with the Active Chapter. The benefit is that an infrastructure can be built per National's protocol which guides the Chapter on a proven and safer track. It also places the onus on Nationals to imbue the Chapter with those ideals that we hold true as Kappa Sigmas. Day-to-day oversight will be provided by our alumni who will ensure that the traditions of Gamma-O are not lost. The Corporation meanwhile will focus on facilities management, disciplinary action and ensuring alumni involvement does not cease. We have had surprising support from National volunteers and in our work together are building a stronger future for Gamma-Omicron.

To that point, I would like to invite every alum to make a visit to the Chapter this school year. Walk around, meet the guys and take a trip down memory lane. The Chapter's exposure to our alumni has been from a very small group — all of you who have been a part of our Chapter embody the spirit of Gamma-O and are just as critical to providing the legacy of Brotherhood as volunteers. The Corporation and the Chapter are eager to bring new alums into the fold and increase involvement from the many generations of Gamma-O's. If the mood should strike you to be a more hands-on volunteer, feel free to give me a shout or shoot FMG a note and we'll make sure you can get involved.

We look forward to this coming year, believe we have a successful path forward and are working diligently to ensure the brightest days of Gamma-Omicron are ahead of us.

AEKΔB
Nick Lombardi '02



with KU. The suspension was lifted and the chapter allowed to resume full functioning. And here again is another chapter in KU misleading our National, knowing full well that they, like other nationals, have to treat any report from the university as serious and credible.

In October, KU notified National of yet another "anonymous report" that doesn't warrant much description, other than to say that thankfully our National recognized KU's pattern and didn't engage in any discipline until it was investigated. It took little time for the DGM to determine the report wasn't credible. But KU Conduct Officer Christina Parle demanded that our guys submit to interviews on one day's notice. The status of this is ongoing.

Lest we appear to have a martyr complex, you should know that similar behavior has occurred with numerous other KU fraternities. KU's tactic is always that any "report" they receive triggers an alarmist letter to the national HQ before anyone local hears a thing. Five other major houses experienced this during the past school year. In a couple KU made public that a hazing act was alleged at a specific fraternity before any investigation occurred at all. I will note that this is not limited to fraternities; this Fall semester has seen similar allegations made against multiple sororities. In one case, involving the same Christina Parle, she attempted to pressure a national to suspend a chapter over an uninvestigated allegation even though it came during the week of Rock Chalk and the chapter was a participant. The allegation was that pledges were hazed because they (like actives) were deprived of cellphones during initiation.

So, what is being done about this abuse of power?

Kappa Sigma is a founding member of the Kansas Fraternity Landlords League, a consortium of 11 major, "housed" KU fraternities. KFL is organized to protect our interests as major, high-dollar facilities, and to instill and maintain best practices ranging from managing risk to effective Room Contracts. I'm serving my second term as president of KFL, and a few months ago we embarked on an effort to bring to light the abuses and improper acts of KU administrators, and to create awareness that KU claims of systemic and serious hazing allegations are often exaggerated, premature, or apply to trivialities that many people would ignore.

We attended a March meeting with the Chancellor during which numerous fraternity alums challenged the depictions he had received from the Office of Student Affairs. As a new Chancellor he had taken at face value comments about the number of "reports" received without knowing that almost all pertained to minor matters. KFL asserted that Chancellor Girod had received inaccurate depictions from Vice-Provost Durham (who attended the same meeting and said very little).

Since that meeting we've been engaging with an increasing number of KU administrators and believe that the Chancellor has come to recognize that KFL fraternity alums have contributed mightily to the welfare of KU, and also that our principles, goals, and alum involvement provide confidence that almost all of our young men will be contributing Jayhawks. We wrote him to encourage a revamp of Student Affairs and that until that happened KFL distrusted their motives and policies.

KU's own statistics clearly demonstrate a huge benefit in retention and graduation rates for young men in fraternities compared to non-fraternity men. Almost one-fourth of

non-fraternity males fail to return to KU after their freshman year, whereas nearly 93% of fraternity freshmen return. And the percentage of fraternity men who graduate in four years exceeds the percentage of non-fraternity men graduating even six years after enrolling.

You can help Gamma O and KFL. Write Chancellor Girod; inform him that you are aware and concerned that the Office of Student Affairs has, in multiple instances and multiple fraternities, engaged in abusive and unfair treatment of fraternity members; urge him to disengage Ms. Parle, Dr. Tuttle, and Dr. Durham from any oversight of KU fraternities; and to discontinue the harmful and unjustified practice of notifying National organizations of any allegation whatsoever, prior to informing local advisors who can intervene promptly when warranted and also often have knowledge that neither KU nor the national will have. I suggest you not mention being a Kappa Sig to avoid retaliation by Durham, et al.

Douglas Girod, M.D.
Chancellor, University of Kansas
1450 Jayhawk Boulevard, Room 230
Lawrence, KS 66045-7518

Advisor Report:

The 2017-2018 school year was very trying for alumni volunteers and undergraduate members as showcased in the cover story, but the consequences have been a forcing function for the chapter to improve programming across the board. As alumnus advisor, I have been very pleased with the first half of this school year for several reasons. I have gotten to know the new exec committee very well, and though they are young, they are an impressive group. We piloted a new pledge program, overseen by alumni advisors, which ensured compliance with Kappa Sigma and KU, while also promoting the history and values of our Fraternity. Grades have already improved by a quarter point in one semester, and I expect that trend to continue. We have new alumni volunteers helping with community service and philanthropy, and will be bringing back the Harvest Week event that raised \$50,000 in 2011-2012. Although the number of active members will be low this year, I think we have a rush program and

volunteer guidance that will see the house back to capacity within the next 12-24 months. All that being said, clearly there is a lot of work to do, but I believe the bad times are in the past and we have a clear path forward. As always, assistance from alumni, either with your time or donations to the educational fund, is greatly appreciated. You're welcome to contact me directly at corymsims@gmail.com.

ALUMNI VOLUNTEER SUMMARY

This summer, we underwent a restructuring and recasting of alumni advisors and the corporation board. There is always room for more volunteers. If you would be interested in learning more, please contact me at corymsims@gmail.com.

AEKDB,
Cory Sims '04



Gamma-Omicron Inducts Five into Hall of Fame

Alums, undergrads, spouses, and “significant others” filled a banquet room at Brio Restaurant on KC’s Country Club Plaza on September 28 to recognize Brothers Tom Robinett ‘68, Paul Wilbur ‘77, Davis Rooney ‘79, Jeff Bragalone ‘81, and David Van Eekeren ‘88 as the newest inductees into the Gamma-Omicron Hall of Fame. The men were recognized for their accomplishments both personal and professional, and the lively event was ably MC’d by Corp Board Chair (and recent dad) Nick Lombardi.

Alum Advisor Cory Sims oversaw the planning, including moving the event from the chapter house to the heart of KC, a decision that drew much praise, and both food and beverage at Brio were well-received. A contingent of undergraduates joined the alums even though the dinner conflicted with “late Night in the Phog”, the annual kick-off to KU hoops. Each inductee voiced similar positive feelings about his life at Gamma-O, but Jeff added the most memorable one, directed to the undergrads. He announced that his daughter had recently joined our neighboring sorority, Kappa Delta, and admonished the young men that “you can look, but don’t touch”, which elicited much laughing although perhaps not so much from the undergrads.

Gamma-Omicron has now inducted 94 alumni into the Hall and encourages our alums to nominate future inductees by emailing Cory Sims at corysims@gmail.com.



HALL OF FAME BIOS



TOM ROBINETT '69

Tom graduated from the University of Kansas in 1971 with a B.S. in Secondary Education. Today, he serves as the Vice President of Public Policy and Advocacy for Overland Park Chamber of Commerce. Tom is actively involved in his community and holds many leadership roles, including serving on the Board of Trustees of Menorah Medical Center. Tom is a past treasurer of our House Corporation and current director.



PAUL WILBUR '77

Following graduation from KU's MBA program, Paul began being involved in the Automotive industry, where he worked his way to the top. He is now a CEO at a Tier 1 Automotive supplier, where he is proud to be a part of the five consecutive yearly awards won for Best Place to Work in Michigan at the Tweedle Company. Paul is actively involved in numerous philanthropic activities, such as Habitat for Humanities, Make a Wish, and many more.



DAVIS ROONEY '79

Over the years, Davis has taken his leadership skills and knowledge to four companies. He has pursued careers ranging from Computer Auditing, to Resource Planning and Commodity Analysis. Today, Davis Serves as the Vice President and CFO for Sunflower Electric Corporation. Davis has stayed actively involved with Gamma-Omicron as an alumnus by previously serving on the Alumni Board, as well as being a donor and volunteer to the campaign to renovate the house.



JEFFREY BRAGALONE '81

Jeff's wide variety of experience has helped him succeed through his professional years. Since 2006, he has been recognized as one of the "Best Lawyers in Dallas" by D Magazine, was selected to Best Lawyers in America (2016-2018), and has been recognized as a Texas "Super Lawyer" for the past 15 years. Jeff is a lover of the arts, and serves as President of the Board of Directors of the Dallas Theater Center, and has been a trustee of the Theater Center Board since 2012. Jeff recently contributed a significant gift to help support the chapter.



DAVID VAN EEKEREN '88

David has worked for Land O'Frost for his entire career. Prior to holding his position as CEO and President today, he learned the business from the ground level working in the manufacturing plant, and moved into several management roles within operations, sales, marketing, and business development. David is involved in a wide range of organizations and clubs, including serving as a board member of North American Meat Institute.

Gamma-Omicron Babies



1

PHOTO 1:
Nicholas A Lombardi, Jr., born May 1, 2018, son of Nick Lombardi '02

PHOTO 2:
Cameron Hazel Sims, born August 8, 2018, daughter of Cory Sims '04



2



3

PHOTO 3:
Jack Thomas Lutz, born March 10, 2018, son of Robert Lutz '05

PHOTO 4:
Grace Ann Hoefer, born February 8, 2017, daughter of Derek Hoefer '06

PHOTO 5:
Evelyn Clare Oades, born January 25, 2018, daughter of Jimmy Oades '06



4

PHOTO 6:
Charlotte Rose Norwood, born May 25, 2017, Daughter of Nick Norwood '04



5



6

GO-LITE ALUMNI UPDATES

A Thank-you to Dave Mackenzie '61

Gamma-Omicron has a true ally in Brother Dave Mackenzie, who has been diligent and helpful as we've attempted to manage and get past the travails of the last couple years, and this is an attempt to recognize and express gratitude for his efforts.

As a veteran of large, bureaucratic organizations, Dave began inquiring about the reality associated with our different "experiences" with KU administrators, demonstrating concern for fairness but also determination to know the facts. He carefully and meticulously sought corroboration and specifics, and only when he had and understood them, proceeded to communicate effectively and forcefully with KU.

Time and again, he has asked for updates and information, recognizing all the while that to be persuasive communication had to have impact and also be respectful when respect was warranted. He has not just "talked the talk" about being unhappy, but "walked the walk" conveying clearly and explicitly to the Chancellor, KU Endowment, etc, his actions and changed plans.

Recently and without any solicitation, Dave donated a significant amount to our Gamma-O Scholarship/Leadership Fund as well as funds to reward the chapter for overall chapter performance this semester. Our Board and Alum Advisors are grateful to Dave for his interest and generosity.

A Thank-you to Jeff Bragalone

Special thanks to Jeff for his generous donation to the undergraduate chapter operational fund. With the aforementioned historically low numbers living in the house, the budget has been tight. I know the undergrads attending the Hall of Fame dinner loved meeting Jeff and the other alums, and they are very thankful for his donation.

News of the Passing of Nancy Hanahan

Nancy Jane Hanahan, age 79, wife of Loyd Hanahan '56 for 57 years, passed on November 8 at her home in Overland Park after a long and progressive illness beginning with the removal of her cancerous right lung seven years ago. Nancy was as close to being a Gamma-O brother as any woman could be, and we are very sorry to have lost her.

Creating Your Legacy



Our donors are the key to ongoing excellence of Gamma-O Chapter. Please let us help you make a mark on our chapter by creating a planned gift that honors your wishes. Kappa Sigma's Gamma-O Educational Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation that benefits the undergraduate members of Kappa Sigma Fraternity at the University of Kansas. We help fund educational programming, educational areas of the chapter house, and scholarship grants. Please let us know where you want to make a difference! Please contact Ed Grass at foundation@gamma-o.org for more information or fill out this form and we will get back with you:

Name _____ Initiation Year _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Scholarship/Leadership Program in Action!

Congratulations to Cole Smith \$2,000, Chris Vuong \$1,250 and Peter McNeal \$1,000 who distinguished themselves during the 2016-2017 school year...and thanks again to all of you who have made contributions to the Educational Foundation in the past to allow these grants to be made.



PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING

Gamma-Omicron is looking for volunteers. The key to our chapters long-term success is dependent on the commitment of alumni volunteering some time with the chapter. Please consider one or more of the following areas (please circle areas interested in learning more):

- Advisory Board
- Career Mentor
- Housing Corporation Board
- Sit On A Career Panel

Please contact Cory Sims at corysims@gmail.com or fill out the form below:

Name _____ Initiation Year _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Mail to: Gamma-O, c/o Fraternity Management Group, P.O. Box 12010, Tucson, AZ 85732-2010.

RUSH REPORT

Fall of 2018 has been a rebuilding semester for the Gamma-Omicron chapter of Kappa Sigma. This year's fall pledge class started with 19 pledges and on October 27th, 18 of the original 19 were initiated. Those who were recently initiated were immediately eager to get involved in the house and elections were held. As a result, the rush chairs for the remainder of the school year were voted in and consist of a Junior, Peter McNeal (Boulder, Colorado '16), and two Freshman, T.J. Wood (Houston, Texas '18) and Robert Meade (Chicago, Illinois '18).

After a meeting between the new rush chairs, the following goals were proposed for rushing the spring pledge class of 2019 and the fall pledge class of 2019:

Spring 2019

- Hold a minimum of 1 rush event between November 1 and December 16
- Sign between 10-20 men before Dec. 16th (5 currently signed)
- Initiate a minimum of 9 men in March 2019

Fall 2019

- Sign between 22-40 men informally before May 14th (0 currently signed)
- Hold a minimum of 3 rush events in the spring semester
- Sign a minimum of 8 men (Preferably around 15) during June formal rush
- Have a minimum of 10 actives help with formal rush
- Begin the 2019 academic year with a minimum of 30 pledges
- Initiate a minimum of 28 pledges in October 2019

AEKΔB

Peter McNeal '16



Contact Peter McNeal at mcneal.peter@yahoo.com or go to <https://www.gamma-o.org/recruitment-recommendation> to send in your Rush Recommendation.



**Gamma-Omicron Chapter
Kappa Sigma Fraternity**

c/o Fraternity Management Group
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Spring 2019 Alumni Event

Keep your eyes open for email invitations for 2019 Alumni Events. The undergraduate chapter will organize a KU basketball watch party for this Winter, to take place in Lawrence for a game TBD. Additionally, they are planning a golf tournament with dinner to follow in the March/April timeframe. Details to come.

Make sure you're on the invite list by updating your contact info at gamma-o.org.

