



# O megaphone

www.thetachiomega.com

Omega Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity • The Pennsylvania State University • August 2005

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## National Report

[Editor's Note: This letter was posted to [www.thetachiomega.com](http://www.thetachiomega.com) on May 13, 2005.]

### Bringing Omega Back

#### Update from Dave Westol, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, Theta Chi Fraternity

Dear Brothers:

Let me begin by thanking Richard Maltz and other Omega alumnus members for establishing this website and for giving me the opportunity to post an article about Omega chapter.

In March of 2000, the Executive Steering Committee of our Fraternity, composed of the elected leaders of the then four entities of the Fraternity along with the Executive Director, met in State College, Pennsylvania. The decision to meet in State College was prompted by the opportunity to join alumni and undergraduates of Omega in celebrating "Howard Alter Day" that weekend. It was a very special occasion for all and especially for Howard, an Omega alumnus from the Class of 1941 and "Mr. Theta Chi" to all of us.

I recall standing in the living room of the chapter house on Allen Street and watching through a window as Howard made his way to the front door on a sunny Saturday afternoon. He was greeted by three other Omega alumni, including the brother who had given him his bid to join Theta Chi and his fraternity Big Brother. As the men shook hands, tears began to flow. I turned to several of our undergraduates who were standing with me and said, "Guys, this is what it is all about—the friendships that last over the years".

On October 31st of 2001, I sat on the front steps of my home in Carmel, Indiana, handing out candy to trick-or-treaters while participating on a conference call with Matt Valangeon, our Director of Chapter Development, and several undergraduate members of Omega chapter. The undergraduates were telling us in no uncertain terms that Omega was "Dying or dead", and that little could be done to bring it back to life.

The contrast between the feelings of pride, brotherhood and tradition in March of 2000 and the understated comments by undergraduates that, "We're done—it's over" barely 18 months later was striking, to say the least.

Some of you may recall that we sent out letters and emails to alumni asking for help. Our stance was, quite simply, that we weren't going to let Omega die. It wasn't just because Omega produced two Executive Directors—George Chapman and Howard Alter, Jr., whose consecutive terms of service ran from 1948 to 1984--along with other Theta Chi giants such as William Renton, Omega '46. It wasn't just that The Pennsylvania State University was a significant campus in Greek life and boasted one of the largest Greek communities in the nation. It wasn't just the consistently excellent and dedicated efforts of Joost

Keesing, Epsilon Sigma/Wagner '71, who served for many years as chapter advisor to Omega. It wasn't just because Omega is a single letter chapter. It was for all of those reasons, but also that we belong at Penn State, and that we felt we could succeed there again.

And, in all candor, I share a trait with many Omega alumni.....I hate to quit. That was a reason, too.

I received my fair share of scathing emails and letters from Omega alumni in response to the request that Ed Brown and I sent out. The criticisms were typical: "Alcohol-free housing killed our chapter" ..... "Who are you to tell us where and when we can drink?" .....ad infinitum.

Some of those younger alumnus members were and perhaps are among those whom Ed described in a message. Ed noted that they parked their cars on the front lawn of the chapter house, went to the football game, stopped by the bars on the way back from the game, then made their way to 523 South Allen Street, got into their cars, and drove away without making the effort to meet the undergraduates or visit the house.

We also received some very positive and supportive messages from alumnus members who asked, "What can I do to help?"

Through and with leadership by Ed Brown, Omega '87, and

*(Continued on Page 3)*

**1980 Spring Formal**



*This year marks the 25th anniversary of the **Class of 1980**, and we encourage all 1980 alumni, as well as all members from that era, to come back to Penn State for **Homecoming 2005 on October 29** (Penn State vs. Purdue). Watch your mail for further details, but mark your calendar and start calling your buddies now for a long-overdue reunion!*

# Annual Fund Update

## 2004-2005 Annual Fund and Capital Fund Honor Roll

Thanks to the alumni listed below who supported our 2004-2005 Annual Fund and Capital Fund. The Annual Fund giving year runs from July 1 through June 30 and enables us to continue our alumni relations program, including the *Omegaphone*, other mailings and events. Our Capital Fund is ongoing and provides resources for daily maintenance and upkeep of the chapter house.

Edmund G. Geiger 1940  
 Carl A. Korn Jr. 1940  
 Howard R. Alter Jr. 1941  
 Paul S. Handwerk 1942  
 Mark A. Richards III 1942  
 David Robertson 1942  
 Donald L. Williams 1942  
 William H. Renton 1946  
 William A. Grun 1947  
 John F. McElwee Jr. 1947  
 David B. Doan 1948  
 Arnold D. Leonard 1948  
 George R. Wood 1948  
 Clifton Woodward 1948  
 Robert B. Bossler Jr. 1949  
 George W. Chapman Jr. 1949  
 Franklin E. Crissy 1949  
 Ralph J. Ettinger 1949  
 Robert F. Waltenbaugh 1949  
 Ray M. Campfield 1950  
 Herbert Wittman 1950

William K. Elmore 1953  
 Thomas J. Peters 1953  
 Eugene A. Whitehouse 1953  
 Louis W. Martini DO 1954  
 Joseph Crudo 1955  
 W. W. Orben 1955  
 James Forsythe 1956  
 James W. Caldwell 1957  
 Ronald G. Hansen 1957  
 Edwin T. Latchem 1957  
 Michael A. Kuhar 1959  
 Alexis Barron 1960  
 Barry Herr 1960  
 Michael P. Lazorchak 1961  
 Ian W. Ramsay 1961  
 Lamar E. Rohrbach 1961  
 Edmond W. Smathers 1962  
 James C. Stalder 1962  
 Matthew G. Soccio 1963  
 David A. Heitzenroder 1964  
 Gary A. Riser 1964

John D. Swift 1964  
 Samuel K. Padjen 1965  
 Richard I. McLean 1968  
 Charles Stempka 1970  
 John N. Weiss Jr. 1970  
 Toby M. Froehlich 1972  
 Matthew A. Mankus 1973  
 Robert A. Hoffman 1976  
 Robert J. O'Neill 1976  
 Michael R. Perkins 1976  
 Charles S. Englehardt 1978  
 Paul M. Baker 1980  
 Evan J. Rosenberg 1980  
 Ronald J. Biernacki 1981  
 Daniel T. Powell 1981  
 Kerry E. Becker 1982  
 Timothy P. Dutcher 1983  
 Daniel Wood 1983  
 Chris G. Allocco 1984  
 Owen R. Fishman 1985  
 Alan H. Vladimir 1985

Paul E. Vassil 1986  
 Edward M. Brown 1987  
 James R. Koppersmith 1988  
 Robert F. Kramer 1988  
 Sean Tirney 1988  
 William Herron 1990  
 Reed W. Goodwin 1991  
 Daniel S. Kahl 1991  
 Christian J. Koczur 1991  
 David L. Schrader 1991  
 Jason P. Ross 1992  
 Matthew M. Mallin 1994  
 Michael R. Hetrick 1995  
 Mark T. Kelly 1995  
 Britton J. Mattson 1997  
 Matthew S. Keller 2000  
 Charles M. Schellhaas 2001  
 Michael V. Campanella 2004 ■

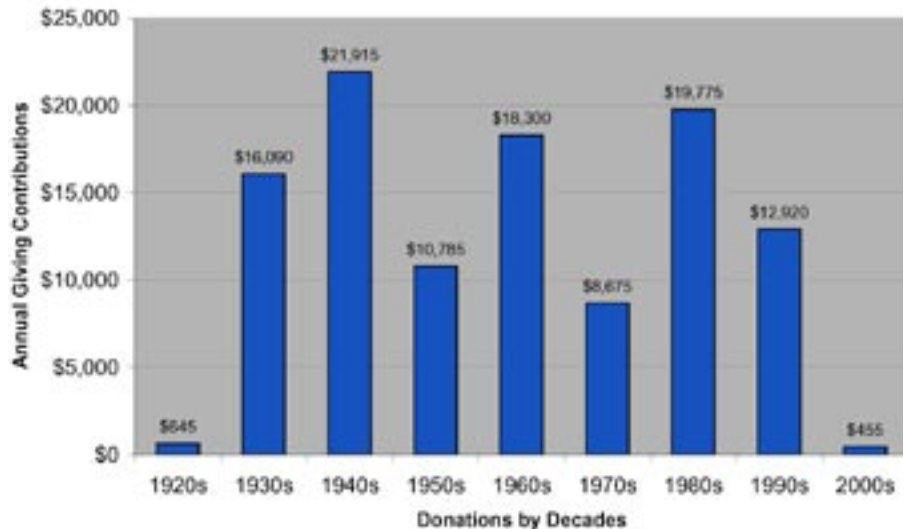
### 2005 PSU Football Schedule

Sat., Sept. 3	South Florida
Sat., Sept. 10	Cincinnati
Sat., Sept. 17	Central Michigan
Sat., Sept. 24	at Northwestern
Sat., Oct. 1	Minnesota
Sat., Oct. 8	Ohio State
	Prime Time - 7 or 8 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 15	at Michigan
Sat., Oct. 22	at Illinois
Sat., Oct. 29	Purdue
	(Homecoming)
Sat., Nov. 5	Wisconsin
Sat., Nov. 19	at Michigan State

Note: Home games are in blue. ■

### Donations by Decades

1940s, 1980s and 1960s lead the way!



## Omega Named Chapter of the Year

Dear Brothers,

It is with great pride that I announce that the brothers of Omega Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity were recently awarded five of the twelve Greek awards given out at this year's Greek Oscars, an annual event held to recognize the outstanding Greek organizations at The Pennsylvania State University.

The awards received and their respective descriptions are listed below:

### Chapter Involvement & Leadership Award

The Involvement and Leadership Award is presented to a chapter whose members embrace leadership positions within and outside of the Greek community. Award consideration will be given to the chapter that has proven active leadership involvement, positions, and participation in campus and community events.

### Chapter Community Service Award

The Community Service Award is presented to a chapter that continuously improves the university and/or State College/Centre County community by actively participating in and/or organizing service activities.

### Chapter Academic Achievement Award

The Academic Achievement Award is presented to the chapter that has either drastically improved or maintained academic achievement as a group.

### The Delta Zeta Distinguished Service Award

The Delta Zeta Sorority Distinguished Service Award is presented to an individual chapter that has gone above and beyond in regards to community service and philanthropy.

### IFC Chapter of the Year

The Chapter of the Year Award is presented to the chapter that has made the most effort in regards to Involvement, Leadership, Programming, Community Service, Philanthropy, and Scholarship.

While the brothers walked away from the Greek Oscars with more awards than any other Greek organization, we will continue to strive to better ourselves and the Greek community at Penn State. And we look forward to the day when we walk away with all 12 Greek Oscar awards.

Fraternally,

**Cameron Lefevre**

**Alumni Relations Chairman ■**

## National Report

*(Continued from Page 1)*

James Stuhltrager, Omega '89, among others, we agreed upon a plan to rebuild the chapter by recruiting men as though we were recolonizing or starting up again at Penn State.

That effort began in the fall of 2002. It has been a long, arduous, and difficult process. As the saying goes, we are not home yet. But, we are making progress.

I visited Omega Chapter on Tuesday, April 12th, of this year. The Grand Chapter scheduled its meeting in Vermont beginning on Thursday, the 14th, and the stop at State College was on the way. Jared Brown, a Theta Chi alumnus of Eta Zeta/Edinboro, serves as an Assistant Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life at Penn State, and he helped arrange my visit, including a brief speech during a Greek Week event that evening.

I wasn't sure what to expect, although reports from a number of staff members, volunteers, alumnus members and folks from the University had been positive. In February, I had the opportunity to meet with Dennis Foley, the new Alumni Corporation President, and Dennis had noted that membership was increasing and that things were looking better.

### Based upon my visit, there are other good things to report.

- We have 24 undergraduate members. Our grade point average for the chapter is among the highest on campus. Our undergraduates come from a variety of

majors and backgrounds. Several of them are leaders in other campus organizations. They waited on dinner until I arrived, and everyone ate together.

- The chapter house was clean from top to bottom. Even the areas that are not currently being used were clean. No litter, no garbage, no dumpster odors.
- Our undergraduates understand the heritage of Omega Chapter. They proudly showed me the chapter room, and how several members have restored or reframed historical items for display. On occasion, I have visited single letter chapters and found that the members have little appreciation for what that means in our Fraternity. That is not the case at Omega.

When I returned from the presentation on campus, I talked with most of our members in the Howard Alter Room on the main floor of the chapter house. I asked the members if they were planning on visiting Howard in the near future. "Can we?" one member asked me, as though asking to visit the Wizard of Oz. I whipped out my cell phone and called Howard at his home. It was 9:12 p.m. and knowing Howard, I gambled that he would still be awake. Howard answered, and I said, "Brother Alter, I am standing in the middle of a room named in your honor at 523 South Allen Street, State College, Pennsylvania. There are some men who wish to speak with you". I then passed my phone to the nearest member. Twenty-seven minutes later my phone was returned

to me. While that conversation may put me over my monthly minute limit, it was worth it to watch the faces of the undergraduates. Howard greeted each member and New Member in turn, and then had a quip or comment about that individual's hometown. We couldn't hear Howard's comments, but the smiles on the faces of the undergraduates told us that Howard was working the crowd.

The men indicated that they will visit Howard after the end of the semester. Several of our members are from the Pittsburgh area, and it is my hope that they will stop by and visit Brother Alter on their own as well.

I enjoyed my visit to Omega. Much remains to be done with the chapter house in terms of professional work to bring it up to code so that all rooms may be occupied, but our undergraduates have clearly done everything that they can do to improve the house. It was among the cleanest houses that I have visited this academic year, and the members take pride in being members of Omega Chapter and Theta Chi Fraternity.

If you are an alumnus and reading this, I hope that you will contact Dennis Foley ([dennisf@zoominternet.net](mailto:dennisf@zoominternet.net)) and offer your assistance to the alumni corporation. As I understand it, there are some positions to fill. From my experience, we can never have too many involved alumnus members. We have a brotherhood to advise, and a house to fill. And, we are on the way to bringing Omega back. ■



# Alumni UpDates

## Alexis Barron '60

(522 Cresheim Valley Rd., Wyndmoor, PA 19038-8409; mbarron@msn.com) I continue to be managing partner of Synnestvedt & Lechner LLP, a law firm specializing in intellectual property law and expanding into N.J. with the opening of another office in Princeton.

## Reid A. Squier '79

(4 Beaman Rd., Sterling, MA 01564-2701) Completed a 120-day tour with my Air Force reserve unit in Kuwait where I was the executive officer of a contingency aeromedical staging facility. This was a small hospital where patients (including military working dogs) waited for medical flights out of the theater. It was a terrific experience thanks to the special members of our unit and the members of the other services who worked closely with us.

## Kerry E. Becker '82

(44 Fry Circle, Port Matilda, PA 16870) I've been back in State College since 1991 and worked as owner/President of Thermal Plus of State College from 1991 to 1999. In 1999, I sold my company to Masco. I have been the general manager since 1999. I have a wife, Debra, and two boys, Zach and Alec. We live near Stormstown, about 10 miles from State College.

## Timothy P. Dutcher '83

(3742 N. Woodrow St., Arlington, VA 22207-4322; tim.dutcher@navy.mil) Recently promoted to manager of the

Outfitting Branch at Naval Sea Systems Command.

## Paul E. Vassil '86

(906 Stonebridge Dr., Lancaster, PA 17601-1473) We're doing well, staying out of trouble by working as a family medicine physician in a suburban, growing practice. When I'm not there, I'm trying to keep up with the kids -- Kyriaki (8), Katerina (6), and Markella and Peter, both recently into the terrible twos. It would be great to see a bunch of brothers in the same setting. It would also be interesting to see how the house has changed, both physically and with regard to its brothers.

## James R. Koppersmith '88

(4613 Davenport St. NW, Washington, DC 20016; jkopper@hotmail.com) The last few years have seen some major changes. My wife, Vivienne and I had a beautiful little girl, Alexandra, on July 3, 2004. She is now busy terrorizing our dog, Kodi, as she learns to move around the house. We also moved from Capitol Hill to a single-family home near American University.

## David L. Schrader '91

(652 S. Warren Ave., Malvern, PA 19355-2953; dschrader@sgarc.com) Opened Schrader Group Architecture in April 2004. Business serves residential, commercial, educational and public clients in and around Philadelphia and throughout the East Coast. I live in Malvern, PA,

with my wife Jamie (Tri-Delt '94) and our 17-month-old twins, Cooper and Sadie. I see **Mark Franz '91**, **John Fischer '91**, and **Mike Engelman '91** regularly and would like to get together again with all of the pledge classes around mine.

## Jason P. Ross '92

(500 Austin Street, Greensburg, PA 15601-4985; j.ross@hemphfieldarea.k12.pa.us) Celebrating my 6th anniversary with my wife, Heidemarie. We have two children, Nicholas Alexander (3) and Katelyn Marie (1). ■

## In Memorium

We regret to inform you of the death of

**Nelson D. Zimmerman '27**  
**Ross B. Brode '49**  
**Robert E. Ritz '49**  
**Albert W. Johnson III '60**

Theta Chi mourns their passing and extends condolences to their families and friends. ■

*The Omegaphone is published for the alumni and friends of the Omega Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity at The Pennsylvania State University. Address changes, news items, photographs and contributions may be mailed to Theta Chi of Penn State, Alumni Relations Office, P.O. Box 296, State College, PA 16804-0296.*



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*Penn State Greek Oscars!  
Omega Captures Five Awards at*

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