

VOLUNTEERS

Harry Fisher
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Steven Sloan
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Aidan Padala
Undergraduate President



BY THE NUMBERS

120

Years of SAE at Penn

3908

Spruce Street

\$25,000

Annual Fund Goal

\$10,680

Raised as of Mar. 1

37

Alumni Donors Have Given

3

Ways for YOU to Give

1. Make a gift online at www.saepath.org.
2. Call our toll-free Donation Hotline at **1-800-975-6699**.
3. **Mail a check** using the enclosed envelope and donation form.

SIGMA ALPHA EPSILON PENNSYLVANIA

www.saepath.org

Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Theta Chapter at the University of Pennsylvania • March 2021

EMINENT ARCHON LETTER

When The Going Got Tough, Penn Theta Got Going

by Sam Fuchs, EA 2020

As with almost every organization, the Pennsylvania Theta chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon has faced many challenges and changes prompted by this pandemic. Being virtual for much of the past year made normal fraternity operations extremely difficult, forcing many on campus to ask the question, "What is going to happen to Greek life because of this?" How would we

keep the brotherhood together while our house was closed and we were all miles apart from one another? Thus, we had to adapt, which we did successfully.

All chapter and executive meetings were shifted to a virtual environment on Zoom and helped the brotherhood come together to support each other during this difficult time. Bonding events were organized via Zoom by our terrific Brotherhood Chairmen Zak Ahmad and Tyler McGoldrick in an effort to connect and lighten spirits within the brotherhood.

Our philanthropy efforts, which usually relied on in-person events, had to be modified as well to fit into the new virtual model. In the Spring of 2020, we were able to organize a donation match program for racial justice initiatives thanks to the leadership of our Philanthropy Chairman Luke Beggy and our Diversity Chairman Phillip Tchouriokanov; we raised \$3,100.

This past fall semester, Luke did another phenomenal job in organizing an essentials drive for Project HOME, a local Philadelphia homeless shelter. Brothers and friends mailed in necessary items and financial donations on behalf of the brotherhood, which in the end amounted to over \$1,100 worth of goods and donations.

Under the guidance of our Scholarship



Chairman, Alex Fey, the brotherhood thrived under the new learning model as our average GPA increased by .34 points year to year in 2020. Going into this semester, we again had to shift all our recruitment efforts virtually, a task which our Recruitment Chairmen William Fallon and Sam Betz did exceptionally well as we welcome a new class of 14 young men to the brotherhood.

And finally, but most unforgettably, we took the opportunity with our increased free time to honor the retirement of Steve Saltzman, our beloved chapter advisor for over 30 years. In a fitting ceremony organized and attended by alumni and current brothers, Mr. Saltzman was awarded the Chapter Advisor of the Year Award, Merit Key, and Order of Minerva.

As I reflect on the past year, I am proud of the way our fraternity responded to the COVID-19 crisis. We focused not only on how to ensure SAE survived this trying time, but also on how we could improve moving forward. And by these efforts, I am happy and grateful our chapter was recognized as a Most Improved Chapter by the national organization at their Award ceremony this past summer.

As we look now to the future and towards the end of this pandemic, things are certainly looking bright. Our chapter house is again open as Penn shifted to the new hybrid model. We recently initiated our new round of brothers, and we have a dedicated new Eminent Archon in Aidan Padala who I am confident will continue the progress. This certainly was a difficult time, but seeing the way the brotherhood came together to combat it makes me even more confident in the strength and longevity of our fraternity.

Catching Up with Tom Robinson '72 on Life and his SAE Experience

SAE: Where has life taken you since you graduated?

TOM: I was one of the few marketing majors at Wharton and actually did end up spending my working life at advertising and public relations agencies in Philadelphia, Richmond, Boston, and Jacksonville as an account executive, brand planner, group head, SVP, EVP running the media department and several subsidiaries, and eventually CEO, partner, and owner of a few. Thank God, it was before social media became the driver!!! I morphed into a business manager for a mental health program at a medical university in SC, and (since no good deed goes unpunished) after increasing the bed census at the hospital and expansion of the outpatient program, was invited to join the hospital system's marketing department and then the entire academic enterprise as Director of Brand Strategy and Creative Director.

I have also had two other career tracks. One moonlighting as editor-in-chief of a magazine for the business side of higher education. The other after "retirement," as a substitute teacher and paraprofessional working with ESE kids (Down syndrome, behavioral, autistic, neglected, poverty-stricken, CP, blind, etc., etc.). Haven't been back to those Title I schools since COVID, though.

Now, besides being depressed by the lack of action in the cloistered COVID environment, I continue to serve as a *Guardian ad Litem*, advocating for kids in the foster care system. I now have 15 cases with 20-some kids who are moving through the system, either heading back home to reunify with parents who hopefully have fixed their problems or finding a new, yet better family, of which to be a part.

On a personal level, I am married (not to my Penn girlfriend that my brothers might remember — if not for any other reason than they are both named Cynthia) for 40+ years to an extraordinary woman, with our three grown children and five grandchildren. Interestingly different, and badly, more isolated from cousins during COVID as they might otherwise be. And for several years, I met with Penn applicants as an alumni interviewer.



SIGMA ALPHA EPSILON



"I hope that we as a fraternity, as a nation of good-hearted, civil, and responsible gentlemen, set an example for maturing young men and bend the arc of justice toward righteousness. Respect for women and others not of our kind. A hand given to those less fortunate than we..."

SAE: What are the most important lessons you learned because of Sigma Alpha Epsilon?

TOM: The positive side of brotherhood, belonging, and identifying with a group that is not hell-bent on tearing something else down. We were what you might cavalierly dismiss as "tolerant" or "diverse" in today's vernacular. Though we might

have been unlike each other, we were actually "inclusive" without knowing that we embraced each other without prejudice.

SAE: When you look back on your time with SAE at Penn, what moments do you tend to remember most?

TOM: Good, silly, weird — but hardly ever bad. When I pledged, there was a senior who stole a steamroller and drove it down Walnut Street. Another had a settlement for a car crash injury and had the option to do what a lot of us could never afford: buy a lighthouse and read the great books. One brother of means had a stereo (remember Garrard turntables???) to die for and we spent more than one evening listening to the new medium called album rock on WMMR-FM. That's right, FM!!! The mother of one of my brothers was the consul to Barbados — and, hence, our Mount Gay rum punch was better than all others on campus. By the time I graduated, we were all kind of boring getting serious about life and careers!

SAE: Anything else you'd like to add?

TOM: Yes. I am not a real belonger-type personality. Our SAE chapter was an eclectic bunch of jocks, brainiacs, ethnically diverse, gay, geographically diverse... and misfits who would not fit into or even like the other fraternities' homogenous profiles. That apparently is not the case in other big houses. I didn't care, still don't. I hope that we as a fraternity, as a nation of good-hearted, civil, and responsible gentlemen, set an example for maturing young men and bend the arc of justice toward righteousness. Respect for women and others not of our kind. A hand given to those less fortunate than we who attended Ivy League schools. Inclusion beyond the homogeneous East Hamptons or Cos Cob Connecticut enclaves in which many of us were nurtured.

Would you or a brother you know make a great alumni profile subject? Email us at alumninews@affinityconnection.com to let us know!

THANKS FOR YOUR SERVICE!

Steve Saltzman Receives 3 Awards for 34 Years of Service before Retiring as Chapter Advisor

On December 1, more than 50 alumni and active Penn Theta brothers joined Christopher Hancock, Chief Executive Officer & Eminent Supreme Recorder, (Indiana Sigma '96), and Gregory Brandt, Eminent Supreme Archon, (Iowa Delta '84) in an awards ceremony via Zoom. **Richard Sawyer**, (Penn Theta '61) moderated. The ceremony was held to present **Brother Steve Saltzman (Penn Theta '85)** with three awards for his long-standing devotion and service to Penn Theta SAE, the Fraternity and Sorority system at University of Pennsylvania, and the ideals and operation of fraternities throughout the U.S.

In opening comments, Brother ESR Hancock noted that "Brother Saltzman's commitment to the University of Pennsylvania's Penn Theta Chapter (1986-2020) will never be matched. Saltzman has been actively involved with the Pennsylvania Theta chapter at the University of Pennsylvania for 34 years, serving as its Chapter Advisor and House Corporation President. He has also served as President of the Penn Theta Alumni Association from 2014-2020. Under Saltzman's guidance, the chapter has become an exemplary organization on campus. He has been recognized twice by the University of Pennsylvania's Interfraternity Council as the Advisor of the Year (Merv Sluizer Award) and is the only multi-year



recipient of the award (2014 and 2020)."

The first presentation was by **Samuel Fuchs**, Eminent Archon, Penn Theta '21 who presented the Order of the Lion Award. The Order of the Lion recognizes outstanding commitment and loyalty to the Fraternity by an alumnus.

The second presentation was by **Steven Sloan**, Vice President, House Corporation, (Penn Theta '77) who presented the Order of Minerva Award. The Order of Minerva recognizes outstanding commitment and loyalty to the Fraternity by an alumnus over an extended period of time on various Fraternity levels.

The third presentation was by Gregory Brandt, Eminent Supreme Archon, (Iowa Delta '84) who presented the Merit Key Award. The Merit Key recognizes an alumnus

who has demonstrated significant service and loyalty to the Fraternity on combined levels for an extended period of time. The nominee must have served ten years of sustained leadership in multiple positions (e.g. chapter adviser, alumni association officer, province officer and national committee member or Leadership School faculty). The recipient also must have made a significant contribution on national, regional and local levels. In addition, he already should have received the Order of the Lion and Order of Minerva.

Steve Saltzman is the most recent recipient of the Merit Key, the second-highest recognition Sigma Alpha Epsilon can bestow on an alumnus.

In accepting these Awards, Brother Saltzman thanked all of the alumni members that had assisted him over the years. He recounted the time 34 years ago when **Brother Russ Heuer**, the long-time Chapter Advisor, asked Brother Saltzman to temporarily take over his duties until an alumnus could be recruited for a longer-term commitment. Little did he know that his temporary duties would last 34 years but he has cherished every moment and hopes that Penn Theta's next 34 years are assisted by multiple alumni volunteers. Before ending the ceremony, Brother Saltzman led the attendees in the recitation of the "True Gentleman."

VOLUNTEER NEEDED



Penn Theta Searches for New Chapter Advisor

Due to the retirement of **Steve Saltzman '85** as Chapter Advisor, the chapter is in need of a Penn Theta or other SAE alumnus to volunteer for this important role. The Chapter Advisor provides oversight of chapter activities and is a source of knowledge, experience, and mentoring for the active members. The rewards are many but certainly chief among them are helping to perpetuate the Penn Theta experience that meant so much to each of us as undergrads at Penn and the satisfaction and gratitude coming from assisting actives in their pursuit of becoming the "True Gentlemen."

Requirements are to live within a 1-hour radius from Penn Theta so that you will be able and willing to personally attend a minimum of one chapter meeting per month, preferably two chapter meetings per month (in a post-COVID world). Share your knowledge and experience with chapter actives as they pursue chapter activities.

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact **Ron Bell, Province Archon**, via email at drbell9@yahoo.com or phone at **570.575.0683**. You will have the Penn Theta Nation's considerable thanks and gratitude.

STAY CONNECTED

Find Penn Theta Alumni Brothers Online

Are you plugged in to our ΣAE Penn alumni website? Follow us to reconnect with your Penn Theta alumni buddies online, find out about upcoming virtual and in-person events, and keep up with the latest news from the chapter.

Website

Visit saepath.org today and login to see exclusive alumni content including alumni updates, old editions of the alumni newsletter, flashback photos, and more. Don't remember your login info? Email alumninews@affinityconnection.com and our alumni communications partner will help you log in.



Alumni Map

With vaccines being distributed, Sigma Alpha Epsilon alumni can't wait to get back together in 2021! See which alums live in your neck of the woods and find their contact information with our new interactive alumni locator map. To see the full map, log

on to our alumni website and visit the Directory page.

If you notice your information is out of date on the map, email your updates to us at alumninews@affinityconnection.com. Login at saepath.org today to find the map.

Pennsylvania Theta brotherhood is for life

Instagram

Keep up with the chapter by following them on Instagram by searching their handle [@upennsae](https://www.instagram.com/upennsae).

ALUMNI CORNER

SAEs Remember Funny Nicknames, Top Social Events, and More!

What were the best nicknames you called your brothers and how did they come about? When's the last time you saw a Penn Theta Chapter brother in person? What do you remember about the top social event the year you graduated and do you remember who your date was? What was SAE known for during your time at UPenn? Read on to find out how other alums answered these questions.

Paul F. Schuster '89

NICKNAMES: BeeBop was **Al Falcione's '89** nickname, and you will have to ask **Mike Ault '89** how that came about. Cap'n was **Matt O'Connell's '89** nickname because he was so wholesome and clean-cut that he reminded everyone of Captain America.

LAST SAW A BROTHER: The last time I saw classmates was in October 2017 in Chicago. Many of us gathered for **Lee Shavel's '89** 50th Birthday celebration.

SOCIAL EVENT: Our top social events were large parties rather than mixers or date-parties.

SAE WAS KNOWN FOR: We were genuinely nice, inclusive, fun young men who knew how to have fun and create memories. We carried no single word descriptors.

Mike Schaedle '89

NICKNAMES: I remember Lippy, Sneaker, UB, Normbro, Mouse, and Dogger. Swifty came up with those and others, may he rest in peace.

LAST SAW A BROTHER: This summer **Harry Fisher '89** and our families got together at our Shore Point.

SOCIAL EVENT: I did marry a Penn girl, Maria, but we did not know each other at school. Fling senior year was pretty trippy.

SAE WAS KNOWN FOR: We were known for sleeping and eating.

Want to share your own response? Email your answers to the questions above to alumninews@affinityconnection.com. We'll publish your response in a future alumni newsletter!

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Penn Theta Outreach Analytics

Here's a snapshot of our alumni engagement for the past year. These are the benchmarks against which we can measure our growth in the coming months.

E-letter Opens & Clicks



E-letters: These are our open and click rates for our monthly e-letters. According to Mailchimp, the average email open rate is 21.33% and the average click rate is 2.62%. Have you been receiving our monthly e-letters? If not, email us at alumninews@affinityconnection.com with your name, grad year, and current email address so we can add you to our email list.

Website Analytics: These are our www.saepath.org website analytics from January 2020 through February 2021.

