

The Crossed Swords

Fall 2002

Alpha Sigma Phi / Alpha Tau

Introductory Remarks

The Crossed Swords is the newsletter of the Alpha Tau chapter of Alpha Sigma Phi. It honors the traditions of our Fraternity as a literary society, in chronicling a selection of the chapter's events and brothers' thoughts on various topics. It is through such newsletters and publications that we are able to maintain a historical account of our times. Selections included in this issue include an article on community service, our visit to this year's national conference, a Parents' Day event held this semester. Other articles feature our attendance at a regional recruitment symposium, and our participation in the AlcoholEdu program.



Special thanks go out to the following brothers for their contributions to this issue of the Crossed Swords: Joseph Haydu, Pranay Khurana, & Timothy Rashkin.

Editor: Jeremy Mikola

Community Service

Joseph Haydu

The open motto of Alpha Sigma Phi is "to better the man." One of the ways our Fraternity achieves this end is through community service. Everyone has heard the saying, "no pain, no gain." Service requires a sacrifice of time, and likewise, service activities are not always interesting or enjoyable. Many people would rather spend their Saturday mornings sleeping or relaxing, rather than visiting to a food pantry or doing a walk-a-thon; however, the benefits of service are threefold. Service gives individuals a chance to address social injustices and improve their own community. Also, service is a chance to lead by example and do good unto others, just as we would want them to do to you. Lastly, the resulting feeling of doing something worthwhile for someone else can make even the worst week much better. Service helps mold men into better citizens and better human beings, and it is for this reason that we, as brothers under a motto of self-improvement, dedicate ourselves to helping others.

Alpha Tau Domination At National Conference

Timothy Rashkin

During the summer of 2002, seven of our brothers recently journeyed to Indianapolis, Indiana, to participate in our fraternity's National Leadership Conference. It was an extremely magnificent event that united the brotherhood of Alpha Sigma Phi from Stevens Tech to Oregon State. We also had the chance to meet a many members of Alpha Sigma Phi's Grand Council as well as attend an honorary breakfast and receive a multitude of awards for our chapter's participation and dedication "to better the man." Some of the awards we received include:

- Phoenix Society Award for 80% Membership Support to the Phoenix Educational Campaign
- The Philanthropy Citation For 2001-2002
- The Service Citation For 2001-2002
- The Risk Management Citation For 2001-2002

- The Campus Involvement Citation For 2001-2002
- The Publication Citation For 2001-2002
- The Ritual Education Citation For 2001-2002
- The Membership Improvement Citation For 2001-2002
- The Brotherhood Development Citation For 2001-2002

Some Thoughts On AlcoholEdu

Pranay Khurana

The brothers of Alpha Tau were asked to take the AlcoholEdu survey in early October in order to save a lump sum on the cost of insurance premiums. As several brothers went about their ways over the course of a week in encouraging everyone else to partake in the education session, it was interesting to notice the manners in which the test-takers were involved, and the results thereafter.

Several of the participants in the AlcoholEdu program decided to drink while taking part in the sessions. This occurrence was quite the irony, as the program was meant to be a drinking deterrent on all regards. This method proved to be quite effective however, as all the brothers that were drinking while taking part in the testing procedure also passed with flying colors. In learning that they passed, these brothers, to be kept anonymous of course, shared another alcoholic beverage in celebration. Thus, the AlcoholEdu program proved to be quite an entertaining experience for some brothers.

Other brothers taking part in the survey session chose to do homework or play video games, paying little or no attention to the various characters on the screen eating up network bandwidth. Upon completion of their assignments, or upon passing multiple levels of a video game, these brothers completed the test at the end of the AlcoholEdu program and passed it successfully.

In comparing the experience between the brothers that chose to drink during (and after) the test, and those that completed homework

assignments, several factors must be taken into account. First of all, the brothers that imbibed in alcoholic beverages scored higher, on average, than the brothers that didn't. Second, the brothers under the influence reported having more fun taking the test, perhaps because they were in such a daze during the process that they didn't notice the laborious three hours pass by. Most brothers agreed altogether however that the AlcoholEdu program did teach them much about the dangers of abusing alcohol.

Rutgers Recruitment Symposium

Jeremy Mikola

On September 7, 2002, shortly after the fall semester began, a handful of brothers from Alpha Tau visited the Beta Theta colony at Rutgers University (New Brunswick) to attend a recruitment symposium, sponsored by Alpha Sigma Phi National. Other Alpha Sigma Phi groups in attendance included the Widener, CW Post, and Albright colonies. The event opened with a general lunch for everyone attending. Some time after all had arrived, National Representative Jeremy Rogers gathered everyone for the main presentation, given by Josh Orendi, an Alpha Sigma Phi alumnus and professional speaker.

Josh began by relating our individual chapters, and the fraternity as a whole, as a product, and went on to state that successful recruitment involves knowing our product, audience, and how to adapt and tune our existing abilities to become more efficient recruiters. After establishing the parallel of our fraternity as a product, our speaker then elaborated on many of the key questions and points regarding the recruiting process. He covered basic, factual topics such as questions about financial commitments and hazing, and then spoke on more open-ended questions such as clarifying the distinction of Alpha Sigma Phi from the stereotypical 'frat' image.

A unique aspect of our recruitment process is that our target audience, much like our former selves, has no intention of joining a

fraternity when they first come to college. A significant part of recruitment is relating to the audience in a personal way. This comes as no problem for brothers that can empathize with common situations such as disapproving parents or the search of finding a truly worthwhile fraternity. A particularly strong selling point of Alpha Sigma Phi is its status as a national organization. With such identification, comes the benefit of associating with other chapters and attending national conferences and events. Our national affiliation also gives Alpha Sigma Phi a more secure lifetime as an active organization.

The latter half of Josh's presentation was devoted towards an open discussion format for all those in attendance. This was perhaps the most fruitful aspect of the event, as members from each school were able to share their ideas and learn from each others' experiences and comments. Josh concluded the discussion with a case study for each school in attendance, where he evaluated each groups' campus environment and individually helped the respective group to establish recruitment goals for their chapter or colony.

In retrospect, most of the brothers from Alpha Tau attending the symposium agreed that the recruitment goals formulated were more than a tad optimistic; however, the presentation did provide a fair share of education information than can be distributed to the chapter as a whole to fortify its recruitment process.

A Successful Parents' Day

Pranay Khurana

On October 20, 2002, the brothers of Alpha Sigma Phi held their first ever Parents Day. During the unanimously successful event, the parents of eleven brothers participated in an interactive session in which brothers and parents rid themselves of the common misconceptions associated with fraternities. Brothers had the opportunity to demonstrate some of the more positive aspects of fraternity life, including leadership activities, responsibility, and teamwork.

The afternoon began at 2 PM with a dinner from Boston Market. To the surprise of the brothers, several parents also decided to cook up a variety of deserts, which they brought to the luncheon. The brothers feasted on a plentiful lunch with the parents, during which everyone was acquainted with each other. Soon after, the parent relations chair, Pranay Khurana, started the informative segment of the afternoon. During this segment, the parents and brothers discussed some of the common misconceptions related to fraternity life, including binge drinking, hazing, and excessive partying. The brothers had the opportunity clear up these disconcerting views of fraternity life by detailing their own experiences at Alpha Sigma Phi over the last few semesters. Furthermore, the brothers brought to the attention of the parents some of the more positive aspects of life at Alpha Sigma Phi, which included leadership roles, financial responsibility, and time management. Several brothers spoke openly about their respective positions in the house, detailing their responsibilities and the lessons they had acquired from these positions. The broad, realistic view of life in the realms of Alpha Sigma Phi was more comforting to the parents in attendance, in comparison to the idea of fraternity life that they were previously aware of.

Last on the agenda for Parents Day was a mock house meeting led by brother Timothy Rashkin. Tim announced each position in the house and had each member describe precisely what the specifics of his position entailed. By doing so, the brothers made the parents aware of precisely how the house kept itself organized and running.

At the end of a very delightful and informative three-hour session, all of the parents went home happy. Several brothers agreed that this Parents Day was the proudest moment of our tenure at Alpha Sigma Phi, and that we looked forward to holding several more such successful events.