



## Quest for New House Director Produces Results

**Drew Millard '98** was chosen as the representative from the Corporation Board to interview and hire a house director. Drew owns a Chicago based real estate company, 33 Realty ([www.33realty.com](http://www.33realty.com)), and has ten years experience in property management. Appointing him to spearhead this campaign was a logical choice.

The first step of the process was to create a job description. The underlying theme was to ensure the house director oversaw the fraternity's operations and physical structure. It was important for him not to take over the house operations because our actives would lose out on the valuable experiences of running a fraternity.

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### Editor's Note:

With Acacia's history at Illinois not having included a house mother, house father or house director, alumni may be wondering about the change announced in this issue of *The Hello* with regard to a new house director.

When the chapter ran into difficulties with the Bureau of Fraternity Affairs more than a year ago with regard to alleged hazing, an agreement was reached that called for Acacia to engage a house director to help insure that the chapter would maintain its commitments.

Board member **Drew Millard '98** led the search for an appropriate person to serve in this capacity and following a semester long search, we believe an individual has been found to perform these functions in a productive and beneficial manner. Read more about Brad Luhrsen in the accompanying article.

## Acacia's House Search Continues

By Dan Bayston '80 and Mike Duncan '74

As many of our alumni are aware, the initial phase of the Campaign for Acacia Illinois has been successful in raising significant financial commitments toward securing a permanent home for Acacia Illinois. By December 31, 2009, over \$1.5 million had been pledged with approximately \$600,000 having been paid by our generous alumni and friends. During 2009 alone, approximately \$140,000 was paid to the campaign and pledges to be collected in 2010 are expected to reach a similar amount. Some interesting statistics regarding our campaign include:

- Number of Donors: 219
- Median Pledge Amount: \$1,500
- Individual Pledge Range Amount: \$50 to \$500,000
- Most Senior Pledge: Class of '38

The next active solicitation phase of the campaign is scheduled to commence once we have a specific property under contract. As we discussed in the Fall '09 issue of *The Hello*, we have been actively negotiating with several potential property sellers. This process continues to take time - more time, quite frankly, than we would like.

Several important issues are emerging through our due diligence and negotiations. First, the pace of potential sellers to respond to our inquiries and investigations is frustratingly

slow. To some extent, this is a reflection of the fact that the campus area real estate market is dominated by just a couple of non-motivated sellers. Second, existing Greek-affiliated properties that were anticipated to potentially enter the sale market due to the local mandated fire safety installations of sprinkler systems has not materialized in a meaningful way. Third, the cost of land (scarcely available in and around campus) for potential construction of a new fraternity house continues to remain high, notwithstanding the trend of declining prices observed in other communities across the country.

Thus, it is taking us longer to execute on our plan of securing a specific property. Also, when we are ultimately successful, our investment in such a property is likely to be greater than originally anticipated. All of these issues will obviously have an impact on the next phase of the campaign. Your fraternity's governance is committed to following a prudent and fully informed course of action in securing a permanent home for our fraternity. Our commitment to finding a permanent home remains steadfast. As always, we will keep you informed as developments unfold. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Campaign Co-Chairmen **Dan Bayston '80** at [dan.bayston@cognient.com](mailto:dan.bayston@cognient.com) or **Mike Duncan '74** at [mduncan@patcap.com](mailto:mduncan@patcap.com).

## Meet Acacia's New House Director, Brad Luhrsen

My name is Brad Luhrsen and I'm happy to be the new house director for Acacia Fraternity at the University of Illinois. I'm looking forward to working with the active chapter and the alumni board to ensure that Acacia continues to be a proud and prosperous fraternity on this campus. There are a lot of fine young men at the chapter now who are sure to have bright futures ahead of them.

I'm a lifelong resident of the Champaign area. I've been running my own maintenance

business for the last six years, doing heating and air conditioning, remodeling and general repairs in apartment buildings, rooming houses, fraternities and residential facilities. For the past ten years, I've served on various boards and committees within my church. We have a school at the church, where I'm the current athletic director as well.

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## Chapter Officer Reports

### **Kyle Daker '09, Venerable Dean**



I would like to take this time to touch base with all of you and let you know a little bit about myself as well as my future plans for the house. I am an entrepreneurial management and finance major. After my time here at Illinois, I plan on attending law school. I am from Bartlett, IL. I have two brothers, a younger one in high school and an older one in college. I've worked for my dad the past few years and after seeing him run a successful small business, I believe I will be able to follow suit running a successful fraternity.

As for my plans for the house, my biggest goals are to revamp our honor board system and further our philanthropy efforts. I recently assembled the new honor board. We are looking for them to serve as the disciplinary board of the house. This way, when people come back to the house and engage in idiotic behavior, they will be held accountable for their actions. I feel that this new system will change the way people act around the house.

Last semester, our philanthropy efforts were not up to par by any means. We are in the process of possibly creating a whole new event for the spring. We also plan to create mandatory service hours, engaging all of our members with the community.

I am honored to have been elected Venerable Dean by my fellow brothers, and I know I'll live up to their expectations. I am thrilled to have an opportunity like this in front of me and I look forward to the upcoming challenges.

### **Alex Chiang '09, Alumni Chair**



Hello, Alumni! My name is Alex Chiang and I am the new alumni chair for Acacia Illinois. I am from North Potomac, MD and am studying finance. Apart from being an Acacia brother, I am on the club tennis team and I am also a campus tour guide. This year, I would like to work with alumni to further advance our mentorship program. I look forward to keeping in

touch with you all and informing you about the events happening at our chapter.

### **Chase Clinebell '10, Risk Management Chair**



As risk management chair, I intend on working very closely with the rest of the chapter by making sure everyone knows what rules and regulations they need to be following. It's going to be important to work closely with **Kyle Daker '09** and the rest of the executive board to make sure we, as a chapter, are making smart and progressive decisions.

### **Wyatt Harris '09, House Manager**

As House Manager, my plans for the house are pretty simple. I would like to clean it up and repair it as needed so we do not lose our security deposit. I have also been shoveling and salting the premises after getting hit with a persistent series of snow storms. The pledges and I will soon be clearing out the current room where we store all of our surplus property and cleaning materials and be moving all the supplies to the room behind the Exec Room.

### **Jeremy Mandell '09, Head Pledge Educator**



As Head Pledge Educator, I plan (and have started), to organize and strengthen the pledge program. In my opinion, pledgeship serves three purposes: to familiarize the pledges with the Greek system and Acacia Fraternity, to encourage a bond between the pledges and to help them earn the respect of the active chapter. There are many ways to encourage this program, in my opinion. One way will be to get the pledges as involved in philanthropy as possible. This will insure they spend time with one another and they can see how the Greek community works.

Last semester, we tried a pancake breakfast where the pledges contacted various sororities and, for a somewhat reasonable price, cooked them breakfast. This, to our surprise, turned out to be profitable and served all the purposes we had intended. I want our house to move away from meaningless activities that do not promote any of my three criteria already

mentioned. There are many ways to get across the same message (and to shape the pledges), and I plan on finding the most mature and productive way to do it.

### **Jack Roberts '10, Social Chair**



I plan on maintaining our house's high social status and continuing to organize safe and fun events. I'm very motivated and I plan on doing the most I can to make our house better. I'm excited to be in a position of leadership and am looking forward to the upcoming year.

### **Eric Ruzalski '10, Senior Dean**



In terms of my background, I grew up in Bartlett, IL and graduated from Bartlett High School where I excelled in the classroom and played football, baseball, track and the guitar. I am currently a freshman at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign where I am majoring in business management. My plans this year as Senior Dean of Acacia include being active in the chapter by helping the Venerable Dean with any request he has. In addition, I will be setting up and organizing an activity filled Mom's Day and possibly a Brotherhood event more towards the end of the school year.

### **Joe Sawa '09, Scholarship Chair**



Greetings, Alumni! My name is Joe Sawa and I am originally from Naperville, Illinois. I am a sophomore chemical engineering major, and I also enjoy my involvement with Illinois Men's Club Soccer team and Engineers Without Borders here on campus. As the Acacia Illinois Scholarship Chair, I am developing a network of academic resources that will be affordable, easily navigable and entirely supported by university policy. These electronic resources will be beneficial to current students and, as the system continues to grow, to our posterity.

## Chapter Officer Reports – continued

### Paul Warkins '09, Junior Dean

My name is Paul Warkins and I am a current sophomore majoring in finance and international business.



This upcoming year, I will be acting as Junior Dean, working with the Social Chair to organize events between Acacia and various sororities on campus. We recently had a very successful semi-formal and have our remaining events with Kappa Alpha Theta, Delta Delta Delta, Delta Gamma, Alpha Chi Omega, Kappa Delta, Alpha Phi and Chi Omega planned. I am involved with planning the events in aspects such as coming up with themes, reserving the spaces to hold the events and making sure Acacia maintains an active role with the other Greek organizations on campus. We also work on staying within the social budget, ensuring that we stay cost effective while making sure the members of Acacia have a fun and enjoyable year.

### Joey Zanghi '09, Philanthropy Chair

My name is Joey Zanghi. I am a pre-medicine student studying biology and chemistry, and I am a member of the Acacia 2012 pledge class. I was our chapter's Risk Management Chair last year, and I am also currently on the IFC judicial board. For the upcoming year, our chapter is looking to get involved in more philanthropy events. Currently, we are planning on participating in at least three or four other chapters' philanthropy events, as well as have signed up a Relay for Life team. We are also looking to continue Seven Days of Service, and ending that week by holding our own philanthropy event, Acacia Bowl. This year, we are looking to team up with our own, **Drew Millard '98**, and his real estate company in order to help Acacia Bowl grow.



## Quest for New House Director

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After the completion of the job description, Drew started by posting job advertisements in many forms of print media with little success. Therefore, he changed gears and started posting job ads on the web, which resulted in approximately ten resumes in the first week!

He decided to interview four highly qualified candidates, but in the end, David Theis, a Champaign Attorney and Acacia brother, gave a nice recommendation for Brad Luhrsen. Brad's been working forty hours per week since the beginning of the semester and already his guidance has proved very valuable. Brad is able to instill the values and objectives the Corporation Board finds important.

Brad's ability to lead these young men in the right direction has them buying into his system already. We are very excited to see what the future has in store and we hope Brad will be with us for a long time to come.

## High Achievers!

Elsewhere in this issue of *The Hello*, **Phil Chapman '71** reported on the outstanding academic achievements of the chapter this past semester. *The Hello* would be remiss if it did not further sight the fine achievements of Acacia's very brightest.

Earning a perfect 4.0 G.P.A. this past semester was junior **Daniel Patrick Ashe '08!**

Other members doing virtually as well, earning a G.P.A. of 3.9 or above were:

**Alexander Gistis '09**, sophomore

**Michael J Rochman '07**, senior

**Frank M Frasco '10**, freshman

We congratulate these and other Acacia high grade point average achievers and remind them that the Board issues \$8,000 a year in scholarships to applicants who reach for the top and apply for consideration.

## The Hello Editors

Alex Chiang '09  
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## New House Director

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At Acacia, I look forward to using my experience in serving on boards and committees and being a business owner to help bring more organization and structure to the executive board meetings and that group as a whole. I will be available to active members and pledges to discuss any issues with them, be it academic, social issues or otherwise. I will serve as a curb (or barricade in some cases) to help guide them to be productive members and hopefully leaders of society. I will oversee all operations and activities of the chapter and be there to help encourage them to make the right decisions.



**Brad Luhrsen**

My tendency to observe situations and then make a detailed plan to correct issues rather than make hasty reactions has served me well in the past. I plan to work through and with the executive board on most matters, but will not hesitate to take a more direct approach when the need arises. I'll also be using my experience as a maintenance technician to make sure that the house is in good repair and, with a new house on the horizon, will help insure that investment remains secure for years to come.

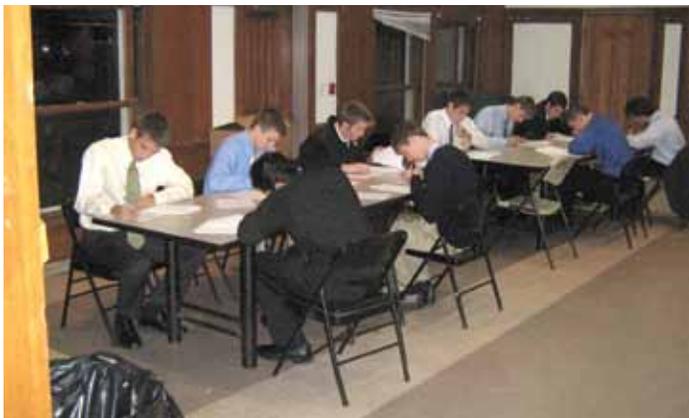
I welcome alumni members to contact me at [brad@lpmcu.com](mailto:brad@lpmcu.com) or stop by the house if you are in the area. Your ongoing support and encouragement is vital to the continued success of Acacia at the University of Illinois.

## Upcoming New Initiates Breakfast

Brother **Phil Chapman '71**, and newly elected Venerable Dean, **Kyle Daker '09**, are planning a New Initiates Breakfast for April. Newly initiated brothers will enjoy a Saturday morning breakfast prepared by Acacia's cook, AL, and listen to alumni share tips on how initiates can make the most of the Acacia experience. In prior years, **Mel Rapp '49**, **Bruce Warren '74**, **Mike McCulley '68**, **Dave Thies '73**, **John Shumacher '73** and **Phil Chapman '71** have provided stories enjoyed by all and insight about what Acacia has meant to them.

Communication support and assistance provided by Omega Financial, Inc.  
(800) 955-ALUM (2586)  
[OmegaAlumniServices.com](http://OmegaAlumniServices.com)

## Acacia's Future Leaders



Initiation candidates hard at work completing their written examination. (See sample test questions below.)

## How's Your Acacia IQ?

Each class of initiates is required to individually take a test relating to information they have learned about Acacia and fraternities in general based on their studies as pledges. *The Hello* thought it would be interesting for our alumni to re-visit some of those test questions to see how well you remember.

Below are ten questions chosen at random from more than 200 questions of similar nature posed to prospective initiates. This is your chance evaluate your Acacia IQ.

### Answer the following as True or False:

1. Acacia Fraternity was a founding member of the North-American Interfraternity Council.
2. An Acacia chapter may activate a man who previously belonged to another general national college social fraternity if that fraternity is not a member of the North-American Interfraternity Council.
3. According to the Pythagoras, Acacia has approximately 26,000 alumni members.
4. Donations to the Acacia Fraternity Foundation are tax deductible.
5. Pythagoras is thought to have traveled and studied in ancient Persia, England, Crete, and Egypt.



Acacia's newest group of initiates who became members on December 5, 2009.

### Multiple Choices:

6. A man may remain a pledge for: 2 3 4 semesters. None of the above.
7. The current Pythagoras is the \_\_\_\_ edition. 7th 12th 9th 13th
8. According to Pythagoras, a member's collegiate priorities should be 1 \_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_  
A. Fraternity, Scholarship, Other campus activities  
B. Scholarship, Fraternity, Other campus activities  
C. Fraternity, Other campus activities, Scholarship  
D. Scholarship, Other campus activities, Fraternity
9. Pythagoras was thought to have died in \_\_\_\_  
A: 500 B.C. B: 517 B.C. C: 507 B.C. D: 432 B.C.
10. The original method of naming Acacia chapters was replaced by the present method  
In: \_\_\_\_  
A. 1908 B. 1913 C. 1921 D. None of the above.

Save your answers. The correct answers will be published in the next issue of *The Hello*.

## Mentoring Program Helps Bear Academic Results

Since the Corporation Board approved the Illinois Chapter Cornerstones mentoring program, the house grades have climbed steadily. Each semester, mentoring point of contact, **Phil Chapman '71** provides classes to the pledges sharing the secrets of academic success. Last fall, the 25 pledges attended Dr. Chapman's "How to Make Straight A's" and "Time Management" classes. The pledges paid attention during the classes, asking excellent questions.

Dr. Chapman challenged the pledges to earn a 3.00 G.P.A. Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs, Ashley Dye, reported the group soared to new heights and scored the highest G.P.A. of any pledge class in recent memory with a 3.04 G.P.A.! Congratulations to the newly initiated class on their accomplishment!

Fortunately, the house's academic accomplishment does not stop there. Since beginning the "How to Make Straight A's" and "Time Management Curriculum" the Board watched the active's grades steadily

rise. The active chapter posted a 3.12 GPA which is 19th of 48 houses on campus! Given the tremendous talent and intelligence of students at the University of Illinois, Acacia's resurgence in academics is most impressive.

Dr. Chapman has cut back on the mentoring relationships in order to allow house officers to focus on other important aspects of fraternity life. Former Venerable Dean **Ryan Van Echo '08** and Assistant Dean Ashley Dye report that Acacia rose to the occasion and is maturely facing its situation. Assistant Dean Dye reports the leadership and active chapter has established a sound program to include: pledgship and initiation, social opportunities, intramural events and superior academic achievement. In addition, all have noted the active chapter worked hard to fill the temporary house on Ohio Street, which is at full capacity.

## Fall 2009 Initiates

Kevin Alsterda  
Lincolnwood, IL  
Agriculture

Andrew Michael  
Naperville, IL  
Political Science

Akash Amin  
Aurora, IL  
Business

Phil Rdzaneck  
Skokie, IL  
Civil Engineering

Chase Clinebell  
Waterloo, IL  
Finance

Jack Roberts  
Naperville, IL  
Computer Science  
Engineer

Ryan Crawford  
West Chicago, IL  
Business-Finance

Steven Romanelli  
West Chicago, IL  
Finance

Will Davis  
Glenview, IL  
General Engineering

Eric Russell  
Lake Bluff, IL  
Undecided

Connor Ekelund  
Minnetonka, MN  
Bioengineering

Eric Ruzalski  
Bartlet, IL  
Business  
Management

Frank Frasco  
Wheeling, IL  
Undecided

T.J. Sobczak  
Glenview, IL  
Business

Mike Guccione  
Wheeling, IL  
Political Science

Patrick Stevens  
Naperville, IL  
Civil Engineering

Jack Kelly  
Chicago, IL  
Undecided

Alex Swanson  
Aurora, IL  
General Engineering

Kevin Langendorf  
Wilmette, IL  
Agricultural and  
Consumer Economics

Mark Uy  
Naperville, IL  
Communication

Alex Lopatin  
Naperville, IL  
Computer Science

Steven Walton  
Bushnell, IL  
Undecided

## Spring 2010 Pledge Class

Trevor Arnholt  
Mattoon, IL  
Business

Chuck Coates  
Lake Forest, IL  
Undecided

Shiloh Golden  
Skokie, IL  
Natural  
Resources and  
Environmental  
Science

Connor Olsen  
Northbrook, IL  
Kinesiology

Andy Rosecrans  
Northbrook, IL  
Undecided



Pledge Class - Spring 2010.

## Acacia Illinois 2010 Annual Fund

Acacia alumni are generous men. You heed the call when it's necessary to reach out with an important need. Some of you volunteer countless hours to the chapter. Many of you helped raise more than \$1.5 million for a new house. Now, your help is needed to continue Acacia's alumni relations program.

The Fraternity's fixed expenses for *The Hello* (printing & postage), website maintenance, event promotion and other communication items is in excess of \$15,000 per year. There are also additional operating expenses for things like Acacia's professional accountant and auditor. These are expenses the Corporation Board covers annually and now your help is needed.

The goal for 2010 is simple: Raise at least \$30,000 and convince alumni that Acacia is worth supporting.

There are a variety of annual fund giving levels to choose from. If your circumstances permit, would you consider making a leadership gift to this year's campaign at the \$5,000 or \$3,000 level? Giving at the Pythagoras Union or 1906 Society level is

certainly not inexpensive, but it will provide the resources needed to continue the alumni advising and mentorship programs and the alumni programs of the fraternity.

If \$5,000 or \$3,000 is more than you can manage, would you consider participating at the Masonic Counsel (\$1,500) or W. Elmer Ekblaw Circle (\$750) levels? Spread out over a twelve month period, your contribution would be just \$125 or \$62.50 per month, respectively.

Regardless of the level of support you choose to provide, it's important that you participate at some level. There are a variety of payment options for you to consider. You can write one check or pay over a year's time. Payments can even automatically be billed to your debit or credit card if you prefer. Choose the giving level and payment plan that's right for you, and make your pledge today.

To give to the campaign, either visit [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com) or respond to the recent letter detailing the 2010 Annual Fund for Acacia Illinois.

## The Corporation Board Looks to Technology to Improve Collaboration

Recently, the Corporation Board took a look at internal operations and identified several areas for improvement. Similar to other organizations, the Corporation Board wanted to improve collaboration and looked to technology to provide a solution. After looking at several alternatives, the Corporation Board decided to setup a Google Apps account to help improve these areas of weakness.

With access to Google Apps, the Corporation Board now has the ability to upload and collaborate on documents and tasks within the tool's framework. Updates and changes to any Google document or spreadsheet are tracked and stored by the tool. Each version of a spreadsheet or document no longer needs to be attached and e-mailed out to Board members. Instead, these updates can be made within the tool and Board members will be able to log into the application allowing them to view all updates and versions - instead of managing multiple versions on their own hard drive. Besides improving collaboration on documents, Google Apps also will allow the Board to setup its own intranet to log open tasks, create a message board, calendar and other content needed for internal operations. Although the conversion is still in process,

the Board hopes that one secure, central repository for documents and information will allow improved communication and collaboration within the team.

When complicated, if not complex, computer related tasks are faced by the Board, it is quickly obvious that younger alumni come far better equipped to grasp the technology available. Recognizing that former Venerable Dean **Andy Braun '05** was tech-savvy; his expertise was requested for this project.

After researching available systems, in particular those that might not have a cost connected, Andy came up with the system and format that was needed. It's great to have young brains like Andy's available for support. We thank Andy for giving back and providing his assistance.

Do you have news you'd like to share with your brothers? Post interesting information about yourself online at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com). Did you recently get married? Have a baby? Change jobs? Retire? Let us know. Post your news today.



**Acacia Fraternity**  
University of Illinois #695  
PO Box 2187  
Columbus, GA 31902-2187

Help us keep our alumni records up-to-date! Parents, please forward this newsletter to your son. Alumni, edit your member profile online at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com), or clip this form, place it in a stamped envelope and send to: Acacia Fraternity, University of Illinois #695, PO Box 2187, Columbus, GA 31902.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Roll Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_



### Visit the Acacia Website

Visit [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com), the official alumni website, to:

- Learn more about the chapter
- Search for alumni
- Update your address, phone number and e-mail address
- Find out about upcoming events
- Post noteworthy accomplishments (a new baby, a recent marriage, a recent promotion, etc.)
- Support the fraternity's capital campaign



### Mystery Photo

Can you identify this photo? Two free Homecoming dinners will be awarded to each of the first five respondents who correctly identify and e-mail their answer to [mrapp3@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mrapp3@sbcglobal.net). The answer and explanation will be included in the next issue of *The Hello*.

### Save the Date

**Homecoming 2010**

**October 23**

**Illinois vs. Indiana**

Make plans and hotel reservations now!

Want to have seats in the Acacia football block?  
Contact **Adam Powers '98** at [adampowers1@gmail.com](mailto:adampowers1@gmail.com).

