



# VIKING

THE NEWSLETTER FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF EPSILON SIGMA CHAPTER OF ALPHA TAU OMEGA AT FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY - SUMMER 2016

## Epsilon Sigma Named "IFC Chapter of the Year"

The year 2015-2016 proved to be a great year for Taus at FSU! Epsilon Sigma reclaimed national recognition as a True Merit chapter and received FSU's IFC Chapter of the Year award. President **Keegan Nelms '14** and his fellow executive board accepted the coveted prize on April 19, 2016.

Board of Trustees Chairman **Skip Smith '79** also won his second consecutive Chapter Advisor of the Year award. Skip received recognition locally, as well as nationally, for his unwavering dedication to Epsilon Sigma.

On top of winning the aforementioned awards, the chapter also won the following six of eight possible chapter excellence awards from FSU: Excellence in Leadership, Excellence in Community Service, Excellence in Greek Relations, Excellence in Academics, Excellence in Brotherhood and Excellence in Membership Education.



From left to right: Phil Goldman '13, Dustin Miller '14, Sahil Patel '15, David Butter '13, Keegan Nelms '14, Joe Galati '14 and Alec Laethem '13

## What Happened at Heritage Grove?

What started as a grand vision and plan to develop a new, permanent home for ATO ultimately turned into a complex legal battle. In the end, ATO prevailed, but it cost the fraternity a great deal over sixteen years.

Following the 1999 fire at 810 West Tennessee Street, FSU began working to develop a new fraternity housing complex.

By the end of 2002, this initial vision began to take shape. With a new name of Heritage Grove, plans evolved quickly. ATO became one of five so-called "equity fraternities" because it made an investment of \$240,000 to secure a larger lot and to own its own fraternity house.

The first major setback occurred in March

2004. The contractor discovered bad clay on the property, which required removal to support the foundation. ATO wrote a check to remove the bad clay.

By July 2004, the general contractor provided its first cost estimate to build the building - \$3.3 million.

Despite the fact ATO worked with a lender the entire time, in January 2005, the bank withdrew its loan commitment.

While ATO renewed its search to find a new lender, the housing construction bubble was building. The cost to build the same fraternity house increased from \$3.3 million to \$4.5 million in eighteen months' time.

Finally, by March 2007, it appeared ATO made the necessary project changes and identified a new contractor to build the house for \$3.6 million.

One month later, FSU suspended the chapter over an alleged hazing incident. The three-year suspension had devastating consequences and put everything on hold.

Leading up to the suspension (and even during part of the suspension), ATO paid Common Area Maintenance ("CAM") fees to Heritage Grove as a condition of our lease to support ATO's share of the general infrastructure and maintenance costs of the property. ATO paid approximately \$36,000 per

*continued on page 2*

## Alumni Weekend 2016: October 28-30

### *The Florida State Seminoles take on the Clemson Tigers*

Epsilon Sigma invites alumni and their families to return to Tallahassee for Alumni Weekend 2016. Join brothers the weekend of October 29 as FSU takes on the Clemson Tigers.

The festivities kick off with a happy-hour reception on Friday night from 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. A traditional FSU tailgate will take place on Saturday, several hours before kickoff of the highly anticipated match-up against ACC division rivals.



## Executive Officers

**Worthy Master**  
Keegan Nelms  
[kc13@my.fsu.edu](mailto:kc13@my.fsu.edu)

**Worthy Marshal**  
Dustin Miller  
[djm13b@my.fsu.edu](mailto:djm13b@my.fsu.edu)

**Worthy Chaplain**  
Nick Baron  
[nb11f@my.fsu.edu](mailto:nb11f@my.fsu.edu)

**Worthy Keeper of the Exchequer**  
Rhyse Boeneke  
[brb14@my.fsu.edu](mailto:brb14@my.fsu.edu)

**Worthy Scribe**  
Jacob Templer  
[jacobtempler@gmail.com](mailto:jacobtempler@gmail.com)

**Recruitment Chairman**  
Alec Laethem  
[laethemalec@aol.com](mailto:laethemalec@aol.com)

**Risk Manager**  
Jamie Molesphini  
[pjm12b@my.fsu.edu](mailto:pjm12b@my.fsu.edu)

**New Member Educator**  
Andrew Abrams  
[aja13k@my.fsu.edu](mailto:aja13k@my.fsu.edu)

**Alumni Relations Chairman**  
Alec Werner  
[alecwerner16@gmail.com](mailto:alecwerner16@gmail.com)

Communication support and assistance provided by OmegaFi.  
(800) 276-6342 | [omegafi.com](http://omegafi.com)

## Dues Waived for Student Veterans

To become the most veteran-friendly chapter at the most veteran friendly university in the nation, Epsilon Sigma officially passed an amendment waiving dues for all student veterans. Currently, two active brothers serve our country and no longer receive a bill for dues.

## ATO Gives Back

Epsilon Sigma continues to thrive as an organization in the Tallahassee community. The chapter exceeded the previous semester's community service hours and dollars raised for the fourth consecutive semester.

After a successful True Merit campaign in 2015, the chapter is even more committed to achieving the same distinction at ATO National Congress August 3-6, 2016. Our True Merit Chairman, **David Butter '13**, tirelessly continues to compile photos, awards and accomplishments of Epsilon Sigma brothers. He is confident the chapter will bring home the hardware yet again.

After a successful "Waka for the Troops" last semester, with roughly 1,000 attendees, Epsilon Sigma hosted its signature event: **ATO Tug of Warriors**. The event consists of a mud tug-of-war competition held in a dirt lot adjacent to the current ATO house. Dozens of teams representing different sororities on campus participated in the muddy affair.

Hosted by internal philanthropy Chairman **Chris Petrilak '15**, the event ran extremely smoothly and was a complete success. This event alone raised over \$10,000.

Please like our official Facebook page **Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity at Florida State** as well as the group **I Was an ATO at FSU** for more updates on chapter activities.



ATO presents: Tug of Warriors benefited Operation Homefront, held April 16, 2016



ATO Sweetheart  
Phoenix Barker  
Deland, FL

## Meet the New ATO Sweetheart

Meet Phoenix Barker - the 2016-2017 ATO **Sweetheart**. Barker is a junior at Florida State University majoring in both Political Science and Sport Management and plans to attend law school in the fall of 2017. Phoenix is the president of her sorority, Delta Gamma, as well as an active member of Student Government and several other on-campus organizations. She remarks, "I am so excited for the year that is about to begin and all of the amazing memories I am going to continue to make with Alpha Tau Omega."

## What Happened at Heritage Grove? (continued from page 1)

year for more than seven years.

By January 2010, a newly re-chartered ATO chapter was active at FSU again. However, ATO was still struggling to obtain financing to build the house at Heritage Grove.

During the intervening years, the original vision for Heritage Grove did not materialize. Sigma Phi Epsilon encountered problems similar to ATO and did not build on their parcel. Phi Delta

Theta delayed the construction of their building. A shooting at the Lambda Chi Alpha house in Heritage Grove led to Lambda Chi's suspension from campus. Some fraternities decided they no longer wanted to lease the rental buildings designated for them. As a result, the property manager opened certain units to any student willing to rent the space. FSU decided to construct a University police substation building at Heritage

*continued on page 3*



## Meet the Brothers



**Josh Lee**  
- Fall '15,  
Jacksonville, FL

As an incoming freshman in 2013, Josh received a scholarship from the FSU Men's Golf team. While balancing school

and athletics, Josh chose to rush Epsilon Sigma as a junior in fall 2015. During his three years at FSU, he played in 27 events and averaged a score of 73.52. He recorded two top 5, three top 10 and nine top 15 finishes. His career-low round for the team is 66, and his best finish is currently second place. Josh is currently the team captain for the 2015-2016 season.



**Josh Hancock**  
- Fall '15,  
Clearwater, FL

As a finance major with a Pre-Medicine route, Josh has a passion for on-campus involvement. In February,

the student body elected him to serve as a Student Senator for the Student Government Association. He currently serves on the Budget Committee looking for ways to better fund clubs and agencies on campus. Josh is a member of Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society and the Business Case Analysis & Solutions Club at FSU. Recently, he placed third in the Internal FSU Case Competition along with a fellow ATO brother and two teammates.



**Jake Weiss** - Spring '13, Miami, FL

Over a year ago, Jake began working for The Saintilus Consulting Group, a local consulting firm based in Tallahassee. Since joining the group, he received a promotion to Associate Consultant and now oversees fourteen interns. His day-to-day functions vary tremendously, from consulting work with local businesses and organizations, to heading an internal start-up project. "Some of my most meaningful work has come from consulting Florida State's Department of Modern Languages on whether or not the initiation of a social entrepreneurship award for students would be both

feasible and practical." Jake is extremely passionate about his work, specifically when he is capable of directly bettering our University.

## Board of Trustees

**Chairman**  
Skip Smith '79

### Members

Conner Britt '11	Nathan Mellon '11
Stefano Cavallaro '11	Travis Miller '89
Robert Clarke, Jr. '76	Austin Moser '08
Nicholas Iarossi '95	Nate Mozeleski '09
Micah Ketchel '04	Brian Newman '88
Erik Kirk '89	Mike Papagikos '10
McKinley Lewis	Justin Thames '01

## House Corporation Officers

**President**  
Fred Maglione '93

**Vice President - Housing**  
Chris Diaz '85

**Vice President - Alumni Relations**  
Micah Ketchel '04

**Treasurer**  
Aaron Darnell '10

**Secretary**  
Andrew Fay '10

**Alumni Relations Committee**  
Joe Didier '93  
John Coleman '00

**Directors**  
Erik Kirk '89  
Scott McClelland '79  
Nathan Meloon '11  
Kevin Miles '06  
Travis Miller '89  
Matt Nasrallah '84  
Tim Padgett '84  
Kyle Reed '84  
Jeff Scales '87  
Skip Smith '79  
Shane Stevens '10  
Garrick Wright '97

## What Happened at Heritage Grove? *(continued from page 2)*

Grove. A number of problems plagued the property.

By January 2011, ATO's frustration grew over Heritage Grove and FSU officials' unwillingness to negotiate reduced CAM fees or assist with bank financing. The new undergraduate officers and members were not enthusiastic about the possibility of moving to Heritage Grove.

As a result, the House Corporation terminated its lease with Heritage Grove on January 4, 2011. The House Corporation spent the next three years demanding a return of the original capital investment ATO made of more than \$240,000.

With no sign of a resolution in sight, ATO

filed a lawsuit against the Leon County Educational Facilities Authority (ATO's landlord at Heritage Grove) and the FSU Foundation on October 6, 2014. A year later, all parties reached a settlement agreement, and the Authority agreed to pay ATO \$235,000 over the next three years.

The settlement agreement in November 2015 was the end of a construction project that started with the fire in 1999. During that sixteen-year period, ATO spent more than \$1 million on architects, engineers, contractors, fundraising activities, temporary housing for the chapter and CAM fees. The lawsuit settlement will return most of the land development costs back to ATO.

## Summary of Major Expenditures:

1/1/2000 – 12/31/2015

Land Development Costs	\$281,993
Architect, Engineers & Professional Fees	\$216,939
Construction & Contractors	\$14,000
Fundraising, Alumni Communication & Events	\$197,106
Temporary Housing for Chapter	\$78,700
Heritage Grove Common Area Maintenance Fees	\$253,941
Other	\$29,976
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,072,655</b>
<b>Future Income to be Paid by LCEFA Lawsuit Settlement</b>	<b>\$235,000</b>



Alpha Tau Omega  
 Florida State University (524)  
 PO Box 2187  
 Columbus, GA 31902-2187

Address Service Requested

PRESORTED  
 FIRST CLASS MAIL  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 GREENVILLE SC  
 PERMIT #113

Help us keep our alumni records up-to-date! Edit your member profile online at [atofsu.com](http://atofsu.com), or clip this form, place it in a stamped envelope and send to:

Alpha Tau Omega  
 Florida State University (524)  
 PO Box 2187  
 Columbus, GA 31902

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Initiation Year \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



VIKING

Summer 2016

## Submit Your Recruitment Recommendations Today

Epsilon Sigma continues to recruit excellence. Alumni are always encouraged to submit recruitment recommendations to **Alec Laethem '13** at [laethemalec@aol.com](mailto:laethemalec@aol.com).



Brothers volunteer at the Second Harvest of the Big Bend with the ladies of Zeta Tau Alpha.

## Visit the Alpha Tau Omega website

Visit [atofsu.com](http://atofsu.com), the official Epsilon Sigma alumni website, to:

- Learn more about the chapter
- Search for alumni
- Update your address, phone number and email address
- Find out about upcoming events
- Post noteworthy accomplishments (a new baby, a recent marriage, a recent promotion, etc.)
- Support the fundraising programs of the fraternity

## Homecoming 2016

Brothers of Alpha Tau Omega will pair with the lovely women of Zeta Tau Alpha for homecoming 2016. Homecoming begins October 9 and will continue until October 15 when the Seminoles take on the Wake Forest Demon Deacons.