

Sigma Phi Epsilon

California Rho Alumni Newsletter

Fall Issue

2014-2015

WELCOME BETA PI

By: Daniel Schiff

This fall recruitment, California Rho was lucky to welcome 19 new brothers into the chapter. After a long week of fantastic events, 19 new brothers accepted their bids and went through their Sigma ritual. We welcomed the following brothers in the legacy that is Sigma Phi Epsilon: Alec Lenamon, Alex Gilges, Drew Sturtevant-Howe, Andy Acosta, Anthony Shilly, Bronson Arucan, Derreck DaSilva, Edward Pak, Fadi Sarsam, Gilbert Dela Cruz, Job Pham, Jonah Gadas, Kevin Anderson, Kevin Liu, Lucas Horcel, Luke Mitchell, Martin Bustos, Nick Ziegler, and Niraj Patel. The new class has been required by the Balanced Man Program to participate in many UCSD Greek life events together. This not only showcased the new class, but created bonds within class, as well as with the older members, to start creating the feel of brotherly love. The new members heavily participated in Greek Week and have been very active in the chapter in general. Sigma Coordinators Colton Titmas and Steven Chik have been teaching them all about the fraternity and all the morals and beliefs that we were founded on. Titmas said that being the “sigma coordinator has been a great experience and it has really allowed me to share my passion of teaching and spread the wealth of knowledge and the love I have for this fraternity.” New member Derreck DaSilva, a freshman that is Texas born, Colorado raised, however, California is where he calls home, currently majoring in Philosophy, joined SigEp his first quarter here at UCSD. DaSilva has had an amazing quarter, stepping up, as a Sigma, to be the new Parliamentarian. DaSilva states that, “I feel SigEp has such a grounded view as to how the Fraternity and Greek life should be and I was really drawn to the overall like mindedness of the gentlemen. They all really keep the fraternity’s values at the base of what they do and I have to say this has only become more and more apparent since I’ve joined. I really like how much the fraternity has to offer and look forward to the next stage.”



The Fall Class of 2014: Beta Pi



THE EDGE EXPERIENCE

By: Alex Gilges

This past fall six of my brothers and I drove up to Big Bear for a memorable leadership overnight program, Edge, hosted by our chapter advisor Troy Hanson. It was a chance for us to bond with brothers from other chapters across the west coast. Each day of the retreat we had talks led by alumni. During these talks we discussed important topics such as presenting Greek life in a positive image on our campuses. We also discussed planning out our college careers so that we can succeed in everything we do. At night we sat around a bonfire together, roasted s’mores, and listened to the Jenkin’s Lesson, the story of how Sigma Phi Epsilon was started. We were able to bond and learn more about each other just by sitting around the fire talking to each other. We also had time to work on the sound body part of the balanced man. We had an hour where we split up and played frisbee, football, and soccer. My favorite part was meeting brothers who had the same interests as me. For example, I am on the rugby team here at UCSD; while at Edge I met brothers on other schools rugby teams. I can now look forward to seeing them at our future games together. Edge was a fantastic experience, and I took many life lessons away from it. It was great to hear from all the alumni leading the event why they love Sigma Phi Epsilon so much. It was good for us to meet and bond with our brothers across all chapters. I highly recommend Edge to all new members.

GREEK WEEK 2014

By: Daniel Schiff

Each year the ladies and gentlemen of Greek Life UCSD come together to compete for the reigning Greek Week Champions, all in an effort to raise awareness and donate to Operation Santa. Operation Santa is an annual relief program in San Diego that give a Christmas to families that cannot afford to purchase gifts for their children. Each Sorority, Fraternity, and Multicultural Fraternity was paired up to create eleven teams and given one family to adopt for Operation Santa. All of the proceeds during Greek Week were given to Operation Santa. Greek Week 2014 was themed Disney, and we were Team Beauty and the Beast paired with the lovely ladies of Chi Omega and the gentlemen of Psi Chi Omega. The start of Greek Week was a Greek Festival that each team showed a well-crafted banner to earn points as well as selling a food to earn raffle tickets. Our team decided to bake around 120 cake pops to sell at the festival. They were mighty tasty as we sold out within the first 2 hours of sales. The second day of Greek Week was a Greek BBQ that was supposed to remind us of our days in elementary school while we played field day-like games to earn points. We won the egg toss, placed second in the three-legged race, and placed fourth in tug-o-war. It was a very fun of event hosted by the three Greek Life Councils. Greek Week culminated in a Greek Variety Show that was a mixture of skits, dances, and singing from each team. After three weeks of long practices, our five-minute Beauty and the Beast skit went flawlessly and we placed second. After all the hard work of each of the three chapters, we finished Greek Week in fourth place overall and it was well worth it. The top 4 teams all finished within ten points of each other so it was a very competitive and fun-filled week. We were also able to fulfill each of the child’s Christmas wish list and give them a great Christmas! This will always be a memorable week for all three chapters, and we are all excited for next year.



ANDREA FOR SWEETHEART

By: Daniel Schiff

This year, we were fortunate enough to welcome a beautiful representative to our chapter. We welcomed our UCSD Cal Rho chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon's 2014-2015 Sweetheart. Miss Andrea Vincenty is a member of the UCSD Kappa Lambda chapter of Chi Omega. She is a current third year studying human biology with plans to go to medical school. Andrea embodies the ideals of Chi Omega when she is "discouraged never and womanly always." She not only represents her chapter wonderfully, but also feels the want and need to represent SigEp. Andrea is always enthusiastically supporting each and every event held by the chapter. From IFC Sports to Greek Week, to even small things like brother of the week, Andrea is always our number one fan. She has so much compassion and "brotherly" love for each and every brother. She never fails to have smile on her face when she is around the brothers and always wants to spend time with each of us. She is a great addition to the chapter.

A DAY AT THE TRACKS

By: Tristan Eicher

On November 15th of this year, the brothers of UCSD's Sigma Phi Epsilon chapter put on their polos to enjoy a bit of horseracing at the Del Mar race track. It was a beautiful and sunny Saturday, and with good spirits and friendly enthusiasm the brothers of Cal Rho cheered on the jockeys and horses through the nine races of the day. For many, it was the first time to ever have attended such an event. To add to the enthusiasm and cheering were prospects of fortune and glory to be obtained through the betting that many brothers chose to participate in. Unfortunately, these prospects were to remain unfulfilled, as winning bets on horses turned out to be much more difficult for complete novices than anticipated.



Some of our Brothers at the racetracks

Brother Oscar Bolanos alone made zero profit on five different attempts! Fortunately though, bets made were small and just for fun, but the memories and enthusiasm were priceless. Although betting was a great amusement, the most valuable aspect of the day was brotherhood, an integral ideal of the fraternity of Sigma Phi Epsilon. Through friendly competition, enthusiasm, and overall good old-fashioned bonding, existing friendships within the fraternity were strengthened and new ones were made. A fair amount of this fall's recruitment class came out to the event, and it was a great way for their newfound relationships amongst the chapter to grow, placing the Sigmas even closer to feeling the inclusion and brotherly love that so many have found through SigEp. Regardless of old or new membership with the fraternity, the day was a fun and important step to friendship and brotherhood throughout and beyond college.

Triathlon Challenge

By: Thomas Newman

As a brother of Sigma Phi Epsilon, we are expected to fulfill our lifetime responsibility of brotherhood. So, when Jason Karavidas informed us about a volunteer opportunity that he was hosting on October 18th, the brothers of Cal Rho were more than happy to lend a hand. Jason is an alumni of our chapter, and the Development Coordinator of the Challenged Athletes Foundation. The mission of this foundation is "to provide opportunities and support to people with physical challenges so they can pursue active lifestyles through physical fitness and competitive athletics". This year marked the 21st annual "Aspen Medical Products San Diego Triathlon Challenge". Every year, this fundraising event hosts many unique activities, from motivational speakers, to a beautiful, breathtaking triathlon course, as well as numerous prizes and gifts. This year, this event raised \$1.3 million for challenged athletes to get back on their feet and start anew. Although they raised a large sum of money that goes to a great cause, the most impressive part of the day was seeing friendships made, barriers broken, and lives changed. Volunteering for this event was a truly humbling experience, as we saw many physically challenged adults competing at a higher level than any of us would ever hope to reach. We were extremely grateful to be able to volunteer for such an admirable cause, and we would love to continue to help Mr. Karavidas with his foundation in order to affect the lives of many in a positive way.



Brothers volunteering at the Triathlon Challenge

CROSSFIT

By: Luke Mitchell

"ΝΟΥΣ ΥΓΙΗΣ ΕΝ ΣΩΜΑΤΙ ΥΓΙΕΙ!"— A sound mind within a sound body. This is the phrase which cradles the top of the Balanced Man pin, and it also describes the ideal state of a SigEp. In order to reach the goal of becoming a balanced man, you must be willing to cultivate your mind and strengthen your body. Practicing CrossFit is one way to enrich both aspects. My brothers and I were given the opportunity to train with an esteemed pair of CrossFit coaches from Eastgate CrossFit a few weeks ago, and the experience is one that I will not soon forget. Being an athlete myself, I am no stranger to painful workouts, but this one in particular did a fantastic job of pushing me and all of my brothers to our limits. When we arrived at the training center, we were given a short introduction by the coaches about themselves as well as the purpose of the CrossFit workouts; which include exercises that range across various disciplines and refine numerous distinct qualities such as aerobic base and flexibility. From wall pushups to farmer carries, and bear crawls to sled pushes, it didn't take the coaches' explanation of the regiment to see that it was multifaceted, and it took less than one of the three rounds which comprised our set to realize that it wouldn't be easy. To encourage us along the way, we hear the shouts of the coaches and brothers, ensuring us that we are here for a purpose and that we are part of a group that lives and breathes excellence. The others echo the thoughts in our heads: "just one more repetition...just one more round..." allowing us to fight through all of the barriers that keep us from marching on. Beyond the fact that we were able to exercise our bodies, CrossFit also provided us a way to improve our minds. Each moment of a workout, you are faced with a challenge from that little voice in your head: will you give up, or will you keep fighting? In the beginning, it may be easy to pick the former, but the latter option becomes more and more appealing as time goes on, muscles tire, and the body aches. This, however, is where we show our dedication to the Balanced Man dogma, because though it may seem nice on paper, in a situation like the one we faced, the idea behind this dogma becomes all too real. Through refusing to give in, we nurture our minds and our bodies, becoming a testament to our SigEp creed.

BROTHERHOOD PAINTBALL

By: Alec Lenamond

On November 22, the Brothers of Sigma Phi Epsilon swarmed Mr. Paintball USA in Escondido for an exhilarating day of activities. Upon entering the playing field, there was a hasty division observed between the elders and the newest recruits of the chapter that resulted in a lengthy struggle for victory in various games, including Capture the Flag and Protect the President. Amidst this mayhem, numerous strategies employed by the new members displayed a feeble understanding of an effective blitzkrieg campaign. Specifically, the actions of Gilbert Dela Cruz, one of the newest members of the Beta Pi class, were quite admirable. Low on paintballs, Mr. Dela Cruz thought it best to charge enemy lines and eliminate at least one opponent. He risked serious bodily injury by running into the open field, and though he was not successful, his courage and bravery were nonetheless honorable.



Brothers participating in Paintball

In contrast, the experience of the older brothers proved invaluable. Their knowledge and expertise, characterized by stealthy and calculated movements, led them to victory in nearly every game. Noteworthy competitors include Chris Kompella, Allan Cortes, and Oscar Bolanos. Mr. Kompella and Mr. Cortes were instrumental in eliminating many new members in various games, whereas Mr. Bolanos was the last remaining member of his team in two straight games, single-handedly fending off every opponent left in both. Regardless of who emerged as the decisive victor, no one member escaped unscathed. Every brother left with new stories to recount, friendships to build upon, and bruises to ice. To conclude the excursion, all brothers congregated for a celebratory picture to capture the excitement, pain, success, failure, and brotherhood associated with an eventful day of paintball. All brothers in attendance sincerely expressed their gratitude for the staff at Mr. Paintball USA that facilitated the activities.

NOVEMBER DINNER SERIES

By: Daniel Schiff & Alex Gilges

With our recent improvements in the California Rho Chapter, we have started to see our alumni play a more active role in our growth as a chapter. This year, the alumni were gracious enough to start a program called the November Dinner Series in which alumni that volunteered took three brothers, one from each of the three challenges, Sigma, Phi, and Epsilon, out to dinner. Brother Danny Schiff signed up to go to dinner with AVC President Matt Hillerud. Here is a message from Schiff about his experience. "The alumni dinner series was such a great idea and it really did allow active brothers to get to know the alumni better. My dinner with Matt was first off, delicious, being that we ate at BJs Brewery, and second it was super fun getting to know Matt on a more personal level. I would definitely recommend that the Alumni host this event again next year, especially because not every brother was fortunate to have the opportunity to go. It is also a unique way to start creating a closer bond between the active brothers and the Alumni. Overall, this was a very positive experience and I hope it does happen again in the near future!"

One of our new brothers, Alex Gilges also attended a dinner and this is what he has to say. "A few weekends ago Jeremy Micalat, Danny Romero, and I went out to dinner at Cucina Urbana with our chapter advisor Troy Hanson as part of the November Dinner Series. It was a great chance to sit down in a small group and learn a little more about our alumni.

This dinner was especially beneficial for me because I am in Naval ROTC. Troy happens to have served in the armed forces as well. This was a great chance for him to impart some wisdom and advice about the military to me. I learned that he and I are quite similar. After serving, Troy went into working between businesses and the military doing defense contracting work. This is something that I have had an interest in for a long time. It was great to make this personal connection with an alumnus.

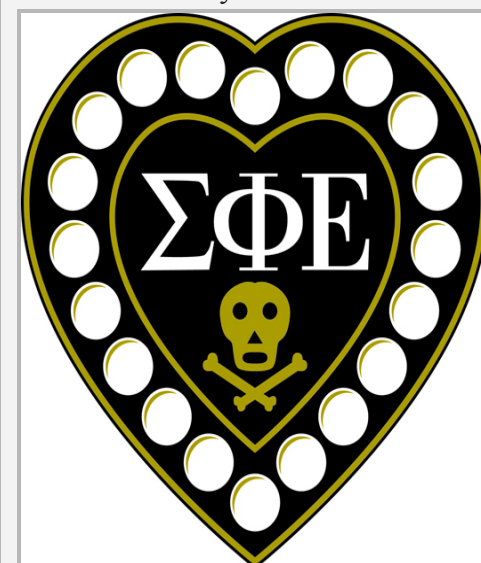
This was also a good chance to talk about improving our chapter. Troy informed us about what he used to do in his chapter, and ways he thought we might strengthen our brotherhood. It was also a chance for us members to suggest ideas to Troy. Sometimes it is hard to suggest improvements in the large chapter meetings. So this was a really effective way to brainstorm ideas for the chapter. Since the dinner, I have already seen a few of our ideas implemented to strengthen the brotherhood of the chapter.

Overall, the November Dinner Series had been fantastic. It was a great opportunity to eat real, non-dining hall food, and converse with our alumni about anything and everything. I look forward to the next dinner series and would encourage any alumni to consider volunteering for the dinner series."

HOMELESS CHARTER

By: Thomas Newman

On December 4th, the Brothers of Sigma Phi Epsilon had the privilege of participating with Phi Sigma Rho in the Homeless Charter here at UCSD. The Homeless Charter is a non-profit organization that hosts sandwich-making events almost every week with different school organizations. These sandwiches are then distributed to the homeless throughout San Diego. The California Rho chapter works with this organization every quarter in an effort to give back to the local community and help it become a better place. The brothers also had the fortune of meeting members of Phi Sigma Rho and working with them to make sandwiches for the local community and therefore, build new relationships. Sigma Phi Epsilon emphasizes the idea of "service learning," service is not only about giving to the community but also learning from the community as well. As a participant, I found that I was learning about the community and the problems it faces. It also put a lot of the local problems in perspective for me and helped me realize just how privileged I am to be in the community and position that I am in. I thank the brothers of Sigma Phi Epsilon for organizing such a meaningful event, and look forward to more service learning opportunities in my community with my brothers. Through this experience I have benefited a great amount and look forward to learning more about people in need and what I can do to help them. After all, this is what fraternity life is all about.



BROTHER ABROAD

By: Jonathan Cervantes

Studying Abroad has been one of the greatest experiences I have ever had. I am currently studying in Madrid, Spain through the UC EAP program. I have learned so much already from living in a completely new country for these last 6 months. I chose Spain as my place of education so I can soon return to California speaking like a Spaniard. Spain has so much to offer and there is so much to see and explore within the country. Each city from Salamanca, Granada, and San Sebastian, are all so different from Madrid. It's incredible seeing all these cities that are ancient compared to the United States. I feast on tapas and drink sangria and have been partaking in the crazy nightlife here in Madrid. Living in Madrid has also given me the opportunity to travel around Europe. I've traveled to the small island paradise, Ibiza and celebrated Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany. I explored the spices and markets in Marrakesh, Morocco and visited my cousin in Dublin, Ireland. I witnessed some of my favorite bands, Rebelution and Dirty Heads, in beautiful Amsterdam. Not sure of where I am off to next, but I am looking forward to my travels. I think what I love most about studying abroad is the people. I love meeting interesting new international people wherever I go. They have interesting stories and have different ideas and aspirations. I have met people from all over the world and I enjoy sharing stories on tour buses or hostels. When studying abroad, you learn things you would never learn or experience in the States. At first it takes some time to adjust, being the minority International student in classes full of Spaniards. However, I really love living with other international students and learning their different ways of life. Through my travels I have met a couple SigEps from around Europe. I do miss my Cal Rho Chapter and the warm sun in San Diego, but time flies when you're having fun and I will be back soon. I did not expect this experience to be so much fun and meet so many new friendly people from all over the world.



Jonathan in Marrakesh, Morocco

BROTHER OF THE QUARTER

By: Daniel Schiff



I would like to begin with stating that I am beyond humbled and appreciative to have been awarded the honor of being Brother of the Quarter this Fall Quarter 2014. My name is Danny Schiff and I am a current third year studying Communication with a minor in Business focused in Marketing. I made the decision to "Go Greek" in the fall of 2013, at the beginning of my second year here at UCSD. It was one of the most rewarding, and one of the best decisions I have made in my college career. I was fortunate enough to join the Beta Nu class of Cal Rho and I have never looked back. Immediately after joining the brotherhood, I got involved in programming committee and have planned and lead many events from winter and spring formals, to Sun Cup, to leading our chapter through Greek Week this past year. I also joined the communication committee and I am currently holding the position of Social Media Chair. After a year of learning what it means to embody the letters of Sigma, Phi, and Epsilon, I have been elected as the new Vice President of Programming and I cannot explain how excited and honored I am to hold this position. SigEp has allowed me to grow immensely in my leadership skills and I know that his position will allow me to grow even more as the year progresses. I have also accepted the position of Vice President of Marketing for the 2015 Inter-Fraternity Council. I am very excited to see what opportunities both these positions will offer me and help grow as a leader and as an individual.

All of my brothers here at Cal Rho have been unbelievably supportive. I do not think that I could have successfully planned events without the enthusiasm from each and every brother. The sense of brotherhood that I feel every time I walk into meeting, every time I go to dinner with a few brothers, or simply just spending time together is incredible. This fraternity will be different, and I have seen that in every activity we do as brothers. I would like to give a special thanks to four brothers in particular. Kris Arellano, Oscar Bolanos, and Horacio Ortiz have stuck by my side and pushed me to achieve my highest goals. The fourth brother is my big brother, Colton Titmas. Colton has been unbelievably supportive through all my endeavors. He continues to push me and inspire me to achieve everything that I want in life, and reach and set new goals as the year goes on. I know I would not have made it this far without him, so I would like to thank him and give him special recognition. These four, just like the rest of the chapter, have supported me and helped me aspire to be a better leader, a better individual, and a better brother. I look forward to this coming year and cannot wait to make more memories, plan new events, and exceed chapter goals as I open new doors with both of my new executive board positions.

BREAST CANCER WALK

By: Daniel Schiff

Last year, California Rho was fortunate to walk the annual Making Strides Breast Cancer walk in Balboa Park with Alpha Chi Omega. This year, we were equally as fortunate to walk in the Making Strides event but with Sigma Kappa. The American Cancer Society hosts Making Strides in effort to continue battling breast cancer. Over 300 Making Strides walks occur nationally, and more than one million people walk in order to empower a fight for a cure. Each walk usually ranges from 3-5 miles, and in this case, the San Diego walk was around 3 miles walk that weaves through Balboa Park, the highway, and down through Hillcrest. This event is a creative way to demonstrate how Greek Life expands into the community to support and come together as one whole in order to fight for something bigger than just one person. This event is also a great way to bond with the brothers and bond with another Sorority. It was a blast being able to share this amazing event with the ladies of Sigma Kappa and walk together to fight to end cancer.

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