

UPCOMING EVENTS

Founders' Day
March 15, 2015

2015 Golf Outing
May 30, 2015

ALUMNI BOARD

Congratulations to our new Phi Sigma Kappa Assoc. board that was voted in during our Homecoming 2014 weekend. Watch for more from our leadership in the coming months:

President

Fred DeCock '80

fred.decock@comcast.net

Vice President

Steve Handwerk '74

sph15@psu.edu

Secretary

Bruce Balmat '70

balmat123@verizon.net

Treasurer

Ben Jarmul '81

ben.jarmul@parentebeard.com

Board Members

Bill Albertson '69

John Little '66

Dan Stearns '70

Bill Stack '77

David Hyland '80

Alex Best '12

Kappa News

www.phisigpsu.com



Kappa Chapter
Phi Sigma Kappa at Penn State

November 2014

ALUMNI REPORT

There's Something New at Kappa Chapter!

Alumni Board Thanks Dick Doherty '58 for Years of Service

By Bruce Balmat '70, Secretary, Phi Sigma Kappa Assoc.

The fall semester ... It is time when a lot of change takes place. New pledges. New courses. New red shutters on the house. And now, we can celebrate a few other changes.

The first floor of the house will soon undergo some major upgrades as a result of recommendations made by a team of alums and actives. The plan was reviewed and heartily endorsed by many actives at a board-sponsored BBQ dinner in August and includes new furniture, carpets, TVs and window treatments. These additions are made possible thanks to a generous donation from **Jim Whipkey '80**. Residents, alumni and visitors alike will be impressed with the welcoming atmosphere of the house when this project is completed sometime in November.

The alumni also plan to have a lighted flagpole installed on the front lawn and are hoping to have the first-floor hardwood floors refinished over the holiday break. Please stop by when you are in State College to see the results.

During our planned Homecoming activities,



we held a board meeting during which several new members were elected and welcomed. Congratulations to our newest members:

David Hyland '80 (board member), **Bill Stack '77** (board member) and **Ben Jarmul '81** (treasurer). We also take this opportunity to those who stepped down from the board this fall: **Jeff Hudak '09**, **Jon Little '66**, **Dick Richardson '70** and **Dick Doherty '58**.

Dick deserves a heartfelt "Thank You!" from all of us for serving on the board for 13 years, 11 of those as president. He guided Kappa up from some of its darkest days and leaves the chapter: 1) on sound financial ground, 2) as one of only five fully renovated houses on campus and 3) with an energetic and outstanding group of actives who have won a number of national awards. We owe a debt of gratitude to Dick for the many years of selfless service to Kappa Chapter.

Watch for our future monthly eLetters and our spring newsletter for details on next year's Founders' Day event.

20 NEW PLEDGES!

Congratulations to our actives for an impressive rush season. See page 2 for a full list of our new pledges.

And, THON is right around the corner. The first canning weekend was Oct. 17-18.

Homecoming 2014

This year's Homecoming provided quite a number of exciting attractions for the many alumni who traveled back to PSU. Friday evening saw the Kappa Chapter "Lion King" float in the parade in cooperation with SNAP (Student Nurses Association of PSU). The pregame tailgate, organized by **Alex Best '12** and hosted by **David Hyland '80** and **Ben Jarmul '81** at their BJC parking spaces, offered plenty of food and beverages for everyone. The postgame reception and pig roast were enjoyed by about 25 alums and a host of actives and friends. And a raffle was held with the proceeds benefiting THON. Once again, the actives made everyone feel welcome, and Jen Pressler presented a wonderful selection of food.

FALL 2014 PLEDGE CLASS

Kappa Chapter delivered impressive recruitment results this fall. Welcome to our 20 new pledges:

Jack Ciraulo
Warren, N.J. – Mech. Eng.

Jason Closs
Farifax, Va. – Bus. Admin.

Nate Cunningham
Lancaster, Pa. – AE Eng.

George Filippatos
Gillete, N.J. – Physics

TaQuan Harris
Chester, Pa. — Eng.

Matt Hine
West Pittston, Pa. – Chem. Eng.

John Hitchcock
Vienna, Va. – Mech. Eng.

Clayton Martin
Shippensburg, Pa. – Pre-med

Sean Napier
Cinnaminson, N.J. – Finance

Andy Nguyen
Danville, Pa. – Nursing

John Podias
Brooklyn, N.Y. – Undecided

Mike Rabitz
Mt. Laurel, Pa. – Com. Sci.

Josh Roesch
Orefield, Pa. – Supply Chain

Sam Russ
Germantown, Md. – Cyber Sec.

Ali Saatchi
Mission Viejo, Calif. – Pre-med

Arman Saeedi
Bryn Mawr, Pa. – Biology

Robert Speers
Howel, N.J. – Finance

Matt Stavropoulos
Edison, N.J. – Supply Chain

Ben Taha
Garnet Valley, Pa. – Undecided

Chris Vecchio
Pottstown, Pa. – Undecided

ALUMNI LEADERSHIP

Meet Our New President, Fred DeCock '80

We take this opportunity to welcome the new president of our Phi Sigma Kappa Association board, Brother **Fred DeCock '80**. Fred lives in Hummelstown, Pa., and is the manager of Web Solutions & eMarketing at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. He has been very involved with our chapter as a member of the board.

Look for more on Brother DeCock in our future publications. Send your congratulations to him at fred.decock@comcast.net.



DAMN PROUD

Can You Put a Price Tag on Belonging?

Do you remember those commercials done by Visa which pointed out things in life that are priceless? Our version would go something like this: Four-year degree at Penn State: \$50,000. Cost of living at Phi Sig: \$300/month. Value of having one of my fraternity brothers introduce me to my wife and the mother of my three children: priceless.

How can you ever replicate the experiences and environment of Kappa Chapter? There are things that have happened at 501 S. Allen St. that could not have happened anywhere else. Belonging to Phi Sigma Kappa



at Penn State means being related to something that is beyond other relationships or affiliations.

So, here are a few things you can do today to make sure that time doesn't run out before you let your brothers know what Kappa Chapter means to you:

- Send us an update to post on our website and in our next Kappa News. Send your email to content@affinityconnection.com.

affinityconnection.com. You may think, "Yeah, no one really wants to hear that stuff." WRONG! This is how one fraternity brother was able to save the life of his daughter. Think big picture here and send us your news!!

- Help us expand the base of those brothers receiving our communications. Go to our website home page, www.phisigpsu.com, and review the list of "lost" brothers ... those for whom we are missing physical and email addresses. If you know how we can reach them, please contact us at updatemyinfo@affinityconnection.com. Be sure to reference Phi Sigma Kappa at Penn State. (Be assured that this information is utilized only for Phi Sig Penn State alumni relations and will never be traded or sold.)
- Call a brother today. Let him know what is happening with you and find out what is happening with him.
- Help us financially support our ability to keep the house running and our alumni returning for Homecoming and other events. We have set a goal of 100 donors for our 2014-15 Annual Fund giving year. Currently, our Honor Roll shows 8 donors. Please join them on our Honor Roll by going to our website, clicking on "Donate" and making your gift today. We want to see your name on our Honor Roll!!

ALUMNI PROFILE

Kappa Alum Part of Happy Valley's Tech Boom

Jeremy Frank '97 Tips Hat to Mentor and Fellow Brother, Robert "Bear" Koehler '58

For Brother **Jeremy Frank '97**, it's all about not getting carried away. The president and co-founder of KCF Technologies in State College, Pa., knows that the success of a business is dependent on the ability of the leadership team to stay focused ... on finding customers. From there, it will all just fall into place.

"My dad had an unconventional job," he says. "He is a lawyer and an engineer, but he started a company specializing in forensic accident investigations. He became a subject matter expert ... that was his niche. So he had a very stable and profitable business. I grew up watching this. He had formerly worked at Grove Crane, and it was a big risk for him to start his own company. I worked for him during high school and early college, and from that point on, he has been a valuable mentor to me."

Another mentor for Jeremy was Penn State Professor of Accounting **Robert "Bear" Koehler '58**. An advisor to undergraduates at the Kappa Chapter, Bear helped several Phi Sigs find direction and focus as they navigated towards adult life and a professional career. "Bear Koehler was an amazing character. He was just so involved ... in everything. And even though we lost him in 2007, his advice has been quite valuable to me in life and in business. And there are others I can add to that list: Gary Koopmann is a given. And all of the people at Ben Franklin Technology Partners, including former Director of Business Development Roger Dagen."

In 2001, Jeremy graduated from Penn State with a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering. While completing his doctorate, he worked under the tutelage of Dr. Gary Koopmann, professor emeritus of mechanical engineering and the founder of Penn State's Center for Acoustics and Vibration (CAV).

"I traveled to Asia with Gary to teach a class in mechanical vibrations and machine reliability. When we returned, Gary suggested that we think about commercializing our expertise. It just seemed like the natural step. Along with Dr. Weicheng Chen — a major contributor to the success of the CAV — we put in a little



money to get the business started. While Gary continued at Penn State, I set up our office and started to bid on consulting contracts."

And, thus, in the fall of 2001, KCF Technologies was born. "The consulting contracts enabled the business to get off the ground, and started our process of solving challenging industrial problems within our field of expertise: mechanical vibrations and noise. But it was pure consulting. It's not scalable or repeatable." With a goal to expand the capability more quickly, the company set out to win R&D contracts to solve

technological challenges of the Department of Energy and DoD. After a series of failures, they celebrated their first contract win in 2002.

"It was hard work in the early stages. We would win Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) R&D contracts supporting the Navy, Army and Department of Energy, which basically resulted in a 6-month bake-off against 3-5 other companies. Finally in 2004 we had a Phase II win ... \$500,000."

Since that win in 2004, KCF has had an extremely strong track record of winning follow-on Phase 2 or 3 contracts, and nearly all of KCF's Phase 2 projects have advanced into Phase 3 funding or commercial product sales.

In an attempt to work their way out of a transactional business model, the KCF team returned to their original strategic mission ... to develop technologies with market application and launch commercially viable products. Their first one hit the market in 2008. A product developed through a Navy Small Business Technology Transfer project, the Smart Tether™ was originally designed "to create a tether-based underwater positioning system for a variety of underwater applications including positioning vehicles in mine countermeasure applications." Once integrated with VideoRay underwater remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and robots, commercialization of the Smart Tether™ project was funded by Ben Franklin Technology Partners at Penn State's Innovation Park. In 2011, KCF celebrated the sale of its 100th Smart Tether™ system.

"We received a lot of press with the Smart Tether™," Jeremy explains. "But it still wasn't

a large market. The need is growing, but the growth of the market is slow."

So, in 2011, KCF embarked on its second major transformation ... a return to its founding focus on vibration technology and design.

As quoted on the KCF website, "reactive maintenance processes inherently lead to unplanned downtime and lost production, inefficiencies that cost the U.S. economy as much as \$2.5 trillion per year (as estimated by the Department of Energy Industrial Technologies Program)." In response to this opportunity, KCF developed Smart Diagnostics®, to "Give Machines a VoiceTM".

SmartDiagnostics® is a predictive maintenance system of wireless sensors designed to extend the life and heighten the performance of industrial pumps, motors and other commercial equipment. Since the launch of Smart Diagnostics®, KCF has seen the application reach into a sequence of industries including oil and gas, power generation, pulp and paper, HVAC/R and food/beverage.

And while it is anticipated that the worlds of AC compressors, heat pumps, tractor-trailer tires and Sikorsky helicopter rotors could all benefit from wireless vibration monitoring systems, there is one market application that might surprise some ... prosthetic limbs.

"We are highly motivated to help injured soldiers get back to active lives," Jeremy says. "There is a higher rate of amputees returning from our most recent conflicts. Starting in 2010, KCF received several million dollars in funding to develop a series of technical capabilities to improve the lives of injured warfighters. We are working with Penn State Professor of Kinesiology Steve Piazza on this project."

And the cycle continues ... the cycle of finding profitable applications for technologies that "make the things you work with smarter." Since the conception of KCF, Jeremy has seen the company double in size five times in the last 10 years. Today, the State College company employs 20 full-time employees and another 10 students and part time.

Jeremy and his wife, Amy, live in State College along with their four children ranging in age from four to 10. "We definitely have a constant flurry of activity. Jobs and careers can be difficult. But it helps me to know that I have a family that is incredibly supportive of what I do."

SCHOLARSHIP

We Said We'd Stimulate Scholarship — And We Did!

Do you remember the words? "Wisdom comes with learning. Complementing the mission of higher education, we seek to help our members to combine formal and informal learning experience ... to produce men of wisdom who will be better prepared to make positive contributions to society and all mankind."

So, now is your chance. Brother **Bill DeGrandis '77** has set up a fully tax-deductible scholarship fund to benefit

Kappa Chapter actives.

This is a great way to support our brothers. The board will do the due diligence to determine which of our actives will qualify as awardees.

If you wish to contribute to this fund, send your check - payable to the "Phi Sigma Kappa Foundation" and reference "Kappa Chapter Scholarship Fund" on the memo line. To access the pledge form, go to http://www.phisigpsu.com/pdf/PhiSigmaKappa_

Scholarship_2014.pdf. Print it (before you submit it), complete it and send it with your check to:

**Phi Sigma Kappa Foundation
Attn: Kappa Chapter Scholarship Fund
2925 East 96th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46240**

Thank you for your support of our active brothers!

WORK DAY 2014

Brothers Return to Get the Job(s) Done!

On Saturday, August 9, 11 alumni showed up at 501 S. Allen Street to take care of some jobs in preparation of the new fall semester and Homecoming. It was a great day of camaraderie, and a lot of tasks were completed by the talented work group. Everyone felt good about contributing to the improvement in the look of the house.

Those who participated included **David Hyland '80, Ben Jarmul '81, Stan Lapek '81, Fred ('80) and Gary ('83) DeCock, Keith Whitman '80, Bob Romeiser '81, Bill Warfel '71, Dan Stearns '73, Doug Arnold '70 and Bruce Balmat '70.** Naturally, refreshments were served. Many came prepared with equipment and supplies to complete some critical projects.

To access the photo album for Work Day 2014, go to www.phisigpsu.com, click on "Connect" and go to Photos.



- Which Kappa Alum is Part of Happy Valley's Tech Boom?
- Welcome to Our New President & Board Members!
- THANK YOU to Dick Doherty '58 for 13 Years of Service!
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