



ΣΝ Beta Chapter

Fall 2020 Newsletter

The spring semester brought upon unforeseen challenges to the Beta Chapter at the University of Virginia. Nevertheless, in the face of COVID-19, albeit strained at times, our brotherhood took all obstacles head-on, fostering personal growth and persistence within ourselves and with each other. In this issue of our Beta Chapter newsletter, we hope to feature our brotherhood's strength by highlighting novel developments within the chapter, successful individual members, and treasured Alumni contributions.

Our chapter, while recently re-established, has exceeded expectations on Grounds here at the university. Each year, we strive to embrace a new state of virtue and excellence. We understand the importance our alumni play in promoting our well-being, supporting our daily operations, and leading by example in building meaningful and lifelong relationships. In this newsletter, we aim to give our valuable alumni insight into our chapter and our resilient brotherhood's daily life.

Fraternally,
Zach Steele, Alumni Chair
Josh Fishbein, Commander



Beta Chapter's first January 2019 snow fall

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Each new spring semester at UVA sees hundreds of young men searching for an exciting and fulfilling avenue for their college experience. Brothers at the Beta Chapter are always eager to offer our brotherhood and guidance. There can be no underestimation of the importance that we place on these two and a half weeks. Rush is how we maintain our quality of men and continue to grow our presence on grounds. This year it was our top priority to recruit a superb pledge class to bolster our operations and success as a brotherhood.

This year's recruitment process proved fruitful and advantageous through all brothers' rigorous efforts, particularly our rush chairs, Ethan Caldas and Michael Degen. In the end, the rush process yielded a pledge class of 17 highly sociable, intelligent, and engaged candidates who are ambitious to advance their college career as Sigma Nu Betas.



Annual Lighting of the Lawn 2020

To stay up to date on how the University is tracking the virus, please visit the website with frequently asked questions and more. The site is: www.returntogrounds.virginia.edu. "The University is fully operational. Adjustments to schedules, spaces, meetings and other details will be made as needed to ensure public health and safety and to comply with University policy, the Governor's Executive Orders, and public health guidelines by the Virginia Department of Health, CDC and others. Any adjustments will be posted on the Operations Status Board."

2020 Pledge Class

- Luke Anzaldi '23
- Brendan Bennet '23
- Grant Blumberg '23
- Seamus Cochrane '22
- Eddie Collins '22
- Michael Flanagan '23
- Eddie Kaiser '23
- Will Keen '23
- Elliot Macrae-Sadek '23
- Alex Martin '23
- Colin Meek '23
- Zach Pederson '23
- Jackson Postal '23
- Armaan Sachdev '22
- Nkomo Smith '23
- Andrew Warrington '23
- Hudson Zegarski '23

Pledge Education Process

Upon their bids, our new pledge class was participating in their mandatory candidate education events. Covid-19 interrupted the process until the fall. Candidates completed four more weeks of pledge education while following all CDC guidelines until their initiation.

The New pledge class hails from all across the United States including South Carolina, New York, Washington, and California.

Recap of Spring Semester

Eight of the class of '20 fourth-years at Mardi Gras just prior to the lockdown



Four of the class of '20 a brunch pre-covid



"I was on spring break with four other SNUs when we heard that Harvard had moved classes online for the rest of the semester. At first we thought it was something to make fun of. Those academics up North were afraid of a couple hundred confirmed cases. The jokes stopped when UVA went online as well a few weeks later and we realized how serious Covid-19 was. We went on to graduate online, missing some of the end of college traditions that previous classes had enjoyed. For those in the class of '20, it was a difficult way to end our times at UVA and our times as collegiate members of the fraternity. However, even given the challenges of our last semester, the class of '20 cannot complain for a second about their time at UVA. In our second years, we were involved in the recolonization efforts, experiencing both the rewards and the challenges (and there were many) of bringing Sigma Nu back to UVA. In our third-years, we were a part of the greatest sports redemption story of all time, watching all of UVA's March Madness run from the Chapter House and storming the corner afterwards. In our fourth years, we witnessed the best UVA football team in a decade and a majority of the fourth years even made it to Mardi Gras in New Orleans just prior to the lockdown. While our last semester was cut short, we still experienced a lot at UVA and the class as a whole was proud to revive the fraternity from a 20 person meeting into the successful chapter that it is once again.

And while we have graduated, the relationships we made at the house are ongoing. I'm currently living in NYC in an apartment with another brother, Matt Renk. We live down the street from Frederico Vivacqua and Justin Shah, two other brothers from the class of '20. In DC, there is a large cohort of the class of '20, also living together. While we had always heard that the relationships we built in the chapter during our time at UVA would last, we're truly seeing it today as we move on to our post-graduate plans."

Nick Koziolk, Commander 2018-19.

Congratulations
to the Beta Chapter of
SIGMA NU
CLASS OF
2020

Parv Ahuja
Hamza Belafia
James Berlin
Henry Bramham
Mike Degen
Greyson Hardison
Dominic Keilty
Nicholas Koziolk
Benjamin Lewis
Rohan Malladi

William Mason
Walker Maxey
Rushton McGarr
Carter Murray
Thomas O'Neal
Kush Patel
Balram Prasad
Jack Prescott
Paul Qualey
Michael Quinn

Joseph Reeves
Matthew Renk
Michael Ruediger
Christopher Saunders
Justin Shah
Alex Stern
Frederico Vivacqua
Brendan Walker

Classes of 1970-1974

*Classes of 1970-74, June 2019 Reunion at the House and Farmington Country Club and touring the new athletic center.
A good time was had by all.*





We have had a challenging last nine months since the University limited activities for all Greek organizations. The spring semester ended a month early and the fall semester saw the imposition of strict Covid-19 protocols for inhabiting our cherished house. Nonetheless, we were fully tenanted and the brothers showed strong leadership in following safe practices, limiting social activities to small groups allowed by UVA, and using our state of the art WiFi system for Zoom chapter meetings and attending virtual classes. Our maintenance company deep cleaned and sanitized all common areas weekly with disinfecting foggers. We will be fully tenanted for the spring semester as well. The brothers living in the house and those coming by were smart and organized and as such we had zero infections in the brotherhood.

We have used the slowdown in social activities to make some needed improvements to the house. We installed new slate front stairs for easier access, planted ivy along the front stairs and new azaleas in the main beds; improved drainage and run off water to maintain a dry basement; rekeyed all rooms with a master key system; replaced several front windows, added new light fixtures in hall ways and main chapter rooms; boosted our WiFi system to handle the enhanced usage from virtual classes and chapter Zoom meetings (thanks to Jay Ragsdale, Beta 1360). We are planning this spring to add outdoor seating furniture, to paint the trim and windows. If our finances permit it, we plan to install outside front accent lighting, an air conditioning system for the main floor and replace our back and side gutters.

All these improvements and repairs are made possible through alumni contributions. In the last eighteen (18) months we have received some \$25,000 from over 75 alumni brothers in contributions—every dollar of which has been put back into the rehabilitation of the house. We have the largest fraternity house by square footage at the University— and we all will agree the most visibly imposing. We are proud of our heritage and our noble structure. We continue to need alumni support for ongoing projects. Contributions can be made to the Alumni Association of the University of Virginia in the Beta Chapter's name. Checks to the Beta Chapter of Sigma Nu can also be mailed to our treasurer, James Bogart, at 402 Mashie Dr., S.E., Vienna, VA 22180. We hope to see alumni back at the house by the fall of 2021 when we have our 150 Year Anniversary Celebration. Stay tuned.

Fraternally,
Terry Birkel, Beta 931
James Bogart, Beta 1538
Wes Martin, Beta 1357

To support the Hopkins Society

Please consider making a contribution of any amount to the Hopkins Society's Management Reserve Fund. All alumni contributions are applied directly to repairs, upgrades, and furnishings. Checks made out to The Hopkins Society of Sigma Nu can be mailed to James Bogart. Contributions can also be made to the benefit of the Beta Chapter of Sigma Nu at the UVA Alumni Association (or UVA Fund).

James Bogart's address is:
402 Mashie Dr. S.E.,
Vienna, VA 22180

UVA Fund Gift Processing Services
(or Sigma Nu)
PO BOX 400314
Charlottesville, VA 22904-4314

Visit Sigma Nu's newly updated
Beta Chapter website at:
[www.aig.alumni.virginia.edu/
sigmanu/donate/](http://www.aig.alumni.virginia.edu/sigmanu/donate/)



Recently uncovered rare 1928 photograph of originally constructed Beta Chapter house at 1830 Carrs Hill Rd., prior to 1961 renovations



New ivy beds front stairs



Gutter repairs



House column restoration



Since the University suspended all fraternity social activities in the spring, and made many classes virtual, we have engaged our brothers through virtual meetings, small group settings and limited outdoor activities. We have followed the guidance of Sigma Nu National in adopting three guiding principles for our Chapter, our alumni advisors, and our house corporation throughout the pandemic: 1) health and safety; 2) continuity of operations; and 3) enhanced communication. Through weekly virtual Zoom meetings and limited social engagement, we met regularly, assured that our pledge class was educated in fraternity principles and that all our brothers maintained a strong affinity with the chapter—despite the absence of normal social activities. Many classes met virtually; we left Grounds for take home final exams at Thanksgiving, and will resume classes February 1, 2021.

Despite the challenges, we successfully transitioned our officers in November, with the invaluable assistance of our Alumni Advisory Board and our Chapter Faculty Advisor, John Cheney. We are thankful for the weekly support our AAB members provide to each of our officers, as well as the oversight and engagement of the Hopkins Society, our House Corporation. We have strictly followed University protocols and experienced zero infections. We are proud that we retained our entire 17-man pledge class through the summer despite the Covid crisis. We successfully initiated the class in a “semi-virtual” initiation ceremony in October. We have trained our new pledge class. We have maintained one of the highest GPA averages for all fraternities. We are planning now for a strong rush starting February 2021, as we hopefully transition to a more normalized academic and social setting. Please send in any names of potential candidates! The pandemic has underscored for each of us the incredible value of having a brotherhood to turn to for mutual support, and of a strong alumni base to provide leadership and financial support for needed house repairs.



Beta Chapter House spring 2020 with new slate stairway