

# MU CHAPTER of SIGMA PI EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION



## FOUNDED 2007

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Sigma Pi Mu Chapter Educational Foundation, founded in 2007, is a 501(c)(3) Internal Revenue Service–approved organization. It is dedicated to funding educational programs for the members of Mu Chapter, enhancing the learning infrastructure of the house, and supporting education-related programming that benefits the youth of the greater Ithaca community and provides mentorship opportunities for Mu Chapter brothers.

*The College Mentors for Kids' Thursday group from Cayuga Heights Elementary School, below, stops for a photo during their scavenger hunt activity.*



by Tom Silver '81

The Sigma Pi Educational Foundation is proud to celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017. The foundation is dedicated to funding educational programs for the members of Mu Chapter, enhancing the learning infrastructure of the house, and supporting education-related programming that benefits the youth of the greater Ithaca community and provides mentorship opportunities for Mu Chapter brothers. We have accomplished a tremendous amount, and I thank all who have contributed their time and resources during the past 10 years. The increased focus on education and the learning infrastructure of the house have contributed to increasing the house GPA to one of the highest among fraternities on campus. Participation in College Mentors for Kids continues to grow, and is often praised by Ithaca schools for active participation and impact on the young students in the local community, as well as winning the national Chapter of the Year Award in 2015. I am proud to summarize some of the Foundation's more significant highlights during the past 10 years:

#### College Mentors For Kids

In 2013, the Sigma Pi Educational Foundation

donated the seed money needed to establish a College Mentors for Kids Chapter at Cornell University. Mu Chapter's high-profile involvement and leadership in College Mentors for Kids helped propel the Cornell Chapter to win the national Chapter of the Year Award in 2015.

#### Cayuga's Watchers

The Foundation began to sponsor undergraduate participation in leadership in 2014.

#### Scholarships

The Jim Keene III '57 Sage Scholarship was established in 2013 to provide free rent to senior upperclassman, sage, residing in the house. The award is approximately \$9,000 per year monetary value.

The David Harrop Memorial Scholarship was established in 2014 by the Foundation in honor of Bert Harrop's ('61) late son. Bert Harrop is the founding patron of the Mu Chapter Educational Foundation.

#### Enhanced Academic and Study Areas

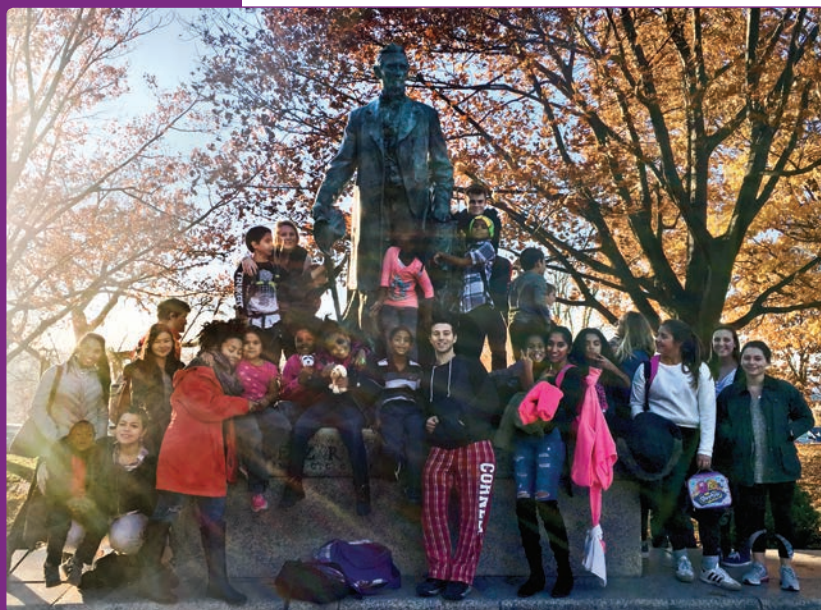
The Educational Foundation began looking to aid the academic performance of the undergraduates through improvements to the house's infrastructure in 2012.

**2015: The Richard Cahoon '77 Tech Center launched.**

The Tech Center is a state-of-the-art video-conferencing system for undergrads to better interact with alumni. The Richard Cahoon '77 Tech Center allows for one-to-one and one-to-many webcasts between alumni and undergrads. It has been a constant location for collaborative study, host for the Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series, and a showcase for recruitment. Dick Cahoon '77 also generously funded through a gift to the Foundation a number of needed study area upgrades and enhancements for the undergraduate brotherhood to do their work in the West Lounge and the Memorial Library. In addition, the wireless infrastructure was completely upgraded to provide better WiFi coverage and security. The study space in the house has been significantly expanded with these investments, and many brothers now prefer to do their work in their rooms or in the Memorial Room rather than walking up the Slope.

**2012: Desk Appeal, led by Aaron Klein '12,**

*(continued on page six)*



# ALUMNI BOARD APPROVES PLAN FOR KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM MODERNIZATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW DINING AND LEARNING COMMONS AREA

In December 2016, the Alumni Board took an important step toward initiating the modernization of the kitchen and dining room, as well as establishing a new dining and learning commons area, where the bar used to be. The board voted 10-2 in favor of the project, which will now move into the next phase of development and fundraising.

The K&D Committee, consisting of **Brian Finneran '81**, **Steve Pirozzi '80**, **Alexa Bosshardt '82**, **Greg Vojnovic '85**, **Kevin Kruse '79**, **Dave Williamson '77**, **Jake Howell '18**, **Patrick Wang '18**, and **Alec Charbonneau '17**, has 100-plus years of experience in the food service industry combined. It has spent over 20 months researching and planning the project with multiple on-site visits, two student feedback surveys, numerous conversations with other fraternities – garnering key insight to what other houses are doing with their kitchen and dining programs – as well as reaching out to three outside industry consultants.

The ongoing viability of a modern fraternity is predicated upon the recruitment and development of the highest quality members. Today's student requires a fraternity house that not only has the history and tradition that we treasure, but also an exciting house complete with modern enhancements, such as state-of-the-art internet connectivity and flexible high-quality dining. In addition, these young men value connectivity with alumni for mentoring, internships, and possible career opportunities. Success is determined by not only an engaged and committed alumni base willing to work on these endeavors, but also by a secure and stable financial underpinning. These efforts will enhance Mu Chapter's position to thrive for its next 100 years.

## Project Goals

The K&D Committee is looking to create the premier Cornell fraternity dining program, resulting in a major competitive advantage for Sigma Pi. Additionally, the team was looking to meet the needs of today's students by offering them flexible dining hours, modern clean facilities, and healthy meal choices at a competitive price point.

Students want communal spaces that function for collaborative studying as well as for dining. Recent undergraduate survey results point to an increasingly important role of these attributes for new member recruitment.

The project will modernize much of the existing kitchen equip-

ment, which is beyond, or rapidly approaching, its useful service life, and maximize space utilization of the dining room space. Additionally, it will balance the undergraduates' desires with the alumni's concerns for safety, hygiene, and liability. The new area will offer an assortment of prepared sandwiches and snacks that can be readily assembled or heated, along with hot and cold beverages. It will also include small equipment, such as microwaves and toasters. Lastly, it will enhance the social experience of studying and snacking in a designated educational section of the dining hall with comfortable cafe-style seating, charging/docking stations, and quality lighting that will rival popular coffee houses. (Starbucks model.)

## K&D Project Proposed Budget

We are finalizing the fundraising plans, which started in late December. Based on funds raised, the project may be phased in, but that is under review at this time. The estimated plan budget is \$550,000-\$600,000, with the kitchen remodeling budget of \$250,000, the dining room budget of \$200,000, and the Dining & Learning Commons estimated to cost \$100,000.

## Project Timeline

Based upon funding availability, the project aims to complete the design phase by mid-February, select contractors by mid-May, and begin construction in early August, which is expected to last 60 days.

## K&D Committee Bios

### Brian Finneran '81

CEO at *Intermedia Events & Conference Group*

### Steve Pirozzi '80

Food & Beverage Dept., *The Hotel Plaza Athénée*, New York

### Alexa Bosshardt '82

Corporate Research Chef at *American Sugar Refining*  
Culinary professional and registered/licensed dietitian with expertise in recipe/new product R&D, nutrition, nutritional labeling, and nutritional marketing.

### Greg Vojnovic '85

Chief Development Officer at *Arby's Restaurant Group*

### Kevin Kruse '79

Chief Development Officer at *Hurricane Grill & Wings*  
Experience in franchise sales and operations, franchise law, business development, market mapping, and site selection.

### Dave Williamson '77

President at *Five Star Restaurants, LLC*  
Entrepreneur opening fast casual restaurants in Nevada and Southern California

### Jake Howell '18

Sage

### Patrick Wang '18

Steward

### Alec Charbonneau '17

Resident Advisor/Grad Student





## BERT HARROP TO BE HONORED ON APRIL 22, 2017

By Justin Bredahl



Bert Harrop

In 2007, the Mu Chapter Education Foundation was founded through the generous initial donation of Bert Harrop '61 and his wife, ValBerta, CU '61. To honor Brother Harrop, his generous donation, and his ongoing commitment to Sigma Pi, there will be a celebratory dinner at the Pi House on April 22, 2017. Bert Harrop himself, along with many notable alumni and current brothers, will be present to celebrate the progress of the Foundation and Bert's lifetime contribution.

Let's get to know Bert a little better. He is no different from most of the brothers of Sigma Pi. He came to school as a young man not really knowing what was ahead. He was raised in a small town in Kansas. He arrived in Ithaca with \$3,500 and a \$700 grant. The cost to attend Cornell at that time was about \$10,000 a year. Bert worked as a range chef at the Statler. He served as steward at Mu Chapter, and that took care of room and board.

He was influenced by **Brother Joel Van-Wynen '58** (deceased) to double register in the Hotel School and the Johnson Business School. This preparation gave Bert the tools to go into the world and achieve success as an entrepreneur, CEO of Harrop Construction Co., and a director of the Sterling Bank in Texas.

Bert met his wife Val at Sigma Pi. His little brother had invited Val to be his date at a dance at the house. For some reason, the little brother could not follow through on the date and asked Bert if he would

pinch hit. Bert and Val continued to date and married. One person instrumental in the relationship between Bert and Val was Dolly Hailstork. Dolly lent Bert the money to allow the marriage to happen.

Bert is grateful to Cornell and Sigma Pi for introducing him to a whole new world, and chose the large gift to the Educational Foundation as a way to pay back for what the house and his brothers did for him.

Bert's ongoing dedication to Sigma Pi continues to be critically important to the Foundation, which has had a significant impact on the brothers of Sigma Pi and the Ithaca community. One of the Foundation's initiatives was providing seed money for the establishment of College Mentors for Kids to the Cornell campus. The organization works

with underprivileged children in the Ithaca area, pairing them with college students to act as mentors and demonstrate the importance of higher education. Currently 23 of 56 active Sigma Pi brothers are involved with the organization. This includes President David Dellapelle '17, Treasurer Andrew Walsh '17, and three other members of the nine-person executive board.

Many brothers speak about the lasting impact the organization has had on them personally and professionally. We all look forward to sharing our experiences and honoring the contributions that Bert has made to the Sigma Pi brotherhood.

Mark your calendars now to visit Ithaca on April 22, 2017.



Photo taken of a recent gathering of Sigma Pi Houston alumni with Sigma Pi Educational Foundation President Tom Silver and Sigma Pi Alumni Association President Jarett Wait. From left to right: Joe Dervay '80, Jay Sacco '80, Tom Silver '81, Luc Chabot '80, Bert Harrop '61, Jarett Wait '80, and Nick Vojnovic '81.

## MU CHAPTER WELL REPRESENTED AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This past summer, brothers Bill McGrane '17 and Colin Roche '18 traveled to Las Vegas to participate in the annual Sigma Pi Convention. They expressed a lasting impact the experience had on them, best summarized by Colin Roche: "My experience in Las Vegas will forever be a most fond memory of my time as an undergraduate brother. Never before, even as an active participant in the dealings and events of Mu Chapter, have I felt so in touch with the logistics of Sigma Pi International. Via voting to amend bylaws and projecting my voice as a representative of Mu Chapter into the elections of the Grand Council, I further braided myself

to our organization and the standards to which we pledged."

Mu Chapter was specifically recognized throughout the convention. Brother John Zimmer '06 was presented with the Young Professional Achievement Award through his work with Lyft, which provided discounted rides for Sigma Pi brothers throughout the weekend. Mu Chapter also walked away with the Louis Foley Newsletter Award and Byron Lewis Academic Award, recognizing the chapter's average GPA of 3.51. As Bill McGrane noted, "audible gasps" could be heard as they announced Mu Chapter's GPA, a feat many found even more impres-

sive when considering the chapter's size. A mock initiation concluded the event, allowing our brothers to observe and learn the national ritual performed by the Grand Council members themselves.

The undergraduate brothers would like to thank the alumni board for continuously providing the means necessary to travel to such conventions and proudly represent our chapter. Such trips allow us to broaden our knowledge of ritual, sacrifice, and brotherhood in order to further push Mu Chapter and Sigma Pi International toward the pinnacle of excellence.



*The undergraduates with Andrew Ross Sorkin '99 at the New York Times Dealbook Conference.*

## BROTHERS ATTEND DEALBOOK CONFERENCE

This November, the Educational Foundation granted six brothers, including myself, tickets to the New York Times Dealbook Conference at the Lincoln Center in Manhattan. The conference was hosted by Andrew Ross Sorkin '99, an alumnus of Mu Chapter, who is now an editor at the *Times*. We listened to several top business executives and industry experts discuss the challenges or opportunities we might face in the future. Sorkin, who interviewed each guest, also gauged their reactions to the election results, as the conference took place the day following the election. Jarrett Wait '80 attended Dealbook as well, and introduced us to several high-profile individuals, including Robert Appel of Appel Commons at Cornell, and the owner of the Mets.

The speakers included Eric Schmidt, Howard Shultz, Roger Goodell, Lloyd Blankfein, and Indra Nooyi. Their perspec-

tives and predictions on the future were encouraging to listen to, words we will remember as we begin our careers. The format of the event allowed the audience to ask questions of the speakers, and Sanjay Banda '18 took the opportunity to ask Roger Goodell why referees in the NFL are not full time employees. Goodell struggled with the question, and two weeks later, the NFL announced that they would begin hiring their referees full time. Sanjay has not stopped gloating since the conference.

Attending Dealbook as a student was a unique experience. We came away from the event feeling more motivated and prepared to start our own careers. We were only able to obtain tickets to the event with the help of Andrew Sorkin, and with the financial support of the Educational Foundation. We very much appreciate the opportunity to attend. Thank you!

## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI SPEAKER SERIES ENDS STRONG THIRD SEMESTER

The Sigma Pi Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series finished a successful third semester after hosting six speakers, each representing his own line of work and path to success. Ben Dreier '15, Adam Gottlieb '15, Kurt Rasmussen '80, Jonathan Beckerman '14, Sam Hendrickson (Hendo) '13, and Aaron Klein (Dad) '12 all spent time with the brothers — either in person or via video stream — detailing their work,

challenges they have faced, giving advice, and answering questions.

We are always looking for more alumni for this speaker series, and would love to hear your story! If you are interested in speaking or would like to recommend another Mu alumnus for the series, please email David DellaPelle '17 at [djd259@cornell.edu](mailto:djd259@cornell.edu).

## BROTHERS ATTEND CAREER WEEKEND

Over the weekend of November 10–11, 2016, 50 current undergrads and alumni gathered for the Sigma Pi Career Weekend. We convened at Orsay in New York City for the annual networking dinner, and several alumni hosted students in their offices the following day.

Coincidentally, Andrew Ross Sorkin '99, editor of *The New York Times* and Mu Chapter alum, happened to be hosting the NYTimes Dealbook Conference on the same weekend and gave six brothers tickets. Business leaders, such as Howard Shultz of Starbucks, Eric Schmidt of Alphabet, Roger Goodell of the NFL, and William Ackman of Pershing Square, spoke at the conference.

## SIGMA PI ALUMNI MENTORING PROGRAM LAUNCHED

This past fall, we launched the third year of the Sigma Pi mentor program. Under this program, undergraduate brothers are matched with Sigma Pi alumni with similar academic and career interests. The alumni "mentor" is asked to provide his undergraduate mentee advice on career development, career paths, potential job opportunities, networking suggestions, resume writing/critiquing, and general guidance to assist the brother as he prepares himself for the working world.

This past year we saw an unprecedented number of undergraduate brothers sign up for the program, with over 60 alums and undergraduates participating! We have received very positive feedback from both undergraduates and alumni on the benefits of the program and the relationships it has fostered — even after graduation. Many thanks to the alumni who participate in the program.

If any alumnus is interested in becoming a mentor or assisting with the program in any way, please contact Rob Novo '79 at [robn1979@gmail.com](mailto:robn1979@gmail.com) or Tom Silver '81 at [tsilver10359@yahoo.com](mailto:tsilver10359@yahoo.com). We can always use your help. Any level of participation will be greatly appreciated — things like offering to critique a few resumes or providing networking contacts or referrals on potential job opportunities will go a long way to making the program even more successful and meaningful for all involved.



## CORNELL MENTORS STRIVE TO HELP ITHACA YOUTH REACH POTENTIAL

By Trey Aguirre | November 20, 2016

Cornell's chapter of College Mentors For Kids—a national mentoring program based in Indianapolis—is celebrating its fourth consecutive year of operations, according to the David DellaPelle '17, the organization's president.

Since its founding in 2013, the program has tripled in size and now serves over 100 elementary school students from the Ithaca area, according to DellaPelle. The majority of students involved in the program are considered "at-risk," meaning they come from single parent households, families where neither parent has attained a college degree, low-income brackets, or other backgrounds that put the children at risk of not pursuing their full potential at either a college or a trade school.

"Whatever [students] want to do, we want to inspire them to achieve that," DellaPelle said.

DellaPelle said there are 133 Cornell students—105 mentors and 28 student leaders—and several faculty members and alumni, who oversee the administrative aspects of the organization.

DellaPelle explained that College Mentors For Kids is unique, compared to other mentoring programs, due to its "highly structured" nature.

"[The program] actually brings the students to Cornell's campus so they can envision a positive and successful future for themselves," he said.

Each week, elementary school students visit Cornell's campus from all over Ithaca to participate in a variety of enriching activities focused on "community service, higher education, and cultural diversity," DellaPelle said. He added that activities range from visiting Cornell's ornithology lab to ROTC-themed relay races and teamwork-building exercises in Barton Hall. This semester, mentors and their "little buddies" visited a petting zoo known as Ezra's Farm, Cornell Orchards, and the Cornell Dairy Bar.

Each mentor is paired with a student, who they directly work with for the rest of the year through structured activities designed to introduce students to the college environment and "inspire them to reach their full potential," DellaPelle said.

"These kids live in Ithaca, but most of them ... wouldn't ever come to Cornell's campus without this program," he said. "They're learning about what college is and when they think, 'My mentor went to Cornell and studied history. I too can study history'—it's really remarkable."

DellaPelle said College Mentors For Kids has achieved great success nationally, with 80 percent of mentees graduating high school and 76 percent of mentees attaining a two- or four-year college degree.

DellaPelle also stressed the importance of "allowing Cornell students to get outside their bubble."

"It's easy at Cornell to ... stay on campus and not branch out into the community, and [this program] allows [Cornell students] to see what the Ithaca community is really like," he said.

DellaPelle said Cornell's chapter of College Mentors For Kids aims to increase its mentor-mentee pairs from 105 to 120 in the spring and to expand further into Cayuga Heights—specifically the West Village housing community, which contains many at-risk children.

David Golding '18, the organization's vice president of programming, said he is especially excited for this expansion.

"Working with the children from West Village housing community has allowed us to fully carry out the College Mentors for Kids mission and really confirms the positive influence a mentorship program like ours can have, not only for the Cornell community, but also the greater Ithaca area," he said.

DellaPelle said the most important aspect of the program is to "bridge the divide between Cornell and the Ithaca community."

"I think that that's kind of an overlooked benefit that this organization is providing to both Cornell and Ithaca," he said.

*This article was originally printed in the Cornell Daily Sun on November 20, 2016. The article can also be found online at [CornellSun.com](http://CornellSun.com)*

## SETTING GOALS WITH SHAROM

As many of us begin to think of setting goals for the year ahead, there are a few important goal-setting strategies to keep in mind. These strategies don't come from a professional coach, but by one of our little buddies named Sharom, an elementary student from New York. When we asked her about her goals, she did more than just share her goals — she offered several concepts we can all use to be more successful in achieving our goals.

First, if we want to achieve a goal, we have to be disciplined and focused. Taking steps to achieve a goal will require a willingness to give up something that's fun right now in order to keep striving toward what we really want. For instance, take Sharom's goal of wanting to do well in school.

"One of my goals is to do good in

school. My college mentor has taught me to ignore those who try to get my attention during class. This has been very helpful because now I can put all my focus into my work and not my friends."



Second, it's important to make sure that along with any goal we set, we also outline a plan to achieve it. Otherwise, the goal can become so big and overwhelming that it's tough to know where to even start. The key is breaking goals down into baby steps and then actually diving in and realizing that we won't reach our goal in a day, but we can make progress toward the goal with each action we take.

Sharom shared how she is taking small actions now to contribute to one of her big overall goals. Sharom said, "I would really love to change the world by helping to create a cleaner environment. My college

mentor has helped me to reach this goal by reminding me to always keep my area clean. With these reminders, I've been able to slowly make the world a better place."

Finally, in order to achieve our goals we need to be passionate about the goal or why we want to achieve it. It's difficult to put the first two lessons into place for a goal that we don't really care about. In order to make sure nothing stands in our way, we need to have a personal connection to our goal.

As Sharom put it, "Another one of my goals is to become a doctor. I remember my college mentor telling me she had some of her family members die from sickness. This inspired me to want to help those who are sick to become better and feel well."

From all of us at College Mentors, thank you for allowing children like Sharom to set and achieve big goals. We are so grateful for your support and hope that you achieve every goal you set this year.

## MU CHAPTER OF SIGMA PI EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS: PLANNED GIVING

Once you have decided to make a gift to the Foundation, you'll want to be assured it is done in the most tax efficient manner as possible. Several charitable giving methods exist, which could help optimize your tax and estate planning strategies. Following is a high level description of common strategies:

### ***Outright Gift During Lifetime or Through a Will***

Tax savings can be achieved either through income tax deductions or estate tax savings.

### ***Life Insurance With a Charity Named as Beneficiary***

Makes it possible to gift a significant amount at a relatively small cost.

### ***Charitable Gift Annuity***

Donor receives the benefit of annuity payments during their lifetime, while leaving the underlying asset to charity.

### ***Charitable Remainder Trust***

Often funded with appreciated assets, the trust provides an annual payout stream, with the remainder left to charity upon donor's death. Capital gains taxes are avoided, while allowing an income tax deduction.

### ***Charitable Lead Trust***

Another donor-funded trust, the charity receives a fixed annual payment, with the remainder going to their beneficiaries upon the donor's death. The primary benefit of this structure lies in its gift tax consequences.

### ***Pooled-Income Fund***

Collects several donors' funds to create one large gift. Each beneficiary receives annual investment income with tax deductions dependent on the amount the charity is expected to receive at the donor's death.

Every donor has varying financial circumstances, which must be considered in discussion with a tax and estate planning specialist. The Foundation can help you find the necessary expertise upon request.

## FOUNDATION CELEBRATES

*(continued from page one)*

raised funds for new desks to be placed in each of the 25 bedrooms in the house.

### **Conference Sponsorships**

Brothers attended the Annual DealBook Conference, hosted by Andrew Sorkin '99, in New York City in 2015 and 2016. Brothers attended the Sigma Pi International Fraternity Mid-Year Leadership Conference, Sigma Pi International University, and the Biennial Sigma Pi International Convocation. These programs are extremely beneficial learning experiences for the undergraduate leaders of Mu Chapter, educating the attendees on the process on

leading and managing the chapter.

### **Internship Program Launched in 2015**

Two internship positions were established – one to assist with and promote the Cornell University College Mentors for Kids program, and the second to support the technical requirements of the Dick Cahoon '77 Tech Center.

### **Mu Chapter Academic Momentum Continues**

Since its launch in 2007, the Educational Foundation has invested in enhancing the academic programming and infrastructure of the house. We believe these investments

are starting to pay off, as measured by the year-to-year improvement in the undergraduate aggregate GPA.

Since 2009, the house GPA has increased from 3.09 to 3.53, and the ranking has increased from 39<sup>th</sup> to fourth as of 2016. An undergraduate accomplishment everyone should be proud of.

We look forward to a productive year in 2017 and hope we can continue to help undergraduates have a complete and fulfilling experience at Cornell and Sigma Pi.



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EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION