



MU CHAPTER OF SIGMA PI EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

SUMMER 2018

ONWARD AND UPWARD

Dining and Learning for the Next Generation



New Learning Commons Area.



Steve Pirozzi '80 shows members of the class of '63 the plans for the new Learning Commons during the reunion weekend in June.



Alumni gather during reunion weekend and view the house renovation.

President's Message

As we continue the Educational Foundation's 11th year of operation for Mu Chapter, I am pleased to report the progress and positive impact our organization has had on leadership and educational programs within the Sigma Pi brotherhood and the Ithaca community. The Foundation's consistent support during the past few years toward educational and infrastructure initiatives, such as the Cahoon Tech Center and the completion of the third Entrepreneurship Conference, have helped pave the way for the Foundation's future. With continued support of the local community and participation at a number of local school events, Mu brothers' commitment, participation, and leadership of College Mentors for Kids remains strong. The continued focus on education, combined with the efforts of the brotherhood, has helped generate a cumulative GPA of 3.43 during the spring 2018 semester, one of the highest among all fraternities at Cornell.

Learning Commons Update

This past year has largely been focused on supporting the *Dining and Learning for the 21st Century* project with particular emphasis on the creation of the new Learning Commons, which is scheduled to be completed by Labor Day. The Learning Commons will be a transformational addition to the chapter house by providing brothers with a

needed collaborative study space—a much-needed attribute that the chapter house has been lacking for many years. The Foundation is pleased to also be supporting the installation of a state-of-the-art Wi-Fi system, which will meet brothers' needs for many years to come. To read more about the installation of the new Wi-Fi system and how you can support this venture, please see page 6.

Board Member Achievements

We are grateful for the support from so many of you. Thank you. So much of what the Foundation has accomplished has been led by two of our long-standing board members, **Kurt Rasmussen '80** and **Sandy True '78**, both of whom have been recognized for their outstanding work in other areas of their lives.

Kurt was recently welcomed as the Director of the Division of Therapeutics and Medical Consequences for The National Institute on Drug Abuse. We wish Kurt the best of luck in his role and appreciate the impact he bestows on the Educational Foundation. Board member Sandy True recently received the Sandy True Award for Exceptional Volunteerism by the Family & Children's Service of Ithaca during its annual meeting in May. We are fortunate to have her continued support of our local College Mentors for Kids program in addition to her other volunteer activities.

Board Member Changes

The Foundation board voted to add **Connor Riser '16** to the board as treasurer at our annual meeting on July 17. Connor is a graduate of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell and is pursuing a master's degree at Georgetown University. As an undergraduate, he served as president of the Interfraternity Council and vice president of Mu Chapter. Connor will be replacing longtime Mu supporter, **Aaron Klein '12**. We are pleased that Aaron will remain on the board, and thank him for his many years of service as both Foundation president and treasurer.

Alumni Support Strengthens Educational Foundation

We thank all who have supported the Foundation with generous donations during the past year. This year was an extremely successful year, as 49 alumni and friends of Mu contributed \$51,171. We are encouraged to continue the Foundation's dedication to excellence to ensure a positive future for our great brotherhood and are thrilled to see its impact better the college experience of our undergraduate brothers.



Fraternally,
Tom Silver '81
President
tsilver10359@yahoo.com
(914) 582-1604



Construction on the Learning Commons at the chapter house began in June and will be completed in time for the fall semester.



Shay Doshi '19 reads aloud to a group of second-graders at a College Mentors for Kids activity.



Undergraduate members and fellow guest speakers listen to Jesse Hammerman '83 during the Entrepreneurship Conference in April.

HONOR ROLL OF PATRONS

The Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi Educational Foundation would like to thank and recognize the following generous donors who made contributions from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018.

| | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| The Patane Family | Kevin Fountain '68 | John Christoforo '77 | Neal Douglas '80 | Michael Feiertag '83 |
| Albert Beck '52 | Walter Knox '71 | Jim Franz '77 | Wayne Forman '80 | Dennis McNamara '83 |
| Winthrop Cody '55 | James Boland '73 | Robert Ruhlman '78 | Kurt Rasmussen '80 | Steve Novak '83 |
| Peter Romeo '55 | William Strusz '73 | Kent Sheng '78 | Jarett Wait '80 | Scott Wilson '83 |
| Angela and | Bert Hurlbut '74 | Sandy True '78 | John Altmeyer '81 | Alexander Deyle '06 |
| Douglas Parker '56 | James Kraker '74 | Steven Bergh '79 | Joseph Ruocco '81 | Aaron Klein '12 |
| Jim Keene '57 | Jeffrey Craver '75 | Kay and | Tom Silver '81 | Connor Riser '16 |
| Richard Boerner '60 | Mark Cunningham '75 | David D'Orlando '79 | Ford Fay '82 | |
| Bert Harrop '61 | John Morrison '75 | Gordon Pugh '79 | James Garr '82 | |
| James Unckless '66 | Tom Garr '76 | Robert Novo '79 | John Roche '82 | |
| Arthur White '66 | Peter Cady '77 | Thomas Cherner '80 | Joshua Weinrich '82 | |

A Prosperous Educational Foundation

Foundation Sees Financial Success Due to Alumni Support

As discussed earlier in this report, the Educational Foundation's largest investment this year was the *Dining and Learning for the 21st Century* project. During the last two years, the Foundation has generously received approximately \$82,000 in restricted donations, which we contributed back to the project this year along with some additional funds from our portfolio.

Our portfolio's size was reduced from \$213,306 to \$130,151, a decrease of \$83,155, primarily due to the Foundation's overall contribution of \$110,489 toward the Learning Commons project. Investment performance returned 11.92% on a net basis versus a similarly weighted composite index return of 11.53%. We continue to maintain and diversify our holdings among liquid mutual and exchange traded funds with 75% of funds in equity, roughly 80% domestic and 20% international, and 25% in short-term fixed income and cash. The portfolio allocation was generally held constant throughout the year,

although a reduction in our international holdings was implemented toward the end of calendar year 2017, as non-dollar currencies had moved significantly higher, and international equity markets became somewhat extended. We would like to thank all of our generous supporters this year for their gifts totaling \$51,171.

It is a bittersweet moment for me to send my final report as treasurer of the Educational Foundation. I took on the role while still in graduate school at Cornell back in 2012 and am proud to have served in that capacity for the past six years in addition to my two years as president. I look forward to continuing to support our initiatives as a Foundation board member.

Fraternally,
Aaron Klein '12
Outgoing Treasurer

Board Members in the News

Kurt Rasmussen '80 Welcomed into New Position at the National Institute on Drug Abuse



Mu alumnus and Foundation board member, **Kurt Rasmussen '80**, was chosen to serve as the Director of the Division of Therapeutics and Medical Consequences to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a part of the National Institutes of Health, on April 30. Kurt's career spans more than 30 years of research and leadership experiences in pharmacology and neuroscience therapeutics. The Educational Foundation commends Kurt for his hard work and for serving as an exemplary figure to both undergraduates and alumni alike.

After graduating from Cornell with honors and distinction in 1980 with a bachelor of arts degree in biopsychology, Kurt attended Princeton where he received doctorates in neuroscience and psychology in 1985. He later completed his postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine.

With the completion of his studies, Kurt began his career at Eli Lilly & Co., where he most recently served as a senior research advisor. As an internationally recognized neuroscientist, he has more than three decades of experience in basic addiction research and drug development. Kurt has also

displayed extensive knowledge of neuropsychiatric and neurological therapeutics and is known for his expertise in pharmaceutical discovery research from hypothesis production to clinical candidate evaluation. A great deal of his work has focused on identifying novel mechanisms for the treatment of neuropsychiatric disorders, including addiction.

With his new position, Kurt will lead a team that conducts studies to evaluate the safety and efficacy of pharmacotherapies, behavioral therapies, and devices to treat substance use disorders through peer reviewed grants, contracts, and interagency agreements.

Kurt expressed how honored he is to join such a talented team at the National Institute of Drug Abuse and looks forward to addressing issues associated with substance use disorders. "My goal is to help bring new treatment options to the millions of patients suffering from addiction to opioids and other substances." To find out more about the National Institute of Drug Abuse, please visit www.drugabuse.gov.

Local Non-Profit Names Award for Long-time Sigma Pi Supporter, Sandy True '78

The Educational Foundation is excited and proud to announce that Family & Children's Service of Ithaca (F&CS) recently renamed its outstanding volunteer award after **Sandy True '78**, presenting the Sandy True Award for Exceptional Volunteerism at its annual meeting on May 17. Sandy is a Cornell alumna, Sigma Pi sweetheart, and current member of the Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi Educational Foundation's board of directors.

Sandy has long been involved in leadership roles with F&CS, having served two terms on its board, chairing 1997-99, and providing leadership for multiple promotional and fundraising campaigns. "This was especially important when demand for mental health services at F&CS exceeded the capacity of our old house. Sandy heard this loudly, and she co-chaired the

Opening New Doors capital campaign. The campaign was a huge success and helped F&CS purchase the beautiful building that we call home today," a representative of the F&CS said. She also chaired the Cayuga at Twilight Committee, which was the 2018 recipient of the Sandy True Award. This committee and event have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars—all in support of children's mental health services.

The newly named award is "presented when there is a volunteer, or committee of volunteers, through exceptional volunteerism have demonstrated devotion and commitment to advancing the mission of F&CS, and the volunteerism, long-lasting impacts have been realized."

Sandy has spent more than 25 years as a volunteer for non-profit agencies in Ithaca in the areas

of fundraising, event planning, major gift program development, and capital campaigns, including the last three years assisting Sigma Pi alumni in bringing the College Mentors for Kids program to Cornell University and serving as the liaison between the Ithaca City School District, Caroline Elementary School, Cayuga Heights Elementary School, College Mentors for Kids National, and Sigma Pi. In 2015, the Cornell Fraternity and Sorority Awards selected Sandy True as the recipient for the Distinguished Alumni Service Award for her work with the College Mentors for Kids program.

To learn more about Family & Children's Service of Ithaca, please visit www.fcsith.org. To learn more about Sigma Pi's work with College Mentors for Kids, please visit musigmapifoundation.com/foundation-initiatives/college-mentors.



Aaron Klein '12 Finishes Another Chapter in His Service to Sigma Pi

Article originally provided by Tom Silver '81 and featured in the spring 2018 issue of The Muse.

The Educational Foundation board and I would like to inform our loyal alumni and other supporters that **Aaron Klein '12** decided to step down from his role as treasurer at the end of this fiscal year, which concluded June 30. While we are sad to learn of and regretful to share this news, we are primarily thankful for his years of service to the Education Foundation

and that he will continue to serve as a Foundation board member beyond the end of his term as treasurer.

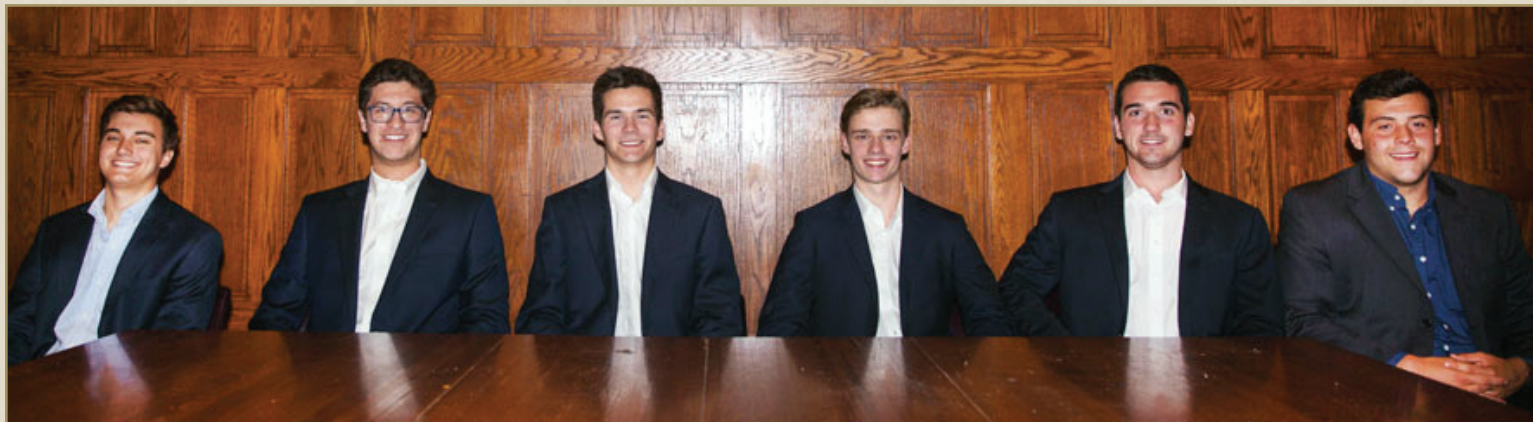
Aaron served in multiple chapter leadership roles before graduating in 2012 with a degree in industrial and la-

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An Introduction to the 2018-19 MU EXECUTIVE BOARD



During the spring semester, the brothers of Sigma Pi held their annual executive board elections. Besides collaborating to make major decisions within the chapter house, the board members serve as role models for the younger brothers and act as liaisons for the fraternity. The new position holders both assume the responsibility of ensuring the prosperity of the fraternity and gain the opportunity to make long-lasting improvements. We thought it would be beneficial for alumni to know more about the undergraduates who are running the house on a day-to-day basis. Feel free to reach out to any of these individuals at any time.

Sage

Alex Ewald '20

ame85@cornell.edu

Alex is from Westchester, N.Y., and is a junior majoring in economics. Previously, he served as philanthropy chairman. As sage, he hopes to increase the transparency of the board, as well as better organize communications between the position holders, brotherhood, and alumni. Alex is eager to serve as sage during a time where the brotherhood boasts one of its most diverse membership in years and has learned a lot from the fraternity's previous presidents

Vice President

Ian Atkinson '20

ica8@cornell.edu

Ian is from Bethesda, Md., and is a junior majoring in biology and society. His previous positions on the minor board allowed him to see how the fraternity functioned and how certain positions keep the house operating smoothly. As the university begins to increase pressure on Greek life on campus, Ian is eager to assume the role of risk manager for the benefit of the brotherhood. As he transitions into his new position, Ian hopes to work in conjunction with the risk managers of other fraternities for the betterment of Sigma Pi and the Cornell Greek system. He looks forward to tackling challenges head on and following in the footsteps of brothers who have led the house in the past.

Treasurer

Joe Brogan '20

jjb285@cornell.edu

Joe is from Syracuse, N.Y., and is majoring in hotel administration. He previously served as brotherhood chairman and is eager to step into a larger role in the fall. His goal is to increase financial transparency and inform the brotherhood more on the budgeting process. One of the ways he will accomplish this is by releasing the budget to the brotherhood on a monthly basis. Lastly, he wants to create a sense of democracy for the treasurer position by allowing the brotherhood at large to have greater control on spending.

Alumni Secretary

Harry Drazhal '20

hd292@cornell.edu

Harry is from Mendham, N.J., and is majoring in information science. After serving the last two semesters as technology chairman, Harry wanted to become more involved in the fraternity's overall functions. With the kitchen and dining renovations ramping up, Harry will be able to continue his involvement while working closely with the alumni. He hopes to continue arranging events such as the Entrepreneurship Conference to foster impactful relations between the brothers and alumni.

Steward

Jonah Hutchinson '20

jhh275@cornell.edu

Jonah is from Denver, Colo., and is majoring in hotel administration. He ran for the position of steward because of his culinary involvement in the Hotel School and his desire to give back to the fraternity in a constructive and meaningful way. With the construction of the new kitchen and dining facilities, the position of steward has never been more important. He is dedicated to providing high-quality meals to the brotherhood while acclimating the brotherhood to our new facility.

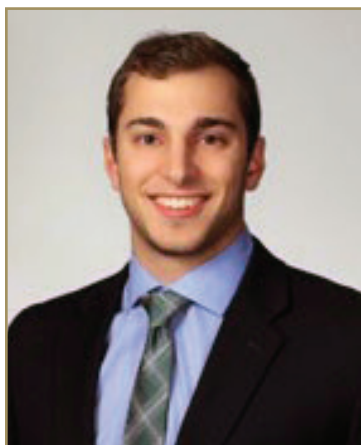
Herald

Justin LaClair '19

jrl379@cornell.edu

Justin is from Albany, N.Y., and is a biological sciences major in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He previously served as diversity and inclusion chairman, and he believes his experiences will help him be an effective leader in the community during the new member education process. Justin wants to do his part to make sure that next year's new member class becomes close with each other while becoming acquainted with Sigma Pi's rich history and traditions.

Pictured above, from left to right: Harry Drazhal '20, Jonah Hutchinson '20, Ian Atkinson '20, Alex Ewald '20, Joe Brogan '20, and Justin LaClair '19.



Celebrating Outstanding Leadership

*Jake Howell '18 and Griffin Py '18
Named Mu Chapter's Brothers of the Year*

Every year, Sigma Pi awards the Brother of the Year Award to a Mu Chapter senior who has demonstrated his unwavering commitment and unparalleled leadership throughout his time as an active member of the fraternity. This year, the chapter chose two recipients, **Jake Howell '18** and **Griffin Py '18**. Both brothers served the chapter as sage: Jake during the 2016–17 term and Griffin during the 2017–18 term. Both of these men demonstrated selfless commitment to the betterment of Sigma Pi, both through their roles as officers and through their roles as brothers and friends.

Both of these men have led the chapter through periods of progress and growth and guided the chapter through challenges along its way. Both truly live and breathe for this brotherhood. They have both demonstrated immeasurable commitment to their brothers as individuals, to Mu Chapter as a whole, and to the greater Cornell community. Congratulations Jake and Griffin, and thank you for your commitment and leadership during your tenures as undergraduate members.

GROWING YOUNG MINDS

Members Promote an Enthusiasm for Learning through College Mentors for Kids Program

During the spring semester, mentors and “little buddies” from College Mentors for Kids enjoyed a number of fun, educational activities. While each venture is memorable in its own right, a few projects were more impactful to mentors and their “little buddies” or students during the semester.

From the students’ perspective, a science activity, where they had the opportunity to experiment with fluid dynamics and constructed lava lamps out of household materials, was most memorable. Students used plastic water bottles and suspended a wax-like fluid in an oil base. Later, they got a crash course in aerodynamics through competitions with paper airplanes and boats that they learned how to craft themselves. Students were smiling ear to ear the entire time, and the general managers were pleased to see that the “little buddies” were finding enjoyment in science and learning.

The mentors’ favorite activity was teaching of various cultures from around the world, which allowed mentors and “little buddies” to share stories and experiences of their own. It was a great group discussion that allowed Mu’s diverse members the opportunity to teach their “little buddies” about their own backgrounds.

Each week included a new learning objective, but the overarching themes of the semester were listening, respect, and safety. Students who exhibit one or multiple of these traits are rewarded at the end of each activity with “Buddy Bucks.” These paper notes are redeemable at the end of the semester for a range of toys and prizes. This reward system provides a tangible way for the students to see the positive repercussions of their good behavior. College Mentors for Kids had another great semester, and Mu members look forward to growing and learning with their “little buddies” in the upcoming fall semester.

ALUMNI SUPPORT ENCOURAGES NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR MU CHAPTER

The undergraduate chapter was overwhelmingly pleased with alumni interaction during the 2017-18 academic year. The brothers attended Career Weekend in November, where each brother visited Sigma Pi alumni at organizations spanning numerous industries. The annual trip was a fantastic opportunity for brothers to learn more about industries, develop their network, and meet alumni.

At the beginning of the year, more than 30 brothers were paired with an alumni mentor in an industry of interest. Alumni/undergraduate relationships vary from recent graduates to retired

professionals. The program has been successful as every brother has developed a new found relationship with an alumnus that is able to provide career and life advice. The brotherhood also participated in numerous speaker series in the Memorial Library, where an alumni video chatted with undergraduates regarding their career paths and professional recommendations.

Brothers also had the opportunity to attend a workshop at the Statler Hotel Regent Lounge in April, where Cornell alumnae, Julie Choi and Catherine Phelps, provided insight on how to build resumes and offered professional advice.

“I have been working to better my resume,” said **Kyle Schwartz '21**. He expressed his gratitude to Julie for her great insight and feedback. “I feel confident sending my resume out to potential employers, and it was beneficial to hear her perspective on good interview dialogue beyond the contents of the resume.”

The undergraduate brothers are thankful for the time and effort the alumni spend to assist in their professional development. Sigma Pi prides itself on creating leaders and these programs enable our members to grow personally and professionally.

UPGRADING OUR TECHNOLOGIES

In recent years, Mu Chapter has continually upgraded its technological capabilities for the 21st century university experience. Enhancements such as the **Dick Cahoon '77** Tech Center and the Learning Commons (currently under construction) have helped Sigma Pi brothers gain an advantage both in the classroom and brotherhood activities such as recruitment. The next stage of improvement to the chapter house's technology is an upgrade of its Wi-Fi systems.

Mu Chapter will be switching over to Cornell University's Wi-Fi system, Red Rover, which will allow for an overall faster internet experience for undergraduates. An added bonus is that the undergraduates will no longer have a monthly internet expense as Red Rover will be provided free of charge. Although, the costs of switching over to Cornell's network are costly as new wiring needs to be laid and connected throughout the chapter house.

These expenses will be covered by the Educational Foundation since fast and reliable internet is essential to today's students and their academic achievements. If you would like to donate to great cause, please make your tax-deductible donation today by visiting our online giving page at musigmapifoundation.com/donate for special instructions on how to give to this campaign.

Aaron Klein '12

(Continued from page 3)

bor relations. He earned his MBA from Cornell's Johnson Graduate School of Management in 2014 while also working as a graduate resident assistant at the Sigma Pi chapter house during his two years as a graduate student. He joined the Educational Foundation's board of directors in 2012, served as the Foundation's president for two years from 2014-16, and completed his second year as treasurer in June.

He is currently working for the Chicago Cubs as a Senior Business Development Executive, where he assists local and global companies with corporate events at Wrigley Field and the surrounding Wrigleyville campus. Prior to moving to Chicago, he served as the director of football operations at Cornell and has also interned with the Buffalo Bills and Buffalo Bisons.

"I am proud to be part of the Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi Educational Foundation because, it not only helps support the academic pursuits of the brothers, but also provides opportunities to make them more well-rounded men," Aaron said. "Through programs such as College Mentors for Kids, the Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series, made possible by the **Dick Cahoon '77** Tech Center, and the funding of leadership initiatives and conferences, the Foundation has enhanced and transformed the fraternity experience of Sigma Pi men."



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Third Sigma Pi Entrepreneurship Conference Sponsored by the Educational Foundation

Article originally featured in the spring 2018 issue of The Muse.

The third Sigma Pi Entrepreneurship Conference took place on April 21, at the Mu Chapter house with 45 undergraduate members in attendance. The conference featured nine distinguished speakers, including Sigma Pi alumni and Cornell professors.

Tom Silver '81: Top Gun Ventures and president of Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi Educational Foundation

Jesse Hammerman '83: President and founder of AMG Solutions and HH Woodworking

Dennis McNamara '83: Executive vice president and general counsel for Oppenheimer & Co. Inc.

Michael Vernick '83: Solutions architect for JW Player and Sigma Pi alumni board member.

Jeff Corbin '87: Founder and CEO of APPrise Mobile

Will Murphy '18: Co-founder of YNOT Bike

Daniel Abaroa: Founder of Vita Shoes Company

James Mahoney: Software developer, entrepreneur, and digital artist

Ken Rother: Managing director of eLab and visiting lecturer of management at the Johnson Graduate School of Management

This year's conference focused on career stories. Speakers discussed their career paths, including the successes and pitfalls along the way. They shared interesting stories about how they made job-changing decisions or how the decisions were made for them. Speakers also discussed the day-to-day routines, or lack thereof, in their companies and fields as well as their favorite parts of their positions.

Most importantly, they conveyed tips, advice, and lessons learned throughout their careers. Each speaker concluded by answering questions about his position and about what kind of person could find success and fulfillment in his industry and career path. We thank all of the speakers and participants for helping to make the conference a terrific success. If you would like more information about participating in future Sigma Pi Entrepreneurship Conferences, either as an attendee or as a speaker, please contact **Michael Vernick '83** at michael@giantface.com.