

A Message from Incoming Alumni Association President Ford Fay '82



I am excited and honored to step into the role of alumni president of Sigma Pi Mu Chapter. At the same time, I am humbled by the responsibility that comes with this position. Having just retired from a rewarding 42-year career in telecom, I am in awe of the leadership, business success, and lifelong friendships so many of our brothers exemplify.

First and foremost, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Jarett Wait '80 and John Haggerty '78 for their extraordinary 20-plus years of dedication and leadership. Quite simply, we would neither have a house nor such a vibrant and thriving brotherhood without their steadfast commitment. My gratitude also extends to the many Pi men who have served on our boards and supported the chapter in countless ways over the years, including Slater Goodman '18, Yordanos Goshu '18, William Murphy '18, Matt Pens '00, and Jonathan Fordin '80.

Most importantly, I want to recognize the **541 alumni** who stepped up to donate more than **\$1.3 million** during our recent campaign for the House Recovery Fund: the most successful fundraising effort in our history. Because of your generosity, Mu Chapter house is now in the best condition I've witnessed in over four decades. I am especially grateful to the **106 alumni who gave multiple times** during this campaign to ensure our house remains a true home for Pi men for generations to come.

What's Next and How You Can Help

Our priority moving forward is to **strengthen relationships** with the undergraduates and ensure a vibrant, healthy, and sustainable brotherhood. To achieve this, we need more **younger alumni** to join our boards, help bridge the generational gap, and foster even stronger bonds across the decades.

Currently, we operate with **two boards**:

- The Alumni Association, soon to be restructured to focus on communications with alumni, undergraduates, parents, and Cornell, as well as targeted fundraising.
- The Educational Foundation, led by Wayne Forman '80, which supports undergraduates through the Greek Affordability Fund, scholarships, Career Day in NYC, the Speaker Series at the Pi house, and annual reunions.

We are also working to create a **separate housing board** that will focus exclusively on facilities, kitchen, and dining operations, and the physical upkeep of the house. The housing board will be led by **Steve Pirozzi '80**, **Alexa Bosshardt '82**, and **John Morrison '75**.

Fundraising efforts will now turn toward building **endowments and reserves**, both for the Educational Foundation and for ongoing house maintenance and future capital improvements. To attract and retain the best young men at Cornell, we must provide not only strong undergraduate leadership but also **best-in-class facilities**.

Strengthening Brotherhood Beyond Ithaca

Brotherhood doesn't stop at the house. I encourage all of us to participate in the many gatherings, formal and informal, that keep our bonds alive. Last June's reunion brought back more than 120 Pi men, a reminder that "every year is reunion." I also had the pleasure of joining the 39th annual Procrasti-Cup Golf Tournament and the second annual Rock & Roll Ski Event in Steamboat. Other groups are meeting regularly around Cornell lacrosse and hockey games, and I hope to attend one soon.

These events, big and small, remind us of the lifelong friendships and network that make Mu Chapter so special.

Moving Forward Together

As I begin my term, I invite you to join me in building on this momentum. Together, we can continue the **resurgence of Mu Chapter** and ensure that Sigma Pi remains a powerful force in our lives and on campus.

This has always been a strong brotherhood. With your help, we will make it even stronger, more vibrant, and more enduring.

Fraternally,

Ford Fay '82

President, Mu Chapter Alumni Association



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Alumni Treasurer's Report



Tom Owens '83

I am honored to be back on the board after stepping away in 2013. In the years since, our two boys graduated from Cornell, and I completed a 36-year military career. It is truly humbling to follow John J. Haggerty '78 as Treasurer. His dedication and service to our brotherhood are legendary, and we will all miss his steady

leadership — especially me. There will never be another "Haggs," and I am grateful for everything he has done.

As we look ahead, I want to briefly acknowledge what the chapter has endured over the past two years — from fluctuating occupancy to serious infrastructure challenges and the black mold crisis. Consider these two excerpts from our website, one from our founding and another several decades later when we almost lost Mu Chapter's house to fire:

"In 1915, the growing fraternity purchased the house of a professor at 730 University Avenue for \$20,000 for its 28 brothers. The new fraternity continued to flourish and soon petitioned Sigma Pi Fraternity of the United States to become a chapter. The petition was granted, and on May 18, 1917, the fraternity became the Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi." The US had entered WWI several weeks earlier on April 6, 1917, imagine what the brothers were enduring..."and then another serious challenge:

"A comprehensive remodeling project in 1994 ended in disaster as a workman's error resulted in a fire that destroyed much of the house. Before the blaze was extinguished, the fraternity's architect was told to start work on plans for an entirely new house, incorporating the parts of the house not destroyed by fire. The new and improved house was opened in 1999."

Through it all, the brotherhood stood united, responded with urgency, and helped steer Mu Chapter through historic global and local challenges. That resilience speaks volumes about who we are.

Where We're Headed

We are now entering a new chapter, not only financially but organizationally. Two distinct entities are in place to ensure clearer governance, better financial controls, and long-term protection of our historic property:

- Mu Housing, this entity oversees the house and its operations.
 I serve as its Treasurer.
- Mu Alumni, this entity focuses on alumni engagement, programming, and long-term strategic support. Brother Rick Rego '82 serves as Treasurer.
- Mu Educational Foundation, this is a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation that provides support to the undergraduate members such as scholarships and educational programming.

This separation is an important modernization of our structure and will help us manage responsibilities more effectively. You can expect more detailed financial reporting in future Muse editions as we finalize the money flows between and within these organizations.

Transition and Priorities

During the handoff, Brother Haggerty emphasized three guiding principles that have kept the house on stable footing for more than a decade:

- 1. Fill the house.
- 2. Pay your bills.
- 3. Get your brothers to pay their bills.

Our undergraduate Treasurer, Alex Ramirez '28, is doing an exceptional job upholding these standards. His leadership gives me confidence as we move forward. (And yes — don't mess with Texas!)

Financial Health Beyond the Numbers

While financial statements and budgets matter, the true health of a fraternity like ours goes far beyond spreadsheets. It's measured in resilience, shared purpose, alumni commitment, and the bonds that carry this chapter from generation to generation.

Mu Chapter has been tested — and it has responded. With renewed structure, strong volunteer leadership, and enthusiastic undergraduates, we are positioned for a brighter, more stable future.

It's a privilege to serve as your Treasurer. I look forward to working with all of you as we continue strengthening Mu Chapter for the brothers who will follow us.

- Tom Owens '83

Facilities Report: Mu Chapter House Renovations and Upgrades

We are pleased to share that significant improvements have been completed over the summer at the Mu Chapter house, ensuring a safe, comfortable, and welcoming home for our undergraduates and visiting alumni.

- Exterior Refresh: The entire exterior of the house has been fully repainted, giving it a fresh and revitalized look. We plan to paint the rest of the house in the Summer of '26 or '27.
- Bathroom Upgrades: New tile work has been completed in the bathrooms, enhancing durability and appearance.
- Safety Enhancements: All smoke detectors now have brand-new batteries, and roof hatches have been fitted with locks for added security.
- Mechanical Improvements: A new boiler has been installed on the second floor to provide reliable heating throughout the winter months.
- Interior Repairs: Drywall repairs have been completed, improving both function and aesthetics within the house.

These updates reflect our ongoing commitment to preserving the integrity of Mu Chapter house and providing the best possible living environment for our brothers.

Sage Report: Back on Track



Josh Evans '27

This past year has been one of the most challenging and rewarding in our chapter's recent history. Last fall, we were forced to vacate the house on short notice. Although stressful, that final night together in the house remains one of my most memorable

nights at Cornell. While packing up my things, I recognized that the value of the house lies not in the building itself, but in the community it brings together, something we had taken for granted until it was gone. What could have derailed us instead became a test of our resilience. Without a physical house, brothers stepped up to keep Sigma Pi moving forward.

Our rush chairs, **Kevin Goldberg '27**, **Jason Cannistraro '27**, and **Sami Steinberg '27**, were pivotal in bringing in 18 new members during one of the toughest recruiting environments possible. Their effort made it clear that what defines our chapter isn't the building, but the commitment of our

brothers. The success of that class laid the foundation for the energy we feel in the house today, and it proved that adversity could spark lasting growth.

Now, one year later, the house is buzzing again. The past few weeks have been some of the best times I can remember. With the leadership of our new rush chairs, Andrew Peene '28, Nolan Wu '28, and Aidan D'Alessandro

'28, we have

welcomed eight new Pi men. The culture of stepping forward and pushing through adversity is one I am particularly proud of, and that has been exemplified by our rush chairs and brotherhood as a whole.

We've also had some of our strongest events in recent memory. Our Mykonos Date Night was beautifully executed and a tradition I hope the house continues for years to come. Looking ahead, we are excited for our upcoming wine tour, our annual Career Weekend trip to New York City, and Homecoming celebrations, including a dinner with former Cornell Hockey Coach Mike Schafer and a chance to reconnect with the class of 2025.

Brotherhood engagement has been at an all-time high, but our men continue to excel individually as well. **Adi Arora** '26 recently returned from Los Angeles, where he filmed

the upcoming season of The Voice (airing this February). At the beginning of the semester, **Arnav Tevatia '27** was named captain of Cornell's varsity squash team, while **Clay Malott '27** is currently working full-time on machine learning research and acting as the chapter Herald. These brothers, just to name a few, embody the Sigma Pi culture of striving for excellence academically, professionally, and personally.

After being forced out on short notice, returning to a space that feels both livable and improved has been transformative. A number of updates have made the house more comfortable overall. More importantly, having a functional home base again has restored a sense of normalcy and reinforced the bonds that come from living together. These improvements were spearheaded by our alumni, whose support and guidance ensured the chapter had a true home to return to. We are deeply grateful for their commitment to preserving and strengthening the Sigma Pi experience and are excited to work with our new Alumni President Ford Fay

'82 and Treasurer **Tom Owens '83**. Beyond
the physical house, the continued mentorship and support of our alumni remain uniquely invaluable to our success as a chapter.

As I look toward the remainder of my presidency, I often reflect on where I want to leave Sigma Pi at the end of my tenure, what culture I want to instill, and what traditions I want to preserve. When I first arrived at Cornell, I had no plans of joining a fraternity, much less

I had no plans of joining a fraternity, much less becoming the president of one. Yet this experience has been one of the most influential of my college career. Although my time as Sage has been, and will continue to be, an invaluable experience, it is the bond with my brothers, not the title, that has defined my presidency. My hope is to leave Sigma Pi stronger than ever, built on resilience, engagement, and the drive to push one another to new heights. In the months ahead, I am committed to building on the momentum we've created and strengthening the foundation for those who will follow. Although far down the road, my time as Sage will one day conclude, but the values and strength of this chapter will

endure long after. I look forward to seeing what the future

holds.
Jevo,
Josh Evans '27
Sage of Sigma Pi, Mu Chapter



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Undergraduate Rush and House Report

Carter McClintock '27



We're excited to welcome six new members to the Sigma Pi Class of 2028, bringing the sophomore class to twenty-one brothers. Our newest members are Dylan Baker, Javier

Benerofe, Dylan Greenberg, Steven Lin, Sid Penalver, and Bowen Valery.

This fall, Sigma Pi hosted a series of great house events, including our annual Mykonos-themed date night on the beach, a poker-night rush event, as well as several brotherhood barbecues. Weve also welcomed alumni brothers back to Ithaca for the Homecoming football game against Colgate. This coincided with our new member dinner, honoring Cornell Hockey Coach Mike Schafer.

In house news, the undergraduates are taking on some capital improvements as a way to give back to the house and alleviate the financial strain on the alumni. Matthew Kodsi, house man, is building a bar in the Grotto, scheduled for completion this fall, and installing a lighting system in the Pit. Late last spring, we polished and repainted the Sigma Pi sign at the house entryway. We hope to complete further drywall and paint work as necessary, and hang and illuminate an American flag on the exterior of the beach.

Looking ahead, we're excited for an undergraduate wine tour, our career weekend in New York City, and more date nights and brotherhood events. We would like to thank the alumni board for their continued support, especially Ford and TO as they step into their new leadership roles.

Welcome to the New Member Class of Fall 2025



Dylan Baker '28Major: ILR
Hometown:
Tarpon Springs, FL



Javier Benerofe '28 Major: ILR Hometown: Armonk, NY



Dylan Greenberg '28Major: Biological
Sciences
Hometown:
New York, NY



Steven Lin '28 Major: Computer Science, Math Hometown: Bayside, NY



Maximo Penalver '28 Major: Biology Arts & Sciences Hometown: Seattle, WA



Bowen Valery '28 Major: Urban & Regional Studies Hometown: Nyack, NY

Welcome Larson Ortiz, Resident Advisor



Larson Ortiz

We are pleased to introduce Larson Ortiz as the new resident advisor for Sigma Pi. Larson recently graduated from Cornell with a Bachelor of Science in electrical and computer engineering with a computer science minor. He is currently pursuing a Master of Engineering in engineering management.

Since his freshman spring semester, he has been a dedicated member of Alpha Sigma Phi, where living in the house and serving on the executive board taught him the value of brotherhood and collaborative leadership. He spends much of his free time with Sabor, Cornell's Latin dance team, where he has built lasting friendships through their shared passion for

movement and cultural expression. When not in the classroom or dance studio, you can find Larson at the Hoffman Challenge Course or Lindseth Climbing Center through his work with Cornell Outdoor Education, where he enjoys helping others push their boundaries and build confidence. As resident advisor for Sigma Pi, Larson is excited to bring his love for building genuine connections and creating supportive environments where every brother can thrive personally and academically. He believes that the strongest communities are built on mutual respect, shared experiences, and looking out for one another.

MU CHAPTER OF SIGMA PI EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION UPDATE

Consider Serving on the Foundation Board



Wayne Forman '80

"Wisdom, work, wealth," or "talent, time, treasure."
Those are the customary terms describing the attributes that board members are asked to contribute to any nonprofit organization. The Foundation board needs new members who are interested in adding their unique skills to foster

success at the Pi house. Please consider joining us in our mission

to promote education, leadership, and community among the undergraduate brothers. We're sure you will find the experience rewarding and enjoyable, and you'll be paying forward the memories and bonds of friendship that you created during your years at Cornell. If you're interested, please email any one of the board members, and we'd be glad to provide you with our insights on serving as a member of the Foundation board.

Don't procrastinate; join us!

ANNOUNCING THE JOHN J. HAGGERTY TREASURER'S AWARD

The Foundation has established an award for the undergraduate treasurer of Mu Chapter, in honor of **John J. Haggerty '78**, who has served as the treasurer for the Alumni Corp for the past 20 years, and has steered the chapter through some of the most financially challenging times in its history. **Thank you, John, for your extraordinary dedication, and well done!** The award is intended to recognize that the role of house treasurer is demanding and critically important to the financial health of the chapter. The foundation will grant up to \$2,500 per semester to the house treasurer, upon the recommendation of the alumni treasurer and based on the house treasurer's performance.



Career Day 2025

We hope you all received the announcement of the 19th annual Sigma Pi NYC Career Day, that was held on November 6–7, 2025, at the Cornell Club in midtown Manhattan. This is a keystone event for the foundation and alumni corp. Please consider attending in the future if you can. And for those alums in the NYC area in the fields of finance, investment, entrepreneurism, real estate, law, or medicine, please let us know if you'd be willing to host an undergraduate for several hours to share with them your pathway to, and experience with, your chosen profession. Kyle Swan '26, undergraduate alumni secretary of Mu Chapter, and Teddy Gintsling '28, Foundation intern, have reached out to many of you to ask you to volunteer for this important role. Photos of this year's event can be viewed on page 11.

Greek Affordability Fund Honoring Dean B. Harwood '81

The foundation awarded \$5,000 GAF grants for the 2025–26 academic year to five deserving undergrads. Those recipients will receive \$2,500 per semester, assuming they honor their commitments to the chapter. The program will henceforth be known as the **Dean B. Harwood Greek Affordability Fund**, in memory of **Dean Harwood '81**, who passed away unexpectedly far too young. The class of '81 has already raised \$100,000 to endow the GAF program in Dean's name.



Thanks to Tom Silver

Tom Silver '81, current vice president and past president of the foundation, will be resigning from the board as of November 15. We want to thank Tom for his unparalleled dedication to the foundation. He's been a workhorse, single-handedly running several foundation programs through the years, and a wise strategic counselor to the board. **Thanks, Tom, for all you've done!**

Securing Our Future: The Mu Chapter Educational Foundation Annual Campaign

Once again in a time of crisis, our brotherhood rose to the occasion, meeting and defeating another significant challenge to our survival. To be better prepared for the road ahead, let's build on this success by making annual giving a part of our culture. If all of us participated based on our reunion year i.e. number of years after graduation, the following suggested amounts would generate over \$100,000 a year for the Educational Foundation, thus creating a war chest for whatever comes our way. All gifts are tax deductible.

1-5 years: \$25

6-10 years: \$5/month or \$60

11-15 years: \$10/month or \$120

> 15 years: \$15/month or \$180

> 50 years: your choice

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Recovery Campaign Wrap Up



Jay Sacco '80

The Re-Open the Doors House Recovery Campaign is coming to a close as the fundraising team works with a few remaining donors on their pledged funds. Your historic participation (see chart) in this campaign is a testament to

our brotherhood. Each donation, large or small, was an important expression of what our fraternity means to you and your desire to gift that treasure to our future brothers. A huge thanks to everyone who gave; finger snaps all around. Everyone's individual Cornell donor giving records have been credited with your donation. Plaques commemorating the



Recovery Campaign, Rob and Abby's Porch, and the newly named "Class of '81 Dean Harwood Memorial Fund" (previously the Greek Affordability Fund), are being worked on and we look forward to presenting them in recognition at the June

2026 reunion. If you haven't yet expressed your support, it's never too late to join the many who have. Go to https://musigmapifoundation.org/make-a-gift/

The Class of '80 continues efforts to raise an additional \$18K for the much anticipated "Jarett Wait and Class of '80 Foyer" plaque. This is expected to conclude in time for presentation at Reunion next summer. In addition, Class of '80 has already raised the funds to honor our brother Rob Fuchs with a memorial plaque.

All this could not have been accomplished without our dedicated fundraising team: Jarett Wait, Dave D'Orlando, John Haggerty, Tom Owens, Wayne Forman, Steve Pirozzi, and Jay Sacco with significant help from many others. As this epic effort comes to a close, we, the brothers of Mu Chapter, have put the Pi House in its best condition since the rebuild in 1994 and left Mu chapter on a solid financial footing going forward. Raise a hearty wassail and drain your goblets dry!





Celebrating Brotherhood: Annual Giving Day (Dolly Day) 2025



Dr. Michael Ayalon

On September 18, Mu Chapter gathered virtually to celebrate our Hailstork Annual Giving Day, known fondly to many as Dolly Day. This year's event brought together alumni across generations for an evening of laughter, storytelling, and gratitude as we reflected on all that has been accomplished together.

Remembering Dolly

The program opened with lighthearted memories and "Dolly-isms" shared by brothers, honoring the legendary house steward whose humor and wisdom remain woven into the fabric of our chapter. From his famous sayings like "Up your giggy" and "This isn't Burger King, you don't get it your way" to stories of late-night meals and quick-witted comebacks, Dolly's spirit continues to bring us together. Plans are underway to feature his words of wisdom on a plaque beside his portrait at the house, ensuring his legacy lives on for generations.

A Year of Transformation

Brothers also celebrated the extraordinary progress of the Sigma Pi House Recovery Fund. Thanks to the generosity and commitment of our alumni, more than \$1.25 million was raised in just 203 days to restore and transform the chapter house. Recent projects include a fresh coat of exterior paint—the first since the fire of 1994—bathroom tile work, smoke detector upgrades, new boiler installation, and critical drywall repairs. The house now stands as a renewed home for the undergraduates and a symbol of our resilience as a brotherhood.

Looking Ahead

Beyond the recovery campaign, the evening highlighted ongoing initiatives that will shape the future of our chapter:

- The Dean B. Harwood Greek Affordability Fund, established in 2022, has reached its \$100,000 goal, helping ensure that financial barriers never prevent deserving brothers from joining.
- The Jarett F. Wait '80 and Class of 1980 Foyer Campaign is underway to commemorate both Brother Jarrett Wait's leadership and the class's contributions with a lasting tribute in the front room of the house.
- Plans are in motion to honor departed brothers like Rob Fuchs with memorial plaques, ensuring their impact on our chapter is never forgotten.

JARETT F. WAIT '80 AND CLASS OF 1980 FOYER GOAL ST50,000 ST37,791 NEAL DOUGLAS DONALD MOTSCHWILLER RANDALL OTTINGER https://sigmapicornell.org/ways-to-give

A Brotherhood Reunited

Finally, alumni reflected on the extraordinary turnout at this year's reunion, where **120 brothers returned to Ithaca**, packing the house with energy, music, and camaraderie. From spontaneous open-mic jam sessions to the newly rebranded "Rock and Roll Tea," our reunion traditions are thriving and continue to bring alumni and undergraduates together.

Closing Thoughts

Hailstork Annual Giving Day is more than a date on the calendar; it is a celebration of who we are as Sigma Pi men. It is a chance to remember those who shaped us, to recognize the generosity that sustains us, and to recommit ourselves to building a stronger future for Mu Chapter.

As we honor Dolly's memory and all that he represents, we also celebrate the living legacy of brotherhood, service, and leadership that defines our fraternity.

Sigma Pi Annual Reunion Weekend, June 5-8, 2025

The 2025 Sigma Pi Reunion Weekend was a great success, bringing together 117 brothers for four days of camaraderie, music, and celebration at the Pi house. The classes of 1980 and 2020 led the way with the largest turnouts.

Open to all alumni regardless of Cornell's official Reunion years, the weekend welcomed brothers from across generations. The alumni board worked hard to make the weekend fun and memorable, with events that appealed to everyone.

Highlights included boating on Cayuga Lake, golf at the Robert Trent Jones Course, yoga at the house, a Johnson Museum tour, and the alumni brunch hosted by the Sigma Pi Alumni Corporation and Mu Chapter Educational Foundation. The **Band of Brothers** kept the energy high with their performances on the front porch and at their headline set at **Redstock** on Saturday night.

A special thank-you goes out to everyone who helped organize, perform, and participate in making Reunion Weekend 2025 such a success. It was a wonderful celebration of brotherhood and lasting Sigma Pi spirit.

Looking ahead, the next **Sigma Pi Reunion Weekend** will take place **June 4–7, 2026**. While Cornell's official reunion years will celebrate the 1s and 6s, the Sigma Pi Reunion remains **open to all classes every year**. We hope to see an even bigger turnout next June!













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A Sigma Pi Love Story: Connor Riser '16 and Kaitlin Monson '16 Tie the Knot

It's not every day that the Sigma Pi house becomes the backdrop for one of life's biggest milestones, but for **Connor Riser** '16 and his wife, Kaitlin (Monson) Riser '16, Mu Chapter was the perfect place to celebrate their wedding.



Connor and Kaitlin first met during their freshman year in Mary Donlon Hall, striking up a friendship that blossomed during their years at Cornell. Kaitlin was a Sweetie Pi, and Connor spent countless hours at the house, where their bond deepened. "Sigma Pi is where Kate and I really got to know each other," Connor shared. "We spent four years becoming great friends, mostly at Sigma Pi events, before beginning to date in April of our senior year."

A Wedding Rooted in Brotherhood and Tradition

The Risers' big day was a true Cornell and Sigma Pi affair. The rehearsal dinner and welcome party took place at the Big Red Barn. Their ceremony was held in the iconic Sage Chapel, followed by a reception in Duffield Hall. And when it came time to keep the celebration going, there was only one choice: the after party on the Beach at Sigma Pi.



Brotherhood was central to the day. Half of Connor's groomsmen were Sigma Pi brothers, including George Chalhoub '16, James Alvarez '16, Rob Attia '16, Lorenzo De Simone '16, Zane Mokhiber '16, Michael Adelstein '16, and Brandon Choi '16. George and Mark

Luzzi '16 also read scripture during the ceremony. In total, 17 brothers attended, including three who traveled from Europe to be there.

Why Sigma Pi Still Matters

When asked why Sigma Pi remains such a big part of his identity, Connor reflected on the enduring strength of his fraternity relationships:

"Most of my friends are from Sigma Pi, and not a day goes by when I'm not talking to one of my brothers. I know that even if I haven't talked to someone in a while, I can pick up the phone and my brothers will be there with whatever I need. And it means so much that Kate shares those memories of Mu Chapter right alongside me."



The Risers' wedding was not only a beautiful celebration of love but also a living testament to the lifelong bonds of brotherhood forged at Mu Chapter.



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19th Annual NYC Career Event









Dinner with Coach Mike Schaffer







Treasurer Skills in Action: Alumni Interview Spotlight: Benji Sliwka '25



Dr. Michael Ayalon

Welcome Mu Chapter brothers! Today, we're catching up with Benji Sliwka '25. The treasurer role has always been a cornerstone of our chapter's stability, accountability, and long-term success, and Benji set a high standard during his time in the position. Now, as the founder of a sustainability consulting company based in London, he reflects on how the leadership,

decision-making, and financial skills he developed at Mu Chapter have translated into the corporate world. In this conversation, we dive into his journey from Cornell to entrepreneurship, the lessons learned managing budgets, and his vision for building a more sustainable future.

Dr. Michael Ayalon: What inspired you to pursue a degree in environment and sustainability at Cornell, and how did that align with

your personal experiences growing up across three continents?

Benji Sliwka: I grew up in Germany and Singapore and then moved to the US for college, which exposed me to a wide variety of environments and cultures. Traveling around Southeast Asia, Asia, and Europe made me aware of the impact that humans have on the planet, especially in developing countries. In high school, I worked on projects like building a sustainable farm for my school to help supplement cafeteria food. Cornell's flexible program in environment and sustainability allowed me to design my studies around my interests, and I graduated with a concentration in policy and governance.

Dr. Ayalon: Can you walk us through your journey from Cornell to founding Regenify? What was the "aha" moment?

Benji: I graduated a semester

early, and during that extra time, a neighbor asked if I could help his company with sustainability and ESG efforts. I had already done consulting for smaller companies in Ithaca, so I decided to see if I could turn that into a business. With mentorship and guidance, I founded Regenify, which is now based in London.

Dr. Ayalon: How did managing the chapter's budget prepare you for running a company?

Benji: It's a unique challenge for someone in their early 20s to handle such a large budget, especially for a group of 18–22-year-olds with plenty of creative (and sometimes unrealistic) spending ideas. You learn quickly to prioritize, think long-term, and protect the chapter's financial health. Those same skills translate directly into business and personal finance.

Dr. Ayalon: Was there a challenging moment as treasurer that taught you leadership under pressure?

Benji: Plenty. As treasurer and on the executive board, you're often the "bad guy" who has to say no to fun ideas that don't fit the budget. One

example was when we wanted to hire a DJ who would have taken up nearly the entire semester's budget. It's hard to turn down your friends, but you learn to weigh costs and benefits carefully.

Dr. Ayalon: How has the Sigma Pi network impacted you personally and professionally?

Benji: It's reassuring to know there are brothers who've gone through the same experiences, from recent graduates to seasoned alumni. The New York City career event stands out as an amazing opportunity to connect, have candid conversations, and build lasting relationships.

Dr. Ayalon: What does brotherhood mean to you now, after graduation?

Benji: It's evolved into a more mature relationship. I don't see my brothers daily anymore, but the bonds remain strong, and we check in on each other regularly. It's a connection that lasts for

life.

Dr. Ayalon: Why do you believe sustainability is also a path to profitability?

Benji: They're often seen as opposites, but they're not. For example, green-certified buildings can increase in value by up to 20%. Companies like Patagonia have built strong brands by committing to sustainability. Even simple measures, like better energy management systems, can reduce costs significantly.

Dr. Ayalon: What advice would you give current undergraduates in officer positions?

Benji: Take the role seriously; it's a big responsibility. Managing budgets, building relationships with alumni, and influencing the chapter's direction are all valuable experiences. It's not always the most fun, but it can be incredibly rewarding.

Benji Sliwka '25

Dr. Ayalon: If you could give freshman Benji one piece of advice, what would it be?

Benji: Put yourself out there sooner. Join clubs, try new activities, and take advantage of all Cornell has to offer. Those experiences will shape your college years.

Dr. Ayalon: What's your vision for Regenify?

Benji: We just secured preseed funding to develop an ESG management platform. The goal is to take the burden of navigating constantly changing regulations off of companies so they can focus on implementing sustainability initiatives. I want Regenify to be a one-stop ESG solution that combines consulting with a user-friendly platform.

Dr. Ayalon: Benji, we wish you all the best and know that your Mu Chapter brothers are proud of you.

Benji: Thank you so much; it means a lot.

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Alumni Interview Spotlight: Feliz Tabary '14, from Brotherhood to Global Moral Ambition



Dr. Michael Ayalon In this insightful and inspiring interview, Mu Chapter alumnus Felix Tabary '14 shares his journey from 730 University Avenue to launching a global movement. Now U.S. Director of the School of Moral Ambition.

Felix reflects on how Sigma Pi shaped his values, leadership, and entrepreneurial drive. He discusses how moments at Cornell sparked his interest in impact-driven work and how students today can align careers with values without sacrificing financial stability.

Felix also shares honest reflections on his wins, mistakes, and the advice he wishes he'd given his younger self. Whether you're a student exploring life after graduation or an alumnus looking to support the next generation, this interview offers practical wisdom, heart, and hope.

Read on to see how Mu Chapter's legacy lives on through leaders like Felix and how you can join his mission to redefine success through moral ambition.

Dr. Michael Ayalon: Welcome, brothers of Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi. I'm here today with Felix Tabary, a brother of Mu Chapter, and he agreed to help us out with an interview for *The Muse*. Welcome, Felix.

Felix Tabary: Mike, great to be here. Thanks for having me.

Dr. Ayalon: Tell us what the School of Moral Ambition is, and what you work on every day.

Felix: The School of Moral Ambition is a nonprofit pushing people to think about how to spend their careers doing the most good. Your career is the bulk of your life, and your decisions add up. We ask people to consider high-impact career choices and to put their ambition toward solving the world's most complex problems.

Dr. Ayalon: Sigma Pi is a values-based organization. Are there any shared values between Sigma Pi and your work now?

Felix: Definitely. One phrase from new member education still resonates with me: "Progress man's distinctive mark alone." As humans, we have agency, and we can choose to use that to move society forward. That idea has influenced a lot of my life decisions. Progress. However, you define it. It's in your hands, and you can decide to bring things forward. You just have to make that choice.

Dr. Ayalon: Do you see parallels between fraternity bonds and the circles you're building at the School of Moral Ambition?

Felix: Yes. Our discussion groups are 6–8 people who meet weekly to explore how their values connect with their careers. That reminds me of



Feliz Tabary '14

the open and vulnerable conversations we had in the fraternity. We pushed ourselves pretty hard. There was a lot of distributed ambition at Sigma Pi, a lot of big ideas, and a lot of opportunities to kind of discuss those in groups. I think Sigma Pi, in particular versus other fraternities on campus, ran multiple businesses together. We were doing this as undergraduates, and I don't know that I would be where I am today if I wasn't being immersed in that environment. That environment shaped me.

Dr. Ayalon: Were there specific moments at Cornell that sparked your interest in moral ambition?

Felix: Several. A freshman-year roommate gave me *The Blue Sweater* by Jacqueline Novogratz, which opened my eyes to global impact finance. She's the founder of the Acumen Fund, which is one of the biggest global-impact investing firms focused mostly on fixed income. It never really occurred to me that there was a way to connect all of this finance talk that was happening on campus with just things that mattered for a broader, larger population.

Later, I won a business plan competition with a hospitality education idea for a developing economy. Also, consulting firms kept highlighting their pro bono work, which showed how impactful work resonates more deeply.

Dr. Ayalon: What advice would you give current Mu Chapter undergraduates trying to align their career with their values?

Felix: First, advice is easy to give and hard to follow. I spent my first few years at Bloomberg, so I understand. But, I will say if elite college students don't take career risks, who will? And, seek out examples of people on alternative paths; they're usually kind and happy to help. Consulting and banking offer clear paths, but meaningful careers exist too. You just have to find your own examples.

Dr. Ayalon: What keeps you grounded and motivated through all the ups and downs?

Felix: I built and sold a company before this, and while that had its ups and downs, we learned a lot. There was a lot of failure and a couple of big successes here and there. It made this second rodeo a little less scary. What's different is working in a nonprofit where fundraising and communication are very different. Thankfully, I work alongside Rutger Bregman, our founder and a global figure, which helps. And in a place like New York, you don't need permission to be ambitious.

Dr. Ayalon: What lesson do you wish you could tell your younger self?

Felix: I wish I had pushed harder for Venture for America. For those who are not familiar with it, VFA was a program that pushed you to consider doing entrepreneurship in a second or thirdtier city in the US. The objective of the national program was to try and inject a bit of economic life into developing cities in the US by taking smart, ambitious undergraduates from really good schools, and putting them in other places in the US where they were perhaps statistically less likely to return to or move to post-college. Sigma Pi sent a number of students to VFA who were influential in my life in major ways. In particular, Alex Rowitz '13. There was a window where they waitlisted me, and then I got my feelings hurt, and hastily accepted an offer from Bloomberg. They came back around two weeks later and said a couple of people dropped out. I said out of spite that I'm better than this. I often wonder what would have happened. Also, I wish I'd taken my academics a bit more seriously. I thought, "I'll graduate, so that's enough," but looking back, I wish I'd pushed harder just for my own growth.

Dr. Ayalon: What's next for the School of Moral Ambition, and how can Mu Chapter alumni or undergraduates get involved?

Felix: We're expanding to campuses like Columbia, Princeton, and Yale based on student demand. If Cornell students show interest, we can build a program there too. For alumni or students who want to bring us to Cornell or are just looking for more meaningful career paths, reach out to me. We're also working on US food system reform for mid-career professionals. But, our focus in the US is helping elite undergrads find meaningful, financially sustainable careers.

Dr. Ayalon: Felix, thank you so much for your time. It's amazing to see how your Sigma Pi experience helped shape what you're doing today.

Felix: Thank you. One last note: I'm moving back to France soon. We'll be hiring an interim US director for the School of Moral Ambition. If you're looking to leave consulting or banking and take on a new challenge, this could be a great opportunity. You can reach me at: felixtabary@gmail.com.

Mu Brothers' News & Notes



Winthrop B. Cody '56 is still above ground and able to keep a reasonably active schedule. "Golf only twice a week with an elevated handicap. I lost my wife of 62 years of marriage three years ago. I have a 96-year-old significant other, and we keep a very active social schedule. She's quite a lady, a model in her younger years. I'm considering attending the 2025 homecoming. I wonder if anyone from the 1955–56 years is thinking about attending. Perhaps we could rent a multi-seat golf cart for transportation. I assume no one in our generation can navigate the Libe Slope."

Herbert R. Holden '63 writes that he and Becky are on their way to their new address. "We have sold both our homes in New

York and North Carolina and are moving to a continuing care community, although we are still in good shape. It was a plot by our children to make us clean out our own homes. (I had already established an endowment for dumpsters!) I'll provide more details as things evolve. I'm so glad the house is back! Becky and I are still healthy and busy. We also have a home in Greensboro, North Carolina, where we spend winters with no snow. My two sons are contractors there, so I get to see big projects and also seven of our nine grandchildren. We still travel but less and less with each passing year.

Arthur E. White '66: As a 20-year volunteer supervisor for Habitat for Humanity of Reading and Berks, I saw dozens of

more-than-100-year-old brick houses. Most of them had water damage and mold. Roof and bathroom leaks caused the most problems. There were single-family and two-or three-floor apartments, not the volume of usage of a 30-man fraternity house. I am very sorry for the brothers this has affected. It is good it was caught before any major collapse caused by the rot. I hope the repairs go as planned and that the house is operational as soon as possible.

Nicholas Trott Long '68 is still trying to find justice in the courthouse after 52 years. **David Ross Miller '71** hopes to get up to the house sometime this fall, maybe for Homecoming.

Rick Fish '72 Memoriam

George C. Edmunds Jr. '72: "Haven't written in quite a while and was very saddened to learn of the passing of Rick Fish '72 in the Spring '23 edition of The Muse. Rick, Ken Yurgelun '72, Steve Silbermann '72, and I shared an apartment on Coddington Road near Ithaca College during our sophomore year. I'm particularly disappointed to have just learned of Rick's coming to N.C. State in 1999, in that same Muse memoriam written with such meaning and sincerity by Bill Strusz '73. I later came as well to N.C. State in 2006 as vice president of the Institute of Textile Technology and continued there until my retirement in 2009. I was unaware that Rick was on the same campus in those years. I've always remembered Rick's dream of a veterinary career and am glad he was able to pursue that passion for so many years.

Rick knew my first wife, Betsy Smith Edmunds, as did many other brothers during her tenure as Sigma Pi Sweetheart during my senior year (1971–72). Some will affectionately remember her as "Puddin" and me as "Beaufort." We were Pi house representatives from south of the Mason-Dixon line. Betsy and I married a month after graduation. After my three years in the Navy and completion of an MBA at UVA's Darden School, we moved to North Carolina. Sadly, Betsy passed away at age 45 in 1995 from an aggressive form of breast cancer.

Most of my textile career was with Burlington Industries, headquartered in Greensboro, North Carolina. I married Rebecca in 1997, having met her during our careers at Burlington. Coincidentally she is also a Cornell graduate, College of Human Ecology, Textile Apparel and Design major. She grew up in Ithaca and is an Ithaca High School graduate. Who would have thought I'd get to

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marry a "Towny"? We've been back to Ithaca together on more than one occasion, but never at Reunion or Homecoming times.

My last assignment with Burlington was as vice president of operations for Burlington Worldwide based in Hong Kong. After my retirement, Rebecca and I continued to live in Greensboro until 2013. We moved to Roanoke, Virginia, in the Blue Ridge Mountains, where we now reside. Our son and daughter, and their families (our four grandchildren) all now live in the Raleigh suburbs of Wake Forest and Cary.

I have many fond memories of Cornell and Sigma Pi, from watching Ken Dryden guard the net for the Big Red to playing goalie for the Pi house team and winning the university championship, and I even carried that passion to Darden, where I played goalie in a club league and won another championship against the law school. Slipping out our Pi house bedroom window onto "the beach," always leaking and in need of repair! Sailing on Cayuga Lake with the sailing team Pi men. Road rallies through rural Tompkins County with extra points for dates or drivers chugging! A Collegetown walk-up flat shared with Wally Knox '71, Whitney Garlinghouse '71, and Roy Brower '72. Watching Ed Marinaro run for more than 100 yards on any Saturday enroute his Heisman candidacy! And, of course, sitting out on Coddington Road sipping a cold beverage with Rick and Ken and Steve. We will miss you, Rick! I'm at george@r4LLC.net and would certainly enjoy hearing from any of you!

William J. Strusz '73 writes, "Come on, brother alums! By the time anyone reads this in The Muse, I know we'll be proud of what we did and are doing to save and preserve what we've built."

Jeffrey Craver '75 still enjoys working but has been on 80% of a fulltime schedule since November 2023. "I am looking to using the abundant time off to enjoy the rest of 2024 and travel abroad and in the US, visiting friends and enjoying new adventures."

Frederick H. Parker '75 enjoyed a great Reunion in June but regrets that he will not be able to attend the Zoom call.

Tom Garr '76 is now a lecturer of economics at Kennesaw State University. Connect with Tom at www.linkedin.com/in/tomgarr1.

Thomas M. Garr '76 announces that aftereight exciting years as an adjunct professor teaching economics to thousands of students at the Coles College of Business at Kennesaw State

University, he am honored to announce that he has now officially joined the KSU faculty as a full-time lecturer of economics. Terrific School, outstanding faculty and best of all, incredible students. "I cannot think of any place that I would rather be."



Jim Franz '77 in the middle with Cornell lacrosse coaches (left) Jordan Stevens '15 and Connor Buzeck '15.

C. La Pier '78 retired from corporate America in February, after many years in computer networking as a product manager and security architect. "I plan to work on my art and sailboat racing for a while. If you wish to reach out, I live in Palo Alto, California, and would love to hear from you all. Contact me at deelap@icloud.com."

Kent Sheng '78 had his poem "Back to the Hill" published on Cornell's website.Read it here:

Back To The House

Get me back to the House again. There're Pi-men to meet and see. We'll laugh about our antics past, "It's you that aged, not me!"

Catch me up on your story. Your career that spanned the range? And I'll tell you about some TARFU twists and what I've learned of change.

Let's walk the quad, no books in tow, Yes—sweet, those times gone by, Yet, write new chapters that begin today, Of stories sprung from Sigma Pi.

So, let's get back to the House again, And cheer the classes of "Fives" and "O's!" To the sounds of the Band of Brothers We'll lift a chorus of our "Jevos!"

Luc G. Chabot '80 says that despite having reached the age of 66, he has chosen to keep the doors open for my company of 22 years, LG Chabot, Inc., and remain professionally active as technical advisor for deepwater oil and gas developments. "With that said, I have relocated with my wife Janet ('81) to Lake Travis near Austin to our retirement home. It's my way of transitioning from this professional life to the next thing which includes more time with my Sigma Pi brothers. What else do we need in life!"



Joe Dervay '80 was the commencement speaker at the University of Texas Houston McGovern Medical School 2025 Graduation. He was elected to this honor by the graduating class, which included his son Ryan, who was unaware that his dad was even under consideration until it was announced. Watch Dr. Dervay's speech at youtu.be/oKSOLITnOlc? si=6loUIDdgbYCVBwSH."

R. Joe Ottinger '80 and Geoff Woods are partners in a new, fast-growing AI venture and podcast. Check it out at aileadership.com.

Kurt Rasmussen '80 has started his own company, KR Neuroscience Consulting, LLC. Contact with Kurt at www.linkedin.com/in/kurt-rasmussen-phd.

Devan Musser '05 joined Cole-Frieman & Mallon LLP as a Senior Associate in Investments. Connect with Devan at www.linkedin.com/in/devan-musser.

Nick Ornitz '16 shared that his company, Topline Pro, has raised a \$27M Series B Inkd.in/eAVd Vag

Joshua Even '19 recently left Citadel to explore AI and real-world businesses. If you run a business and your team is buried in tedious, repetitive work or just interested in AI but not sure where to start, connect with Joshua at www.linkedin.com/in/ioshua-even.

Aaron Lauer '19 recently launched Anan Capital Management. Anan is long term investors who believe in deep research, focus and alignment. Connect with Aaron at www.linkedin.com/in/ aaron-lauer-005677110.

Max Cook '20 started a new manager position at Axion Ray.

Mac Ritchie '22 started a new position as a senior analyst in debt and restructured finance at Berkadia. Connect with Mac at www.linkedin.com/in/mac-ritchie-a97407188.

Mu Brothers' News & Notes

Rob Fuchs

1958-2025

Robert "Rob" Brian Fuchs, previously of Austin, Texas, died on August 14, 2025, at the age of 67 in Singapore, where he had recently relocated.

Born in California on April 30, 1958, to Josephine Servello and Robert Louis Fuchs, Rob grew up in Westport Connecticut, graduating from Staples High School in 1976. He earned a BS in Chemical Engineering, Class of 1980 at Cornell University, his father's alma mater. Throughout his college years, he enjoyed an active social life as a much beloved and distinguished brother of Mu Chapter of the Sigma Pi Fraternity, forging bonds that lasted his lifetime.

Rob began his career with CalTex in Dallas, Texas. His work eventually took him to Singapore where he met and married Li Lian Gan. The couple had two beautiful children, Chelsea Lin Fuchs and Bryan Anthony Fuchs.

The family moved back to Austin, Texas, in 2013. Rob continued to work, commuting to Houston where he was known to be a skilled negotiator and oil trader. After an accomplished career, Rob retired in 2020.



Known for his unflappable good nature and dry humor, Rob was a devoted husband and father. He enjoyed spending time with family and friends, experiencing the great outdoors, traveling with his family, and walking his two dogs. "Fuchsy" as he was known to his fraternity brothers, was an avid skier who often joined his brothers on ski trips and get-togethers throughout his life. He will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by his family, fraternity brothers, friends, and all who knew him.

Rob is survived by his mother; stepmother; wife; brother and family; two children; and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his father and stepfather. A service and cremation were held in Singapore on August 17, 2025.

The class of 1980 is honoring

Rob's Sigma Pi legacy with a commemorative plaque in the Memorial Library via a gift to the Mu Chapter Educational Foundation. Donate at: sigmapicornell.org/ed-foundation/donation-form/

In Memoriam

The alumni board has been notified with the passing of our dear departed brothers.

Frederick J. Shuler '55

Richard W. Pew '56

Arthur E. White '66

Robert Brian Fuchs '80

January 2, 2023

October 2, 2025

August 27, 2025

August 14, 2025

Honor a deceased brother with a memorial plaque; visit sigmapicornell.edu/150-giving-memorial.asp