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GREETINGS FROM MONTANA BETA RLC!

The Chapter Composite for 2010-2011. The undergraduate brothers are shown as well as Chapter Counselor Frank Butterfield, Faculty Fellow Dr. Brian Kassar, and SigEp Sweetheart Megan Rothstein.

Congrats to Our Graduated Seniors!

- Kevin Christofanelli
  Civil Engineering

- Justin Fabricius
  Landscape Design

- Jeff Marty
  Business Management
Once again the undergraduate brothers traveled over the hills and far away to spend the first weekend of April on Steve Leibmann’s (Montana Beta ’74) ranch near Sheridan, Montana. The weekend involved lots of activities including a workout led by Frank Butterfield (California Beta ’83), our Chapter Counselor from Las Vegas, NV who traveled here with Tyler Tyburski, a guest from his home chapter, California Beta. We also discussed Chapter goals and the newly revamped Bylaws, fostering a great sense of Chapter unity.

Following these inspirational dialogues, the brothers paired up with their chosen Big Brothers and Little Brothers and spent time discussing their personal “Life Maps” aimed at providing a complete and encompassing sense of Brotherly Love. Pat Tate, a sophomore studying Chemical Engineering and Spanish says of the experience, “This was probably my favorite part of the whole retreat, I would love to get a chance to have a conversation like that with any of my brothers!”

To top off the weekend, we performed the Burning Heart Ritual under the beautiful canopy of wonderful Big Sky Country. The stars and moon shined which really enhanced the significance of the Brotherhood that we all share. "Before the ritual I was a little nervous, as I had no idea what to expect. But as the ritual progressed and I had only my brothers to rely on, I felt very trusting and felt the fraternal bonds grow stronger," said freshman Jake Losinski who is studying Political Science.

Overall, the weekend was a huge success because it once again brought all of the Brothers together to promote an omnipresent love for each other. As Kevin Christofanelli, a graduating senior in Civil Engineering, said, “As a graduating senior, the SigEp retreat showed me my younger brothers are determined to keep improving our chapter, from their love for each other to ever higher goals for the chapter.”

-Michael Townshend

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ROCK AGAINST RAPE

On Wednesday, April 13, Montana Beta RLC co-sponsored Rock Against Rape with the MSU VOICE Center and the student organization, Men Stopping Rape. The VOICE Center is MSU’s sexual violence prevention and resource center, and Men Stopping Rape is a peer education group under the guidance of Brian Kassar, the faculty fellow for Montana Beta RLC. Sig Ep has played a crucial role in Rock Against Rape since its inception three years ago.

Initially in 2008, Nate Martin (MT Beta 2009) and Dustin Stoltz (MT Beta 2010), both members of Men Stopping Rape, suggested a concert as a part of Sexual Assault Awareness month. The original idea was a day-long event featuring several local bands and prevention information, and in 2009 the first Rock Against Rape was launched on campus.

Since then, the concert has evolved into a larger event held at an off-campus venue. The concert features local bands, free food, prizes, awards to community advocates, and awareness information. It serves as a finale to the Take Back the Night Rally and March, which provides an opportunity for survivors and educators to tell their stories and urge campus participation in violence prevention. Many members of Sig Ep attended the march and were by far the largest Greek presence at the event.

This year’s concert featured local band Mr. Downtown and the TBA Boy Band, an MSU a cappella group. Sig Ep members participated in setting up the event, loading the band in and out, picking up food, and distributing T-shirts. “I think it’s incredibly important to be involved in assault prevention,” said Bryan Vadheim (Brother Mentor, Junior). “With our co-sponsorship of Rock Against Rape, we model the way for other fraternities and help break the “frat guy” stereotype of perpetrating violence or assault. It’s good for us, good for the Greek community, and good for MSU.” -Dr. Brian Kassar
GRADUATING SENIOR SPOTLIGHT—KEVIN CHRISTOFANELLI

Originally an Arizona native, Mr. Kevin A. Christofanelli has lived in Big Sky Country for almost a decade now. Graduating this May from Montana State University with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, Kevin landed a job at Halliburton in Grand Junction, Colorado. This past summer he had the opportunity to be an intern at an Engineering firm in London, England. One of Kevin’s passions is traveling the world. He has visited Hawaii, England, France, Australia, and as a graduation gift, he and his family went to Greece and Paris in May. As a freshman, Christofanelli began his SigEp journey in October of 2006 and has served as Programming Chair and Chaplain, as well as being the Chapter’s Super Senior for a couple semesters now (although, his brother would not mind him being a super, duper senior!) He has done his fair share of hard work to promote and improve Sigma Phi Epsilon. In addition to his hard work and passion for the fraternity, Kevin has always been truly hospitable to everyone he meets by inviting new members skiing, to his parents’ place for dinner in Big Sky, MT, camping, hiking, roasting s’mores and to have dinner at his apartment. Kevin has never been reserved about meeting new people and making them feel welcome in unfamiliar settings. Kevin Christofanelli has been a great brother to Sigma Phi Epsilon. His personality and joyful spirit will be greatly missed in the semesters to come! - Mike True

RESIDENTIAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

- Dr. Brian Kassar at the house conversing with Nathaniel, Luke and Wesley.

As reported in the last newsletter, Montana Beta was officially designated as a Resident Learning Community (RLC). This designation requires the chapter facility to remain substance-free and provide an environment conducive to academic success. It also requires the chapter to recruit a faculty fellow to act as an academic resource and mentor for the members.

Last August Dr. Brian Kassar became the Resident Faculty Fellow, moving into the apartment attached to the chapter lodge, and is the only Sig Ep faculty-in-residence in the country. Brian is a psychologist at MSU’s Counseling Center, the Program Director for Men Stopping Rape, and an adjunct instructor teaching a course in the Psychology of Men & Masculinity. He was initiated as a Renaissance Brother in December 2010.

“This has been one of the best jobs I’ve ever had. I feel so privileged to work with these amazing young men. I wouldn’t have accepted the position if Sig Ep wasn’t a quality organization and if the members of this chapter didn’t uphold the Sig Ep values. It’s amazing how much I’ve grown to love them in just nine months,” said Kassar.

Brian quickly implemented new practices. A computer lab and study areas were created with new equipment and furniture. Brian met with each member to set academic goals, and at mid-term members provided a progress report from each of their professors detailing their grade, attendance, and participation in class. If there’s a problem, early detection can help get students back on track. Freshman Jake Losinki values the usefulness of the progress reports saying, “They helped me to become acquainted with my professors, which is always a good thing, and gave me a better idea of what I should focus on in each class in order to succeed.”

Brian has also provided academic advising, resume review, letters of recommendation, and has been there to lend an ear when needed. He spends a great deal of time interacting with the brothers at the house, eating meals, watching movies, and going to theater productions at the Equinox Theatre in Bozeman. “Because Brian lives in, I know that he’s almost always available,” said freshman Nathaniel Wilson. “This also allows him to stop by more frequently and he’s able to connect more with the brothers. Even if he isn’t home, I know he’ll drop by at least once a day to say hi.”

These practices have helped the chapter maintain their academic excellence: they earned the highest Greek GPA on campus with a 3.23, and well surpassed the all-male MSU average of 2.68. Assistant Dean of Students and Greek Advisor Erin MacDonald - Peck praised the chapter’s excellence in academics. “Since I have been at MSU they have consistently achieved the highest all-men’s and all-fraternity GPA.” She also revealed that they earned the Scholastic Trophy for this year’s Greek Awards.

Brian has formed an RLC Committee to generate new ideas for the following year. The first task was for the Exec Board to appoint Junior Patrick Tate as Academic Chair. Pat is a 4.0 student triple majoring in Spanish, Biological and Chemical Engineering. Pat will work with the committee and the VP of Member Development to enhance academic progress of the chapter. New ideas for next year include study/tutoring hours at the lodge, a Sig Ep Lecture series with MSU faculty, expanding the library, contributing to a Greek Leadership course, and inviting an additional faculty fellow.

Montana Beta is working closely with the RLC Task Force from National and excited about maintaining their RLC designation. Shane McKee, the Member Development Manager with Sigma Phi Epsilon, is very positive, saying the success of the chapter and its members rests on the fact that we “truly epitomize the living-learning experience.” He added, “The undergraduate leaders, a highly-involved, extremely impactful Faculty Fellow, an award-winning facility, and strong support from the AVC are key factors in this chapter recently becoming an RLC and its very bright future.”

- Dr. Brian Kassar
Every so often one experiences an event truly worth remembering. The Relay for Life held here in Montana State University’s Brick Breeden Fieldhouse was an event geared towards offering the community a chance to participate in a fundraising event for the American Cancer Society. It involved a twelve-hour long period of walking around the Fieldhouse’s track interspersed with a plethora of events sponsored by local American Cancer Society volunteers, all symbolizing our continued perseverance in the battle against cancer.

Alongside activities intended for the enjoyment of the Relay’s participants such as dodge ball or dancing, we took time to commemorate all those who had suffered through ravages of cancer. Joining hands with hundreds of others — be they friends and strangers — to encircle the track as the survivors made their ceremonial “Survivors Lap” was truly stirring. Similarly poignant was seeing the gymnasium light up with the glow of countless commemorative candles that had been donated for the “Luminaria Ceremony.”

Perhaps the most memorable experience, though, was seeing the dedication of my own brothers. Leading up to the event, it was truly surprising to see their efforts to turn the task of fundraising from a chore into yet another enjoyable fraternity event. For hours they went door-to-door in freezing temperatures requesting donations. In the end we had collected over twenty-six hundred dollars and managed to exceed everyone’s expectations.

Their enthusiasm at the event itself was remarkable as well. With a team of thirty-eight members, our participation was noticeable throughout the night; whether it was our letters displayed proudly at the tents we had set up or the sound of our laughter long after others had retired, our team helped inspire every participant there. A total of eleven brothers stayed the entire twelve hours; if nothing else, I can confidently say they will never forget the soreness they felt for days to come.

I would like to sincerely thank the brothers of the Montana Beta Sigma Phi Epsilon RLC for their truly amazing commitment as well as the women of Alpha Gamma Delta whose presence was integral to achieving our goal. Most of all, the Bozeman community and all the friends and family who gave donations deserve recognition; without them we would have surely fallen short of our endeavors.

-Wesley Hilliard

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**Greeks awards**

- Brothers gathered outside the lodge with the Greek Awards following the banquet

The members of SigEp Montana Beta RLC returned to their lodge in good spirits following the annual MSU Greek Awards ceremony on April 25th, and with good reason — SigEp had been recognized for many awards and achievements, including Fraternity Chapter of the Year 2010-2011, which SigEp previously won in 2008-2009.

SigEp was awarded three of the seven chapter awards, including Fraternity of the Year, the Fraternity Scholastic Trophy for highest grade point average, and 2011 Greek Week Competition Fraternity Champions. SigEp also monopolized the Fraternity Distinguished Alumni and Advisor of the Year categories, with awards going to alumni Bill Schell (’97), Steve Liebmann (’76), and Chapter Counselor Frank Butterfield. Additionally, several members were recognized by Order of Omega, the Greek Honors association, for receiving a 3.0 GPA or higher in the Fall semester.

Fraternity awards that SigEp did not receive include Member Recruitment Excellence, which went to Pi Kappa Alpha, Philanthropy and Community Service awards, both awarded to Alpha Gamma Rho, and the Athletics Bobcat Spirit Award, also given to Alpha Gamma Rho.

In addition, the Fraternity Member of the Year was given to Jon Sheehy from AGR, and the Fraternity New Member of the Year was awarded to Cahill Maffei from Pi Kappa Alpha. Although SigEp was excited about their successes, they realize that these other awards indicate areas of future growth and development for the chapter.

-Wesley Hilliard

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**Relay for Life**

-The remaining SigEp and AGD Team gathered together after surviving a long night of running!
**The Future of Montana Beta**

The Montana Beta RLC chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity has accomplished many great things since its RLC accreditation and receiving its Charter last year. Currently, there are thirty-four undergraduate brothers who are a diverse group of men, involved in a variety of ways, on and off campus. These undergraduate men are what make our Chapter different from the other Greek organizations currently on campus.

Having a dry house, following the Balanced Man Program, excellence in academics, complimented with the support of a Faculty Fellow whose guidance and forward thinking gives us the opportunity to pursue our current endeavors contribute to our overwhelming successes. Everything that the Chapter has done well so far has provided us with an amazing starting point for what we can accomplish in the upcoming years.

In order for the Chapter to stay prominent and to keep its foundations strong, recruitment is absolutely critical. It's the lifeblood of any fraternity and maintains the strength of the Chapter every year as older members graduate. Of course, recruitment is not important only in numbers, but also for the quality of guys that join. To help us choose what young men will fit well with our current members, have the same drive to succeed as us, etc. Montana Beta implements the Balanced Leader Scholarship (BLS) every semester, our biggest recruitment tool. The scholarship awards $4000 annually to the undergraduate men and women at Montana State University and gives us the opportunity to get to know some of the “best of the best” leaders on campus. To do this, we sponsor a month long series of events associated with BLS where the applicants are encouraged to meet other leaders and have the potential to start relationships with similarly motivated individuals. The events also provide ample opportunities for the Brothers to network with others from across campus and promote the ideals and values of Sigma Phi Epsilon. In addition to BLS, the Chapter partakes in general recruitment as well by having a table every year at Catapalooza, being on campus during Orientation Sessions and participating in Greek Week.

In addition to our successful recruitment practices, brothers have been excelling in their own individual pursuits, giving a glimpse of who Montana Beta is to other SigEp Chapters across the country.

This past year, one brother, James Pallardy was a finalist for the Tragos Quest to Greece; David Walsh attended the Ruck Leadership Institute in Richmond, Virginia, and Mike True was a recipient of the NUTS! Scholarship to attend the 52nd Grand Chapter Conclave. In the Spring 2011 Semester, the Chapter GPA was a 3.38, which surpassed our goal of a 3.33. This GPA was not only the highest of any fraternity on campus but also of every Greek organization. Brothers are always getting involved with other organizations on campus whether it’s the Leadership Institute, ASMSU, Engineers Without Borders, being Resident Advisors, Advocats or Orientation leaders.

But where can the Chapter go from here? Where do we see ourselves heading in the future? The difference between a successful and thriving fraternity doesn’t last is forward thinking. For Montana Beta, the future is clear...

Our High 5! Program, which was first implemented to help our chapter achieve a 3.5 GPA, is successful in continuously contributing to our brothers’ academic excellence. We have enough brothers to maintain a balanced budget and support ourselves financially, which allows us to sponsor many events for the Brotherhood and other Greek and non-Greek campus organizations. Our prominence at Montana State University is noticeable by everyone in the community due to our brothers being involved in several different groups and clubs on campus and off. We’re actively engaged with faculty on campus as they often stop by the Lodge to provided assistance to brothers with classes. Most importantly however, the strength and bonds in our Brotherhood are clear to the entirety of Montana State University.

To help us attain this vision, the organization of a strong Parent Group is necessary. If you would be interested in getting involved with the organization and formation of this Parent Group, please don’t hesitate to let us know! Some things that this Parent Group could do to assist us in our future endeavors could be as simple as helping with a home-cooked meal or as complex as getting in touch with new members’ parents to provide some examples as to what SigEp has done to aid their own sons. Please email or call our Vice President of Communications if you have any interest at (307)-251-1274 or sigep.msu.communication@gmail.com

-Nathaniel Wilson

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**Montana State Sig Ep at a Glance**

**Brother Of The Month:**

September: David Walsh  
October: Michael Townshend  
November: Sean Henley  
January: Wesley Hilliard  
February: Michael Bonde  
March: Mike True

**Awards 2010-2011:**

- National Sig Ep Awards:
  - Chapter Home of the Year (2010 & 2011)
  - Residential Learning Community (RLC)
  - Man Power Excellence
  - Scholarship Excellence
  - MSU Awards:
    - Fraternity of the Year
    - Fraternity Scholastic Trophy
    - Greek Week Fraternity Champion

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Reminder-
Please join us for the:

**Alumni Homecoming Barbeque**

11:00 am October 1st, at the SigEp lodge.  
For more information please contact Sean at (307)-251-1274 or the email address listed below.

Sigma Phi Epsilon  
1717 Greek Way  
Bozeman, MT 59715

Email us with your comments: sigep.msu.communication@gmail.com

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We are on the Web!  
www.montana.edu/sigep