



FALL 2024

SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY

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# THE AUBURN SIG



## Making a Positive Impact at Auburn and Beyond COLLEGIANS CONTINUE TREND OF EXCELLENCE



*Gamma Sigma Chapter brothers in front of the house in April 2024.*

**A**s we reflect on the past semester, we are proud to highlight the outstanding achievements and contributions of our brothers. Through dedication, excellence, and service, we continue to uphold the values of Sigma Chi while striving for even greater success.

### GROWTH AND MEMBERSHIP

Our fraternity is experiencing significant growth. We have surpassed 200 on-campus members for the first time in our history. This incredible milestone reflects the steadfast commitment our fraternity maintains toward upholding the high standards we have set.

### ACADEMICS

Academic excellence remains a priority for Sigma Chi. This semester, we have raised our chapter's overall GPA from 3.17 to 3.25, demonstrating continuous improvement. Additionally, a record 44 brothers were named to the dean's list last semester. As we push forward, we are committed to further enhancing our grades and supporting our brothers in their pursuit of academic success.

### PHILANTHROPY

Last semester, our chapter raised an impressive \$64,000 during our annual Derby Days philanthropy event, benefiting both the Huntsman Cancer Foundation and Auburn University's Research Initiative in Cancer. We are eager to build on this success and raise an even greater amount for these causes this fall.

### CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

Members of Sigma Chi are actively engaged in the Student Government Association, Interfraternity Council, Auburn University Dance Marathon, and First Year Experience Program (Camp War Eagle). Notably, for the third-consecutive term, one of our brothers has held the prestigious position of head orientation counselor, with **Nate Foster '26** taking on the role from **Feb Aba '26**. Beyond these commitments, we remain focused on the professional development of our brotherhood, ensuring our members are well-prepared for life after graduation.

In all our endeavors, we are guided by the values of Sigma Chi and remain dedicated to improving our brotherhood and making a positive impact on the broader community.

In Hoc,  
**Colin Rigor '25**  
Consul



*From left: Michael Lynden '24, Nick Leonard '26, Caedmon Hunt '27, Landon Miller '26, and Colin Rigor '25 with 38th International Sweetheart Jordan Garret (middle).*



*Feb Aba '26 and Nate Foster '26 during Camp War Eagle in summer 2024. Feb was one of seven head orientation counselors, and Nate has been selected as a head orientation counselor for next year.*



*Brothers enjoying a post-game day band in the backyard in September 2024.*

# Welcome, New Members

**Lenny Bankson '28**  
Auburn, Ala.

**Watson Boren '27**  
Peachtree Corners, Ga.

**Tate Colson '27**  
Brooks, Ga.

**Eliot Griffin '26**  
Headland, Ala.

**Landon Hyland '27**  
Milton, Ga.

**Mason Taylor '27**  
Prattville, Ala.

**Luke Wilson '27**  
Charlotte, N.C.

## Hear why they joined:

*"I didn't know what my calling for college was going to be, but I feel like the Lord led me to Sigma Chi. I have been given a platform to speak into the lives of brothers and to grow faithfully into a stronger man." –Watson Boren '27*

*"At my very first Sigma Chi event, I could feel that the brothers were genuinely interested in building meaningful connections. An old friend from high school introduced me to a few others, and the kindness I experienced was unforgettable. Being part of this fraternity has given me lifelong friendships and countless memories, and I'll always be grateful for choosing Sigma Chi."*  
–Tate Colson '27

*"From my first visit to Auburn, I had the chance to meet a few Sigma Chi members and immediately felt like I belonged. Their connection was evident, but what truly stood out was how they welcomed me like one of their own. Since then, I've forged incredible friendships and created memories I'll cherish forever."*  
–Mason Taylor '27



## Brothers Gain Valuable Insight Through Leadership Speaker Series

**A**uburn Sigma Chi Foundation's Leadership Speaker Series is an annual event where successful alumni are invited to share career insights. This event aims to help chapter members transition from college to their professional lives by focusing on career planning, leadership, and personal growth. **Dr. Jay Gouge '69** delivered the inaugural talk, setting a high standard by offering advice on navigating career choices and preparing for the workforce.

On April 4, 2023, **David Gray '93**, president and CEO of Stoneybrook Ventures, former CEO of Daxko, and member of the Birmingham Business Journal's Power 60, spoke to the chapter about his successful business career, military service, and the impact of Sigma Chi on his post-college path. David emphasized the importance of setting career goals and being proactive when researching potential employers, especially for internships. He also reflected on how his military experience shaped his approach to leadership and business, stressing discipline, teamwork, and adaptability.

David concluded with advice on interviewing and job decision-making, encouraging students to align their career choices with personal values and company culture. You can catch up with David at [stoneybrookventures.com](http://stoneybrookventures.com).

Afterward, David helped award the 2024 Foundation scholarships, presenting \$2,500 scholarships to **Vincent Indovina '25**, **Landon Miller '26**, **Eric Barnett**, and **Feb Aba '26**. To date, the Auburn Sigma Chi Foundation has presented over \$140,000 in scholarships to undergraduate brothers.

For more information on giving to the Foundation, email John Smyth '93 at [jsmyth@maynardnexsen.com](mailto:jsmyth@maynardnexsen.com).

# All Honor to His Name ◆ Remembering Bob Benz '60

We are saddened to report that **Bob Benz '60** entered Chapter Eternal on May 17, 2024, at the age of 88. Bob was born on September 1, 1935, in Philadelphia, Pa., and graduated from Pensacola Catholic High School, where he was a standout letterman football player, in 1953. That fall, Bob would begin his studies at Auburn University. One of his initial pledge brothers, **Cecil Stokes '58**, recalled that he and Bob accepted their Sigma Chi bids after upperclassman **Strick Newsom '55** took the two to an Auburn vs. Stetson football game in Montgomery (Auburn won 47-0).

Cecil recalls they had a lot of fun their freshman year, but that fun kept Bob from making grades. He shares that Bob was inspired to join the Army so he could take advantage of the GI Bill, and Bob left Auburn for a few years to serve his country. When Bob returned to Auburn as a veteran in '56, he repledged Sigma Chi and Cecil became his big brother in the fraternity. Bob was a more serious student when he returned and excelled academically and in leadership, serving as the quaestor (treasurer) for the fraternity.

Bob earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from Auburn in 1960 and

would go on to receive a master's degree in accountancy from the University of West Florida. He received his CPA license in 1964 and would practice in the field of public accounting for the next 42 years. The governor of Florida appointed Bob to the State Board of Accountancy, where he served with distinction.

Following retirement, Bob was again called to public service. On two occasions, he temporarily relocated to the Washington, D.C., area to serve the intelligence community combatting foreign and domestic terrorism in classified positions. Of those years, former House Corporation President **Richard Alker '81** recalled, "We asked Bob what kind of work he was doing for the government after he retired, and his blanket answer was that if he told us he'd have to kill us ... and don't ask again."

Bob was loyal to Sigma Chi his entire life. For many years he served as treasurer of the Gamma Sigma House Corporation and as a financial advisor to the chapter. In 1992, after years of hard work, Bob successfully attained a private-letter ruling from the IRS granting 501(c)(3) status to The Sigma Chi Foundation at Auburn University, Inc. To our knowledge,

this was the first time that a local fraternity housing corporation had obtained approval for contributions to a fraternity housing fund to be tax deductible. Since its inception in 1991, The Sigma Chi Foundation at Auburn University has made grants to the Gamma Sigma House Corporation totaling more than \$635,000 and has awarded scholarships to undergraduate Sigma Chis totaling more than \$140,000. In 2018, the Foundation created an annual giving society of Gamma Sigma alumni and supporters and named it the "Robert A. Benz White Cross Society." Over the years, Bob was, by far, the Foundation's largest benefactor. The library in the chapter house is named in his honor.

In 2012, Sigma Chi International Fraternity awarded Bob the Seven Lights Award, honoring his significant service to the fraternity. In 2015, he was inducted into the Order of Constantine, which is "the highest honor that the International Fraternity can bestow upon one of its members in recognition of his lifelong commitment, dedication, and service to the organization." There have been only 829 Sigma Chis inducted into the Order of Constantine since it was founded 76 years ago in 1948.



## MAINTAINING OUR HOME ON MAGNOLIA

### *House Corporation Updates*

Your house corporation board was hard at work this summer. We completed a few upgrades and repairs and continue to work closely with the chapter's house manager on other needs. We got the house looking nice for the onset of the fall recruitment. While recruitment is an all-year thing now, there is still a formal recruitment week in the fall for on-campus gatherings.

We will start basketball court renovations soon and continue to look at complete house renovations or a replacement. As Christmas break approaches, we will be cleaning all of the room AC units and finishing up a few odds and ends that are left from fall.

Overall, the house looks great! The chapter has done a good job of maintaining their home. The young men seem to enjoy the facility, and we see a great many hanging at the house all the time. While football season has not gone the way we all wanted (so far), basketball is right around the corner, which should create additional opportunities to drop by and reintroduce yourself to the property. If you have not visited Auburn in a few years, you will not recognize it with all the changes.

Our group is comprised of many varied fields and areas of expertise. We have continued to pursue excellence and operate as a business with a professional manner and solid management practices. We understand that we work for the chapter and alumni and that we must maintain all of the ideals instilled by Sigma Chi.

As always, if I can answer any questions, please don't hesitate to call.

In Hoc,  
**Reid Brown '81**  
 House Corporation President



# THE AUBURN SIG

◀ Today

## Pledge Class Group Chat

### When's Our Next Meetup?

Lunch last month was great. Let's do it again

Sigma Chi at Auburn University  
**Are You Getting Our Emails?**  
It's easy to update your info!

-  Send your preferred info to [updatemyrecord@penningtonco.com](mailto:updatemyrecord@penningtonco.com)
-  Make sure your fraternity brothers are also getting emails.
-  My info is already up to date! Let's start reading *The Auburn Sig*.

Gamma Sigma Alumni of Sigma Chi, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1880  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35403-1880

*Address Service Requested*

**Know Someone We Should Know? | Send Us Your Recruitment Referrals Today!**

Please refer any potential new members to **Caedmon Hunt '27** at [caedmonhunt1@gmail.com](mailto:caedmonhunt1@gmail.com), [cah0028@auburn.edu](mailto:cah0028@auburn.edu), or (205) 919-9480. Please include their contact information, extracurricular involvement, and any relevant legacy connections. ***Thank you for helping to ensure Gamma Sigma's continued growth!***

# ALUMNI NEWS

**Crawford Crawford Grice '58** is retired and lives on Lake Burton in Northeast Georgia.

**Peter M. Kenyon '60** shares that while several of his brothers have now passed, he will always relish their friendship and memories. Peter resides in Cumming, Ga.  
Email: oakbendman@gmail.com

**Frank R. Fryer '66** is a Life Loyal Sig from Brundidge, Ala. He retired from business in 2002 and lives in Naperville, Ill., with Wynette, his "Sweetheart" of 58 years. She is the sister of late brother **Jimmy "Cobo" Caldwell '64**. Frank enjoys keeping up with all Auburn sports and played baseball for AU from 1963-66. He lives in Naperville, Ill.  
Email: [frankfryer@yahoo.com](mailto:frankfryer@yahoo.com)

**W. Lewis Wilson Jr. '66** owned part of an investment management company but has been retired for 12 years. He has stayed busy doing church work, serving on boards of several former endowment and foundation clients, and serving as a chapter advisor to Emory University Sigma Chi for many years. He remains close friends with lifetime best friend and pledge brother **Glenn Currie '69**. Lewis lives in Mableton, Ga. Email: wilson7737@aol.com

**Joseph M. Harrison '78** retired after 40 years as an EHS professional. He visits Auburn frequently for games, good food, and to ride mountain bikes at Chewacla. Joe resides in Alexander City, Ala.  
Email: [joeharrison8833@gmail.com](mailto:joeharrison8833@gmail.com)

**Hal J. Weidman '80** moved to Valdosta, Ga., in February after eight years in the Dakotas and ministry with the Lakota people in the Black Hills and Bismarck. He has four grandchildren in Georgia and Florida. Email: padreausig@gmail.com

**Richard C. Alker, DVM '81** sold his veterinary hospital in 2008 after 23 years of private practice and bought a small farm in Ocala, Fla. He then started a second career with a ground-floor opportunity in the veterinary sales and appraisal arena. “Natalie and I are fortunate to be able to travel a lot. We own shares of a number of thoroughbred racehorses and enjoy going to the races all over the country.” Email: richard@tpsgsales.com

**Allen D. Smith '81** retired in July 2023 and splits his time between Winchester, Va., and Auburn, Ala. "If you're heading to Auburn, give me a call or an email and let's catch up!" Email: [coachalsmith@gmail.com](mailto:coachalsmith@gmail.com)

**James S. Soteres '93** shares, "We still live in Sandy Springs, Ga., where I enjoy golfing, tennis, and time with family. My two boys and I also like to big game hunt and fish." Email: [soteres@bellsouth.net](mailto:soteres@bellsouth.net)