



# THE AUBURN SIG

FALL 2021

SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY

## CHAPTER UPDATES

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Welcome, New Members

**G**amma Sigma finished in the top five of the IFC with an overall GPA of 3.30 for our spring 2021 grades. Our juniors finished number one out of all junior pledge classes with a 3.55 GPA. Our cumulative GPA is above the IFC, undergraduate, and all-male averages at UW.

"The brothers of Gamma Sigma Chapter worked hard in and out of the classroom this spring," scholarship chairman **Jack Engel '23** said. "We are looking forward to continuing our academic success in the fall."

Gamma Sigma was honored to host a virtual Derby Days on April 12-16. Our chapter raised over \$18,000 for Huntsman and during that week, we were able to honor our 2021 Derby Days queen, Maddie McClendon. Maddie was diagnosed with small-cell carcinoma of the ovary in October 2020 and lost her battle with cancer May 8, 2021, on World Ovarian Cancer Day. We will continue to raise money and awareness so we can be the generation to end this disease.

"Our chapter was excited to be able to host Derby Days this year even though it was virtual," philanthropy chairman **Noah Waters '21** said. "We also had a philanthropy three-on-three basketball tournament with Sigma Nu at the beginning of March."

Intramurals were also different during the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19, nonetheless, our intramural softball team was able to succeed.

"Our softball team had a good showing in the spring, and we reached the Elite eight," intramural chairman **Tony Iannone** said. "This gave us good momentum heading into the fall, where we intend to compete for every sports championship."



Spring 2021 pledge class after March 27 initiation.

"Recruitment this summer for Gamma Sigma chapter has been great," recruitment chairmen **Peyton David '23** and **Carson Desocio 'YR** report. "We found new pledges and extended bids to those who embody the values of our fraternity. We are looking forward to the rest of the summer and finding an excellent pledge class who will live by the Jordan Standard."

"Gamma Sigma Chapter is excited for what's coming this fall," magister **Max Smith '23** said. "We will educate our new members on what it truly means to be a Sigma Chi. We have 14 swaps planned for them."

Gamma Sigma is proud of our active brothers for getting involved on campus during the 2020-21 academic year. We have five brothers who participated in the SGA cabinet, elections board, and elections council: **Richmond Maddox '23**, **Michael Lynden '24**, **Tucker Brandt**, Jack Engel, and **Arnav Mathur**. Our chapter is also proud of house manager **Grayson Fuller '23**, who serves on the IFC cabinet as the director of housing, and proconsul **Richmond**, who is serving as the director of academics.

We are very excited to return to some normalcies and are looking forward to our upcoming events, which we hope to see you at! We will be hosting our annual White Cross Society Dinner on Saturday, Nov. 6, as well as our Parents Weekend from Nov. 12-14. We are also eager to welcome back alumni and parents on game day weekends and hope to see you at the house this fall!

In Hoc,  
**Grantland Stone '22**  
Consul  
(256) 303-7860  
jgs0043@auburn.edu

## Recruiting 365 Days a Year—How Alumni Can Help

**I**n January, Gamma Sigma Chapter had a Zoom meeting with our regional chapter support coordinator, **Larry Cukjati, Zeta Iota '75**. Our lesson that night was called Mission 365, which focused on recruitment strategies, and it has really stuck with us.

As a chapter, we now plan to recruit brothers 365 days a year. Most chapters only have

recruitment for the summer months and for a week in January, however, this is something that we want to change at Gamma Sigma.

We want to start identifying potential Auburn students and Sigma Chi pledges for the upcoming year through alumni referrals, legacies, family friends, and other methods. We even want to start recruiting in the fall semester

before potential brothers have graduated high school.

This is where you as an alumnus come in. To help, reach out to Recruitment Chairman **Peyton David '23** at prd0010@auburn.edu or Chapter Advisor **Brain Snyder, Troy '85** at bksnyder22@gmail.com with your recommendations.

## A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

### Inge Waddle '66 Shares Several Highlights of His Sigma Chi Experience



When it was time for **Inge Waddle '66** to head off to Auburn University, he already had a good idea of where he and several of his closest childhood friends from Mobile, Alabama could build upon their strong friendships while on campus. Many of Inge's friends had older brothers who were Sigma Chis at AU and had many great things to say about Gamma Sigma. Pledging Sigma Chi proved to be one of the best decisions that Inge has ever made.

"My friends and I were all recruited very heavily by Gamma Sigma and the housemother, Mrs. John Peavy, who was also from Mobile," Inge said. "I felt like she was my grandmother and I immediately felt at home in the fraternity house. It was a match made in heaven."

Throughout Inge's pledgeship, he was impressed with the history of Sigma Chi and the high ideals upon which our Fraternity was founded. The Jordan Standard set forth certain principles for admitting members into Sigma Chi that have stayed with Inge throughout his life, and it's been the same case for several other brothers from his era.

"The brothers who graduated from 1960 thru 1969 have maintained a close relationship with each other, and we bring our spouses along to get together as often as we can," Inge said. "It is especially significant that one of our brothers, **Dr. Jay Gogue '69**, became president of Auburn University. We are all very proud of him."

Along with keeping in touch with his brothers, Inge has maintained a strong relationship with Gamma Sigma itself. When Inge retired from BellSouth in 2003, his son-in-law and chapter advisor at the time, **John Smyth III '93**, asked him to join the house corporation. Inge

was elected vice president several years later and assumed responsibility as president following the unexpected passing of the previous president. While serving on the house corporation has certainly featured some challenges, it has been very rewarding for Inge to serve as a mentor to Gamma Sigma active members.

"Working with men much younger than I was took a big adjustment, especially since I had two daughters," Inge said. "I also had a dual career in the Army and was accustomed to having my orders and wishes executed immediately; well, as you can imagine, that didn't happen. It was frustrating at first, but I gradually adjusted. In the last year, I have stepped back to vice president, focusing my efforts on the renovation of the house and maintenance opportunities."

Inge has been thankful to work with brothers like **Bob Pou '65**. Bob has been instrumental in planning the long-term maintenance efforts of the chapter house and grounds, and the house corporation has had the utmost confidence in his leadership. Having friendships with Bob and other brothers from the 1960s has reminded Inge how fortunate he was to be a part of a brotherhood like Gamma Sigma. Inge's most cherished memory is being recognized as a Significant Sig by the Fraternity and receiving the award in the presence of his family and Gamma Sigma alumni and undergraduate brothers—Sigma Chi has truly been a match made in heaven.



"I have met Sigma Chis all around the world while serving in the US Army in Vietnam, Panama, Germany, and the United States," Inge said. "It is amazing how quickly friendships can develop when you meet another Sigma Chi."

Inge and his wife, Judi, have two daughters and six grandchildren, whom they are very proud of. He sends his best wishes to all his brothers and their families. You can connect with Inge at [ingewaddle@gmail.com](mailto:ingewaddle@gmail.com).

## Alumni News

**Jere Rivers '63** lives in Ga. and has two sons who have both married. He has five grandchildren. Email: [jrivers@bellsouth.net](mailto:jrivers@bellsouth.net)

**Lorman Steele '64** has retired and lives in N.C. Lorman's son, **Jason Steele '93**, was a Sigma Chi at North Carolina State. He has two high school senior grandsons who are considering Auburn. Email: [budsteele@gmail.com](mailto:budsteele@gmail.com)

**Clyde Hewitt '69** is happily retired and living in Ga. Email: [burtan.hewitt@gmail.com](mailto:burtan.hewitt@gmail.com)

**Lawrence Rucker '76** has retired from the Shell Oil Company. Lawrence has two grown

children, and he enjoys traveling with his wife of 41 years as well as his friends. In his free time, Lawrence volunteers at church. Email: [lruicker8806@comcast.net](mailto:lruicker8806@comcast.net)

**William Gregg '84** works as a general contractor in Tenn. Email: [billygregg@comcast.net](mailto:billygregg@comcast.net)

**Thomas Barrett Jr. '84** retired as a pilot for Southwest Airlines in 2020 and lives in Ga. Email: [tommybarrettjr@hotmail.com](mailto:tommybarrettjr@hotmail.com)

**Scott Register '91** lives in Ala. and recently added a second daughter, Luca Lily, to his

family. She completes the set with her sister, Radda Rose (4) and her brothers, Griffith (21) and Mitchell (18). Griffith will graduate from The University of Memphis in 2022 and Mitchell will be playing soccer at Birmingham-Southern starting fall 2021. Scott still works in the music industry and his wife, Shae, practices veterinary medicine in Vestavia Hills. Email: [reg@thinkindie.com](mailto:reg@thinkindie.com)

**Brian O'Neil '03** works at Third Lens Ministries in Ala. as an executive director. Email: [oneilbp@gmail.com](mailto:oneilbp@gmail.com)



# A FAMILY BUSINESS AND BROTHERHOOD

## Significant Sig Jim Batson '91 Shares His Key to Success

The Significant Sig Award honors alumni who excel in their field and “have brought great honor and prestige to the name of Sigma Chi.” **Jim Batson '91**, as the sixth-generation owner of a family business that's lasted 137 years, became the latest Gamma Sigma brother to receive this honor last year.

### Success in the Community

H.C. Blake Co. (a plumbing, heating, cooling, and electrical contractor) was founded in 1884, and Jim's family has lived in Huntsville since the writing of the Alabama Constitution. When Jim bought the company—a family tradition—and became CEO, the market crashed that same year; he knew they'd have to adapt to stay afloat. H.C. Blake initially worked mostly in commercial construction but shifted to a 50-50 split between that and retail service. A willingness to adapt was also how the company survived the Great Depression, and its suite of services was a boon to both the business and its community as many stayed home during COVID-19 lockdowns.

Some claim young people are lazy or that there's a shortage of workers; Jim disagrees. “There are tons of people out there to work,” he argues, “but it's more than just putting an ad in the paper.” The company recruits people at job fairs and other local events, and Jim says when they get a potential employee through the door, they're usually hired. He told *ACHR News* in 2018 that his employees under 25 were, “The hardest workers I've ever seen.”

His company employs about 200 people from all walks of life and education levels. Staff are trained at an in-house facility and profiled to find their best position within the company. It's also important to Jim that H.C. Blake stays right on the cusp of new technologies and techniques to keep people happy, healthy, and hassle-free in their homes. “We call ourselves the oldest newest business in the industry.”

Jim has shared his success with the community not only through the company's services, but also through a major revitalization project: taking a condemned shopping center and turning it into one of the highlights of North Huntsville. The building features an art guild and history center that highlight the culture of North Alabama as well as restaurants and a yoga studio. True to its nature, the whole center is repurposed with old pieces of local history, from columns of antebellum mansions to lamps from the town square in the 1800s. “It's really brought back a deteriorated part of our town and created a major resurgence of the area.”

### Family and Brotherhood

“I have always lived by the spirit of Sigma Chi,” Jim said of his life and work philosophy. “One of the greatest lessons I learned from the brotherhood is that a diverse team can succeed at any level.”



Jim always puts family first, which made Sigma Chi an easy choice when it came time to pledge. Three uncles were Gamma Sigma alumni and his cousin, **Bill Crump '89**, was an active brother; Jim and his cousin **Bryant Crump '91** followed suit. Ever since those undergraduate years, he has been best friends with his cousins as well as fellow Significant Sig **Carey Bringle '91**.

### Always Moving Forward

“When I received the [Significant Sig] award, all I could remember was how bad a student I was in high school,” Jim admits. He thinks about where he would be if he had listened to the teachers who said he would not succeed in college. His experiences since then have shown that everyone has the potential for success—you just have to tap into their passion. “This award is just the start, and I have always believed that I can do better than what I have done in the past. Hopefully, I will not disappoint.”

Through all the accolades of Jim's career, the backbone of his life has been his wife, Bonnie, and three boys: Luke, Andrew, and Cole. “As crazy as it is being married to an entrepreneur, she has been there for me at every turn.” Jim is proud of the young men his sons have become, creating their own paths and succeeding by their own merits. *Jim can be reached at [since1884@aol.com](mailto:since1884@aol.com).*

## SIGMA CHI FOUNDATION UPDATES

### Join Us This Fall for Our Foundation Event

Sigma Chi has begun its 2021 fall semester at Auburn, and we look forward to a more normal experience as football games and tailgating are expected to be back in full swing. Our Sigma Chi Foundation at Auburn University continues to do well, and I want to thank everyone who has supported it with time and donations. The last 18 months have been a trying time for many reasons, but our chapter and foundation have weathered the storm and are poised to enjoy a successful 2021-22 academic year.

One of our goals is to better connect with alumni. Our partner in publishing this newsletter, creating email blasts, and hosting our website, Pennington & Company, recently approached us with an opportunity to clean up our database, to which we agreed. It is our hope that more Gamma Sigma alumni receive this newsletter and will either reconnect or reach out for an opportunity to start connecting!

As noted in the last newsletter, the foundation's Robert A. Benz White Cross Society had a successful year in 2020 despite the chaos brought on by the pandemic. Contributions have continued into 2021, and we are proud to announce that our second White Cross Society member appreciation event will be held the weekend of the Texas A&M away game on Saturday, Nov. 6. At the event, we will welcome and thank our WCS members, watch the game, share a meal together, and receive an update from our Gamma Sigma Chapter leadership.

If you would like to join the Robert A. Benz White Cross Society, please contact **Fred McCallum '79** at [mccallumfred@gmail.com](mailto:mccallumfred@gmail.com). You may also make tax-deductible donations to the Sigma Chi Foundation at Auburn University by going to [auburnsigmachichifoundation.com](http://auburnsigmachichifoundation.com) and clicking on Donate.

Fraternally,  
**Alan Shackelford '90**



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Grantland Stone '22, Richmond Maddox '23,  
former Grand Cosul Buddy Metcalf '69, and  
Zack Lundy '22 at conclusion of grand chapter in  
Scottsdale, Ariz. on June 26.

## WELCOME, 2021 FALL NEW MEMBERS!

**Gregory David Adcock '23**  
Dallas, Texas

**Layken Cole Hussey '23**  
Elba, Ala.

**Ashton Lane Cobb '24**  
Hoover, Ala.

**Wilson Scott Coger '24**  
Marietta, Ga.

**Jake Scott Eggleston '24**  
Vestavia Hills, Ala.

**Paul Daily Fisher '24**  
Homewood, Ala.

**Kemp William Guas '24**  
McLean, Va.

**Jackson Boone Kennedy '24**  
Haleyville, Ala.

**Nico Carlos Martinez '24**  
Huntsville, Ala.

**Paul Lewis Miller Jr. '24**  
Oak Mountain, Ala.

**Charles Davis Mims '24**  
Dothan, Ala.

**Hampton Searcy '24**  
Vestavia Hills, Ala.

**Brock Baker '25**  
Allen, Texas

**Eric Cole Barnett '25**  
Fairhope, Ala.

**Brandon Lee Brown '25**  
Roswell, Ga.

**Will Burkhardt '25**  
Mountain Brook, Ala.

**Robert Selwyn Butson '25**  
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

**Cooper McCord Cantrelle '25**  
Mandeville, La.

**Hayden Carroll '25**  
Huntsville, Ala.

**Christopher Ethan Chapman '25**  
Homewood, Ala.

**Noah Russell Clayton '25**  
Calera, Ala.

**Jack Robert Cramer '25**  
Marietta, Ga.

**Jake Hamilton Davis '25**  
Prattville, Ala.

**Jake Alan Dransfield '25**  
Homewood, Ala.

**Logan Ryan Ferris '25**  
Vestavia, Ala.

**Max Gabriel Forman '25**  
Savannah, Ga.

**Jack Ryan Fulford '25**  
Prattville, Ala.

**William Smith Garner '25**  
Atlanta, Ga.

**Jason Gage Hughes '25**  
Hoover, Ala.

**Zachary Steven Hugues '25**  
Alpharetta, Ga.

**Vincent Joseph Indovina '25**  
Birmingham, Ala.

**Miller McLaughlin Kleckley '25**  
Birmingham, Ala.

**Taylor Lamar Lansden '25**  
Hoover, Ala.

**Ronald James Larson '25**  
West Bend, Wis.

**Jackson Van Major '25**  
Hoover, Ala.

**Parker Hamm Manis '25**  
Granite Bay, Calif.

**Dylan Mitchell McQueen '25**  
Marietta, Ga.

**Robert Meyer '25**  
Prattville, Ala.

**William Cameron Parker '25**  
Sandy Springs, Ga.

**Zane Michael Patel '25**  
Marietta, Ga.

**William Cole Pendle '25**  
Fairhope, Ala.

**James Posey '25**  
Andalusia, Ala.

**Colin Rigor '25**  
Chelsea, Ala.

**Jacob Clark Rowell '25**  
Homewood, Ala.

**Jayk Sailer '25**  
Chula, Ga.

**William Joseph Sharp '25**  
Atlanta, Ga.

**George Wilson Smith '25**  
Mobile, Ala.