



# THE AUBURN SIG

SPRING 2019

SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY

*Inside...*

2  
Alumni Spotlights

3  
Sigma Chi  
Gamma Colony  
Prepares for  
April Installation

4  
Save the Date



*Colony members and pledges following the pinning ceremony in fall 2018.*

## Phase II of the Capital Campaign Is Continuing Make an Impact Today

As a result of many dedicated alumni, and 39 outstanding colony members that you will read about in this newsletter, we are headed toward an April reinstallation of the Gamma Sigma Chapter of Sigma Chi and rehabilitation of our house at 737 W. Magnolia this fall. Alumni have been working to raise the funds necessary to renovate the house and provide funding needed to support the scholarship and leadership needs of the chapter. We are currently in Phase II of this campaign. In Phase I we raised \$176,000. In Phase II we have raised \$75,000, for a total of \$246,900. While we are grateful for all contributions we have received, we are far short of reaching our \$500,000 goal.

We need everyone's help to provide our new brothers with a first-class house and to support their scholastic and leadership programs. As you will see in this newsletter, our colony members have made great strides in a short period of time to become a leadership example to the Auburn Greek system.

The house needs renovations to the interior and exterior prior to the brothers coming back in the fall. Specific details of the campaign, including the renovations that have to be made to the house, can be found at our website, [www.auburnsigmachi.com](http://www.auburnsigmachi.com), on the capital campaign tab.

I sincerely believe that most our lives have been significantly enriched by our Sigma Chi experience, while at Auburn and beyond. It is time for us to step up and ensure that this experience continues to enrich the lives of young men for years to come. They need our support at this critical time, so please consider a tax-deductible gift to the Sigma Chi Foundation at Auburn University Inc. You can donate online through PayPal at the website above, or you can send your check directly to me at 2110 Longleaf Trail, Vestavia, AL 35243.

Thank you for your help,  
**Fred McCallum '79**, Campaign Chairman  
[mccallumfred@gmail.com](mailto:mccallumfred@gmail.com)

# Construction Entrepreneur, Steve Cates '85, Credits Sigma Chi for Business Success

For **Steve Cates '85**, Sigma Chi gave him a sense of belonging and community. "You don't always get that through a larger university," Steve said. "It gave me guys I could socialize with, get advice from, and ultimately gave me long-term connections, even outside of college."

Sigma Chi prepared Steve for life after college by exposing him to many different views and types of people. "Part of your success in the business world is learning that everyone sees things differently," Steve said. "It's how you share ideas and listen to each other that leads to success." He took that same mentality into his first job after college as a project engineer. "I was given a lot of responsibilities early on, and it gave me the ability to take on many challenges."

Meeting those initial challenges within his first job sparked a desire to take on more. Steve's father could sense that his passion lie in owning a business and encouraged him to move forward. At 25, Steve took the plunge and started his own land

development and construction company, which is now Cates Builders. Owning a business has given him a great deal of meaning. "I really enjoy building unique homes with creative people," Steve said. "Helping people meet their dream of having a home and to develop a neighborhood where people have a place to raise their family is very satisfying."

Steve's business savvy spans many industries, and from 2011-14 he served as Commissioner of General Services for Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam. "It was rewarding being able to save taxpayers millions of dollars and putting that money back into the hands of Tennesseans," he said. "It's always good when people have the resources to support their own family."

In his spare time, he enjoys boating, golfing, keeping up with politics, traveling, and trying new wines. He is married to Lyn and they reside in Nashville, Tenn. Steve has two children, Wesley and Hannah. Email: scates@catesbuilders.com



*[Sigma Chi] gave me guys I could socialize with, get advice from, and ultimately gave me long-term connections, even outside of college.*

## Sigma Chi Brothers Open Birmingham's First, Largest Brewery, Good People Brewing Co.

When **Michael Sellers '94** joined Sigma Chi, he knew it would be a great place to form friendships and gain connections. However, he didn't realize then that a brother would also become a future business partner.

In Sigma Chi, Michael had an instant sense of camaraderie with his brothers. Following graduation, he felt the chapter gave him even deeper connections, especially when he moved back to his hometown of Birmingham. "Coming back, you have a network of friends and business associates."

In 2008, Michael and brother **Jason Malone '96** reconnected over their love of home brewing, and in July of that year decided to open Good People Brewing Co.—Birmingham's first brewery. "It was a good hobby gone wrong," Michael laughs.



Since the brewery's opening, Michael has been overwhelmed by the feedback from customers. "I love the experience of creating a product from start to finish," Michael said. However, with creating a business, there's bound to be curves, such as learning on the job, making mistakes, and long hours. In the end, he wouldn't change a thing. "Having a little bit of success is worth it all."

For Michael, the key to success is simple: hard work and perseverance. "It's the daily grind over and over," he said. "Timing has a lot to do with it and sometimes you can take advantage of that."

Staying connected to fellow Sigma Chi alumni has remained important to Michael. He recently came back from a quail hunting trip with **Brad Young '96**, **Brian Murdock '98**, and **Todd Brandon '97**. "As you grow, it's really fun to connect back with brothers," he says. "It's life enrichment to have these friends forever."

He and his wife, Melinda, have two daughters, Audrey and Cassidy. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family and going camping. Email: michael@goodpeoplebrewing.com



*Colony members standing on top of the pile of gravel used to refurbish the playground at Saint Michael's Catholic Church.*

## Sigma Chi Gamma Colony Prepares for April Installation Brothers Focus on Academics and Philanthropic Involvement

The fall semester was an eventful one for the Sigma Chi Gamma colony and as the spring semester takes off, we are looking forward to what's ahead.



*Consul Will Odom and former Consul Coleman Kitchens accepting the Small Fraternity of the Year award from Auburn's IFC.*

### Growing the Brotherhood

We accepted 18 new members during fall recruitment and expect to bring in several more this spring. Our intramural teams also excelled, with our soccer team playing hard and our football team winning the small fraternity championship—the first for the fraternity in a long time. In addition, we renovated the playground at Saint Michael's Catholic Church as a community service project, which ended up being an excellent brotherhood building event.

### Academic Focus

Our GPA for the semester was 3.08, and we have implemented an eight hours per week study policy for all members with a GPA of 2.75 or lower. Most significantly, we were awarded the Small Fraternity of the Year award from Auburn's Interfraternity Council, a prestigious honor and a sign of more good things to come.

### Preparing for Spring Recruitment

This coming semester will be a busy one for the

colony. We recently returned from a weekend trip to the beach in Destin, Florida, from January 18-21. The trip was a great opportunity for strengthening our brotherhood. The colony participated in Mission 365 training on January 26 in preparation for recruitment the following week. We held spring recruitment from January 29-31, and we hope to add several more quality men to our colony.

### Looking Ahead to Installation

The colony also completed a community service event with Auburn United Methodist Church on January 25 to wrap up all of our requirements for installation. With installation just around the corner in April, all members of the colony are excited to finally learn the ritual and what it truly means to be a brother of Sigma Chi.

**In Hoc,**  
**Fischer Hawkins**  
Tribune

# Alumni Update

## CHAPTER ETERNAL

**T. Drew Ragan '56** entered Chapter Eternal in 2014. "I'm so happy to hear that the Gamma Sigma Chapter is resuming operations. My father enjoyed his years there as a student, and then as an adviser," Drew's son, Robert, shares.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**James W. Fitzpatrick Jr. '42** was active duty in the military from 1942-64 and in the Army reserve from 1946-55. He spent his working career with major industrial engineering companies until his retirement in 2003. He and Ruth were married since 1948 until her death in 2009. James and Ruth had one son, James.

**Tom O. Fuller '52** is retired and living in England. Tom recalls that he and three Auburn ROTC graduates were sent to the 52nd field artillery battalion in Japan in 1953. After a few months of intensive training, they were sent to Korea and it took them almost a week to arrive. "We were alerted to go to the front line. President Eisenhower and North Korean leaders realized that three Auburn guys would muddle up their war, so they agreed on a cease fire effective July 27, 1953." After a few weeks, the men were sent to perform guard duty at a POW camp near Pusan. Tom was an officer every third day and third night. Eventually, Tom returned to Alabama and became off-duty but stayed in the reserves.

**Alan C. Stone '61** was in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1961-'68; an airline pilot from 1968-1997; an NTSB accident investigator from 1997-2003; and an aircraft accident investigator from 2003 until his retirement in 2016. He lives in Miami, Fla. E-mail: apstone@comcast.net

**Jerre W. Feagin Jr. '66** retired after 45 years as an Episcopal priest. He moved to Colorado to live with his daughter and her family, which includes two grandsons. He lives in Loveland, Colo. E-mail: jerrefeagin12@gmail.com

**Martin T. Jackson '83** was a head high school football coach for 27 years. Before coaching, Martin was a graduate assistant at Auburn University and an assistant coach at two universities. He now works as athletic director at Grovetown High School. He and his wife, Penny, have two grandchildren and live in Evans, Ga.

**Kevin S. Cleary '85** says his son, Brett, graduated from AU in 2017 and his daughter, Courtney, is a senior planning to graduate from the university in 2019. KC lives in Brownsboro, Ala. E-mail: kcleary248@gmail.com



# THE AUBURN SIG

Gamma Sigma Alumni of Sigma Chi, Inc.

P.O. Box 2367  
Auburn, AL 36831-2367

*Address Service Requested*

PRSR  
FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LAWRENCE, KS  
PERMIT #570

*Attention: This newsletter is intended for alumni and parents. If your son is still attending Auburn University, he will receive a copy at the chapter house.*

*If he has graduated, please send us his permanent address. Thank you.*

## SAVE THE DATE

### Sigma Chi Gamma Colony Installation

*Saturday, April 6, 2019*

#### INITIATION

Auburn United Methodist Church | 10 a.m.

#### LUNCH

17-16 Restaurant | 12 p.m.

154 E Magnolia Ave, Auburn, Alabama 36830

#### BANQUET

Marriott Grand National

Cocktails 6 p.m. | Banquet 7 p.m. | Band 8 p.m.

**Purchase banquet tickets online at**

<https://auburnsigmachi.ticketleap.com/banquet/>

Are You  
Following Us?

[www.sigmachauburn.com](http://www.sigmachauburn.com)



Sigma Chi at Auburn University



@AuburnSigmaChi

@auburnsigmachi