

the back bay beta



BETA THETA PI AT MIT | SPRING 2016

BETA UPSILON CHAPTER OFFICERS

- Erik Gest '17**
Co-President
- Taylor Craig '18**
Co-President
- Sebastian Lopez-Cot '19**
VP of Communication
- Michael McGraw '17**
VP of Member Education
- John La '17**
VP of Finance
- Jonathan Zdasiuk '17**
VP of Recruitment
- Kevin Shum '19**
VP of Risk Management
- Matthew Mellor '17**
VP of Brotherhood
- Kollin Wasserlein '19**
VP of Programming
- Jack Erdozain '17**
Rush Chair
- Mario Macedo '18**
Steward
- Sam Van Cise '18**
House Manager

ALUMNI RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- Herman L. Marshall '78**
Michael G. Feinstein '82

HOUSE CORPORATION BOARD

- Michael G. Feinstein '82**
President
- Herman L. Marshall '78**
Vice President & Secretary
- Frank J. Leibly III '93**
Treasurer
- Andrew B. Levy '84**
Chapter Financial Advisor
- Neil P. Harrigan '90**
Alumni House Manager

BETAS FROM ACROSS THE U.S. GATHER AT KEYSTONE CONFERENCE

Every year in February, Beta executive officers from all over the country gather at the Keystone Conference for 42 hours of intensive leadership training. This was my first time attending, and it was a great time of fellowship, goal setting, and planning the way forward through the upcoming semester.

Friday night we discussed the state of Beta Theta Pi among national fraternities, where we rank as one of the largest and most academically successful in the country. We then

discussed these national statistics in terms of where we stand on our own campuses. This set the tone for the type of big picture thinking and vision casting that would lead to some very concrete plans going forward.

The second day focused on practical specifics. We split up into training seminars for each of the different officer positions. I attended the one for alumni relations, which was well run and provided some good ideas for increasing

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Mike McGraw '17, Erik Gest '17, Matt Mellor '17, Jonathon Zdasiuk '17, Beta leadership consultant Charlie Ruff, John La '17, Kevin Shum '19, and Taylor Craig '18.

RENOVATIONS, CELEBRATIONS IN THE WORKS

It gives me great pleasure to write this update. I am proud to announce the completion of our centennial campaign to support the renovation of our facilities and the restart of the chapter. All of these efforts have been very successful, with your support.

Thanks to so many loyal, committed Beta Upsilon Betas, we have raised over \$2.3 million from 151 donors, over 26 percent of our active alumni. This met our goal and allowed us to complete the main house renovation in 2013, in advance of our successful 100th anniversary celebration. We now plan on renovating the Annex in the summer of 2016, allowing us to bring our facilities up to a level that will help us maintain our success on campus.

Thanks to all of our donors for their support. Despite the completion of our campaign, it's not too late to join in this success. If you

would like to give, or extend your gift, please let me know. Despite our success, we can still make good use of additional resources to continue to maintain and improve our facilities.

Our Annex—120 Bay State Road—renovation plans are more modest than what we undertook in the main house. Key priorities are to improve the common space in the basement—expand the current maker-space, add some exercise facilities, improve laundry, etc.—improve the second floor bathroom, and reconfigure some of the bedrooms to add capacity and expand educational areas. Of course, we'll also do significant cosmetic work to improve the look of the building, which is overdue.

We are working with an architect now to get the project planned. We hope to complete

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NEW PRESIDENT LOOKS TOWARD FUTURE



My name is Erik Gest and I'm the new president of the Beta Upsilon colony. One of my main goals this semester is to improve our relationship with alumni and advisors. To this end, the executive team and I are working with Mike Feinstein '82 to make the May 7 event a success. We are also working with our leadership consultant, Charlie Ruff, to keep our advisors active and involved.

I'm hopeful that stronger relationships with the alumni and advisors will make this a great semester.

As we are still a colony, recruitment is a big focus. We had a great rush last year with 10 men pledging. They have since been initiated, and now we now have 26 brothers. The other good news is that only three brothers will be graduating this spring, so a

strong fall rush will put us close to our target of 40 brothers. We are planning to host high school seniors who have been accepted to MIT at the house during campus preview weekend this April, with fun events planned. This is a great way to meet potential new members before they arrive in August.

We can't wait to expand into the newly remodeled Annex. We would like to thank all of you for your support. We are currently working with the housing corporation and architects to design the future Annex. We hope to increase the size of our current maker-space to accommodate a wood shop, machine shop, and electrical room, while not reducing the number of brothers who can live there. If all goes as planned, the remodeling will happen this summer, and 120 Bay State will be ready for rush in the fall!

I am very proud of our academic standing this past semester. In the fall of 2015, our house had an average GPA of 4.51, which

was tied for fifth highest of the 25 fraternities. We exceeded the Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Association, and Living Group Council averages, and are on the honor roll. This is even more impressive because many of the brothers were taking some of the most difficult classes at the institute, including 2.013 (Engineering Systems Design), 2.671 (Instrumentation and Measurement), 6.005 (Software Construction), 6.131 (Power Electronics), 10.490 (Integrated Chemical Engineering), 16.01-04 (Unified Engineering), and various graduate level classes. We hope to continue our tradition of academic excellence this coming semester.

We also hope to continue to make Beta as great a place for our current members as it was for you. I hope to see you at the May 7 reception!

—kai—
Erik Gest '17
President

KEYSTONE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)



Matt Mellor '17

and community among Betas across generations.

The rest of the event provided time for chapters' executive teams to sit down with each other and figure out plans for what

interaction between alumni and actives. Ideas concerning the content of the newsletter—the concept of interviewing a current brother came from this meeting—to planning events for actives to connect with alumni were designed to foster stronger interaction

they would like to accomplish in the coming semester. We set two goals—one external and one internal: to increase our involvement and recognition on campus, and foster more community within the chapter.

Once we set these objectives, we discussed and refined our plans with Beta advisors. This was an excellent opportunity to go through the details and learn from the experience of Betas who had gone through similar issues in their chapters. One advisor from William and Mary had a similar experience of his chapter trying to be more visible on campus, while a Beta from Columbia had strong insights into strengthening community across classes. We talked about rush

for a while with an advisor from Cornell who had led one of the strongest recruiting seasons

in many years. All in all it was a fruitful discussion among varied and experienced perspectives that all contributed to some very practical plans going forward.

In addition to planning, there was plenty of time to meet other Betas. I ended up rooming with a few men from the University of Maryland chapter, and during one of the networking events a few of the MIT Betas and I sat down at the Cornell table

and had some fun conversations. I also spent a session at the Ohio State table, where we discussed the differences between our schools while appreciating the variety of experiences Beta can offer, centered around the same core values.

Overall, Keystone was a very strong manifestation of what I had hoped joining a chapter of a national—even international—fraternity would be. Though our primary focus is on our chapter at our school, there are times when we can come together to share our experiences, offer advice, and sit down and enjoy the company of our fellow brothers in the shared pursuit of mutual assistance, intellectual growth, responsible conduct, trust, and integrity.

Taylor Craig '18



Mike McGraw '17, John La '17, Kevin Shum '19, Erik Gest '17, Matt Mellor '17, Jonathon Zdasiuk '17, and Taylor Craig '18.

OUR NEW BETA BROTHERS

Chris Briere '19
Mansfield, Connecticut

Michael Castillo '19
Ocala, Florida

Brian Chen
Exchange student from the
United Kingdom

Gilbert Gutierrez '19
Brownsville, Texas

Nicholas Klugman '19
Sarasota, Florida

Sebastian Lopez-Cot '19*
Safety Harbor, Florida

David Olaley '19
Indianapolis, Indiana

Kevin Shum '19*
San Lorenzo, California

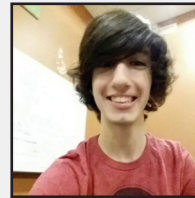
Sam VanCise '18*
Julian, Pennsylvania

Kollin Wasserlein '19*
Hooper, Utah

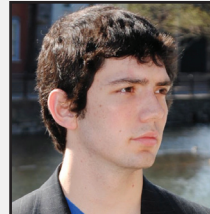
**pictured*



Wasserlein '19



Lopez-Cot '19



VanCise '18



Shum '19

FOCUS ON STRENGTHS DURING RUSH

Rush isn't about numbers, tactics, dollars spent, or dollars saved. Rush is about people. This isn't to belittle the necessity of growth or thoughtful planning, but often these factors overshadow the fact that as a community we are trying to recruit like-minded individuals who can better both ours and the MIT community at-large.

In this pledge class alone we have a thespian/comedian who is also active in MIT student administration, an MIT integration bee competitive champion with a black belt in martial arts, a serial entrepreneur and new Beta machine shop chair, and a TeamUSA figure skater who is active in the MIT TechX administration. The list goes on.

This group of 10 fantastic pledges is passionate, not only for their work in science and engineering, but also in their personal endeavors. No sturdier foundation could be found to build a community upon. So now we find ourselves with the burden of finding equally vibrant members to continue to grow with. I believe the solution is to display the qualities that make our members unique and exceptional at rush. A lot of rush has fallen into cookie cutter events, identical across communities. What does that tell the person attending the event? How does that help them decide between the endless sequences of Greek letters being tossed at them? My thought is that it doesn't. There needs to

be a balance so events are both universally enjoyable and relevant to our community. What does that mean in a practical sense? To me, last year it meant creating a home brew flamethrower and roasting marshmallows in public. I love to build odd contraptions, and people love fire-roasted s'mores. Everyone walked away happy. Another brother is looking into the possibility of chartering a helicopter for a brief MIT tour. He loves the engineering of all things aeronautic, and I can't imagine a single potential member with a pulse who wouldn't find that a blast.

Whether it's sports, comedy, gaming, or creating, we can build our events to display our brothers' interests. Our passions are our strengths in rush. It's about great people finding other great people to share the opportunity to bond. For that reason, all I want is for our last pledge class to be as proud of our new class as we are of them.

Jack Erdozain '17
Rush Chair

A BIT ABOUT BETA UPSILON:

Chapter Status: Colony
Collegiate members: 27
Collegiate pledges: 0
Living alumni: 708
Lifetime members: 1,170
Chapter GPA: 4.5100

RENOVATIONS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

this work over the summer of 2016. This is important as the chapter is on the verge of growing into the Annex with active members, reducing the number of rooms we will need to fill with MIT graduate students.

In the wake of our successful centennial in 2013, we also plan to return to an annual alumni event each spring, with larger events every five years.

We are planning an alumni reception on May 7, 2016, at the main house—119 Bay State Road—at 5:00 p.m. as part of MIT's celebration of 100 years in Cambridge.

We will be reaching out to alumni by email and phone with more details. And, we'll do a larger alumni celebration in 2018 for our 105th. So many alumni have asked us to hold periodic events to rekindle some Beta spirit, and we will do our best to keep that going. And, as usual, we have a reception planned during MIT's Reunion Weekend on June 3, 2016.

We welcome more of your involvement with the chapter, the house corporation, or both. The chapter is always looking for advisors who can aid one of the officers in doing his job. And, the house corporation needs additional volunteers to help with facilities and communications. Please contact me if you are interested in this rewarding experience.

Once again, we couldn't do this without your support, which is much appreciated. I want to thank the committed volunteers who have worked with me to raise the money, renovate the facilities, advise the chapter, and manage the house corporation. Thanks again to all of you.

Yours in __kai__,
Mike Feinstein '82
mike_feinstein@yahoo.com

SPOTLIGHT ON ACADEMICS

School Year	Term	GPA	AFA	AMA	ACA	Pledges/IFC	Rank
2015-16	Fall	4.51	4.38	0	0	0/0	5/25
2014-15	Fall	4.52	4.504	0	0	0/0	12/25
2013-14	Spring	4.47	4.37	0	0	0/0	0/0
2013-14	Fall	4.54	4.33	0	0	0/0	4/27

alumni updates

NEWS AND NOTES ABOUT BETA UPSILON BROTHERS

Ward D. Halverson '56 writes, "I was sorry to hear of Jack Zimmer's ('55) death. He was a sparkplug and fun person for the whole chapter. I am still fine, playing squash twice a week, and consulting at the company where I worked for many years. Good luck to all." Catch up with Ward at 25 Hutchinson St., Cambridge, MA 02138; or wdhalverson@aol.com.

DECEASED

We regret to announce the deaths of:

David Donald Weir '38

Stephen W. Bishko '68
November 23, 2015

KEVIN SHUM '19: WORLD-CLASS FOCUS & DETERMINATION



Kevin Shum '19 joined Beta during the fall rush of 2015. He is humble, passionate, and a leader both inside and outside the fraternity. He is also a world-renowned athlete.

Kevin was raised in Piedmont, California, and began taking figure skating group lessons when he was just six with his brother. After two years, Kevin's brother received private coaching, and Kevin hung around the ring mimicking his brother's moves. A skating natural, Kevin caught on quickly and was offered his own

private lessons.

After placing highly in local competitions, Kevin won his first Junior Nationals Championship at age 10. He moved up to the next level of competition, and placed in the top 10 several years in a row, competing in the U.S. national championships.

After suffering an ankle injury in 2012, Kevin took a year and a half off, but, indefatigable, returned to the rink and competed in the winter of 2013, where he placed sixth after months of training to relearn his skills. He then began competing internationally—in the Grand Prix in Japan, and in Tallinn, Estonia—where he secured top 10 spots.

Fast forward to MIT, where he juggles the roles of international athlete, hard-working student, admissions office blogger, and Beta risk manager.



On a typical day, you'll find Kevin rushing to the ice rink in the morning with skates in one hand and psets in the other. Later, he'll be writing down his life experiences for MIT admissions so he can connect with prospective students and alumni alike. On weekends, he is an active brother and helps the executive team plan coming events.

Kevin plans to move into the house next semester, where he will continue to lead and shape our chapter culture. As Kevin's big brother, I am proud not only of his past accomplishments, but also of his personal growth during his freshman year. Kevin is the embodiment of a Man of Principle, and the Beta Upsilon chapter is proud to call him a brother.

Michael T. McGraw '17



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Published regularly by the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Beta Theta Pi at MIT. News and photos should be sent to Alumni Records Office, Beta Theta Pi at MIT, P.O. Box 390528, Cambridge, MA 02139-0006, or alumnirecords@beta-mit.org.