

Report of the Alpha Visitor (Nick Gilly, Road Warrior): Around the Nation in 90 Days

Nick Gilly, Delta Delta '07, is serving in his second year as Alpha Visitor. You will not often find him in the Central Office, as his rigorous travel schedule takes him throughout all corners of the country to work with Alphas and help them improve. He focuses on the development of leadership skills, recruitment techniques, and best practices that help maximize the fraternal experience for our undergraduates. He is a familiar face to Brothers and a great asset to Chi Psi Fraternity.

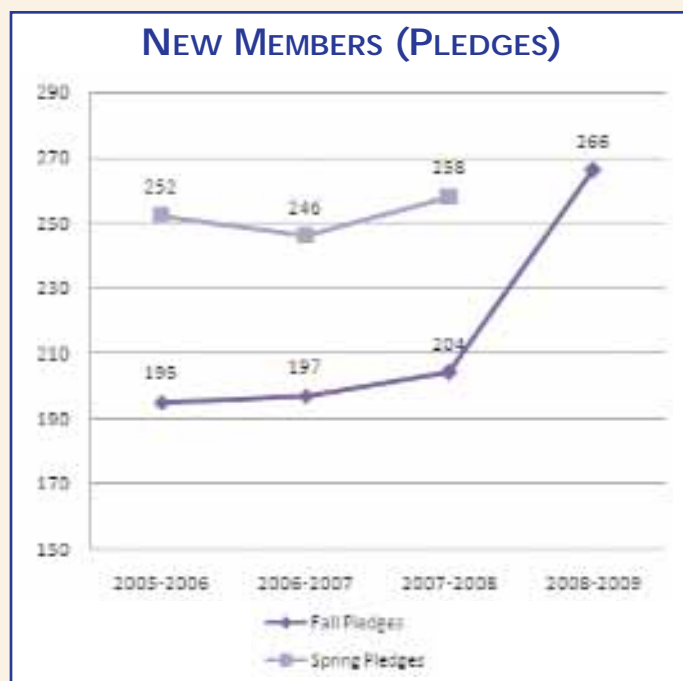
WHEW! That was the only sound I could muster when I deplaned at Nashville International Airport on the evening of Friday, November 14. This marked the end of one of the most intense experiences of my life: conducting thirty-one visits at twenty-four Alphas in three months. Within a month of leaving Nashville by car, my family and fellow staff members expressed concerns that I might burn out and, to be honest with you, I somewhat expected it myself. But as the weeks passed, I found myself becoming more invigorated by the progress and potential I observed in so many of our Alphas. There are many great things happening this year in Chi Psi, and I am privileged to share them with you.

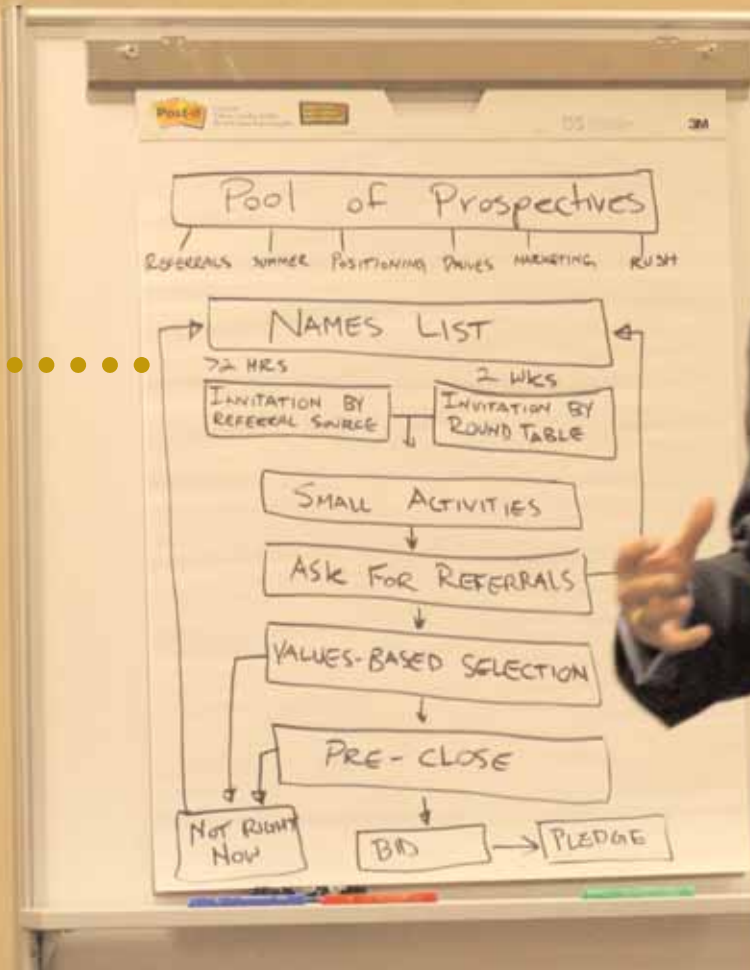
Dynamic Recruitment

THIRTY PERCENT! Chi Psi fall 2008 recruitment numbers are thirty percent higher than in any of the previous four fall semesters. One might think that a few percentage points beyond the standard deviation fall to luck. But these results are not a product of fortuitous circumstance. Thirty percent represents a paradigm shift in the way our Alphas approach recruitment. Enter the dynamic recruitment model.

Last fall, Brad Beskin, Chi Psi's Director of Education, tossed a copy of *Good Guys* on my desk. My first reaction: "I don't need this. I already know how to recruit." I chaired the recruitment efforts at Delta Delta for two years and I spent a summer at another Alpha managing its recruitment program. I humored him, though, and a few pages quickly revealed how little I understood about the essential elements of fraternity recruitment. I immediately began infusing the content from *Good Guys* into the recruitment training I was offering to Alphas during my

visits. Then, The Chi Psi Educational Trust flew Josh Orendi of Phired Up Productions, a co-author of *Good Guys*, to Athens, Georgia, for the Southeast Regional Conference in February 2008. After participating in his program, I was completely convinced that the model he prescribes would work for Chi Psi. We completely reorganized Chi Psi's Program for Recruitment Development and began offering it at every interested Alpha. Responses to the dynamic recruitment model have been overwhelmingly positive. Throughout the 2008 spring semester, the Central Office worked with several recruitment officers to help them develop a values-based recruitment program based on the dynamic model.





Eleven Alphas received the Program for Recruitment Development in spring 2008, and sixteen others received it in fall 2008. The result: Chi Psis are becoming better recruiters.

Typically, there are several questions asked when I speak about building a successful recruitment program. The challenges and inconsistencies we have faced nationally over the past several years have come from the fact that we have been asking the wrong questions. The Dynamic Recruitment Model focuses our undergraduates on the more important questions.

Static Questions

- How do I motivate my brothers?
- How can we get more rushees to come to the Lodge?
- What rush events attract the most men?

Dynamic Questions

- How do I recruit with my *motivated* Brothers?"
- How do we get more Brothers out of the Lodge, and *meeting* and *recruiting* more men on campus and in the community?"
- What activities build the strongest *relationships*?"

We cannot arrive at the right answers until we ask the right questions. This is one of the most important lessons that we have learned through our partnership with Phired Up Productions.

Many Alphas rely on traditional IFC “formal rush” activities to recruit. This limits their pool of prospective Pledges to the paltry few who decide to explore Greek life at that time or those who fortuitously happen upon the Lodge.

The dynamic recruitment model encourages the Alpha to find ways to turn the entire non-Greek male student body into a pool of potential recruits. Rush is just one small component of an Alpha’s efforts to meet potential recruits. The Alpha recruits each and every day through the development of values-based relationships. Our Alphas are learning to look outside the Lodge to bolster the number of men with whom they attempt to build relationships. Yesterday’s mantra of “quality, not quantity” thus becomes an essential concept of dynamic recruitment:

Quantity ***Drives*** Quality



Alpha Xi Delta
1983 - TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Lubbock, Texas

In 2007-08, Alpha Xi Delta pledged 10 and initiated 7 men. It completed 2 Educational Trust programs. It was awarded the Kennicott Literary Award.

#1: Kyle Green '09 • kyle.green@ttu.edu • C: 972-251-0940
2409 Broadway Street, Lubbock, TX 79401
Corporation President: Jason Cox '98 • jcox@coxinnovations.com
13435 West Center Drive, Lakewood, CO 80228 • C: 303-204-3033

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Values-Based Selection

Through my tireless travels, I have observed the recruitment and bidding processes at several Alphas. If asked what they look for in potential recruits, most assert the buzzwords with which we are all familiar: gentlemen, scholars, involvement, motivation, service, sociability, respect, etc. When the time comes to discuss the extension of a bid to a recruit, however, petty squabbles often ensue. "Is he a Boston fan?" "He's too awkward in uncomfortable situations." The final decision often rests on whether or not the man qualifies as a "good guy." To date, I have yet to find an undergraduate that can tell me what that means in a complete sentence.

The inconsistency in "who we want" and "how we select" can be reconciled through creation of values-based membership eligibility requirements. If an Alpha values brotherhood, the accompanying standard might be "three or more Brothers must speak on behalf of the potential recruit in front of the Alpha." A common academic standard might ask a recruit to meet a 3.0 GPA or enroll in academic support. Standards for involvement might include participation in another campus club or organization. This framework of quantifiable metrics increases the quality of eligible recruits and, thus, increases the Alpha's appeal to men of the highest caliber. In 2008, over half of our Alphas have drafted and voted to implement a set of membership eligibility requirements.

Lessons from the Road

THE FOLLOWING TRENDS became apparent to me during my time on the road. They represent important developments in the way Chi Psi adds value to the collegiate experience.

Our Alphas are growing closer: The Oliver and Marie Rowe Regional Leadership Conferences are having the intended unifying effect in each Chi Psi region. A few examples:

- Alpha Theta Delta at the University of Washington recently elected an "Inter-Alpha Relations" coordinator to coordinate events between the West Coast Alphas. Nearly a dozen Brothers from Washington, in that spirit, drove for 15 hours to Alpha Delta Delta at the University of California to assist our Berkeley Brothers with fall recruitment this past August. They stayed at Cal for nearly a week.
- Alpha Iota Delta at Georgia Tech trekked to Athens to assist the under-manned Alpha Alpha Delta at the University of Georgia with their fall initiation. According to our UGA Brothers, "we could not have pulled it off without our Tech Brothers." The two Georgia Alphas set aside their good ol' fashioned disaffection for each other's institution to host a joint tailgate for the UGA-Tech football game in late November. Additionally, Alpha Delta and Alpha Chi Delta at Clemson jointly hosted their spring 2008 formal.
- Brothers attending Alpha Pi's reinstatement in mid-October represented eleven Alphas from throughout the country. Undergraduates from Alphas Phi, Chi, Psi, Rho, and Tau Delta worked tirelessly to facilitate a successful initiation for Chi Psi's mother Alpha.

Alphas are displaying an increased interest in philanthropic opportunities. In recent years, many Alphas participated in or planned philanthropy activities as a way to meet campus requirements or "say that we did." In the last year, however, several Alphas have taken an interest in philanthropy as a way to increase the quality of the Alpha and enrich the undergraduate experience.

- Following the example of Alpha Theta Delta at the University of Washington, Alpha Zeta Delta at the



Some of the new Brothers of refounded Alpha Pi, Alumnus Advisor Joe Johnston '01 (at far right), and Visitor Nick Gilly, ΔΔ '07 (red sweater in center).

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Alpha Upsilon Delta
1986 - WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

In 2007-08, Alpha Upsilon Delta pledged and initiated 4 men. It completed 4 Educational Trust programs. It was awarded Financial Honor Roll and the Kennicott Literary Award.

#1: Tyler Kellner '10 • keltj6@wfu.edu
PO Box 7254, Winston-Salem, NC 27109 • C: 815-474-5686
Corp Pres: Matt Van Sickle '00 • vrosslaw@bellsouth.net
2729 Lyndhurst Ave, Winston-Salem, NC 27103 • 336-312-5892

University of Illinois and Alpha Rho Delta at Miami University held Stuff the Bus food and non-perishables drives as an engaging twist on the traditional canned food drive. The event was a great success for all three Alphas. Several other Alphas are already planning their own Stuff the Bus for spring of 2009.

- Alpha Mu Delta has partnered with the Susan G. Koman Foundation to fight breast cancer. As part of their extended effort to promote breast cancer awareness and raise money for the Foundation, the Alpha is selling T-shirts and collecting yogurt cup lids. Brothers also participated in the Foundation's Race for the Cure in Orlando in early October and have several other activities planned this academic year to support their cause.

Our Alphas are trying new things. Many of our Alphas are breaking out of the ordinary and trying new activities.

- Alpha Sigma Delta at Duke University raised close to \$500 for charity through an on-campus video-game tournament. While I am far from a video-game novice, I was completely out of my league. Bearing witness to the best and the brightest that higher education has to offer, out-maneuvering their opponents in a ruthless battle of virtual cunning was a truly humbling experience.

- Alpha Delta Delta at Cal embarked on its first post-rush camping trip in the coastal California mountains. Scheduling this brotherhood-building trip so early in the semester provided a strong start to the Alpha's facilitation of the Program for Pledge Education. Brothers incorporated Pledges into activities to create a weekend focused on friendships and unity.

- Brothers and Pledges from Alpha Upsilon Delta spent the afternoon with a local haberdasher learning about the elements of gentlemanly attire. "Dress for Success" provided an opportunity for these young men to learn something new while enjoying each other's

company and camaraderie.

I simply cannot get enough of that Lubbock scenery. The multi-day 25th anniversary celebration of Alpha Xi Delta at Texas Tech proved to be a memorable occasion. I believe I have also earned a spot in the record books as one of the only people who did not attend Texas Tech to visit the city of Lubbock three times in one year.

I find large women beautiful. By large, I mean 305 feet tall. I had the privilege of attending the 125th anniversary celebration of Alpha Xi at Stevens Institute of Technology, which included a breathtaking cruise around Long Island. Having never visited the Statue of Liberty, I was surprised at one point in the evening to turn around and see that the boat was trolling at the feet of Lady Liberty.

During a flag football game, one should avoid hopeless diving catches on hard, barren ground. Who would have thought the low point of my semester would include losing a foot race to a lineman while participating in a flag-football game with Alpha Rho Delta at Miami University in Ohio (they have quite a team!).

Travels with Dr. Dan

ONE of the most revealing experiences during my travels this fall was my trip with current #7 Dr. Daniel B. Ahlberg, N'67. The trip fell in the middle of a tour of some of our Northeastern Alphas that included Alphas Omega Delta, Rho, Xi, and Beta Delta. Our journey began with the reinstallation of Alpha Pi at Union College. We spent four days touring Alpha Phi at Hamilton College and Alpha Chi at Amherst College.

The reinstallation weekend, which began Wednesday 16 October and concluded with a brunch-banquet on



Left: Nick at Lodgegiving at Berkeley; Right: #7 Dr. Dan Ahlberg, N'67, and #4 Austin Gallman, AA'11, head off to a class at the University of Georgia.



Alpha Sigma Delta
1989 • DUKE UNIVERSITY
Durham, North Carolina

In 2007-08, Alpha Sigma Delta pledged and initiated 11 men. It completed 2 Educational Trust programs. It was awarded Financial Honor Roll, Community Service Award, and Kennicott Literary Award.

#1: Ryan Perdomo '09 • ryan.perdomo@duke.edu
PO Box 99312, Durham, NC 27708 • C: 323-204-7844

Adv Board Pres: Nick Superina '03 • Nick.Superina@alumni.duke.edu
1415 N Taft Street, Apt 1186, Arlington, VA 22201 • H: 703-772-6194

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Sunday 19 October was a wonderfully memorable occasion. After sixteen months of dedicated work, twenty-four men now represent a revitalized Mother Alpha, with twenty-nine others set to be initiated next spring. Among the alumni present were Ralph N. "Whitey" Silverio, EA '71, William A. Royce, P'78, NA'02, Brian T. Heil, E'80, Dr. E. Todd Falls, TA'89, Vincent Le Blon, P'77, as well as several generations of Alpha Pi alumni, including Alumni Advisory Board Chair John Kennedy '78, Corporation President Brian Shea '82, and Alumnus Advisor Joe Johnston '01. Also in attendance were undergraduates from Alphas Phi, Chi, Rho, and Tau Delta. Thanks to the contributions of these many undergraduate and alumni volunteers, the weekend was a huge success.

Shortly after the reinstallation brunch-banquet, Dr. Dan and I left for Clinton, New York, and Hamilton College. For some reason, travelling with Dr. Dan really earns you the VIP treatment. Both the preparation for and hospitality during our visits to Alpha Phi and Alpha Chi were fantastic. I have searched endlessly for some explanation of what he has that I do not. Admittedly, he has performed over 7,000 brain and spinal surgeries during a prestigious career as a prominent Minnesota neurosurgeon. But I once built a bunk-bed ... by hand!

Over the next four days, Dr. Dan and I busied ourselves by conversing with Brothers and Pledges in every role and year, facilitating programs, and attending class with the undergraduates. By the latter, I mean that Dr. Dan attended classes. I skipped (there's a first time for everything). Each evening, over a cup of coffee or tea, we discussed what we had learned. Our trip ended with a brief stop at Williams College to visit campus and the old Lodge. I then dropped Dr. Dan at the airport in Albany for his flight back to Minneapolis. "This was a very important trip for me," Dan confided. I agreed. I had visited

both of these Alphas, shortly after I joined the Central Office, in early fall of 2007. Only after more than a year of visits, however, was I fully able to appreciate the significance of the Chi Psi experience at small Northeast liberal arts colleges. Alpha Phi has not possessed a Lodge in over a decade, yet shares the Thayer Trophy with Alpha Theta Delta this year. Alpha Chi is a truly secret society, yet it fosters one of the strongest atmospheres of mutual protection and advancement that I've ever encountered. The spring 2007 issue of *The Purple and Gold* reported that "Brothers who live without traditional Lodges report as positive a fraternity experience as those who have Lodges." I can now point to Alphas Phi and Chi who exemplify the truth that Alphas do not need a physical structure to create a relevant and powerful Chi Psi experience. The draw of Chi Psi is relationships. It is "a thing of the spirit."

Looking to the Future

WHILE Chi Psi takes pride in its unique and transcendent traditions, the Fraternity has survived by pairing them with change and adaptation. Our Alphas are clearly adapting to the needs of today's students. The outstanding recruitment performance and anticipated high retention rates this year represent only the beginning of many great changes. For these trends to continue, however, undergraduate Chi Psis must focus themselves on maintaining their Alpha's vision and pursuing its goals. If they thwart complacency and continue to challenge one another, Chi Psi will enjoy these upward trends in recruitment, retention, campus involvement, and service in perpetuity.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve!

To reach Nick Gilly, e-mail him at ngilly@chipsi.org.



Dr. E. Todd Falls, TA'89, presents the charter to Jeff Combs, II'10.



Toasting to rechartered Alpha Pi, and its first Founder, Philip Spencer.

