

## ALUMNI OFFICERS

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## IN THE NEWS

### Gamma Alpha Alum Ranked #26 in *Forbes* 30 Under 30: Food & Wine

Congratulations to Brother **Rob Rhinehart** ΓΑ 2005 for recognition as an up-and-coming leader in the food industry. Watch for more about Rob in our next eLetters.



# The Rose & Star

Gamma Alpha • Sigma Nu Fraternity • Georgia Tech  
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We are looking for a few good men! Send your rush referrals our way. Email names and contact information to Chapter Rush Chair Nic Matarazzo at [njm319@gmail.com](mailto:njm319@gmail.com) or Alumni Rush Contact Jonathan Sangster at [jbsangster@gmail.com](mailto:jbsangster@gmail.com).

## SPOTLIGHT: MAJ. GEN. KELLY MCKEAGUE ΓΑ 1493

### It's Time to Change the Narrative

By Jonathan Sangster ΓΑ 1946, Rush Advisor

Brother **Kelly McKeague** ΓΑ 1493 has at one time been identified as “pledge,” “cadet,” “IFC president,” and even “eminent Commander” in his time at Georgia Tech. These days, he is addressed as major general, a promotion he received from the U.S. Air Force in 2008 and a status that a select few officers will ever receive.

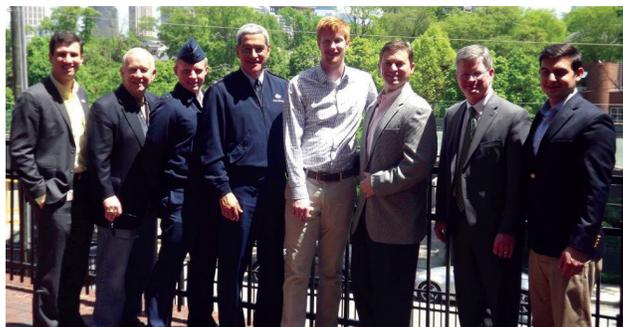
At lunch at the Gamma Alpha Chapter house on April 22, this accomplished brother introduced himself as Kelly, slinging the grip and proudly identifying himself simply as “1493.” Brother McKeague recalled that the day he, “Kelly,” mistakenly received his all-female dorm assignment at Tech was also the first day he had ever left Hawaii, his birth state. After Brother McKeague greeted every brother in the room personally, the lunch conversation transitioned to adapting to new challenges with rush, new risk areas for Greek life at Georgia Tech and the recent strides our active chapter has made in the areas of philanthropy. At the end of lunch, our discussion led the Major General to address the room with a few proud words, calling his audience “... first-rate men of high moral fiber and great character.”

It became clear to me that Brother McKeague measures his own success by his relationships, attributing many of his basic leadership skills to his time within the walls of Gamma Alpha of Sigma Nu. As far as Brother McKeague is concerned, he is simply an alumnus, like us. He has been fortunate enough in his career to return to his birthplace and spend time near his parents. In town for his first meeting after being asked to serve on the board of the School of Industrial & Systems Engineering (ISyE) at his alma mater, he and his wife

were able to swing a trip to Fort Benning to visit their son, who had just recently returned from a deployment in Afghanistan. In addition to his successes as a family man and an engineer with undergraduate and master's degrees from Georgia Tech, his career accolades with the USAF are too numerous to list here.

After discussions about today's fraternity stereotypes and badly spun news stories, Brother McKeague insisted that “it's time to change the narrative: it all starts with what you do and how you present yourself.” He spoke with a sense of pride as he commented on the current state of the chapter. Coming from such an accomplished leader, I thought his remarks and his tone were especially inspiring. As actives and alumni finished exchanging questions and answers with the Major General on his success and that of our chapter, I was able to scribble down his closing remarks: “The common thread is this institution and what it gives you ... What you have here at Sigma Nu only enhances that experience. I have no regrets, and I was very proud that people associated me with this fraternity.”

We extend our thanks to Brother McKeague for his special visit and words of inspiration.



(l - r): Daniel Furman ΓΑ 2111, Gary Jones ΓΑ 1290, Scott Gorham ΓΑ 2086, Kelly McKeague ΓΑ 1493, Spencer Neely, Jonathan Sangster ΓΑ 1946, Pat McKenna ΓΑ 1345 and Pete George III ΓΑ 2036.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### A Little of Your Time to Shape the Lives of Our Actives

By Alex Brown ΓA 1759, Alumni Association President

Last school year, the alumni association created a mentor program for the Sigma Nu actives, loosely modeled on the GT mentor program. It turned out to be a great success. As a result, we want to do another round of pairings between alumni and actives. The purpose will be for each alumni mentor to be available to their active mentee for advice and guidance over the next 12 to 18 months.

This will not require a lot of time or effort and should be fun. For most of the alumni who participated in the last round, the commitment entailed one or two in-person meetings over the course of the year and a willingness to be available for career advice or networking. There are about 30 actives who have signed up, so we need 30 alumni who are willing to be a part of the program.

Once all of our alumni mentors are committed, we'll request a bit more info from our undergraduates (hometown, major, job, etc.) and then send out the mentor/mentee pairings as well as a few basic instructions and suggestions.

If you would like to participate or refer other GA alum who might be interested, email **Alex Brown ΓA 1759** at [alex@htrjobs.com](mailto:alex@htrjobs.com). Be sure to spread the word. All Gamma Alpha alumni are welcome to participate.

We recently sat down with Dan Furman '16 and asked him a few questions about his experience with the program ...

**Tell us a little bit about yourself (grad year, major, hometown, family, etc.):**

*Graduation:* May 2016

*Major:* Business Administration with a minor in Economics

*Hometown:* Alpharetta, Ga.

*Sigma Nu Offices:* Past Treasurer and Recruitment Chair; Current Lieutenant Commander (Vice President)

**What did you hope to get out of the mentoring experience?** An opportunity to have someone that I can discuss career goals with as well as weigh how potential internship opportunities can impact those goals. I was also hoping for an outlet to expand my network.

**Give us some details about your mentoring experience: How often did you meet, where did you meet, what did you discuss, how did your mentor share his experiences with you, etc.** Great experience! We met about once a month usually for coffee or lunch. We discussed many things including Sigma Nu, current news and my career goals. It was great hearing about my mentor's college experience and to see that he had many of the same struggles I have today. I also enjoyed learning about what Sigma Nu was like when he was in school. We also completed a few personality assessments to improve my leadership.

**How has the mentoring experience helped you move closer to your goals?** My mentor helped me weigh my internship offers. The experience has helped move me closer to figuring out what I want to do when I graduate in May 2016.

**Would you encourage other active brothers to participate?** Absolutely. It is awesome to hear from an older brother regarding what Sigma Nu was like when he was in school. It is a great connection to make and helps us expand your networks! Furthermore, mentors are able to give us advice on on collegiate goals!



**Will you consider serving as a mentor after you graduate?** Yes, it is a great way to stay involved with both Georgia Tech and Sigma Nu, both of which have provided me with tremendous opportunities!

## PHILANTHROPY UPDATE

### Brother Shaves Head and Raises Money for Childhood Cancer

For the fifth year in a row, **Sam Eichenblatt ΓA 2025** shaved his head with 300 others to raise money for the St. Baldrick's Foundation. The March event occurred at RiRa's Irish Pub.

Over the past five years, this event has raised over a half a million dollars toward childhood cancer research. (Most of that is supporting St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.) In 2011, Sam asked potential sponsors how much they would donate

toward childhood cancer research if he shaved his head. The answer he got was \$500. This past year, when he asked the same question, the answer was \$1,000! That's a compounded annual growth rate of 20%!

Therefore, Sam decided to follow this trend and set his 2015 goal to \$1,200, and thanks to support, he exceeded it! Sam says, "I just wanted to send out a big thank you for your love and support! Together we raised over

\$1,600 for local childhood cancer research. At RiRa's, we raised over \$150,000!"



*Brother Sam Eichenblatt before and after ...*

## Sigma Nu Brother Receives One of the Greatest GT Honors

It is an honor like none other at Georgia Tech — to be chosen as the driver for the legendary Ramblin' Reck. A story that dates back to 1914 — only 18 years after the founding of our Gamma Alpha Chapter, the tradition of the Reck is one that we can celebrate more than ever this year as one of our own has been selected as the 2015 driver. Hats off to Brother Jake Meisner '16, a junior chemical engineering major, who was elected by the Ramblin' Reck Club to serve as this year's driver. Read below to learn more about Jake.

**How were you selected as this year's driver?**

I was selected as this year's driver through the Ramblin' Reck Club's election process. I gave a speech before the entire club; I answered questions ranging from my list of commitments for 2015 to what plan I had in place if the Reck were to break down on a game day. Thankfully, the club selected me as driver.

**What has this responsibility and honor meant for you so far this year?** This is a huge honor for me. I have tremendous respect for all the past drivers that I have had the pleasure of meeting. To now be one of them is an honor in itself. I will always cherish the support of all the great people that make Reck Club the best student organization on campus. Georgia Tech is an institution with traditions

that can be seen in every-day interactions, and to be the sole keeper of its most cherished tradition is something that I will never forget.

**How do you think you can best represent Sigma Nu in this capacity?** I plan to govern all my acts with a high sense of honor and to make the Sigma Nu fraternity proud to have me as a brother.



*Brother Jake Meisner '16, this year's driver of the Ramblin' Reck.*

**Tell us about your hometown, major, family.**

I am from Canton, Ga. It is a relatively small town that seems to keep growing. I remember, as a kid, that it took 20 minute to drive to the closest grocery store in Alpharetta. Today, my old house is within walking distance to a Publix and a Kroger on the same street. I grew up in a house of five. My mother, Cynthia, is a labor and delivery nurse and has worked for Northside Hospital for the better part of three decades. My father, George, is an electrician. He has worked for AT&T for more than 30 years. I have two brothers; Shaffer is 16, and

Will is 14. My family as a whole has raised me to be the person I am today.

**What inspired you to pledge Sigma Nu?** I decided to join Sigma Nu because I was drawn to the diverse group of young men that I had encountered. At other fraternities I rushed, there always seemed to be a single unifying factor that defined the fraternity, and I thought that was a good thing until I came to Sigma Nu where honor is the unifying factor. That interested me the most.

**Have you held any officer position within the chapter?** I was an IFC representative for the spring of 2014.

**Are you involved in any other campus activities?** I am on the Student Center Expansion Committee; we hope to one day house the Reck at the Student Center.

**What is something that not many know about you?** Not many people know that I learned how to drive a stick on a tractor when I was 10 years old.

Send your congratulations to Jake at [jakemeisner@gmail.com](mailto:jakemeisner@gmail.com).



## 2015 HONOR ROLL

Thank you to the following alumni 58 brothers for gifts made during our 2015 annual fund giving year. There is still time left to add your name to this honor roll and to be counted among those brothers who are supporting our alumni relations program. To make your gift today, go to [www.sigmanugt.com](http://www.sigmanugt.com) and click on "Donate" in the upper right-hand corner.

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Phil Gingrey '62  
Bill R. Poland '63  
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Patrick J. McKenna '71  
Matthew G. McKenna '76  
Michael S. Rupert '83

- Grant Norwood '88  
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Josh R. Lesman '02  
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## In this Issue of The Rose & Star...

- *Special Sigma Nu Guest Has an Important Message*
- *Meet This Year's Ramblin' Reck Driver (a Brother!)*
- *Updates from Your Fellow Brothers*

## ALUMNI UPDATES

**Carlton F. Roberson GA 1080** (2611 Bayshore Blvd., #1701, Tampa, FL 33629-7403; [robrober444@gmail.com](mailto:robrober444@gmail.com)) Rob Roberson, also known as Carlton F. (the human rag) Roberson, left Tech with a master's in aerospace engineering in 1965 and went directly into the Army



Signal Corps. He spent 28 years flying choppers and Bird Dogs and had a couple of tours in Vietnam, working as a Signal communications commander. Later, he flew Bird Dogs, trying to protect the infantry on the ground and scouting out North Vietnamese locations for artillery and U.S. Aircraft to destroy. He had a nice tour at Wheeler Air Force Base in Hawaii, working as a program manager with Hawaii Telephone personnel installing the entire, newly designed Oahu telephone system. Finally, he landed at MacDill AFB

in Tampa, Fla., and was the simulations and gaming director for U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). He retired from the Army in 1991 and took a job working for the Department of Energy as a systems engineer in support of USSOCOM for another 10 years. In 2002, he retired in Tampa as a golf enthusiast. He is married to Mary Jo Alford-Roberson, and all of their kids are on their own. He is proud to be a Sigma Nu and tries to see a couple of brothers at high school reunions. "I love the new fraternity house, which is all-together-fitting for our outstanding chapter of Sigma Nu."

**John W. Chapman GA 1598** (1034 McLynn Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-3345; [jwc\\_atlanta@yahoo.com](mailto:jwc_atlanta@yahoo.com)) John and his son, William, were recently in Lexington and stopped by Headquarters. Due to an incoming storm, they were



given an abbreviated tour but it was a great experience. They would highly recommend it for anyone traveling nearby.

**Alex Brown, III GA 1759** (595 Bittersweet Trail, Atlanta, GA 30350-4702; [alex@htrjobs.com](mailto:alex@htrjobs.com)) Alex, his wife, Stacy, and their daughters, Kesley (7) and Lainey (3), say hello from Sandy Springs.

**Jason Edward Plamp GA 1907** (2420 Old Brick Rd., Apt. 1317, Glen Allen, VA 23060-5995; [jasonplamp@gmail.com](mailto:jasonplamp@gmail.com)) On Feb. 5, 2015, Jason and his wife welcomed their first child and future Yellow Jacket into the world. Our congratulations to them on the birth of their son, August Edward.

**Martyn C. Mercer IV GA 1995** (5608 Kansas St., Unit D, Houston, TX 77007-1144; [mcmrcer4@gmail.com](mailto:mcmrcer4@gmail.com)) Martyn recently accepted a position as an assistant project manager with Hoar Construction in Houston, Texas. He was recruited to Hoar by a fellow Sigma Nu alum from the Beta Theta Chapter at Auburn University. His favorite Sigma Nu event is the annual philanthropy at Steeplechase, as every brother — young and old — teams up to participate in what is the highlight of every spring semester at GT Sigma Nu.

**Gamma Alpha Brothers! We want to hear from you! Submit your own alumni update to [content@affinityconnection.com](mailto:content@affinityconnection.com) and we will share it with the brotherhood. Please mention Sigma Nu at Georgia Tech in your email.**

