

# The Alpha Gamma Fellowship

## for Lambda Chi Alpha Alpha Gamma Zeta Alumni Association

Volume 7 | Issue 2

Winter 2024

### New Chapter House Dedicated Over D-Days

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Editor:  
Logan Lamphere, (AF 1596)

Over 200 alumni, spouses, actives, associates, and friends of Lambda Chi were on hand over Dakota Days, October 24, to dedicate our new Home Away From Home!



Remarks were delivered by Nick Bratvold, Dan Hartmann (President & CEO of Lambda Chi Alpha Educational Foundation), Dennis Daugaard, Mark Mickelson, and Jim Abbott. Harry Roberts unveiled a YAMBAILY



plaque (You Are My Brother And I Love You), and Brandon Wilsey presented the Alpha Phi key-stone from our previous chapter house.

*continued on next page*

### Get Your Commemorative Brick

Brandon Wilsey was able to save some of the bricks from the old house.

These commemorative bricks will be available for you! For \$150, they

will be engraved with your name and Alpha-Gamma number, as shown on the next page. Donors over \$50,000 will automatically receive

*continued on next page*



## Dedication (cont'd)



Remember, to be on the donor wall plaque, you must donate/pledge a minimum of \$1,000 by December 31, 2024.

*Photos taken during the new house dedication. Dennis Daugaard (right) delivered an invocation. Max Mickelson was selected to Dakota Days Homecoming Royalty (Taylor Van Emmerik)*



*continued on next page*

## Bricks (cont'd)

one. Bricks can be picked up from Brandon Wilsey in Sioux Falls, at Founders Day 2025, or shipped directly to you for an additional fee.

To order, send a message to Logan at [llampher@hotmail.com](mailto:llampher@hotmail.com) or 605-490-0732.



*Commemorative bricks from the old brown house can be purchased for \$150.*



*Lambda Chi Alpha Foundation President Dan Hartmann also spoke (Taylor Van Emmerik)*

## Check out the Dedication Video

Click [here](#) or visit [youtube.com/@loganlamphere](https://youtube.com/@loganlamphere)



Lambda Chi Alpha New Chapter House Dedication 2024

247 views • 6 days ago



## Dedication (cont'd)



*Mark Mickelson, Nick Bratvold, and Jim Abbott deliver dedication remarks (Taylor Van Emmerik)*



## Alpha Phi Keystone Presented

Brandon Wilsey presented the keystone that was formerly above the doorway of our old chapter house to the Alpha Phi Sorority (actually Alpha Phi International Fraternity!). The A-Phi's originally built our old house in 1931 and sold it to

us in 1936, and the keystone had their letters. Several alumni with connections to A-Phi walked over to their current house to present the keystone along with one of the framed blueprints of the old house.



## Home Away From Home Campaign Donor Wall—\$3,564,260.45 Raised



Many thanks to these Brothers and their families for supporting the [Home Away From Home](#) campaign to build a new Chapter House!

- You have until December 31 to be included on the permanent donor plaque to be installed in the house. Donor names will appear as per your pledge form. Only donations over \$1,000 will be included.
- The list is current as of December 17, 2024.
- If your name is missing or the amount is incorrect, please contact Randy Sorensen at [rsorensen4@mac.com](mailto:rsorensen4@mac.com).
- The list below includes only those who have committed their support to the Building Fund. Annual donations to the Housing Corporation Operating Fund for 2024 chapter operations are published on Page 27. This list does not include donations towards our scholarship funds.
- Ω denotes a Brother who has passed away.

**For more information on the capital campaign, or to donate, visit**

**[lambdachialphaatusd.org/donors](http://lambdachialphaatusd.org/donors)**

***Many thanks to these Brothers and their families for supporting  
the next 100 years of Lambda Chi at USD!***

**\$150,000+**

**Harry D. Roberts** ΑΓ 1185

**Michael J. Runge** ΑΓ 1379

**G. Mark Mickelson** ΑΓ 1337

**Michael L. May** ΑΓ 1467

**\$100,000 - \$149,999**

**James F. Hart** ΑΓ 656

**Doyle D. Estes** ΑΓ 805

**Robert E. Anderson** ΑΓ 1019

**James W. Abbott** ΑΓ 782

**David J. Gardner** ΑΓ 938

**Roger W. Mjoen** ΑΓ 790

**Kenneth Duncan** ΑΓ 993

**\$75,000 – \$99,999**

**Edward J. Pluimer** ΑΓ 803

**\$50,000 – \$74,999**

**Douglas L. Estes** ΑΓ 684

**Brian Darnall** ΑΓ 808

**E. Paul Amundson** ΑΓ 1213

**Harold Hansen** ΑΓ 769

**Harry Christianson** ΑΓ 889

**Nicholas J. Magera** 1269

**Robert Murphy** ΑΓ 773

**Terry M. Schmidt** ΑΓ 984

**Louis H. Hogrefe** ΑΓ 806

**Kevin D. Horner** ΑΓ 1026

*continued on next page*



## Home Away From Home Campaign Donor Wall (continued)

### \$25,000 – \$49,999

Frank L. Trotman AG 643	Roger Werth AG 1017	Charles A. Nelson AG 1199
David R. Gienapp AG 667	Scott Heidepriem AG 1018	David G. Hurrell AG 1244
Ralph D. "Van" Hines AG 844	Kevin Garvin AG 1021	Karl Adam AG 1330
Dennis M. Daugaard AG 917	Fredrick Slunecka AG 1022	Joel L. Konrad AG 1343
Jeffrey K. Williams AG 947	Bradley D. Hammer AG 1053	Jeffrey W. Post AG 1445
Alan K. Pearson AG 972	Bradley Estes AG 1059	Chris E. Ekstrum AG 1448
Randy J. Sorensen AG 989	William L. Baker AG 1145	Corey H. Peters AG 1471
Ω Brad Gullickson AG 996	John A. Lake AG 1177	Logan Lamphere AG 1596
Kevin P. Brady AG 999	Scott G. Stern AG 1178	
Mark Knight AG 1004	Stephen G. Fendrich AG 1195	

### \$10,000 – \$24,999

Ω Loren H. Amundson AG 459 (Mavis Amundson—Crescent)	Thomas J. Schaefer AG 914	David Erickson AG 1048	Matthew C. Reynen AG 1334
Allen B. Brown AG 532	John Wollner AG 915	Douglas Mulder AG 1056	Joe Krall AG 1345
Ω Jerome B. Lammers AG 587	Thomas F. Truhe AG 924	Arlen Hanssen AG 1073	David Mahowald AG 1348
Craig E. Knudson AG 636	James Morrison AG 930	Thomas J. McDowell AG 1141	Doug P. Christensen AG 1349
Richard E. Brown AG 688	Daniel MacRandall AG 950	<i>Duerre Family</i>	Mark Vavruska AG 1359
Wilson Kleibacker AG 759	Gordon Peterson AG 955	Ω Faris F. Pfister AG 66	Daniel L. Rausch AG 1365
James R. McGrann AG 777	Douglas A. Sandvig AG 977	Ω Charles D. Nass AG 670	Thomas J. Henderson AG 1382
Leland Hoekstra AG 820	Mark Peters AG 985	Ω Faris G. Pfister AG 486	Randal J. Osterloo AG 1388
Glen A. Severson AG 850	Dan J. Cheever AG 1008	Blake W. Duerre AG 1143	Brian D. Landry AG 1530
Marcus Gullickson AG 860	Thomas C. Bower AG 1016	J. Tyler Haahr AG 1284	Derik W. Kleibacker AG 1545
David W. Landry AG 867	Gregg Carlson AG 1020	Timothy A. Clausen AG 1317	Brandon Wilsey AG 1653
Roger D. Sullivan AG 900	Kevin Whitelock AG 1037	Craig S. Mischo AG 1322	

### \$5,000 – \$9,999

David Duncan AG 687	Stephen L. Hebert AG 941	Michael J. Neuroth AG 1308	Tyler L. Tordsen AG 1863
Thomas V. Conway AG 725	Richard K. Hegg AG 982	R. Scott Campbell AG 1323	Troy D. Tordsen AG 1876
Charles W. Cooper AG 760	William Taylor AG 1032	Mark S. Simmons AG 1339	Quinton J. Tordsen AG 1974
Joseph P. Egger AG 796	Daniel Radigan AG 1035	Michael D. Padrnos AG 1456	Nicholas R. Bratvold AG 1881
Fred W. Romkema AG 799	Kevin Hawley AG 1060	Milo R. Carley AG 1465	Gavin P. Zimmerman AG 1888
David G. Padrnos AG 862	Michael Fox AG 1122	Russell D. Olson AG 1479	Zachary S. Williams AG 1893
Curtis J. Liedtke AG 886	J. Scott Endres AG 1186	Lance Elshere AG 1581	
Ross D. Lamphere AG 888	Clark Hurrell AG 1191	Van J. Carmody AG 1790	
Doug Lind AG 937	Steven G. Pint AG 1290	<i>Tordsen Family</i>	

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## Home Away From Home Campaign Donor Wall (continued)

### \$1,000 – \$4,999

Truman Schwartz AG 530	Barry Buehler AG 835	Scott Shaeffer AG 976	Darrell A. Jesse AG 1273
Thomas E. Aman AG 551	John Gulbranson AG 838	Darrell Mueller AG 979	Gary R. Jaeger AG 1278
Courtland Swenson AG 573	Patrick Seager AG 847	Carroll Fullerton AG 987	Joe Smedsrud AG 1281
Thomas Johnson AG 618	Michael Brummer AG 853	Kim Madsen AG 992	Marlon Lofgren AG 1347
Jerome Andersen AG 629	Gary Pommer AG 865	Scott R. Yeoman AG 1007	Anthony J. Macke AG 1351
Clark Absher AG 633	Steven Wobbema AG 866	Mark Kontz AG 1062	Timothy Forbes AG 1360
Gerald Baldwin AG 639	John A. Eickman AG 870	James W. Miller AG 1072	Robert Seuntjens AG 1361
Larry Jorgenson AG 671	Steven J. Holm AG 879	J. Kevin Croston AG 1087	James Hieb AG 1369
Victor G. Raphael AG 726	Thomas J. Froning AG 881	Thomas Kennedy AG 1105	Ryker J. Lammers AG 1386
Richard Schneider AG 736	Wesley Shelton AG 893	Scott Schuknecht AG 1128	Steve Andrzejewski AG 1395
Dennis O. Holt AG 752	James Plucker AG 896	William Protexter AG 1130	Thomas J. Looft AG 1417
Jeff Esbenshade AG 757	Kenneth Eide AG 908	Jeffrey Jares AG 1131	Daniel R. Kolberg AG 1451
George Strandell AG 758	Lyle H. Castle AG 912	Craig Viehweg AG 1146	Tanner D. Musick AG 1544
Milne J. Duncan AG 772	David J. Bell AG 913	Paul M. Rickert AG 1147	Brad Delperdang AG 1595
Elton G. Winters AG 778	Donald C. Rusch AG 919	John A. Reaney AG 1151	Jeremiah Johnson AG 1601
Kris J. Kober AG 779	Ronald Erickson AG 920	Michael A. Roach AG 1159	Wade Foreman AG 1608
Dean Rasmussen AG 781	Randall B. Kasch AG 922	Mark A. Culhane AG 1174	Jeff Johnson AG 1737
Richard L. Brownell AG 783	Jeffrey Stavenger AG 933	Kevin G. Kane AG 1193	Christopher Healy AG 1815
Ted Richardson AG 785	Ω Greg Smeen AG 935	Benedict Mahowald AG 1197	Jordan M. Smith AG 1858
Ron S. Dvorak AG 789	Vernon Deters AG 936	Thomas Carpenter AG 1190	Jordan Schumacher AG 1862
Bryan H. Bennett AG 792	Scott E. Bell AG 943	Steven M. Dexter AG 1198	James Gulbranson AG 1870
Thomas Duncan AG 804	Neil S. Hoversten AG 944	Thomas Burchill AG 1223	Donovan J. Barnes AG 1877
John E. Leuthold AG 821	William Grant AG 948	James C. Edman AG 1228	Derek McBride AG 1892
Roger C. Roskens AG 824	Jay Anderson AG 957	Timothy Teslow AG 1246	Garrett Bankston AG 1903
David R. Quinn AG 827	David J. Cullen AG 961	Brian G. Stern AG 1253	Lucas G. J. Lund AG 1910
Joseph M. Fergen	Russ Pearson AG 962	James Protexter AG 1263	
Thomas Assmus AG 831	Steven Beyer AG 969	Ω Scott Schoppert AG 1267	

### Crescents

Mavis Amundson	Janet Olson Cheever	Joanie Holm	Betty Schwartz
Sherry Assmus	Mary Pat Erickson	Tami Konrad	Betty Sinclair
Peg Baker	Cathy Connors Gullickson	Janet Trumpe Lamphere	Peggy L. Wittmeier
Victoria Bartz	Colleen Gullickson	Cynthia Mickelson	
Carol Bouska Kleibacker	Nini Hart	Kristi Nelson	
Cherise Bromberg	Christa Hieb	Kathy O'Byrne Cullen	

## Home Away From Home Campaign Donor Wall (continued)

### Memorials & Honorary Gifts

Ω Faris F. Pfister AG 66	Ω Donald D. Foreman AG 767	Ω Sigurd Anderson AG 859	Ω Stuart Quam AG 1211
Ω George T. Mickelson AG 103	Ω Thomas E. Carr AG 749	Ω James L. Bach AG 861	Ω R. Scott Schoppert AG 1267
Ω Clarence Mickelson AG 145	Ω Gale G. Camerer AG 766	Ω Robert P. Bartz AG 874	Ω Kirk A. Steck AG 1293
Ω Howard Connors AG 402	Ω Wayne Bridenstine AG 776	Ω Stephen "Paco" Decker AG 885	Ω Ryan W. Whiteside AG 1546
Ω William "Doc" Farber AG 445	Ω Peter E. Binder AG 786	Ω George Sappingfield AG 895	Ω Christopher S. Burgess AG 1548
Ω Faris G. Pfister AG 486	Ω Thomas J. Storms AG 787	Ω Brad "Digger" Gullickson AG 996	Ω Jason D. Macke AG 1597
Ω George S. Mickelson AG 653	Ω Robert Azelton AG 798	Ω Gary Cwach AG 1001	Donovan J. Barnes AG 1877
Ω Charles Nass AG 670	Ω Clark Johnson AG 807	Ω Mons. James Doyle AG 1078	
Ω Patrick Hayes AG 706	Ω Richard P. Holm AG 810	Ω Michael Oates AG 1125	
Ω Kenneth Buell AG 727	Ω Robert Lewandowski AG 822		
Ω Fred Oleson AG 730	Ω Rex H. Camerer AG 829		

### < \$1,000 (Reminder: need to have over \$1,000 *pledged* to be on Donor Plaque)

Jerry Novotny '66	Paul H. Hetland '89	Nathan M. Rentschler '08	Riley Riggs '23
Dennis D. Mitchell '67	James M. Slaba '90	Matthew J. Ballard '08	Tyler Gere '24
Vernon Halter '71	Dean A. Karras '91	Ryan W. Griffith '09	Ethan S. Riswold '23
Rodney R. Krueger '72	Jeffrey C. Holdorf '91	Ryan N. Everson '16	Logan R. Stone '24
John M. Brown '73	Kirby A. Proehl '94	Eric B. Rupe '17	Grant Judson '24
Michael Schmidt '74	Kurt E. Johnson '94	Seth B. Pierce '17	Reed C. Lenker '24
Anthony "Tony" Hansen '77	Brian J. Steele '94	Jace M. Jerome '18	Max Mickelson '25
Geoffrey Fowler '78	Michael Goodhope '94	Andrew D. Holmes '20	Carter Norris '25
Lee Holman '79	Randall R. Heisinger '96	Casey Williams '22	Colin D. Carstens '25
Steven Culhane '80	Erik Hulm '96	Caleb J. Lusk '22	Triston J. Curry '25
Thomas Gulbranson '83	Justin W. Graves '97	Matt A. Wegener '22	Zach Ciurej-Hatcher '25
Bradley S. Fowler '82	Robert L. Barron '98	Tyson G. Dahler '22	Seth Knoer '25
Mark L. Overbaugh '82	Jeffrey J. Steichen '00	Tayte O. Gleason '23	Paul Heth '25
Michael D. Miller '85	Christopher T. Brevik '01	Alex R. Kolbeck '23	Patrick Gulbranson (Hon.)
John A. Smedsrud '88	Kevin W. Vohhahme '04	Jaron J. Pesicka '23	
Mark Vavruska '88	Karl L. Hoskins '04	Tyler S. Ezra '23	
Robert N. Seuntjens '88	Gregory L. Arens '08	Quinton Tordsen '23	

### Friends & Family

Robbie L. Arend	George & Stephanie Gongopolis	Stephanie Kraft	Diane F. Ross
Bob Baker	Jean & Tim Graf	Bart & Lisa Laber	Sayre Associates
Bridget Bergin	Erin Gullickson	Jenna Lequire	David W. Siebrasse
Al & Augie Buck	Bryan Hammer	Joe & Pam Lux	Arlin K. Simmons
Mark & Terri Buechler	Abigail Hampton	Mark & Toni Meile	Dennis Smith
Carol & Wayne Carvey	Bill H. Hansen	Brad Meyer	Ralph & Sheree Soles
Judy & Todd Cheever	Julie Hayek	Paul Millman	Kristi Tamash
Glen Clough	Alan Hochreiter	Robert M. Murphy	George Williamson
Craig A. Connell	James E. Hoffman	Ron E. Olson	Kari Zeeb
Kevin A. Doyle	Jim & Rhonda Holbeck	Justin Parliament	David L. Zimbeck
William J. Ellingson	Vincent J. Hurley	Dieter W. Proehl	Jim & MaryAnn Zimmerman
Steven G. Evjen	Jim Huss	Renee Rabe	
Scott Fiedler	Jerry Kippes	Kevin & Marsha Rhinehart	



## AGZHC Financial Update: A Letter to the Alumni

Dear Alumni,

Thank you to all who have generously donated to our Capital Campaign, and to those who have expedited their pledges to help reduce our construction loan. Currently, our loan balance stands at \$666,616.70, with \$21,533.95 in our Capital Campaign account, which I will soon apply to the loan as additional donations arrive.

We are on track to cover our loan entirely, thanks to the outstanding pledges, which was a goal set by the Board before construction began.

This success has sparked discussions about potential expansions, including adding a Sports Court on the south side of the house for activities like basketball, volleyball, and pickleball come spring, should our loan payments continue at this pace.

Our occupancy is nearly at capacity, and we've seen our rental income quadruple compared to what we received from the old house. Previously, we depended on Alumni Annual Donations to balance our budget, but with current trends, we anticipate being able to cover operational costs with chapter rents alone, allowing us to save annual donations for future projects or emergencies.

I will compile a detailed financial report after the year ends, once all expenses are finalized, and share it through this newsletter next year.

Your contributions have not only been financial but have demonstrated the strength and engagement of our alumni base. It's clear that a fraternity thrives with a robust alumni support system both financially and operationally. We are growing stronger, and success begets suc-

cess.

Let's keep this momentum going.

Thank you once again for your support.

Randy Sorensen,  
Treasurer  
AG 989



### USD to Hold Winter Reunions



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH DAKOTA**  
FOUNDATION & ALUMNI

#### Fort Myers Alumni Social

**February 13, 2025**

Marriott Sanibel Harbour Resort & Spa  
17260 Harbour Pointe Dr  
Fort Myers, FL 33908

6:30pm - 8:30pm Eastern

Click [HERE](#) to register.

#### Scottsdale Alumni Social

**March 12, 2025**

McDowell Mountain Golf Club  
10690 E Sheena Dr  
Scottsdale, AZ 85255

5:30pm - 7:30pm Mountain

Click [HERE](#) to register.

Since we are not holding events this winter, perhaps Lambda Chi's can meet up beforehand!

## THE YOTE BOOK

### Q&A with Richard E. "Dick" Brown

*Reprinted from The YoteBook, a production of the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of South Dakota, November 25, 2024*

**What inspired you to pursue a career in public service, and how did your time at USD influence that decision?**

As a fifth generation South Dakotan, I was raised in a family legacy which embraced a passion for community involvement, development and a respect for public service. No one outside of my immediate family had a more long-lasting impact on my life than USD political science department chairman and professor emeritus Dr. William O. "Doc" Farber. He was my mentor, friend and matchmaker. An icon of South Dakota political life and public service, Doc's basic philosophy to stimulate critical thought, encourage public service participation in a meaningful way and motivate students to reach their highest potential is his USD mentoring legacy. The fact that he practiced the public service participation that he preached gave him lasting credibility and a legacy to follow by decades of students beyond graduation day.



**In your experience, what are the qualities that make someone effective in a public service role?**

Accept Dr. Bill Farber's admonition to "think of the possibilities" public service. This is to embrace the best of inclusive leadership, having a "service above self" philosophy, a dedication to mentor people who are inspired and who have a mission. Foster an unabashed commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of all we

touch today and in the future. All of this anchored firmly in the civility of personal and public discourse, respect for diversity, the sanctity of truth, integrity, dignity, inclusiveness and tolerance of differences that foster a supportive public and private environment of a large-

er collaborative community that advances the opportunity for citizen visions and dreams to become realities.

**What advice would you give to current students in the political science department who are interested in working in public services or politics?**

Read "Footprints on the Prairie: The Life and Times of W.O. Farber"!! Tom Brokaw in his forward commentary references Doc's "...enduring reminder that citizenship is a privilege to be exercised and nourished." In remarks to his students "The Farber Testament" May 8, 1976 Doc stated "...to broaden one's horizons, travel, experimentation, and bold thinking must be the goals." My mentor said

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## Brown Q&A (cont'd)

it well "To make a difference, to serve well: One needs the background to know - the vision to see - and the will to do." This is what makes public service the "noblest of profession."

**How has your relationship with the university evolved since graduation, and what makes it special?**

Since graduation as a USD government major

with a B.A. in 1966 and M.A. in 1967, my involvement with the USD family, Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity and the Department has been a continuous, collaborative, supportive partnership of advocacy and support. I have cherished the honor to serve on the USD Foundation and Political Science Farber Fund Boards. What makes it special is that one is always on the court seeking and thinking about the possibilities just around the corner. GO YOTES!

## Fendrich and Roberts Receive Order of Achievement

The 60th Lambda Chi Alpha General Assembly and 2024 Stead Leadership Seminar was held in August in Scottsdale, Arizona. Harry Roberts and Steve Fendrich received the Order of Achievement, the highest honor of Lambda Chi Alpha.

According to Nick Bratvold, Alpha-Gamma has now had five recipients, including Dennis Daugaard, Jim Abbott, and Kevin Brady—more than any other chapter in Lambda Chi.

(From [Lambda ChiAlpha.org](https://lambdachialpha.org)): After graduation, Steve and Harry moved to Texas and started their careers at American Bed Company, gaining their initial experience in the bedding industry. Harry managed retail lo-

cations in several states and was involved in advertising, while Steve also managed stores and served as the company controller.

In 1986, they, along with their partner Paul Stork, founded The Mattress Firm and opened retail stores in Houston, Texas. Despite the challenges of starting a business during the oil bust, which led to massive layoffs and high home foreclosure rates, their combined skills in sales, advertising, and finance helped them succeed.

Through hard work and strategic decisions, they expanded from one store to multiple locations in Houston and later established a presence in Dallas. In 1994, they shifted their focus to franchising, offering their successful business model to dedicated employees, turning them into entrepreneurs. This expansion grew The Mat



*Steve Fendrich (AF 1195) (left) and Harry Roberts (AF 1185) (right) receive the Order of Achievement from past recipient Kevin Brady (AF 999) (center)*

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## David and Kathy Cullen '76 – Professional Achievement

Reprinted from the [University of South Dakota Foundation & Alumni website](#)

David and Kathy Cullen are longstanding supporters of USD, known for their commitment to philanthropy, leadership, and hard work.



Both earned their undergraduate degrees from the University of South Dakota. David joined the family business, JP Cullen: Commercial Contractor, in the 1970s, rising from laborer to CEO and contributing significantly to the company's growth and success. With over 40 years of service, David's impact on JP Cullen and the construction industry is marked by innovation and dedication.

Kathy, an accomplished speech pathologist, spent her career supporting individuals with complex needs in settings like the Janesville, WI, School District and the University of Wisconsin Waisman Center. Her experience in healthcare complemented her extensive volunteer work with organizations like the Ronald McDonald House Charities Foundation and the Susan G. Komen Charity.

The Cullens' professional and community contributions are exemplary, and USD is honored to recognize their achievements.

## Fendrich & Roberts (cont'd)

tress Firm brand from two to thirty-two markets within three years.

In 1997, they sold the Houston and Dallas retail company and the franchise entity. Despite the difficulty of leaving their successful venture, it was the right decision. Both Steve and Harry stayed in the industry in different roles. Harry later co-founded Mattress Pro, which was sold to the new owners of The Mattress Firm in 2007. In 2020, Harry was honored as one of the three "Retail Giants" in bedding by Furniture Today Magazine.

Throughout their professional career, Steve and Harry have hired countless Lambda Chi's, carrying on the tradition of Brotherhood throughout their professional career. In his letter of recommendation, fellow Alpha-Gamma Brother and co-worker Doug Christensen wrote:

"It may sound silly to be excited about selling mattresses, but they found a way to bring it out of us. We worked hard and laughed often doing something you wouldn't instinctively think of as fun. Harry and Steve and their partner Paul built something we were all proud of, and, to this day, I doubt there are many organizations that have as tight knit a group as we did then.

Today, many know Harry and Steve for the massive business they built and the success they had along the way—all of which is well deserved. Yet, for me, I will always remember them as having given a dumb kid like me (and so many others) a chance. If they learned to be leaders at Lambda Chi, they perfected it during their time at The Mattress Firm."



## 75th Anniversary of Mickelson's Dedication of Crazy Horse Memorial Celebrated in the Black Hills

2023 marked the 75th anniversary of the start of the Crazy Horse Memorial in the Black Hills. Governor George T. Mickelson (AG 103) was there on June 3, 1948, to demonstrate the State of South Dakota's support for the endeavor. The governor, with the help of his seven-year-old son George S., [set off the first blast](#) on the mountain carving.

"The only politician in South Dakota who came was Gov. George T. Mickelson," said Ruth Zilkowski, widow of artist Korzak Zilkowski and long serving CEO of the Crazy Horse Memorial in a 2006 interview. "The rest of them didn't want anything to do with the project."

Forty years later during South Dakota's Cen-



*Governor George T. Mickelson (AG 103), standing next to Oglala Lakota Chief Standing Bear beneath the sculpture model during the 1950 dedication of the Crazy Horse Memorial in the Black Hills. (Photo from the Custer Chronical)*

Mickelson shared the vision laid out by Oglala Lakota Chief Standing Bear and artist Korzak Zilkowski to build a monument honoring the Native Peoples of the Northern Plains, depicting their heroes in the backdrop of the early heroes of the entire country memorialized in neighboring Mt. Rushmore.

ennial in 1989, Governor George S. Mickelson (AG 653), observed that relations between the people of Native descent and European-American descent had still not fully reconciled their past.

He declared a Year of Reconciliation, and initiated a number of pro-

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## Crazy Horse 75th (cont'd)

grams and events to bring together the people of South Dakota.

Later, in 1990, Mickelson made a declaration that in South Dakota that Columbus Day would be renamed Native American Day, honoring Indigenous cultures that call South Dakota home. South Dakota was the first state to officially celebrate Native American Day.

At the first Native American Day holiday gathering, Gov. Mickelson told more than 1,200 people, "We can't turn back the clock. We can only turn to the future together. What we can do as leaders, both Native American and white, is teach others that we can change attitudes."

Today, both governors are remembered not for their efforts to cut taxes or bring fiscal responsibility to state government, but for their

efforts to bring unity to our state.



*Tim Giago, publisher of the Lakota Times (left), confers with Governor George S. Mickelson (AR 653). Giago lobbied for Native American Day and the Year of Reconciliation in 1990 to honor the 100th anniversary of the Wounded Knee Massacre. (Photo from Native Sun News Today)*

## Refer Prospective Members

Do you have a son, nephew, brother or neighbor that is going to USD? Would they be a good Lambda Chi? Let us know at [alphagammazetaaa@gmail.com](mailto:alphagammazetaaa@gmail.com).

What are we looking for in a prospective member? According to our national fraternity, we look for men with:

- scholastic aptitude
- leadership potential
- strength of character
- dedication to service

At USD, we have always added in friendliness and sociability; is this someone we would want to live with in the house? Are they a "good guy"?

There is also a way to refer prospective members online, even at other colleges and universities: [www.lambdachi.org/refer-a-brother/](http://www.lambdachi.org/refer-a-brother/).

Furthermore, according to the National Fraternity, "Letters of recommendation submitted to the Chapter by an alumnus on behalf of a prospective member should be courteously acknowledged by the recruitment chairman. It is then the responsibility of the recruitment chairman to notify the alumnus of the outcome of the recruitment period."

## Phoenix Weekly Winter Coffees

Do you go to Arizona each winter? Stop in and say hi at the weekly USD Lambda Chi coffee! They meet every Tuesday at

9:00 a.m. at George's Café, 16810 N 99th Ave, Sun City, AZ 85351. They meet from mid-Oct to mid-May.

Jeff Esbenshade is the host, and most of the guys are from the late 1960s and early 1970s, but anyone is welcome!





## Petersen on Fraternity and Sorority Political Action Committee

Hello alumni brothers!

It was great seeing some of you during Dakota Days for the dedication of the new house. For those of you who have not met me, my name is Griffin Petersen (ΑΓ 1998), and I am a junior at USD studying political science and criminal justice. I have been a member of the Lambda Chi Alpha chapter there since the beginning of my freshman year in Fall of 2022, and I am reaching out to you all to share some information about the work of the Fraternity and Sorority Political Action Committee (FSPAC) and seek your financial support for the organization.

The FSPAC is the fundraising arm of the larger Fraternal Government Relations Coalition (FGRC), and it is the largest PAC focused solely on issues of education. We donate to a bipartisan slate of candidates for the US House and Senate who are supportive of the Greek community's legislative agenda, and after my service as a lobbyist for the FGRC at their annual Capitol Hill Day last Spring, I was appointed to the PAC's first-ever Student Advisory Committee. Since then, I have learned a great deal about some of the issues affecting Greek chapters across the country and why the work that the PAC is doing is so important.

Greek organizations make up the backbone of student involvement on America's college campuses. Despite this, university administrations continually single out fraternities and sororities with disciplinary action, and they have treated the Greek community with hostility and resentment for far too long. A recent example of this came just last February, when the University of Maryland suspended the activities of all 52 of its Greek-letter organizations in response to hazing incidents that implicated just 5 of its chapters.

The suspension meant that fraternity and sorority members could not interact with their new recruits, and that led to cases where sets of siblings in the same chapter could not see each other for weeks on end. You read that right-- siblings.

Brother Griffin Petersen was recently appointed as a member of the first ever Student Advisory Committee of the Fraternity and Sorority Political Action Committee (FSPAC).

**GRIFFIN PETERSEN**  
Member, FSPAC  
Student Advisory Committee



The FSPAC is a political action committee formed in 2005 that advocates for freedom of association rights, single-sex status concerns, anti-hazing legislation, and tax parity for collegiate housing. It supports pro-Greek political candidates and gives a voice to fraternities and sororities in the policymaking process.

At Hill Day, the stories I heard from my fellow Greeks and brothers from UMD and other schools were shocking. At USD, the Greek houses have undoubtedly had their disagreements with the University before, but we have never felt the need to justify our existence to the school that we pay to attend. These stories inspired me to grow more involved in the fight for students' rights to freely associated with organizations of our choosing. My experience in Lambda Chi Alpha has been nothing short of life-changing, and the friendships, connections, and opportunities to grow in my leadership and interpersonal skills is something that should never be denied to ambitious and high-achieving students like me.

The FSPAC is committed to supporting candidates that are sympathetic to the struggles that Greek houses have faced over the years, and there are a number of solutions that the FGRC is pursuing that will help

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## Greek PAC (cont'd)

ensure that fraternity and sorority members are protected. Among them is the Freedom of Association in Higher Education Act, a bill that guarantees the right of students to join single-sex organizations and penalizes federally funded universities from taking extreme adverse actions against Greek houses.

We have also continually pushed for the passage of the Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act, a bill that would grant tax-exempt status to donations for Greek housing facilities, which I know many of you have a lot of experience with as supporters of our recent Home Away from Home Campaign.

To continue this fight, the FSPAC needs your help. I am asking you all, as alumni, to consider how each of your experiences in Lambda Chi Alpha shaped your lives for the better, and what you would have done had that experience been taken from you. That is the reality faced by Greek students across the country, but it doesn't have to be this way. With your support, we can continue to uphold the basic rights of students and make our campuses more friendly toward our brothers and fellow Greeks.

**To donate, follow this link which will take you directly to my fundraising page:** [donate.fspac.org/griffin-petersen](https://donate.fspac.org/griffin-petersen)

If you have any questions about our organization and what it stands for, please feel free to reach back out to me at my email or phone number below. I am always happy to discuss important topics with fellow brothers. You can also visit the PAC's website at [donate.fspac.org/](https://donate.fspac.org/) for more information.

Thank you for your consideration! With your support, we can help Greek organizations maintain their status as some of the longest running social organizations in the history of American higher education!

Your brother in ZAX,

Griffin Petersen, AΓ 1998

## Lambda Chi Buys Carey's

Jared Heiden (AΓ 1848, class of 2011) has purchased Carey's Bar, a Vermillion landmark since 1954 (maybe you've heard of it!?!).



*Jared Heiden (AΓ 1848) has purchased Carey's Bar*

Heiden has been the Director of USD's Budget Office for the seven years. Below is a Q&A with Heiden from December 16.

### What made you decide to buy Carey's?

The decision to buy Carey's was no easy task but it ultimately came down to my knowledge of the business and appreciation for its history. I worked at Carey's in college with a handful of other Lambdas and there is no other way I would have wanted to spend my college years. I was studying finance and entrepreneurship, so owning a business was always on my mind. To be honest, I expressed interest in owning Carey's a long time before it became a realistic option.

### Do you have any changes planned?

I do not have any major changes or renovations planned currently, but that isn't to say a few updates may be noticed. One of the greatest things about Carey's is that despite the changes it has seen, it always feels like the same bar when people come back. The character, the glasses, the staff make it a proper bar and I'll never be the one to change that.

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## Carey's (cont'd)

**How have Vermillion and it's main street changed in the time you've been there?**

I've lived in Vermillion since 2007 and main street has seen some changes. Unfortunately, we've seen some small business come and go, but we've always seen some great additions including updates to the streetscape in downtown. Downtown offers a lot to everyone in Vermillion and remains very lively year-round, especially in the evenings.

*Heiden and his family inside Carey's  
(Photo courtesy of Jared Heiden)*



## Anything else you'd like brothers to know?

I do want to express a thank you to the alumni that made Friday afternoon during Dakota Days a great time. It was a proud moment to hear the excitement from the patrons when they learned a Lambda Chi bought Carey's. Although you guys had the bar full and the beers were flowing, I was able to shake hands and talk with a lot of you throughout the busy weekend.

To the over 21 actives that this letter may reach, anyone of you that wants to work hard and make some money & memories in the best bar in Vermillion, get a hold of me. I hired a brother a few months back, and I think he'd tell you it's a top tier place to work while in school. Speaking from my own experience, you never know where tending bar at Carey's may take you. Cheers.

So as if you didn't need another reason to visit Carey's when you're in Vermillion, now you can feel good patronizing a brother's business!



*This September at the Georgia-Alabama college football game, Logan Lamphere ran into Brad and Holly Delperdang in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where Delperdangs' son attends school. Their oldest daughter attended UGA while their youngest daughter attends Vanderbilt. (Kevin Edwards)*

## Required Minimum Distributions: What's New in 2025

*(by Roger Mjoen with info from Charles Schwab)*

For many investors entering their 70s, diligently contributing to and saving in tax-deferred retirement accounts must soon turn to making mandatory annual withdrawals. The government requires retirees to take required minimum distributions (RMDs) from such accounts after a certain age. Typically, once you reach age 73 (or 75 if you were born in 1960 or later), you must begin taking annual RMDs from all tax-deferred retirement accounts, including:

- 401(k) & 403(b)
- SEP IRAs
- SIMPLE IRAs
- Traditional IRAs

### Qualified Charitable Distribution

A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) allows individuals age 70½ and older to donate up to **\$108,000 for tax year 2025** (indexed for inflation) from an IRA account directly to charity—and use some or all of those funds to satisfy RMDs for the year.

For example, if your RMD for the year is \$100,000 but you only need \$50,000 for living expenses, you could donate the remaining \$50,000 via a QCD to satisfy the rest of your RMD. For those charitably inclined, QCDs can be a great tool for managing taxable income in retirement while also helping a worthy cause. Just be aware **QCDs are not permitted from 401(k)s** or other qualified plans.

### Cash vs QCD

If you are interested in making charitable donations, taking your full RMD and then donating cash could result in a higher tax bill than if you were to give through a QCD.

Prior to the IRA Charitable Rollover, some individuals would take the RMD withdrawal from their IRAs, report the distribution as taxable income, make a cash gift to charity, obtain the re-

quired receipts for charitable gifts over \$250, and take an itemized deduction on their tax return as shown in **Scenario 1**:

- Take RMD of \$100,000 and donate **\$50,000 in cash**
- Other nonportfolio income: \$50,000
- Annual RMD: + \$100,000
- QCD: + \$0
- Pretax income: = \$150,000
- Itemized deduction: – \$50,000
- Taxable income: = \$100,000
- Estimated taxes due: **\$16,909**

Not only was this process rather cumbersome, but it also resulted in increased adjusted gross income. With higher income, you may have paid more income tax on Social Security or paid a higher Medicare Part B premium.

### QCD

In 2025 an IRA owner who has reached the age of 70½ may transfer up to \$108,000 per year. The transfer is made directly from the IRA to a qualified public charity. The QCD is not taxable on your income tax return, so there is no need for a tax deduction. It is a simple and effective way to make a charitable gift as shown in **Scenario 2**:

- Take RMD of \$50,000 and **donate \$50,000 using a QCD**
- Other nonportfolio income: \$50,000
- Annual RMD: + \$100,000
- QCD: – \$50,000
- Pretax income: = \$100,000
- Standard deduction: – \$17,000
- Taxable income: = \$83,000
- Estimated taxes due: **\$13,180**

### LXA QCD Options

1. Alpha-Gamma Zeta Chapter has seven charitable **501(c)(3) endowment/scholarship funds** administered by the University of South Dakota Foundation, listed in order of creation market value as of November 30, 2024:

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## RMDs/QCDs (cont'd)

Mickelson Brotherhood Scholarship	\$513,350.51
Jerry H. Lammers Memorial Scholarship	\$39,290.44
Randy Reinking Scholarship	\$24,534.43
Jacob Z. Esbenshade-Lambda Chi Endowment	\$107,958.75
Scott & Staci Kesling Stern Lambda Chi Alpha Scholarship	\$20,661.92
Lambda Chi Alpha Alumni Endowment	\$107,374.65
Brad "Digger" Gullickson Humanitarian Scholarship	\$57,069.86
Total:	\$870,240.56

Donations to AGZ Chapter's charitable 501(c)(3) endowment/scholarship funds administered by USD Foundation can be mailed to the following address:

University of South Dakota Foundation  
1110 N. Dakota Street  
Vermillion, SD 57069  
Phone: 1-800-521-3575

\*(On the check's Memo Line, please include the fund name of your choosing.)

2. Alpha-Gamma Zeta Chapter also has a **Lambda Chi Alpha Educational Foundation (LCAEF)**, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) (EIN 13-6266432) administered at LXA National for 327 North Pine capital improvements and cash flow needs.

AGZ Chapter can request capital improvement funds from LCAEF in support of the AGZ Chapter House located at 327 North Pine and can also request cashflow as needed to support the expense for maintaining 327 North Pine.

Donations to LCAEF can be mailed to Nick Bratvold at the following address:

Nick Bratvold, CFRE  
Vice President, Lambda Chi Alpha Educational Foundation  
Address: 10 W Carmel Drive, Suite 220, Carmel, IN 46032  
Phone: (605) 553-4497

Email: [nbratvold@lambdachifoundation.org](mailto:nbratvold@lambdachifoundation.org)



### Bottom Line on RMDs

You don't necessarily want to give away money just to get a tax break. But if philanthropy is

already part of your financial plan, a QCD can be a great way to optimize the tax benefits of giving. When implementing an RMD-reduction strategy, there is no substitute for personalized advice from a tax professional who knows the details of your individual situation. Your financial advisor and tax professional can help make sure your giving strategy aligns with your retirement goals as well as any changes to tax rules.

## Sioux Falls "Bored" Meetings First Wednesday of Each Month

Brother Nick Magera (ΑΓ 1269) hopes to continue to organize monthly "Bored Meetings" (happy hours) for Sioux Falls area alumni. If you happen to be in town, join them! They get a nice mix of Brothers from different eras.

The informal event rotates around to different Sioux Falls establishments on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Central Time.

You can email Nick at [nmageraj@gmail.com](mailto:nmageraj@gmail.com) (new address!) to get on his mailing list. The 2025 Sioux Falls "Bored" Meetings are tentatively scheduled for the following dates, with locations to be announced:

- January 8
- February 5
- March 5
- April 2
- May 7
- June 4

## Join our LinkedIn Group

Are you looking for a new job? Perhaps your company is facing the infamous labor shortage affecting the country. Connect with Lambda Chi's from USD on LinkedIn! We have a group on LinkedIn, the business networking site, just for Lambda Chi's from USD. This could be a good way to find that new job or fill that open position!

To join, go to: [linkedin.com/groups/6629299/](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6629299/).

## Active Chapter News

### Founders Day Set for April 12

Founders Day has been set for Saturday, April 12 at the chapter house in Vermillion. Times TBD. Scholarships and annual awards will be presented and all alumni are invited to attend.

### New Officers Elected

High Alpha

**Griffin Petersen**, Onida

I am a junior at USD studying political science and criminal justice, and I am the incoming High Alpha of our chapter. Overall, we are looking forward to another outstanding school year as we continue this new era of Lambda Chi Alpha at USD, and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as its leader!

High Beta

**Jordy Martinez**, Sioux Falls

Hello brothers, my name is Jordy Martinez, and I am from Sioux Falls, SD. I am an exercise science major on the pre-physical therapy track! I chose to run for Beta to ensure our brotherhood was as close as ever and offer different bonding opportunities with my brothers. I also wanted to be an approachable leader that can assist others in any situation and can help navigate life on campus!

High Theta

**Taylor Van Emmerik**, Tea

I'm Taylor Van Emmerik, a senior studying Political Science and Economics and I am originally from Tea, SD. I sought Theta so I could continue and further our Philanthropic missions.

High Gamma

**Maxwell Bour**, Sioux Falls

I am from Sioux Falls, SD, and I am studying economics with plans to get my MBA. I decided to be Gamma again due to my experience with it in the past and felt like running it back.

High Tau

**Parker Van't Hul**, Rock Valley, IA

My name is Parker Van't Hul, and I am a sophomore studying Accounting and Finance from Rock Valley, IA. I was elected to be the next High Tau of our chapter and wanted to hold this position because it would help me grow as a professional in my field by strengthening my skills with the hands-on experience that comes with the position. I look forward to seeing what I can do in the position and what the next High



*Left to right: LJ Fries, Parker Van't Hul, Colby Harrell, Hari Kadarkaraisamy, Levi Taglioli, Griffin Petersen (seated left), Elias Gilk, Taylor Van Emmerik, Maxwell Bour, Gunnar Albertsen (Mental Health Chair), Jordy Martinez (seated right), Justin Tallman, Cade Wakley (Social Media Chair), Landon Bertram, Tyler Marshall.*

Zeta will accomplish this coming year.

High Iota

**Landon Bertram**, Pierre

Hello, my name is Landon Bertram. I am from Pierre, SD, and am a second year student here at USD. I wanted to be elected to this position because I feel that I can uphold the safe culture we currently have as a

*continued on next page*



## Active Chapter News (continued)

brotherhood.

High Kappa

**Justin Tallman**, Wakonda

Hello, my name is Justin Tallman I am currently the High Kappa. I wanted to hold this position because the education of our members is one of the most important parts of the fraternity.

Learning about the core values and history will shape our members for the rest of their lives and turn them into the best men they can be. I plan on reaching out to some of our alumni to incorporate them into kappa sessions so that when we are learning about the core values, they can talk about how our core values stuck with them and turned them into the men that they have become and have helped them throughout the years.

High Delta

**Elias Gilk**, Pierre

My name is Elias Gilk and I am the new Delta. I wanted this position because I was completely against fraternities as a whole when I came to college. Still, members and brothers of Lambda Chi invited me to everything and changed my perspective on not only what a fraternity is but also about what brotherhood really is. I wanted to pay my duty to men who may have the same thoughts about fraternities as I did and to get fitting gentlemen to join Lambda Chi because it was the best decision of my life and I want others to experience our brotherhood.

High Phi

**Hari Kadarkaraisamy**, Vermillion

My name is Hari and I'm a third year med bio student who aspires to be a doctor one day. I'm holding position as Phi because I want to leave a lasting legacy to over 60 brilliant men who will hopefully remember me as the Brother who graciously initiated them into Lambda Chi Alpha.

High Sigma

**Colby Harrell**, Miller

My Name is Colby Harrell, and I am from Miller, SD. I ran for High Sigma as I felt I could make a positive influence while helping to continue the

chapter's recent academic success. I believe in the strength of this fraternity and am grateful to be a part of it.

High Epsilon

**Colton (LJ) Fries**, Edgemont

I am from Custer, SD, and I am majoring in Business Administration with plans to get my J.D. I decided to run for Epsilon again because I like to plan and create a good environment for people around me. I plan to keep my position for Epsilon as long as I can so I can improve every time.

High Rho

**Levi Taglioli**, Spearfish

I'm currently studying Political Science, and intend to go to law school when I graduate. I am very grateful to have been welcomed to this fraternity, because of the involvement that Lambda has on campus and the sense of brotherhood we men share. I know that being a member of this brotherhood will help me to achieve my goals, and hope to make this chapter a place where the members can learn from the alumni.

House Manager

**Tyler Marshall**, Onida

I am from Onida, SD, where I grew up on a ranch. I am currently a sophomore and studying Kinesiology and Sport Management. I decided to run for house manager because I, probably, have the most extensive background when it comes to anything regarding things that need to be built, hung up, decorated, etc. for the house.

High Jock

**Cody Burris**, Sellersburg, IN

I chose to run for High Jock again to foster unity, camaraderie, and school spirit by leading athletic initiatives and encouraging active participation in sports and fitness. I aim to represent our fraternity with pride in competitions while promoting a culture of teamwork, discipline, and healthy living among my brothers.

## Alumni Spotlight: Bob Simpson (ΑΓ 1452)

**How I Got Here** by Bob Simpson *reprinted from "Long On Impact: A Deeper Dive Into the Wonderful World of Multifamily Impact Investing" from [LinkedIn.com](#).*



### What I Learned From Being Poor

I never intended to have a career in housing finance. In college, real estate and affordable housing never en-

tered my mind. I was an English and Theatre major. I minored in Latin. I dropped the only business class I ever took because it started at eight in the morning. Impact Investing, Green Finance and Corporate Social Responsibility – those terms hadn't been invented yet. If they had, I would have run from them.

I did not know it at the time, but my career journey began in the spring of my freshman year. Until that moment, I had lived a sheltered life. My family was not wealthy, but we did well. I had clothes on my back, food on the table, and never really thought much about money. We were middle class, and I entered college filled with dreams of going to graduate school, joining the peace corps, and writing the next great American novel.

And then one day, the phone rang in my dorm room. It was my dad. He was calling to let me

know that he was going to be arrested on 52 counts of felony tax fraud. By the time the day ended, we had no money, no income and no way to send me back to school in the fall. I became poor overnight and everything I thought I knew had come undone. It was like a bomb exploded and my life would never be the same.

Over the course of the next four years, I cobbled together enough money to graduate from college. I qualified for grants and loans, earned scholarships, kept my expenses low and I worked a lot of odd jobs. I did not have health insurance. I was never certain if I would be able to afford the next semester, or pay rent, or cover some unforeseen medical bill or car expense. I also had an amazing time and made lifelong friends. I was rarely unhappy. I was always stressed out.

There were a couple of key things that helped me along the way: Pell Grants, the kindness of other people, and good fortune. I still recall coming home from the last semester of my senior year. I had post-dated my final rent check, had no money in my bank account, and needed a job to make sure the check wouldn't bounce. So, I called my old boss from high school, and he created a job for me as a weekend janitor and overnight disc-jockey at our local radio station. I started work the next day, and the rent check cleared. After a few months, I got promoted to a full-time job as our News Director which gave me the opportunity to interview and get to know our state's elected officials. One of them was United States Senator Tom Daschle. He offered me a job and that changed the trajectory of my career and life.

It did not help me escape from being poor overnight, but it put me on a path. I was 30 years old before my

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## Alumni Spotlight: Bob Simpson

net worth was greater than zero. I've sold family heirlooms to pay rent and groceries. I've sold my plasma and taken out payday loans. I've lived on friend's couches, in low-income tax credit apartments, and other less desirable places with pigeon lice infestations, mold, and floors so slanted that the kitchen sink would overflow when it was half full. I was always behind on bills and when we finally bought a house, it was my wife's credit score that got us get a decent mortgage.



*Simpson in Washington, DC, in his first cubicle  
(Photo from LinkedIn.com)*

While I was able to eventually claw my way out, I still live in fear of being poor again – even though the numbers tell me otherwise. The truth of the matter is that once you've experienced poverty, I don't think you ever escape it. It is just a stone that you carry, and it either becomes your personal superpower or your kryptonite.

While I occasionally struggle with the kryptonite, I made that stone my superpower. And I have come to appreciate that my journey out of poverty was relatively easy. For starters, my poverty was situational so I could always see the light at the end of the tunnel. I was also blessed with advantages to escape that were

not available to everyone. I always had a place to call home. I had good health, a great public education, and friends from stable families. I was also fortunate to be a tall, outwardly confident, white man who looked like he belonged in a suit. I used every one of these advantages to get out of my situation. I worked hard and pulled every lever that was within my grasp. I just had more levers to pull. I am thankful for that good fortune, but it was not a virtue. It was just dumb luck.

Over the course of my journey, I have learned a couple things.

1. **Being poor sucks** and it is usually beyond our control. A few people do earn it. Some, like me, fall into it. Most folks are born into it. Regardless of how a person gets there, it should always be escapable. It should not define the future of the millions of kids who had the bad luck to be born there. And the same holds true for those who are born into wealth. Like generational poverty, generational wealth should not be a guarantee. A healthy society must allow for a person's economic condition to both rise and fall and rise again.

2. **We must strive to make all poverty situational.** In a capitalist society, it is inevitable that people will fall on hard times. But it is inexcusable when people are born into them. The role of a federal safety net must be to make a path out of poverty feasible.

3. **A strong federal safety net begins with affordable housing.** A working safety net is only as strong as the fabric of the net. Affordable housing is that fabric. Finding a path out of poverty is infinitely easier and more cost-effective when a person has an affordable place to call home. That is where my path began, and if we are to be successful

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## Alumni Spotlight: Bob Simpson

as a nation in making sure that every person who falls into poverty has an opportunity to get out, then making sure they have an affordable place to live is where we must begin.

This is not rocket science. It can be done. It will require compromise, hard work, and probably a little dumb luck.

As a new administration sets off on its journey to improve people's lives, it must begin where people live.

*Bob Simpson is the CEO and Founder of the Multifamily Impact Council, a non-profit membership organization responsible for establishing and maintaining industry standards and reporting guidelines for impact investing that help increase the flow of capital to support affordable and sustainable multifamily rental housing properties in the United States. Bob is the former Head of Multifamily Affordable and Green Financing at Fannie Mae and is a nationally recognized expert in affordable, sustainable, and healthy housing with more than 25 years of experience working at the highest levels of housing finance and public policy. He is a 1993 graduate from the University of South Dakota, and is a member of the Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity.*

## Alumni Spotlight:

### Cody Siewert (AF 1725)

*Story reprinted from the Sioux City Journal, September 27, 2024.*

#### **New lawn, landscaping business focuses on carbon-neutral approach** by Jodi Schwan

A new lawn and landscaping business focuses on a carbon-neutral approach and "mindful landscaping."

Cody Siewert started [Greenie Lawn & Landscaping](#) in the spring. He has a doctorate degree in higher education and spent many years working at universities and health care systems.



"It's my passion," Siewert said. "I have a different background than a *continued on next page*

## New Board Members

During the AGZ Annual Meeting held over Dakota Days, three new members were added to the Alpha-Gamma Zeta Housing Corporation Board of Directors. Thanks for *giving a damn!*



*Dave Landry (AF 867), Michael May (AF 1467), and Logan Stone (AF 1979) are all new members of the Alpha-Gamma Zeta Housing Corporation Board of Directors. Now that the Home Away From Home campaign has ended, the board plans to meet quarterly, and does so via Zoom.*



## Alumni Spotlight: Siewert

lot of folks. In March, I quit my job of 11 years at Avera to start this business.”

Siewert, who grew up on a small farm near Yankton, said using organic chemicals and electric tools allows him to “go home at night knowing I didn’t poison any of my workers or the environment.”

Greenie Lawn & Landscaping offers eco-friendly mowing through the use of electric lawnmowers. Siewert said electric mowers are “whisper-quiet” compared with gas-powered mowers and eliminate the exhaust fumes, which contain pollutants.

“As electric tools are not belt-driven, they require basically no maintenance for me,” Siewert said. “In the many years I’ve been working with machines, there’s been barely any regulation to improve the productivity of small gas/diesel-powered engines, let alone to mitigate the environmental hazards coming out of those machines.”



Siewert said the [EPA estimates](#) that 5 percent to 10 percent of air pollution is emitted through gas-powered lawn tools in the U.S.

“I’m focused more on carbon neutrality than



anything,” Siewert said. “I’ve got a trailer with solar panels, and all of my commercial equipment is electrically charged. The average mower puts out like eight cars’ worth of pollutants a year.”



On top of thinking green, Siewert said his services stay affordable because of the lack of maintenance the tools require.

“Unfortunately, there’s not a lot of interest in mindful landscaping at the moment,” Siewert said. “But I believe there is going to come a time when people will have to plant way more heat-resistant and less water-consuming plants.”

Greenie Lawn & Landscaping currently employs three people and is considering hiring seasonal help, Siewert said. It offers landscaping services, tears out old landscaping, works on drainage-type projects and will offer snow removal and holiday lighting in the winter.

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*Omega*

*Fred Oleson,  
AF 730*



**Fred Wayne Oleson** passed away peacefully in his sleep, next to his loving wife, on November 17, 2024, at the age of 79 in Brown Deer, Wisconsin. Born on June 7, 1945, Fred dedicated much of his life to serving his country and community, leaving behind a legacy of resilience and dedication.

Fred was born to Elaine and Darrel Oleson and raised in Laurens, Iowa. In his early years he attended Laurens Elementary and later Laurens High School, actively participating in football, basketball, and track. He continued his education at the University of South Dakota where he was an active member of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity, joined the Army, and met his future wife, Micky. Following his graduation with a degree in business and marriage to Micky, Fred was a Vietnam Veteran who served valiantly in the U.S. Army as a First Lieutenant with the First Air Cavalry from 1968 to 1974. He was a decorated veteran who received many military recognitions including the Bronze Star for Meritorious Service. His military tenure was marked by a steadfast commitment to his fellow soldiers and the nation.

After his military service, Fred and Micky moved to Wisconsin where they raised their kids in Racine and later Brown Deer. Fred transitioned to a successful career in retail management, working as a store manager at Sears from 1971 until his retirement in 2001. Throughout his career, Fred was known for his sense of humor and his hardworking nature and loyalty, both to his colleagues and to the community he served. He was extremely generous in his giving to his family, church, and anyone in need. He loved the Lord and his family.

Beyond his professional and military accomplishments, Fred was deeply involved in his local church, Evangel Assembly of God, where he found a strong community of faith and service. In his leisure time over the years, Fred enjoyed golfing and hunting. During his retirement years, he enjoyed going on walks with Micky, watching sports (while watching multiple shows and listening to the radio), and spending time with his granddaughter. Time with family offered the opportunity for him to share the corny jokes he made up in front of anyone who would listen – often leading to the embarrassment of his kids. Later in life, he became the neighborhood's watchful eye, ensuring safety and community spirit.

Fred is survived by his loving wife of 55 years, Marilyn 'Micky' Oleson, who survives him along with their daughter, Megan Oleson; son, Darrel 'Odie' Oleson (Jolleen); and favorite granddaughter, Violet Oleson. He is also survived by his little sister, Vicki Wilson (Ralph) and numerous nieces, nephews, extended relatives, and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Elaine and Darrel 'Odie' Oleson.

*Reprinted from Krause Funeral Homes & Cremation Service, Inc.*



## 2024 Operating Fund Alumni Donor Wall

*This donor wall reflects annual donations to the Operating Fund of the Alpha Gamma Zeta Housing Corporation for annual operations (as of December 13, 2024).*

*Our fiscal giving year is January 1 through December 31, so this Donor Wall resets January 1.*

### Platinum Donor (> \$1000)

Roger Mjoen AG 790  
Alan Pearson AG 972

Rob Anderson AG 1019

David C. Nelson AG 1318  
Michael Runge AG 1379

### Gold Donor (\$500 - \$999)

Tom Aman AG 551

Lyle Castle AG 912

Paul Amundson AG 1213

### Silver Donor (\$250 - \$499)

Dennis Mitchell AG 721  
Thomas Conway AG 725  
David Landry AG 867  
Dennis Daugaard AG 917

James Morrison AG 930  
Randy Sorensen AG 989  
David Hurrell AG 1244  
G. Mark Mickelson AG 1337

Logan Lamphere AG 1596  
Garrett R. Cox AG 1771

### Bronze Donor (\$100 - \$249)

Clark Conover AG 619  
Victor G. Raphael AG 726  
Kendall Schmidt AG 741  
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John Leuthold AG 821  
Roger Roskens AG 824  
Craig Connell AG 825

Bill Bowen AG 826  
Rodney R Krueger AG 834  
Ralph "Van" Hines AG 844  
Steven Holm AG 879  
Thomas "Frog" Froning AG 881  
Roger Sullivan AG 900  
Randall Kasch AG 922  
Scott Shaeffer AG 976  
Terry Schmidt AG 984

Fred Slunecka AG 1022  
Michael A. Fox AG 1122  
Blake Duerre AG 1143  
Charles A. Nelson AG 1199  
Gregg Duisttermars AG 1274  
Thomas Loofe AG 1417  
Van Carmody AG 1790

### Annual Alumni Donation (\$50 - \$99)

Thomas M. Vick AG 580  
David Gienapp AG 667  
Theodore Steinkogler AG 685  
Dick Brown AG 688  
Dennis E Luft AG 697  
Uldis Sutka AG 708

Daniel L. Jackson AG 714  
Patrick L. Gulbranson AG 750  
Jeff Esbenshade AG 757  
George Strandell AG 758  
G. Elton Winters AG 778  
Scott Schuknecht AG 1129

Scott G. Stern AG 1178  
Thomas Carpenter AG 1190  
Brian Steele AG 1490  
Tyler Tordsen AG 1863

***Thank you for your annual donations!***

## *The Alpha Gamma Fellowship Archives*

### [Vol 1: Issue 1 \(2017\)](#)

[Alumni newsletter created](#)

Lambda Chi Alpha  
Alpha Gamma Zeta  
Alumni Association

### [Vol 3: Issue 1 \(2020\)](#)

[St. Paul gathering](#)



### [Vol 5: Issue 1 \(2022\)](#)

[Brady retires](#)



### [Vol 1: Issue 2 \(2017\)](#)

[Dr. Rick Holm encourages colonoscopy](#)



### [Vol 3: Issue 2 \(2020\)](#)

[Covid Edition](#)



### [Vol 5: Issue 2 \(2022\)](#)

[E.Y. Berry Library expands](#)



### [Vol 1: Issue 3 \(2018\)](#)

[Sue and Dick Brown on SDPB](#)



### [Vol 3: Issue 3 \(2020\)](#)

[New House Capital Campaign Begins](#)



### [Vol 6: Issue 1 \(2023\)](#)

[Chapter Houses Over the Years](#)



### [Vol 2: Issue 1 \(2019\)](#)

[Dakota Days 2018](#)



### [Vol 4: Issue 1 \(2021\)](#)

[Oyler named Fulbright Scholar](#)



### [Vol 6: Issue 2 \(2023\)](#)

[Construction of New House Begins](#)



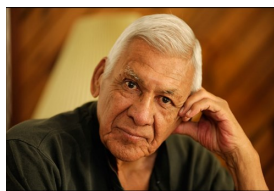
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[Construction Ahead of Schedule](#)





## Donor Card



## Lambda Chi Alpha @ USD 2024 Alumni Donor Card (Jan 1-Dec 31)

☐ Home Away From Home Campaign: \$\_\_\_\_\_

and/or

☐ Platinum Donor - \$1000 and above

☐ Gold Donor - \$500 and above

☐ Silver Donor - \$250 - \$499

☐ Bronze Donor - \$100 - \$249

☐ Annual Alumni Dues - \$50

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Click [HERE](#) to donate, or pay by [PayPal](#).

Please make checks payable to: **"Alpha Gamma Zeta House Corporation"**

Alpha Gamma Zeta House Corporation  
% Randy Sorensen, Treasurer  
1317 Helford Lane  
Carmel, IN 46032

*Thank you for your donation!*

## We want to hear from you!

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at  
The University of South Dakota