



Gamma Iota Continues to Strive at LSU *Chapter Excels in Recruitment, Philanthropy, and Academics*



Our Derby Days banners on display at the house in March 2021.

In the fall of 2021, the Gamma Iota Chapter of Sigma Chi continued to build and strive at LSU. When recruitment concluded in late August, we welcomed 52 pledges—the largest class since our recolonization in 2019 and the third-largest pledge class out of all 18 fraternities on campus.

In September, the chapter spent significant time aiding areas affected by Hurricane Ida, including a joint service trip to Luling, Louisiana, with the Lambda Psi Chapter of the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. We are proud to lend a helping hand in times of need.

On October 9, all 105 members of Gamma Iota were formally initiated for the first time. The night after initiation, we had an initiation banquet with members of headquarters and LSU's senior leadership. Following initiation, we began ritualistic chapter meetings for the first time. We are proud of our alumni participation in these meetings, and we want to emphasize that all alumni are invited and encouraged to attend. Meetings occur every Monday night at 7 p.m.

At the end of October, the chapter hosted its first-ever Halloween party, "The Haunted House of the Southern Woods." The party featured a live band in the backyard and a DJ in the chapter room. It was the talk of campus for several weeks.



Gamma Iota and Lambda Psi brothers took a joint service trip to Luling, Louisiana, to help those affected by Hurricane Ida.

In November, we took our annual service trips to the Maison des Amis homeless shelter and the USS KIDD. To round out the fall, we hosted successful tailgates for every home game, which drew in some of the largest crowds of any fraternity on campus.

Academically, the chapter finished strong despite the restraints caused by the pandemic. Twenty-five members finished with a GPA of 3.5 or above (Dean's List), and two members finished above a 4.0 GPA (President's List).

This spring, we hope to raise a significant amount of money for the Huntsman Cancer Foundation through our second annual Stephen



Previous Consul Will Thomas '22 and Current Consul Miles McLendon '23 with Grand Pro Consul Bob Wilson.

Carter Memorial Derby Days event (March 28–April 3). We will also be welcoming another pledge class of quality young men, and we hope to continue making Gamma Iota proud.

In Hoc,
Miles McLendon '23
Consul

ALUMNI, WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR GAMMA IOTA BROTHERS

We are trying to reinvigorate the Gamma Iota Sig alumni base and increase membership and participation. If you would like to join the alumni chapter, please send a \$50 check to:

Sigma Chi Alumni Association, Attn: René Roberts, Treasurer
P.O. Box 1486 • Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Also, please consider becoming an annual dues-paying member of the house corporation by either sending a check in the amount of \$100, payable to "House of the Southern Woods," to 635 Louisiana Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, or by making a \$100 payment via PayPal to housesouthernwoods@gmail.com.



Reflecting on 2021 and Planning for 2022

Updates from the Alumni Association

2021 was a banner year for the Gamma Iota Chapter of Sigma Chi. Through hard work and the integrated effort of the Sigma Chi Zeta Colony, the house corporation, the chapter advisory board, and the Baton Rouge Alumni Chapter, we were able to regain the Gamma Iota charter in March 2021. Here are some of our major accomplishments from last year:

- Under the direction of the house corporation, major repairs were completed on the House of the Southern Woods (replaced the chapter room roof, replaced siding on the housemother suite side of the house, refurbished the name plates on the wall, and restained the stage in the chapter room). The house corporation received the Outstanding House Corporation Award from Sigma Chi Headquarters for our efforts.
- Due to the constraints of the COVID environment, on March 20, 2021, Gamma Iota alumni conducted the Founders' Ritual Initiation of 70 new Gamma Iota Sigs at the chapter house.
- With the assistance of Sigma Chi Headquarters, on October 8-9, Gamma Iota alumni participated in the full initiation of 108 Gamma Iota Sigs (including the 70 initiated using the Founders' Ritual on March 20) at St. James Episcopal Church. The size of the combined five pledge classes precluded initiation at the House of the Southern Woods.
- Following the initiation ceremonies, the alumni chapter sponsored the Installation Banquet at the Lod Cook Alumni Center. Grand Pro Consul **Bob Wilson, Fort Hays '81** presented the new charter, making Gamma Iota Chapter a reality once again.

As we move forward in 2022, we have a full agenda of activities scheduled to grow the alumni chapter and enhance the relationship between alumni and actives. Our plans include:

- Hosting a meeting of all past Gamma Iota consuls to provide information for the sequel to *Milk and Donuts Forever*, which was written by Brother **Jay Dardenne '76** to document the first 50 years of the Gamma Iota Chapter. The sequel will capture the history of the second 50 years.
- Reestablishing the Gamma Iota Scholarship Program and the interaction with the LSU Foundation through the Lod Cook Leadership Scholarship. In addition, we will have continued interaction with the Sigma Chi Foundation regarding available scholarship funding.
- Reestablishing the alumni "Big Brother" program to facilitate the interaction of alumni with members of the active chapter.

In Hoc,

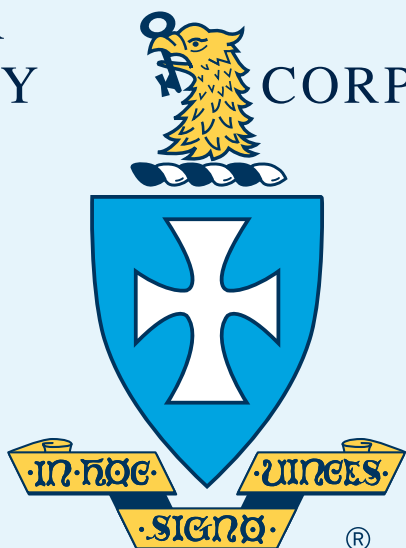
John Cadwallader '70

Alumni Association President

jgcad@i-notification.net

CHAPTER ADVISORY BOARD

Johnny Seago '67
Lake Douglas '72
Reid Batemen '82
Tommy Bell '84
Sonny Chastain '86
Ty McMains '88
Steele Yergain '94
Ben Lemann '96
Ricky Gill '99
Clay Furr '16



HOUSE CORPORATION BOARD

Jimmy Walters '69
Wheeler Parker '81
Keith Benit '85
Van Vanduzee '85
Alex Dalmau '92
Mike Diaz '94
Scott Ritter '99
Judson Sanders '03
Robert Lay '05



Our executive committee members.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Consul

Miles McLendon '23

Pro Consul

Brian McConville '23

Annotator

Camden Pfeiffer '24

Quaester

Ethan Wachtel '24

Magister

William Sheehan '24

Recruitment Chairman

Brennan Phillips '24

Risk Manager

Heath Horridge '23

Social Chairman

Cooper Hand '24

Kustos

Patrick Hardin '22

Pursuing a Joint Effort

Brent Bankston, M.D. '92 Continues Sigma Chi Experience with Significant Sig Award

Combining his passions for practicing medicine and individual growth, **Brent Bankston, M.D. '92** found himself forging a path filled with unforgettable experiences and memories in a career where he could prosper and find fulfillment—orthopedic surgery.

Gamma Iota Chapter was a formative experience for Brent, as it instilled a sense of pride, molded values, and created lifelong friendships: “The people I met at Sigma Chi had the type of values, morals, and aspirations that I had. Although that’s what made me initially join, I’ve noticed that the lasting effects are the friendships I’ve made.”

After graduating, Brent was eager to begin his career in orthopedics, so he joined a fellowship in Indianapolis where he studied total joint replacement and adult reconstructive surgery. “One of my favorite career moments, however, was when I was on call as one of the world gymnastics championship’s physicians,” Brent shared.

As one of the on-call physicians, Brent spent two weeks with the world’s best gymnasts before the Olympics began. “During my time covering this event, I met the LSU gymnastics coach, who had asked me to be the team doctor. Eventually, I was asked to work with various teams, including women’s and men’s basketball, track, and swimming.” Brent added, “I always wanted to be involved with the sports teams at both my high school and LSU, if possible, so I feel fortunate that I’ve made that aspiration into a reality!”

Fast forward a few years, and Brent began assisting sporting at the university at all levels. “When the new football coach, Gerry DiNardo, came in, he wanted to make some changes with the medical staff, and they chose me to be the head orthopedic surgeon for all sports.” Based on his preexisting experience with sports teams and work relationships with

countless trainers, coaches, and athletes, there was no doubt he would excel in this role.



“My success has to do with the fact that I was always there when people needed me.”

Because of all these efforts, Brent was recently recognized as a Significant Sig. Bettering the lives around him with his training and talents and continuing down a successful path make Sigma Chi proud to have him as an alumnus. “It is a great honor to be named a Significant Sig,” Brent said, “To me, this justifies the hours spent away from my family caring for others.”

Brent’s field allows room for growth and adventure. “Another very rewarding part of my practice is the ability to go on mission trips.” Brent began. A notable program Brent has participated in is Operation Walk, an organization that goes into underprivileged countries, including Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Cuba, to perform hip and knee replacements on those that otherwise could not get them.

“I was also fortunate enough to be included in a mission group which took care of the patients after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti.”

Above all, Brent is happy to have found a community in Sigma Chi that inspires him to achieve greatness and a career that continues to enlighten him. He continues working for the high school and university, all while practicing at the Baton Rouge Orthopedic Clinic.

As far as hobbies, Brent believes there are three seasons to life: football season, small duck season, and fishing season. In addition to his career accomplishments, Brent is also quite proud of convincing his wife of 38 years to play golf.

You can connect with Brent at lsubonemd@aol.com.



Above: Brent Bankston, M.D. '92 working his magic on the field. Right: Brent with Alan Faneca after he was inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame. Alan was the first football player Brent operated on at LSU!



Brent with fellow Sigma Chis Scott Woodward '85 and Jim Nickel '84 attending the National Championship game in 2020. A big win for the Tigers!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



Join Us for These Events in 2022

> February 20

Dedication of a plaque to the 100 Men of the House of the Southern Woods—the brothers who provided financial support for the required repairs to the house and for the initial operation of the Sigma Chi Zeta Colony.

If you need an update on your donation status, please contact **Judson Sanders '03** at judsonsanders@gmail.com.

> March 11

Tentative date for spring initiation.

> March 21

Alumni-active golf tournament at Santa Maria Golf Course in Baton Rouge. Members of the active chapter may contact you to sponsor holes for the tournament.

> March 28–April 3

Our second annual **Stephen Carter '65** Memorial Derby Days, which raises funds for the Huntsman Cancer Foundation. Please consider becoming a sponsor of this event.

> April 23

Inaugural **Scott Folse '86** Memorial Laid Back Festival and Crawfish Boil, which will raise money for the American Heart Association.



Gamma Iota brothers, who were partnered with DZ, line up in front of the chapter's homecoming banner.



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Health and Safety Remains a Top Priority

With the omicron variant spreading and COVID cases rising in Louisiana, there is a lot of uncertainty about how LSU will respond. As of now, classes remain in person, and Greek life is still allowing full capacity events, but all of that could change quickly. We will do everything we can to maintain the health of our members. Over 80% of the chapter is fully vaccinated, and we plan to quarantine any sick members per the CDC's guidelines. The health and safety of the chapter's members is of the upmost importance. Just as we did during 2020 and 2021, the chapter will adapt and thrive through a pandemic-stricken 2022.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Konrad Barach • Mandeville, La.
Sam Benes • Gonzales, Texas
Max Borja • Miami, Fla.
Justin Boyle • Arlington, Va.
Braden Burmaster • New Orleans, La.
Samuel Cole • Baton Rouge, La.
Drew Crawford • Baton Rouge, La.
Max Del Rio • Mandeville, La.
Ashton Edwards • Metairie, La.
Simon Edwards • Norfolk, Va.
Jacob Evans • Mobile, Ala.
Quinn Farnet • New Orleans, La.
Andrew Godfrey • New Orleans, La.
Shane Grant • Livermore, Calif.
John Ha • Lafayette, La.
Patrick Hoag • Covington, La.
Owen Judge • Spring Lake, N.J.
Carter Kerrigan • New Orleans, La.
Nico Lonergan • Spring Hill, Tenn.
James Marvel • New Orleans, La.
Peyton Meares • Corpus Christi, Texas

Carlo Melchiorre • Baltimore, Md.
Dominic Messina • Mandeville, La.
Ben Naquin • Baton Rouge, La.
Hampton Pak • Birmingham, Ala.
Jacob Pickett • Scottsdale, Ariz.
Nicholas Porras • Alexandria, La.
Graham Postel • Ruston, La.
Eric Primiano • Jackson, N.J.
Camden Pritchett • Kennett, Mo.
Charles Riley • Baton Rouge, La.
Justin Sawh • Aurora, Colo.
Brice Schrumpt • Sulphur, La.
William Spielman • Lafayette, La.
Austin Stubbs • Houston, Texas
Addison Templ • Lake Charles, La.
Brian Toman • Falls Church, Va.
Grant Trider • Newport, La.
Gavin Tuite • Manassquan, N.J.
Ben Walker • New Orleans, La.
Ethan Winchester • Baton Rouge, La.
Robert "Steele" Yeargain • Baton Rouge, La.