



Spring 2016

Gamma Psi

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Executive Board

Chidozie Ukpabi
RegentKalu Kalu
Vice RegentMatthew Burnette
SecretaryMatthew Burnette
Treasurer

As one pledge recently stated, "This chapter does a lot of Work outside of academics." These words resonated with the Brothers in the

Chapter as we have always mentioned it is harder to be a Brother than to be a pledge. It was a humbling moment to realize the pledges understood this concept. Starting nearly a year ago, the collegiate Brothers supported by many Alumni Brothers had our Brothers retreat and attended GCC. It was during these two occasions that we outlined and solidified the plans for this academic year. The Executive Board did an excellent job ensuring a steady and proactive start to our school year. We effectively completed our agenda learning, growing, and strengthening Fraternal bonds.

In addition, Brothers were very active in other pharmacy organizations this year going on to enhance their involvement on the chapter, regional, and national levels. Several Brothers were inducted into the Phi Lambda Sigma Pharmacy Leadership Society and one into The Rho Chi Society.

Two Brothers have obtained summer internship positions making further strides towards career placement.

As we near the close of another successful school year, we must take time to reflect. First, we must recognize our supportive Alumni. We would like to thank all those who made it for Founders Day and all your continued support throughout the school year. It is with you that we were able to grow and get to this level of success. We must also reflect on the pros and cons of the school year. No organization goes without some flaws. It is imperative that we continue to improve the Chapter as it is an honor to wear these two Greek letters. We must implement this same pride into the pledges to ensure they are ready to take up the responsibilities of Gamma Psi and gain the honor of wearing our letters.

While we welcome one group of potential Brothers we will say farewell to our fourth year Brothers. Just as they have been extremely active this school year we are counting and expecting them to continue their involvement post graduation.

This newsletter is infused with quality Gamma Psi material and kicks off with

a word from our Regent who shares his experience as the leader of this great Fraternity. Our Faculty and Alumni Brothers chime in on how Gamma Psi has impacted them. The PCP shares his journey as a pledge and how the process has strengthened the bond between him and his pledge brothers.

As we make the transition in a few weeks from our old E-Board to the new, we would like to thank them for all of their hard work and sacrifice. We have big shoes to fill and will do our best to elevate the legacy you have left us.

Faternally,

Jason "Clay" Gaines



**Brothers at the Atlantic
Province Winter Conclave,
Raleigh, NC.**

A Word From Our Regent



Entering the Spring Semester, our goal as a Chapter was to improve upon the accomplishments that were made

in the Fall. For myself, it was more important that we continued to maintain the environment that allowed everyone to grow as individuals and as Brothers. We would be faced with a new challenge, bringing in a new set of individuals into our Brotherhood, to carry on the rituals and traditions that we strived to build upon. We spent a lot of time collaborating with Alumni in hopes of improving the pledge process, and to ensure continual output of Brothers that would maintain the high standards of the Chapter. We looked back on what made our process great in the past and critiqued ourselves for the negative "habits" that accumulated over time. At the end of our discussions, we created a process that would greatly benefit incoming pledges, focusing more on the aspects of professional development, instilling of characteristics of leadership while at the same time building upon the foundation set forth by the pillars of the Fraternity.

Pledging was not the only obstacle to be tackled this semester. From Brother's Retreat, we planned to create a manuscript of Chapter duties throughout the year, allowing us to maintain a level of consistency in our activities, removing ambiguity that can sometimes arise from "word of mouth". This would also allow us to also work more efficiently, allotting Brothers more time to focus on academics. "No Brother left behind" was the motto, and that meant that everyone would be provided with the tools needed to be successful in any of their endeavors, whether it be in their commitments to the Chapter, in organizations in which they held positions, or in the acquisition of knowledge inside of the classroom. Committees did a fantastic job of

completing and submitting reports that could be utilized to complete this daunting task, and when the project is completed it would have been one of the greatest accomplishments of the Chapter this year.

The month of February was special, including the acquisition of five first year students, who were committed to entering into our Brotherhood. It was time to put all of our hard work and planning into action and build characteristics in these young men deeming them worthy. The only way this was going to work, was if we all remained on the same page, being "ONE" and carrying ourselves in a manner that would portray the same features that we wished to impart into the pledges. These five were special, and throughout the process, I was given a visual of what each of them could possibly provide the Chapter through their contributions. A large amount of faith was placed in Brother's to "stick to the plan" as Brother Habeeb would say, and I was elated to see that Brothers were committed to building character within each of the pledges. The nature of the task that the Brothers were giving provided the pledges with motivation to constantly improve themselves, everyone followed suit. Personally, experiencing the amount of time and care that Brothers were willing to put forth for this pledge class, was one of my happiest moments as the Regent of this Chapter.

We decided this year to extend Founder's Day to Founder's Weekend, including activities that would incorporate everybody in the Chapter, collegiate, alumni and family alike. Brother Kalu put his heart and soul into this project, handling most of the logistics together with Brother Andy Asberry, and it turned out to be a memorable experience. This year, we decided to honor Brother Marvin Smith, in recognition of his 20 years of commitment and countless contributions to this Chapter. It was a very special occasion, with the most notable part of the banquet being Brothers from each pledge class, going back as far as 10 years, providing speeches describing the impacts that Marvin made in each one of

their lives. I hope that one day, I will be able to stand on the same footing as these alumnus, returning to give back my to Chapter all that it has given to me. To give rise to a plethora of Brothers, capable of making the same impact on future Brother's that these alumnus had on us.

As my Regency comes to an end, I can't help but wonder what the future has in store for this Chapter. The Chapter is definitely in the care of collegiates that are more than capable of continuing the agendas that were set in motion during this year of change, and whom I personally feel will solidify the structure that we all worked so hard to put in place. The alumni, are always ready to provide a helping hand, and have done all they could to ensure that this Chapter remains on the right path. As long as we remain as one, there is no obstacle that we will not be able to conquer in the future. Rickety, Rackety, Rye.

Fraternally,

Chidozie "Boost" Ukpabi



APhA Annual in Baltimore, MD, with Dean Matthews, Dr. Jonathan Marquess and Dr. Scott Tomerlin



Brothers and pledges complete another successful Blood Drive.

Stay Connected!

We are constantly updating Gamma Psi Alumni mailing addresses, phone numbers and email addresses. If you have moved since graduation or changed your email addresses, or know a Brother who may not be in our system, please send updated information to: mercergammapsi@gmail.com. Your information will be used to ensure that you are always updated with Chapter news.

Dates to Remember

IFC Formal

April 22nd

Formal Initiation
and New OfficersMay 6th -
7th

Reflection From The Pledge Class



One snowy evening, five individuals with energy and enthusiasm met up to begin their journey to pledge for the Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity, Inc. and to finish the pledging process in record time. Prior to the Pledge Process, everyone knew that it was not going to be an easy feat. What differed in this regard was what our definition of the process not being "an easy feat" truly meant. We knew that the process would be difficult and that it would force us to get to know each other more. We already knew a couple of the guys and knew just enough of the rest to put a name with the face. At that time, we did not know that these individuals were going to be some of the strongest pillars that hold us up in life whenever we may find ourselves in a difficult situation.

The first week as pledges was filled with a variety of experiences. We quickly understood how mistaken we were in our understanding of the process being difficult, and we

figured out how the process was going to work out—or so we thought. As time progressed, we began to realize that we were only viewing the surface of what was going to be required of us. One of the first challenges was synchronizing everyone's schedules and finding a suitable time where all of us could meet to do work. We also realized that our time management skills would be pushed to the limit and we would be reaching a new level of professionalism that we had never experienced before. With these challenges, it became evident that without passion, determination, and willingness to learn, it would be impossible to complete the process and cross over.

What was once just a normal day at school has been transformed into a never-ending battlefield for both our minds and bodies. We began to find ourselves wondering each day how much more we are going to end up taking on ourselves and when we would reach the finish line. After the exhausting struggles, we started to understand that the point of the process was not to give us tasks to complete before being able to call ourselves Brothers. Instead, the point of the process is that we have to earn the right to call ourselves Brothers and that the title is not easily earned. It requires countless hours and sacrifices before you can truly call yourself a

Brother.

Through the strenuous process, we have come to learn that regardless of what the Fraternity, school, work, or life may throw at us, we will prevail. We will succeed because even if everyone turns against us, we will always be able to depend on each other to push and support us through the obstacles. The lifelong bond that we've formed amongst one another will truly last forever. What we have here is a Brotherhood and we will always DO WORK!!!



Gamma Psi Brothers at Road-side Cleanup



Educating the student body on the Mercer campus about the importance of poison prevention.

Commemorating Brother Marvin Smith for 20 years of Contribution!!



FORGED IN FIRE

This April 12th, I celebrated my 20th anniversary of being initiated into Kappa Psi. It is a significant moment of my life, as it represents a majority of my adult life and nearly half of my 42 years on this existential plane. Every Brother reading this has probably heard me talk about my transformation during pledging, and how much it meant to who I have become. So I won't bore you with a repetition of my personal journey as a pledge in the great Chapter of Gamma Psi. I'll just say that being a Brother in Gamma Psi has always made me proud, and I feel humbled and honored to still be afforded a seat at our Square, as one among equals. No matter how much I may have disagreed, disliked or disavowed the actions of any Brother in that Square, I always loved each and every one of them.

This love is possible because the pledge process at my Chapter requires and demands that Brothers give respect to any pledge that can complete it. The process is of and by itself, a grueling process of mind, body and spirit. It eliminates the weak, terminally frustrates the selfish, and humbles the arrogant. It cares not for the reason a pledge may come to the process, for by its completion that pledge must and will be united in the reason for which he remained and persevered to the end. The pledge upon completion has been the recipient of a transplant, a surgically implanted "servant's mentality" which compels him to think and act for the good of the Brotherhood, even when it presents difficulty and hardship for his own ambition, desires and comfort. Why? Because the process teaches that hard work is its own reward; that the judge in your mirror should be much more demanding than any you meet in the world, and that if you are working for your Brothers, they are also working for you, and the burden of one hand becomes

much lighter when the collective 99 are there to assist.

So we put our pledges through a process some refer to as the "fire"...specifically, when they interact with me, they go through "The Dragon's Fire". And if you have pledged under me at any of the many chapters I have helped to start, or assisted in strengthening their pledge process, then you have a first-hand knowledge of just how hot "The Dragon's Fire" can get. I am happy that years after I have become less directly involved in the pledge process at several of the Chapters I helped to charter, I can still see evidence of new generations of Dragons, still breathing that fire in their pledge processes. And the work of those Chapters can be easily seen, and it is great work.

We all understand that true strength, true commitment and true resolve can never be authentic until and unless it is tested. We continue to be dedicated to the principle that "anything worth having is worth working for" and Kappa Psi is definitely worth having. Those of us forged in the fire of undiluted, professional, unwavering and result-oriented pledging have come to the realization that pledging is about creating FAMILY, and not cultivating friends. And every decision we make regarding the Fraternity is indelibly impacted by this principle. So as we face difficulty, complex situations and changing times, we remain true to our Fraternity because the fires that forged our Brotherhood are pure, based on the principle of always doing the right thing, even when it's not the easy choice.

Unfortunately, this is not a universal phenomenon in our beloved Order. Even worse, it appears that from time to time, those who share our principles are indeed in the minority, particularly as it relates to the decision-makers at various levels of Fraternity governance. From those leaders who pander to the whims and complaints of pledges and rushes, to those who make unprincipled decisions that abuse those who they have been given responsibility for, even to those who claim to make policies in our best interest, but do so in the pursuit of ease while weakening and diluting the processes that have made this Fraternity thrive while others like it flopped, flailed and died. While others

see these things play out and are surprised, I cannot say that I am. Any Brother that has sat through one of my "short pledging workshops" has heard me repeatedly state that "pledging is not a creative process, but rather a replicative process." How a person pledges will largely dictate what kind of Brother they will become. In other words, "the process IS the product." Plainly put, these Brothers came and continue to come from Chapters that have a worthless and useless process, only intent on providing chapters with a steady stream of income and maintaining a façade of unity, which could never withstand the true tests of a real family-relationship.

We have been forged in the fires of true pledging, whether that has been under the never-sleeping eye of this old Dragon, or under the youthful watch of dragons much younger. And this fire has forged us into purity of heart and purpose for our Fraternity. What others may regard as archaic and unnecessary is the very process that continues to make our Chapters and Province the best that Kappa Psi has to offer. We should not be shocked at the apathy, poor decision-making and disregard for tradition that we see from others. In fact, it is expected, even at high levels of leadership, because the people will always seek to see themselves in the leaders they choose. When the majority of Brothers truly pledge and understand the life commitment this Fraternity requires, they will demand more accountability from their leadership, their Brothers, and most importantly, from themselves.

The fire inside of each of us burns bright and our resolve, no matter how sorely tested still stands, unflinching and unbreakable...because we have been forged in the fires of true and undiluted pledging. As they have not been through the fire, we cannot expect the same. So for now, we must lead by example, prove ourselves by our continual commitment to Kappa Psi after graduation, and ensure that the future generations of our Chapter and Province are tested, and shown to be of that superior grade, exhibiting the excellence we demand from them, and from ourselves...because we have been forged in the fire.



Brothers from years past honoring Brother Marvin Smith at this Years Founder's Day Banquet



Gamma Psi Brothers, Collegiate and Alumni, celebrating Dr. Marvin Smith's 20th anniversary in the Fraternity at our 2016 Founder's Day Dinner



Collegiate Brothers paying homage at the Founder's Day Banquet