

## ALPHABET



## ALPHA RECOVERING STRONG

## Groundwork for New Goals

Alpha is excitedly welcoming a new era with the installation of RPI President Martin Schmidt and a return to normalcy on campus as the pandemic enters its waning stages. Our chapter fared well during the chaos and are in a strong position to regain their momentum thanks to help from your hard-working alumni association.

The three short-term goals your alumni board set last April are within our grasp!

- A strong fall upperclassman recruitment following last year's similar success has the **house occupancy** at better than breakeven. Alpha is focused on an equally strong spring freshman recruitment result to again fill our house to capacity next year.
- Our reimagined 6294 weekend delivered a **6294 that alumni chose to attend**, which drew 55 alumni home this year. We're implementing the same improvements and more, and we hope to significantly increase the turnout for our next one. Plans are in motion, and we've reserved a block of hotel rooms at the Franklin Inn (the Courtyard Marriot also has rooms available). Please reserve your rooms for April 28-30, 2023. Be sure to join us in Troy!
- With the active chapter's success to date, your alumni association will deliberate on and soon vote to decide if we're comfortable moving forward with our **kitchen renovation** in summer 2023. This is dependent upon the active chapter's continued improvement as well as supply chain and contractor limitations.

As we've progressed with these short-term goals, we've begun to lay the groundwork for our three medium-term goals as well.

- We're working with the actives to help **systematize critical processes** with a focus on transition and repeatability. This includes our effort to help the actives implement a 365-day recruitment paradigm and a renewed focus on RPI and Theta Xi National accreditation success that Alpha enjoyed pre-COVID.
- We are also **building long-term alumni interactions** through our focus on alumni participation in our professionalism series and coordinating alumni networking within career paths.
- Assuming we complete our kitchen renovation next summer, we will then begin planning **targeted renovations for RPI's 200th anniversary** in 2024.

Please consider engaging Alpha in whatever manner you prefer and returning to RPI and Alpha Chapter for an overdue visit. We'll be at the house for 6294 on April 28-30. If you return to the Capital District or to RPI for a tour, meeting, or recruiting, please let us know. We'd love to host you at the house and introduce you to our active brothers. Hope to see you and your pledge class in April!

Yours in the Bonds,  
**David Fowkes '89 (A1275)**



From left: Chapter Advisor David Goldschmidt '94 (A1364), John-Michael Dearstyne '23 (A1768), Andrew Szoke '23 (A1767), RPI President Dr. Martin Schmidt (RPI '81) and wife Lyn, Paul Kratsios '24 (A1778), and Trent Burton '25 (A1785).



Ben Smith-Foley '24 (A1783), David Fowkes '89 (A1275), and Kieran Bohonan '23 (A1771) surround the Unicorn ice sculpture at the Theta Xi National Convention in New Orleans, La.

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

President  
**Andrew Szoke '23 (A1767)**

Vice President  
**Jonah Whitt '23 (A1769)**

Treasurer  
**Paul Kratsios '24 (A1778)**

Recruitment Chairman  
**Marcus Morgan '24 (A1790)**  
recruitmentofalphachapter@gmail.com

Membership Educator  
**Ethan Critchlow '23 (A1776)**

House Manager  
**Trent Burton '25 (A1785)**

Secretary  
**Erik Swee '24 (A1786)**

Scholarship  
**Luc Trombley '24 (A1782)**



# SERVICE NEVER ENDS

★ ★ ★ ★ A Q&A WITH OUR MILITARY ALUMNI ★ ★ ★ ★

**T**heta Xi strives to instill values of dedication and selflessness within all brothers. For **Vic Galante '86 (A1243)**, **Bill Uhrig '95 (A1373)**, **Kevin Delaney '99 (A1449)**, **Rob Strack '99 (A1452)**, and **Nihar Shah '11 (A1603)**, they each decided to further their commitment to service by joining the military. Below, you can read a word from these brothers on their backgrounds and what makes them proud to serve in their respective positions.

**Q: Why did you join Theta Xi?**

“I was looking for a fraternity house close to campus where I might have my own room. Theta Xi advertised a barbecue social during recruitment week where I got to know some of the brothers over barbecue chicken and a few games of cribbage. We hit it off, and I pledged soon after.” –**Vic**

“Very simply, I joined for the brotherhood. My best friends in college were all Theta Xi.” –**Bill**

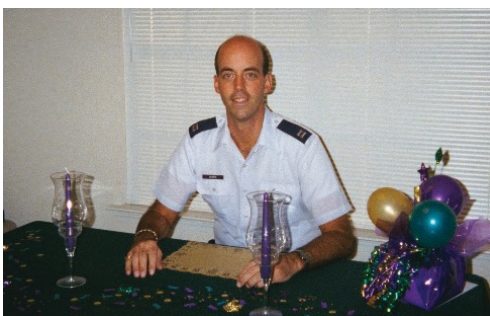
“The fraternity was very diverse, but the common core values allowed the fraternity to still work harmoniously. I also appreciated the rich history of Alpha Chapter, especially since it was not a ‘bro’-y type fraternity.” –**Nihar**

**Q: What is your current position within the military?**

“Veteran, honorable discharge, after 12 years of service as a captain in the U.S. Air Force.” –**Vic**

“I am the cyberspace operations division chief for U.S. special operations command.” –**Bill**

“I was on active duty in the Marine Corps from 1999-03, then I joined the Marine Corps Reserves in fall 2009 for about four-and-a-half years. After initial officer training, I started flight school in Pensacola, Florida. I soon realized that wasn’t for me, so I became a supply officer and served from 2001-2003 at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. I was on active duty when 9/11 happened, and when we began Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Fortunately, I only had to spend just over three months in Kuwait in 2003 until I reached the end of my service contract.” –**Kevin**



*Vic Galante '86 (A1243) on his birthday in 1999.*

“I was an active-duty army signal officer for about nine-and-a-half years but separated from active duty in 2008 as a captain (promotable). My most memorable position was as a company commander, and specifically leading that team of 100+ signal soldiers to Baghdad for a 12-month deployment. After leaving active duty, I continued service as an army civilian up until 2021, culminating as the cybersecurity division chief for army installations across the eastern half of the U.S.” –**Rob**

“I am currently a major in the U.S. Air Force living in Las Vegas. My current assignment is the director of operations in the Air Force test center’s operating location (Nevada). I coordinate with operations on the Tonopah test and training range.” –**Nihar**



*Colonel Bill Uhrig '95 (A1373) and his family.*

**Q: What motivated you to serve our country?**

“Initially, my motivation to join the Air Force was financial. I couldn’t afford to go to RPI without a significant scholarship. But much like Theta Xi, the military is a brotherhood. I initially only wanted to serve four years, but the longer I served, the more I wanted to continue to work with people who volunteered to serve their country.” –**Bill**

“My family has a history of military service, so growing up, I developed a real appreciation for the types of close-knit, well-disciplined teams that the military produced. I was always drawn to the traditions, structure, uniforms, ceremonies, etc., but most importantly, I wanted to be part of my family’s military lineage and to serve my country. Also, the ROTC scholarship was a nice extra that, for me, made going to RPI possible.” –**Rob**

**Q: What does it mean to see so many of your fraternity brothers also serving your country?**

“During my time in the house, there were several brothers in all three ROTC programs. I remember hotly contested games of Risk going well into the night where Air Force, Army, and Navy brothers battled it out for world domination. I’m so proud of them all.” –**Vic**

“The military is kind of like a fraternity in itself. Not everyone does, or even can, join the military. So it’s kind of cool to know that there are guys out there with whom I can share both bonds.” –**Kevin**

“It is amazing to see the long military tradition in Theta Xi. It is another layer that strengthens and further reinforces the bonds of brotherhood. It also provides yet another opportunity to find great mentors as well as mentor younger fraternity members.” –**Nihar**

**Q: How, if at all, did being in Theta Xi impact your career path?**

“Being a Theta Xi, living in the fraternity house, and sharing college life with the brotherhood was a memorable experience—from recruitment week to pledge raids, to parties like “three to three,” and 6294—it simply enriches those early years of your life which you’ll never forget.” –**Vic**

“Theta Xi confirmed for me that I wanted to be a part of something. Being a brother was special, and it took effort—you couldn’t just sign up. I realized I didn’t just want a job that paid the bills, I wanted to be a part of something bigger. For me, that was the military.” –**Bill**

“My experience with Theta Xi was very impactful. I studied environmental engineering and, while I enjoyed it, I was also exposed to a lot of very IT-savvy people at the house, so I also became interested in computers and networking. When I graduated, the Army assigned me to the signal corps, which is responsible for all the Army’s communications and IT services, so even though I didn’t realize it at the time, it turned out to be a perfect fit. If it wasn’t for what I learned from talking with other brothers at the house, I would have been very out of my comfort zone and potentially wouldn’t have stayed active duty for as long as I did.” –**Rob**

**Q: How do you think Theta Xi helped you become who you are today?**

“I think living and getting along with a group of college-age guys forced us to grow up quickly. Living at 1490 Sage, we had to figure things out for ourselves. We made all the decisions ourselves, and we had to live with the consequences. That’s a lot different than living in the dorms or in an apartment with only one or two other folks. I think learning that responsibility early helped me greatly in my career.” –**Bill**

“I joined Theta Xi as a slightly introverted, awkward freshman that really didn’t have any friends in high school. I honestly believe that it helped me open up and learn how to socialize and be a “normal person.” Twenty-seven years ago, I never would have thought that I would make the amazing friendships that I still have to this day.” –**Kevin**

“My time as an active member really helped me adapt into the person I wanted to be. I entered college shy, introverted, and awkward. The friends I made through the fraternity helped me break out of my shell and pushed me out of my comfort zones. I am still introverted and a bit awkward, but I also have a lot of extroverted traits that energize me and can work through the discomfort.” –**Nihar**



*Vic Galante '86 (A1243) playing in the World Series of Poker in 2008.*

**Q: Would you like to tell us anything about your family or personal life? (Spouse, children, hobbies)**

“During my years in the Air Force, I attended numerous retirement ceremonies where the spouse and children were given a bouquet of roses and thanked for uprooting their homes and schools every three years to relocate to a new duty station. I knew I could never put my future wife through that, so after 12 years I decided to part ways with the Air Force, marry Cynthia, and settle down in Navarre, Florida. We enjoy traveling and have made several three-month-long trips to live in Italy, where we visited relatives and had our fill of gelato, pizza, and truffles. These days, I enjoy playing poker and have assembled a collection of over 4,200 different \$1 casino chips. Cynthia is a talented ‘scrapbooker’ and creates amazing greeting cards—always cherished by our family and friends—which includes this Theta Xi Founders’ Day card she created in 2015 (pictured to the right).” –**Vic**

“I am retiring next summer after 28 years in the Air Force and look forward to the next chapter in our lives. Our oldest son continues the tradition of serving in the military, and he also attended an engineering school in N.Y. (West Point). He is currently a lieutenant in the Army. Our youngest son is a junior in high school and hopes to run cross-country and track at a Division 1 college. Once he graduates, my wife

and I will be empty-nesters and are looking forward to being able to travel a bit more.” –**Bill**

“My wife Suzanne (RPI '96) and I have been married since December 2001 and have lived in Nashua, New Hampshire, since spring 2008. We have two children, Alexander Houston (15) and Nicholas James (12), and an awesome rescue dog named Luna. We enjoy returning to Troy every April, drinking beer and wine with our friends, binge-watching Netflix on weekend days after nights in which we imbibed too much, and riding our Harley Davidson motorcycles around our beautiful state.” –**Kevin**



*The cover and inside of the Founders' Day card that Vic's wife made in 2015.*

**A SALUTE TO OTHER ALPHAS IN UNIFORM**

Col. Glen Ryan '57 (A909)  
Bob Nilsson '63 (A984)  
Rear Adm. Michael Lyden '78 (A1173)  
Capt. David LaFontaine '86 (A1245)



Hassan Bermiss '92 (A1362)  
Charles Light '95 (A1370)  
Capt. Jeffrey Beers '96 (A1397)



Albert Chin '96 (A1417)  
Kevin Guldner '08 (A1578)  
Zachary Holmes '16 (A1675)

**Welcome,  
New Members**

**Will Came**  
*Medway, Mass.*  
Mechanical Engineering

**Eli Fadden**  
*Duxbury, Mass.*  
Mechanical Engineering

**Jasper Fougere**  
*Manchester, N.H.*  
Biomedical Engineering

**John Jaklich**  
*Limon, Colo.*  
Industrial Management Engineering

**Patrick Kola**  
*Tirana, Albania*  
Computer Science

**Masen Maggio**  
*Jamestown, N.Y.*  
Civil Engineering

*Help Us  
Grow the  
Brotherhood*

**SEND YOUR RECRUITMENT  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**D**o you know an undergraduate at RPI who'd be a great fit for Theta Xi? Be sure to send their information to Recruitment Chairman **Marcus Morgan '24 (A1790)** at [recruitmentofalphachapter@gmail.com](mailto:recruitmentofalphachapter@gmail.com). Please include the student's full name, hometown, major, contact information, and any other applicable information.

**ALPHABET SOUP**

**CHAPTER ETERNAL**

**James Ingle '55 (A844)** – July 5, 2021  
**Kenneth Boyd '69 (A1083)** – May 3, 2022

**ALUMNI NEWS**

**Franklin Van Rensselaer Jr. '62 (A981)** is retired in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. He enjoys golf, traveling, walking, taking cruises, and touring places. Franklin is still active with NASA and aerospace. He looks forward to mini reunions with Theta Xi brothers from the '60s. Email: [fvanr1@gmail.com](mailto:fvanr1@gmail.com)

**Rod Quirk '63 (A985)** resides in Glen Mills, Pa. He and Donna help take care of their twin grandchildren, Max and Eve. Rod shares the memory of their oldest son, Scott, being born in Troy on Founders' Day (April 29). Rod enjoys visiting beaches and gardening. Email: [rpquirk@uakron.edu](mailto:rpquirk@uakron.edu)

**James DiCarlo '66 (A1012)** is happily retired and living in an 1800-unit retirement community in West Chester, Pa. He co-manages a 150-plot community garden. James enjoys gardening, volunteering at Habitat for Humanity, and fixing things in his community's workshop. During winters, he spends three months in Venice, Fla. Email: [jamesdicarlo@verizon.net](mailto:jamesdicarlo@verizon.net)

# SAVE THE DATE FOR 6294



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MAILED FROM  
ZIP CODE 66044  
PERMIT #570

As mentioned in the report by **David Fowkes '89 (A1275)** on page 1, planning is well underway for next year's 6294. Be sure to mark your calendars for this spring weekend next April.

**WHEN:** April 28-30, 2023

**HOTEL:** Franklin Inn (other rooms available at the Courtyard Marriot)

**Theta Xi Association of Troy, N.Y.**  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
P.O. Box 442100  
Lawrence, KS 66044-2100

*Address Service Requested*



*Rich Lotti '78 (A1170) leads his professional development presentation for active brothers.*



*Brothers participate in a résumé workshop for the career fair.*



*Paul Kratsios '24 (A1778), Marcus Morgan '24 (A1790), Ben Smith-Foley '24 (A1783), and Adhit Desai '25 (A1795) at our car bash recruitment event.*

## *Evolving Our Brotherhood*

### INCREASED RECRUITMENT EFFORTS AND MORE

#### FALL RECRUITMENT AND PLANNING FOR SPRING

Alpha Chapter just finished a successful recruitment period, recruiting six new members. We had the third-most new members of all fraternities on campus this semester.

RPI's new freshman class is the largest in its history, making the upcoming spring semester very important for recruitment. Alpha Chapter has increased our outreach event efforts to try and elevate our campus presence in preparation for freshmen recruitment.

We've already participated in numerous tabling events around campus, and there have been numerous events that we've volunteered at with the school. These include assisting with freshman move-in, IFC events, and student union events.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES

Something new we've started this semester is our professional development series, which has been coordinated with alumni. So far, we've had presentations from **Rich Lotti '78 (A1170)** and **Graham Cabrey '12 (A1617)**.

There've also been résumé workshops and interview prep conducted by older brothers of

the actives. Career development is an important value of our chapter, and professional skills are something we continue to develop further with each of our active members.

#### LOOKING FORWARD TOGETHER

Alpha Chapter's future looks bright, and we look forward to finishing the semester out strong. We'd like to thank all the alumni that have helped support us in our success so far, and we hope that our efforts this semester lead to an even more successful recruitment in the spring.

Yours in the Bonds,  
**Andrew Szoke '23 (A1767)**  
Chapter President



*Alpha Chapter's active brothers.*