

# Phi Gamma Delta:

The Xi Deuteron Chapter History from Year MMIX to MMX  
(Fall 2009 – Spring 2010)

Written by Xi Deuteron Historian, Lewis Yuan

The skies were azure and auspicious, the campus of Case Western Reserve University basked underneath the warmth of the August Sun, and the Brothers of Xi Deuteron began their third year back on campus. A year without the majority of our founding fathers, a year that would test our strength as brothers both old and new, a year that would be the promising turning point for the chapter.

Move-in day, the official exposition to this year's story, where the Brothers of Xi Deuteron helped a countless number of freshman move into their dorms, carrying all the little trinkets and dresses and the cumbersome refrigerators that many of them really don't need. However, a bright note struck when a man approached our brothers, greeting himself as Brother John B. Erinc (Pittsburgh 1983). We were very delighted to have a graduate brother in our presence and duly invited him over to our house after move-in was finished.

Brothers Andrew Stungys and Lewis Yuan, the chapter's recruitment chairs, then led our brothers in a retreat at Pymatuning Lake. There, the eldest Brothers gave feedback about recruitment in the past year, while the youngest Brothers were trained and taught the ways of our recruitment style. At night, we enjoyed each other's company under a full moon and a glistening campfire, sharing stories of our summers.

Soon the retreat came and went, and when the Brothers of Xi Deuteron arrived back on campus, Welcome Days was in full swing. The first Greek Life event, Greek Carnival, was initially stalled due to severe rain, but magically cleared up. We partnered with the ladies of Delta Gamma, making snow cones and cotton candy for the freshman. Even amid all the festivities, the Brothers were able to meet many freshman guys and start the process of recruitment. At subsequent events such as the Taste of Greek Life and the Greek Sports day, we met many qualified

candidates for pledges, building up our relationships and making solid connections with them. In addition, the ladies of Alpha Phi were kind enough to invite us over for a slip-n-slide mixer, ironically over the plot of land that was supposed to be ZBT's future home.

Recruitment officially began Monday, the first day of school, but our events did not begin until Tuesday. For our first event, we held a BBQ out by the volleyball court and the freshman quad, attracting a significantly large number of people. We invited the ladies of Alpha Phi, who live just down the street, and thanked them for their hospitality from the mixer. Our next event, FIJI Luigi, the Brothers served pasta and meatballs to both freshman recruits and the ladies of Delta Gamma, thanking them for their cooperation during Greek Carnival. That Saturday, we held our FIJI Island dance party, which was successful and the campus enjoyed the winding days of summer in the Outpost. That Monday, we held our famous Hugh-B-Que, courtesy of graduate Brother Hugh R. Marshall (CWRU 2001) outside of our house, and as per tradition, we invited over the ladies of Phi Mu, who always seem to enjoy Brother Hugh's meats and special sauce. The next day, we invited our select recruits to Mongolian BBQ for a good time out. And that Friday, we invited our selected recruits to our wonderful Graduate dinner, which many graduate brothers such as our Section Chief, Purple Legionnaire, and others from various eras attended. During our dinner, we awarded many scholarships, thanks to our Educational Foundation. Recipients included Brothers Lewis Yuan, Maksim Chernyavskiy, Jeremy Saks, Ryan Shoup, and Stephen Frese. We also awarded a scholarship, our Shining Star award, split between our two star recruits, Jeremy Pomerantz and Shawn Rupp for outstanding personal and academic achievement in their high school years.

With Graduate dinner over, recruitment winded down to a close, and a heated discussion began over handing out bids. The intense discussions were held for many hours, but in the end we handed out only 17 bids. Recruitment was very competitive this year, as the Delts, Sig Eps, Phi Delts, and even the Phi Psi's were competing for the bids we handed out, proving that these recruits were something special. Luckily for us, 12 of them responded to our call, forming pledge class Epsilon, one of the strongest classes we have seen as a reestablished chapter. On September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Akil Murthi, Elias Kikano, Gavin Aydelotte, Isadore

Budnick, Stuart Ewen, Michael Figura, Michael Johnson, Evan McDowell, Jeremy Pomerantz, Shawn Rupp, Henry Spradley and Vinai Suresh all pledged to wear the White Star of our August Chapter with pride and dignity. This class also represented a diverse group of men, with an international student from India, and seven states, from Texas to Tennessee, represented in pledge class Epsilon.

A couple weeks after the pledging ceremony, we held our Family Luncheon during the University's Family Weekend. We invited the families of both the Brothers and pledges to enjoy a Sunday Afternoon brunch and give tours of our prestigious and well-kept house. Subsequently, we held our Faculty Luncheon the following weekend, to show our professors our gratitude and establish strong ties with the University and continue our endless pursuit of scholarship. During this time, Homecoming also rolled around, and we paired up with the ladies of Alpha Chi Omega and constructed an 80's themed float for the annual Homecoming Parade.

In mid-October, we invited many of the local and far away graduate Brothers to our annual Smoker, held in the Outpost. The night was well spent between the undergraduates and graduates, enjoying food and smoking cigars over games of Poker and Euchre. We were honored to have elder as well as younger graduate Brothers, and we exchanged stories of our undergraduate years in Phi Gamma Delta. That night, graduate Brother Rishad Shaikh (CWRU 1999) was honored for his continued involvement with Phi Gamma Delta, as acting Purple Legionnaire for the Mu Alpha Chapter at West Virginia University.

The end of October came, and the Brothers of Xi Deuteron held our ever-famous Halloween dance party. Both Brothers and pledges had a good time mingling with our campus guests, as we met friends new and old.

Fall semester also marked the elections for the new officers for Xi Deuteron. Elections were held near the end of November. After an extensive round of elections between numerous candidates, Brother Luke Beery was elected as President, Brother Jim Petras was elected as Treasurer, Brother Andrew Stungys was elected as Recording Secretary, Brother Brian Slayton was elected as Corresponding Secretary, and

Brother Lewis Yuan was elected as Chapter Historian. This Cabinet also marked the first time where no Founding Fathers were present on Cabinet, thus starting a young, but propitious era for Phi Gamma Delta on our campus.

Nearing the holidays, the Brotherhood committee held a Secret Santa event, where gifts of all kinds were exchanged between Brothers and pledges. Most gifts were absolutely hilarious and silly, but it brought the Brothers and pledges together in a warm, sentimental moment for the holidays.

The pledges as a class performed well during the semester, as they were proactive and eager to be new pledges of Phi Gamma Delta. They organized a service trip to the Cleveland Food Bank, a BBQ at the house for the brothers, and worked countless hours pulling out staples from the old ceiling of our Outpost for their house improvement project. In addition, many of them came out to the intramural sports games to play and support our efforts to defend our All-Sports Trophy. They also volunteered for the philanthropy events we participated in that semester, such as Alpha Chi Omega's kickball tournament, Delta Gamma's Anchorsplash, Alpha Phi's Bid for your Heart, and Sigma Psi's Mr. CWRU. After a long, hard earned semester of earning our respect and trust, we initiated pledge class Epsilon on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010, at the beginning of the new semester and New Year.

Our new recruitment chair, Brother Ryan Shoup, led off the semester with a sound recruitment plan, filled with events such as FIJI Fiesta, our Mexican dinner night at the house, and Sunday snow tubing, which attracted many recruits as well as Brothers. Again, we held another Graduate dinner during the chilly days of January, but luckily many graduate Brothers were able to attend. At the end of recruitment, we had four strong pledges, Evan Der, Samuel Haese, Nick Jordan, and Fernando Recio that formed pledge class Zeta.

Preparations were soon underway for the largest Greek event of the year, Greek Week. This year's theme was Peace, Love, and Greek Week. Practices were long and intense, and each team worked hard this year to do better than last year, which was an impressive feat in itself. Pledge Sam Haese led the Brothers during our Greek Sing event, while

Brothers Mike Figura, Alex Kogan, Mike Bielawski, and Eduardo Somoza tackled the daunting task of constructing a Banner, which turned out to be a House with Peace, Love, and Greek Week represented on each of the four walls. Brother David Phenis led the Brothers for Variety Show. Practices for Variety Show were both hilarious and frustrating at times, but in the end, the Xi Deuteron Brothers pulled off an amazing performance that garnered us 1<sup>st</sup> place in Variety Show. Later it was revealed that Sigma Nu contested and demanded a recount of the score, and it was deemed that there was a miscount in scoring, so Sigma Nu took first and we took second. However, in our and the Greek community's eyes, we were truly the winners. Next came the basketball event, Spot Shot, and the swimming events, Beach Ball and Raft relays. The Brothers pulled off a strong effort and placed well in all those events. That Saturday was both Egg Toss and Pyramid. Brothers Jeremy Pomerantz, Nick Muzzarelli, Soumil Lele, and Bryan Patton won us 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Egg Toss, while the Pyramid team made a valiant effort later in the day. The final day, Sunday, came Rope Pull, the largest event of Greek Week and possibly the year. Xi Deuteron's Rope Pull team trained long hours and through hard conditions under the coaching of graduate Brother Kevin Carney. That day brought torrential rain and heavy mudds, but the Brothers of Xi Deuteron still showed up in full, cheering our team on. Pulling out Zeta Psi and Delta Tau Delta, the Xi Deuteron Phi Gams made it to the final round, a rematch of last year, against Zeta Beta Tau. Despite a close round and a valiant effort made by the Xi Deuteron Brothers, ZBT managed to take the win, leaving us with 2<sup>nd</sup> place. However, we were especially proud of our performance, placing 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in Greek Week, only trailing the winners Sig Ep by a few points. Afterwards, the pledges held a BBQ for the Brothers, and we all celebrated a hard earned, hard fought Greek Week.

During the semester, many of the Brothers volunteered to host prospective students. Many a times was the house full of both Brothers and prospies, as we tended to call them. Because of our continued effort, we established good relations with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, right across Bellflower Road from us. Xi Deuteron won the award for the "Host with the Most" indicating that we were the Fraternity that hosted the most prospies. We also held many mixers during the semester. Our first mixer was a fondue mixer with the ladies of Omega Tau Zeta, the relatively new Asian-interest sorority on

campus. Then we had a wonderful mixer with the ladies of Kappa Alpha Theta, where we celebrated Cinco de Mayo a bit early with a burrito bar and a piñata. Our last mixer of the semester was with the ladies of Delta Gamma, where we went bowling during the final weeks of the school year.

Later that semester, we held our annual Frank Norris Pig Dinner, held at the Judson Manor. Our Section Chief, graduate Brother Robert W. Niebaum, as well as younger graduates such as graduate Brothers Matt Patton and Baran Onder were present. Brother Jim Petras gave the Exile's Toast to his best German accent, and our youngest Brother present, Vinai Suresh, kissed the tail of the pig. Ironically, he is vegetarian.

The pledges planned a service trip to the local park to clean up and later that day, the seniors held our famous Man Day Brotherhood event. Events this year included partner carrying, partner squatting, marshmallow toss, tire toss, and a tug-of-war. Much fun and laughter was had that day, and even a few of the sisters from Kappa Alpha Theta even came by and observed our festivities. The pledges also repainted the Diamond on our front porch and repainted the window shades in the Outpost for their house improvement project.

With the semester winding down to a close, pledge class Zeta was initiated on a very fitting day, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010. We also celebrated our Founders' Day by giving the graduating seniors, Brothers Maksim Chernyavskiy, Gerald "JJ" Henn, James Ochsendorf, Josh Richards, Eduardo Somoza, Salil Rao, and Chairut Vareechon. With this, Xi Deuteron's third year came to a close, but our future looks very bright, with the White Star guiding us over our right shoulders.

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