



## NATIONAL OFFICERS:

Gary Hodge, President

Annette Stewart, Vice President for Internal Affairs

Mary Ellen Lewis, Vice President for Expansion

Helen Tran, Western Regional Director

Bill Crane, Central Regional Director

Natasha Ghatak, Eastern Regional Director

- Policy Board: Betsy Brasher, Chair
- Gary Hodge
- Eric Lui

Sandra Finley, Executive Director

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**Note:** e-mail addresses are listed with the individual letters. See last page for job descriptions.

# Newsletter from Headquarters!

How important is our Alumni to all of us?

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## Letters from Your National Officers

### Your President

When I was elected president of Phi Chi theta, I decided that during my term in office, we would focus on two things. All decisions that the executive council made would support two missions. The first was to support and expand our alumni base. The second was to increase the amount and frequency of communications from the national office. These national executive council newsletters support the second initiative. To support the first, we decided that this newsletter would focus on alumni. In particular, we asked each officer to focus on a particular event in their life where they benefited by being an alumni of Phi Chi Theta or how another alumni helped them.

One of the primary benefits to belonging to any fraternal organization is that your membership is for a lifetime. Your membership transcends your university. You are not just joining a student organization at your university. You are joining an organization that was sponsored there, but is part of a greater and larger institution. When you leave your university, you can continue your involvement with Phi Chi Theta.

I pledged the Epsilon Beta Chapter at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA in 1990. Unfortunately, my chapter went inactive in 1995. If my involvement in Phi Chi Theta depended on my relationship with that chapter, I would have dropped out of Phi Chi Theta a long time ago. I would have never become a national officer, let alone become national president. Phi Chi Theta is bigger than each of our schools. We need to continue to reach out to others and become a part of that bigger institution. We need to cross over a second time and become active alumni members of Phi Chi Theta.

Now for my alumni story. When I was a young collegiate chapter president, I did not understand everything that Phi Chi Theta had to offer beyond my chapter. I just know that I had to send out my dues and a bunch of reports. However, I started to read some regional newsletters and began to learn about this bigger organization to which my chapter and I belonged. Then I attended my first regional meeting and met my Eastern Regional Director, Greg Holden. From Greg, I learned

more about Phi Chi Theta than I ever wanted to know. He taught me what my responsibilities were as a member and officer. He showed me that I was part of a bigger organization. Due to his encouragement and assistance, I established the Philadelphia Alumni Chapter and became involved on the regional and national levels. I eventually followed his example and became the Eastern Regional Director also. From Greg, I learned that we have to give back to Phi Chi Theta. Greg and I are still friends to this day. I look forward to seeing him each year at a Phi Chi Theta meeting. I also have the pleasure of working with him on the Phi Chi Theta Educational Foundation. Greg is the president of the foundation and I am a member of his board.

Please read on and see how each of us has benefited by Phi Chi Theta Alumni. Then I encourage you take on the responsibility of being an active alumnus of Phi Chi Theta. Consider how you have benefited and try to pass it on.

*Gary Hodge*  
National President  
[President@phichitheta.org](mailto:President@phichitheta.org)

“Working Together to Get Things Done”

“Expansion starts with you.”

“Grow the fraternity for the future.”

### Vice President of Internal Affairs

As I recall my days as a collegiate at Texas State University, I have fond memories of the many friends I made and find myself wondering where they all went in their lives and careers. I remember meeting many enthusiastic alumni at Phi Chi Theta functions and was touched by the fact they were still very involved years after they graduated. This sincere appreciation for Phi Chi Theta seen through the eyes of alumni encouraged me to continue shortly after

graduation as a Regional Director. I will never forget meeting a wonderful Phi Chi Theta member named Kim Gary, who like me was from Texas, but held such a strong passion for life and Phi Chi Theta that I deeply admired. Kim encouraged my early involvement and I always grew stronger through her guidance. It is the people of Phi Chi Theta, like Kim Gary, that make this organization special to me. I believe the alumni keep our bond strong since they show the continued commitment to Phi Chi Theta and its members

which inspires us all. I only hope I can do my part to keep the next generation of alumni inspired to stay with Phi Chi Theta so we may continue to grow in the future.

*Annette Stewart*

Vice President of Internal Affairs

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## Retention and Expansion are extremely important!

### Vice President of Expansion

In 1956, at the Phi Chi Theta national convention, I was privileged to be the Colorado Alpha Chapter national councilor (delegate) in Madison, Wisconsin. I met Frances R. Murray at that convention and immediately knew that I would be a Phi Chi Theta member forever. Frances was an inspiration to me and other collegiates at that convention. She was later honored as a Phi Chi Theta of Distinction — a sister who personified and best exemplified the principles and high standards upon which our fraternity is grounded. She became a member in 1926. By the time, I had met her, she had been a member for 30 years. I kept in contact with her in between the next 3 conventions. She provided advice

to me while I was President of the Colorado Alpha Chapter. In 1961, I left the country to work overseas, but immediately joined the Denver Alumni Chapter in 1966, upon my return to the States. Had it not been for Frances Murray, I would probably not have even thought of joining the Denver Alumni Chapter.

The Denver alums were always helpful to the Colorado Alpha Chapter, but the thought of being a life-time member of Phi Chi Theta was not on my mind when I was a collegiate. There have been many alumni who have encouraged me in my career and fraternity life, both in the Denver Alumni Chapter and nationally.

My main point to my article is that it is so important for collegiates to find those alumni mentors while they are in college. Do you realize how important your role will be as an alumni member to Phi Chi Theta? You are our future mentors, national officers and the continuity we need. The majority of alumni chapters need to be rejuvenated with recent graduates. Once this happens, the alumni chapters will grow and the circle will be complete. If there isn't a chapter nearby, become an alumni-at-large, or a life-time member and meet the collegiates at regional and national meetings.

*Mary Ellen Lewis*

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## Central Regional Director

When I reflect on my experiences as an Active of this great fraternity, I feel truly privileged to have met so many intelligent and outgoing people. Older Actives helped me mature and grow into the leader I am today. They taught me the communication and leadership skills that I apply everyday at work and they continue to act as career advisors. Most importantly, my fellow Actives still remain my closest friends.

After graduation I, like most people, thought the Phi Chi Theta chapter of my life was closed. Fortunately, I was

## Western Regional Director

Life, as an alum is wonderful. The world is out there for you to conquer after graduating college. As an alum, you start a new career, possibly get married and even start a family, but your Phi Chi Theta brothers and sisters will always be there no matter what changes you go through. I talk to at least one of my brothers and sisters each week about my daily life. They have helped me go through some hard times with my family and I know they truly care about me. They are a great sense of support for me no matter what changes I go through. Their support is constant.

As an alum member, starting from the time you graduate, is a great experience. If you need help with job searching, letters of recommendations, or just

given the opportunity to serve you as the Central Regional Director It was not until I took on my current role that I realized all of the boundless leadership opportunities that Phi Ch Theta has to offer.

Phi Chi Theta has given me the opportunity to lead a large and growing organization in the Central Region of 500 plus Actives and Alumni. This valuable leadership opportunity has tested my business skills and pushed me to grow as a leader. This leadership opportunity will prove invaluable for my graduate school dreams and future business aspirations.

In the past four months, I am excited to report that the Central Region has grown 11 percent under our Alumni teams leadership. We

someone to vent with about work, we are there for each other. It is nice to talk to someone who knows what you are going through. It is also nice to get away from your normal routine and visit one of your brothers or sisters for the weekend. Our older alums often serve as mentors for us.

Being an active alum is less work than you might imagine. We usually meet several times a year, but not weekly, as we did in college. When we do get together as a group, it is usually business first, and then fun. Some of our alumni chapters have cookouts, food drives for their local communities, dinner and movie, but best of all, as alums, we support our local collegiate chapters. Phi Chi Theta collegiates can always use help with pledging, fundraising, or just need a helping hand.

Also, as a graduating senior or alum, you can become a Life

have moved quickly to develop a strategic plan called our "Connect-Strengthen-Grow Plan" which will put us on track to accomplish our goals over the next one and a half years.

The strategic plan is made up of multiple smaller projects, which we are actively looking for additional Alumni to lead. There are many other benefits to becoming an involved Alumni including: new friendships, leadership opportunities and networking. We are posed to generate significant results in the coming months and I encourage you to join our team of Alumni.

*Bill Crane*

CentralDirector@phichitheta.org

Member. To become a Life Member, you pay a one-time membership fee and never have to pay annual dues again. What a great way to show your support for our fraternity. So, I encourage you to stay active after graduating. Get involved and offer your support to your local collegiate chapter. If there is not an alumni chapter around you, start one. It's simple. The National Office is there to help you with the process. I hope everyone is doing well and I will see you soon at an alumni event.

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P.S. Please see page 6, for information re the Western Regional Meeting, to be held in January.

## Eastern Regional Director

So you've graduated or are about to graduate from your University, with degree(s) in some sort of Business field, and are working for potentially a Fortune 500 company or considering graduate school, all in the while paying your bills, spending time with your family, making new friends, and oh yes, attempting to keep sane. Welcome to the "Real World."

Since about May 2006, I have been faced with the challenge of surviving in this "real world." Not to say that I didn't enjoy all my new responsibilities, but everything seemed routine and effortless. I discovered what I was missing was my sense of belonging to something that was important to me. These were the same reasons I decided to pledge Phi Chi Theta years ago, and these are now the same

reason I came back to the organization as an Alumni.

PCT doesn't end after you walk across the stage with your diploma in hand. In fact, this organization sticks with you for life. As an alumnus, I have been able to reach out to my fellow brothers and sisters beyond my Alma Mater, and to my family nationwide. My ability to survive post-undergrad has really been from the advice and support of my Phi Chi Theta networks. I was able to find my niche in this big world and find ways to contribute my time to something meaningful.

Our organization has huge network of business professionals all around the country. Do you remember sitting during one of your Professional Events and listening to recent Alumni talking to you about work/life balance or salary negotiations? Well, that is you...now! Wouldn't it be nice to always have this guidance and to

be able to reach out to a familiar face when you move to a new state? These are just some of the very few things Phi Chi Theta Alumni involvement can offer. Besides the obvious professional aspect, do you remember how much fun all of our social events used to be? Isn't it great to come back to tailgates and or happy hours (non alcoholic, of course) and see all of your old friends? Imagine all this on a broader level!

I encourage you to reach out to your fellow Brothers and Sisters, who you may have lost contact with and join your area's Phi Chi Theta network. If anything, you can bring back some old memories and hopefully make some new ones.

*Natasha Ghatak*

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## Executive Director

I was an active collegiate member and officer with the Beta Theta Chapter but after graduation, I moved to an area without an alumni chapter and honestly I did not know that I could still remain active. I didn't understand the meaning of "Once a Phi Chi Theta, Always a Phi Chi Theta." It took me nearly ten years to figure it out. I was already married during college but after graduation, we relocated. I started my career in property management and we started our family — a lot of LIFE CHANGES. I was then busy being a wife, mom, employee and I was very active in PTA but I just still felt that something was missing. I missed that sense of FRATERNITY that I had back in college.

One day, while cleaning out some old files, I came across an old issue of *The IRIS*. I contacted the person listed as the national president and she put me in contact with Kim Gary, the national president at the time. Kim is a founding member of the Dallas Alumni Chapter. I was invited to a meeting and have been a member every since. I became a Life Member and then had the honor of becoming your Executive Director. I don't even want to think about the years I missed out on!

The Dallas Alumni are my extended family. I think I appreciate each of them because they have such a sense of dedication to Phi Chi Theta that is reflected in all that the chapter does. The chapter is very supportive of the

Alpha Nu Chapter at the University of North Texas, we try and serve on the national level, we give back to our community through events such as the North Texas Food bank, Habitat for Humanity, our annual tree decorating and Christmas caroling at a local nursing home, etc. We also enjoy each other's company. We meet on a regular basis to enjoy dinner and a movie, A Star's Hockey game or a simple pot luck dinner. I am also very appreciative of my other Phi Chi Theta friendships — friendships that last a lifetime. When asked what is the best part to being an alum, I would say being able to give back to an organization that I have the utmost respect for.

*Saundra Finley*

ExecutiveDirector@phichitheta.org

## NATIONAL OFFICERS

**National President:** The National President shall be the chief executive officer of the Fraternity, and shall preside at meetings of the National Chapter and Executive Council. This officer shall have the power to approve all payments, sign all charters, issue calls for special meeting of the National Chapter, issue calls for meetings of the Executive Council, appoint all committees and supervise all committees. These duties may be delegated as the National President sees fit.

The National President shall serve as a member of the Executive Policy Board, one of the Fraternity's official representative to the Professional Fraternity Association, and as a Trustee of the Phi Chi Theta Educational Foundation.

**National Vice President of Internal Affairs:** The National Vice President of Internal Affairs shall supervise the activities of the Regional Directors, conduct officer training for incoming Regional Directors, develop professional programs for collegiate and alumni chapters, administer the programs for the Alumni Achievement Award and Alumni Hall of Fame and to assist the National Vice President of Expansion to activate or reactivate chapters, and perform other duties, as directed by the National President. This National Vice President of Internal Affairs shall be first in order of succession in case of the inability of the National President to serve.

**National Vice President for Expansion:** The National Vice President for Expansion shall be responsible for activating and reactivating chapters. This officer will identify and pursue opportunities for establishing chapters, attend pre-petition visits and conduct chapter installation and reactivating ceremonies. The National Vice President of Expansion shall be second in order of succession in case of the inability of the National President to serve.

**Regional Directors:** Regional Directors shall serve as the National Chapter liaison to the Local Chapters in their respective areas. These officers shall appoint and supervise the Assistant Regional director in their respective region. These offices shall visit each chapter in their region at least once during the term between National Chapter Meetings; plan and conduct regional meetings, publish at least one newsletter per semester; monitor and advise chapters, contact chapters regarding financial obligations and reports due; and maintain contact with the National Vice President of Internal Affairs.

**Immediate Past National President:** This officer shall serve as chairman of the Executive Policy Board and render such service to the Fraternity as may be requested by the National President.

**Ex-Officio National Officers:** The Editor of the Fraternity's magazine (who is appointed by the Executive Council) and the Executive Director (who is employed by the Fraternity) shall serve as ex-officio officers of the National Chapter and the Executive Council. They shall have a voice, but not vote, at all meetings of the bodies on which they serve.

## SPECIAL NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS!

We have a new chapter — Epsilon Zeta — Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The chapter was installed by Mary Ellen Lewis, Vice President of Expansion, on November 22, 2008.

The Western Regional Meeting will be held in Austin, Texas from January 16-18, 2009. Registration for the Western Regional Conference is already underway. Please go to the national website for the information sheet and registration form. At the request of the delegates at the National Meeting, the date of the regional conference was changed from August to January. We hope that this is a better time frame for our collegiate chapters and will allow for a large turnout. (41 people have registered as of 12/15/08.)

The Delta Mu chapter will be hosting the conference in Austin, Texas. The conference will begin with a welcome reception on Friday night. Saturday will be a full day of meetings and discussions about Phi Chi Theta. Then we will end the conference with a Saturday night activity at the Alamo Draft House, where we will be enjoying dinner and a movie.



*From left to right: Annette Stewart, Helen Tran, Bill Crane, Gary Hodge, Mary Ellen Lewis, Betsy Brasher and Saundra Finley.*