

Alumni of the Sigma Alpha Chapter of **DELTA KAPPA EPSILON**



and **DELTA KAPPA SIGMA** P.O. Box 18231, Richmond, Virginia 23226

April 15, 2017

Alumni Association/Chapter Update

Dan Johnson, Alumni Board Chairman (S'74)

Dear Fellow DKE/DKS Brothers, Parents and Friends:

Happy payment day! We are well into another year and we finally got out our first 2017 newsletter with all the news that is unfit to print. As an odd year, we are once again taking nominations for the VT-DKE Alumni Association Board of Directors. This prestigious group of gentlemen, scholars and jolly good fellows; faithfully conduct the complex affairs of the Alumni Association and associated Sigma Alpha Properties LLC Housing Corporation. Underhanded tactics of past administrations, have led to the use of the nuclear option and eliminated the filibuster rules requiring two-thirds vote for nominees. Somehow, this lower threshold still prevented over 90% of VT-DKE alumni that were deemed "unfit to serve" due to various "indiscretions" fully documented by Putin and the Russians. However current management has declared all that stuff as FAKE NEWS and despite the infamous "dark DKE files" that we keep on every DKE alumnus in regards to past 'discretions' everyone/anyone can pass a DKE background check. As always, you all are subject to board nomination by yourself/others; and if not nominated, our random board director picker that we keep in the DKE House garage may be used. So once again, if you are interested in helping out please send us an email or fill out and return the enclosed card.

In other news, the chapter is once again hosting a Parents Weekend Spring Game tailgate at the DKE House starting at noon on April 23rd. I think this is the third year in a row the chapter has organized a Parent's Weekend function coinciding with the VT Parent's weekend and Spring Game. Plans are for catered BBQ and age appropriate beverages. Please join before, during or after the game (or all of the above) as we demonstrate to the parents of our DKE chapter brothers that their sons have "a reasonable chance of survival" of fraternity life. We also expect to formally unveil the DKE Hokie Bird and commemorative plaque to our 2016 DKE Annual Giving Fund benefactors. This 1:00 pm 'ceremony' will consist of a photo op by the bird and DKE group toast with official red Solo cups.

We are also looking for volunteers to help out for our 7th Annual "Habitat for Inhumanity" scheduled for August 5-6 weekend. Come spend a day (or two) in Blacksburg and revive your inner desire to mix power tools, comradery and beer to help undertake maintenance activities and carry out house improvements to our beloved DKE House. August 1st is the DKE House tenant turnover date which provides an opportunity for the new residents to start afresh with their own 'historic' tenancy period at the DKE House. The DKE House has eight bedrooms, and we have signed leases to occupy all the rooms. The H for I will also overlap with Sigma Alpha Chapter (that's us!) hosting the South regional DKE leadership conference during the same timeframe (Aug 2-6).

On a new front, Virginia Tech has plans to expand their donor base for donations to the University. As with most other universities and colleges; VT now allows for donations to be earmarked for university related groups. Yes, that means you can make donations to support DKE via VT and get credit as a donation to Virginia Tech! In lieu of our Page 3 Now and Then Column we have a feature section on the new VT-DKE Giving program below.

The active chapter continues to grow with six pledges (including two legacies) for the semester on top of the active membership of 57 brothers. Graduation numbers this year will be significant and continued successful Rush of new candidates is a necessity for the ongoing financial stability of the chapter.

Hope to see some of you in Blacksburg for Spring Game!

FFTHF, Dan Johnson '77



Active Chapter Report -

Chris Large S'15 Chapter President

Brothers, with the end of the spring '17 semester drawing in close, we would like to take a moment to reflect upon the brotherhood and all the progress it has made in the past three months. This semester we've found ourselves six pledges that embody the prerequisites of a Deke, two of which are legacies; Taylor Blake, the son of **Preston Blake (W '82)**, and James Otwell the son of the late **Russell Otwell (W '81)**, nephew of **Bill Otwell** and the brother of **Jonathan Otwell (F '16)**. With these 'gentlemen' reaching brother status later this month, the chapter will have 63 active brothers at the end of the semester. However with graduation not far ahead we are losing 14 brothers to the "real world". Would like to recognize the following graduating seniors and all their contributions to making the Sigma Alpha chapter what it is today. Ben Brisley,

Our philanthropic efforts have been stronger than ever this semester. We have actively participated and placed in the philanthropies of Delta Gamma and Chi Omega sororities, benefitting the Service for Sight and Joining Forces and Make-A-Wish foundations. Earlier this month, a group of brothers participated in the Big Event through Virginia Tech where they spent most of their Saturday landscaping a backyard for a local Blacksburg family. In the upcoming weeks, we will participate in the Relay for Life and Alpha Delta Pi's spring philanthropy, benefitting the Ronald McDonald house.

The DKE house is looking better than ever after the completion of our recent House Appreciation Day which we undertake each semester. We would like to thank everyone for their efforts in helping to complete numerous projects. Some of the activities accomplished included: Window blinds installed on the first floor; a new dishwasher (courtesy of the VT-DKE Alumni Association) was installed in the kitchen; the first and third floors received fresh coats of paint; potholes were repaired in the driveway; multiple bathroom amenities/fixtures were replaced; an automatic locking door handle was replaced on the front door; (the code is 1844 in case door is locked) and the entire house and garage areas were deep cleaned and power washed as applicable. Of course, this was backed by the normal five pickup loads of trash to the local dump!

We're currently in the midst of installing a closed circuit security camera system for the DKE House to deter/prevent loss of DKE property. While we don't have much worth stealing at least we hope to cut down on the vandalism and thefts that seem to always happen. Plans are also in the works to fully repair/replace the DKE House driveway.

On April 22nd, Virginia Tech is hosting their annual inter-squad football Spring Game. It is also Parent's Weekend at VT. As part of the weekend festivities, prior to (and during/after) the game, Dekes will be hosting for our third straight year, a Parent/Alumni/Brothers tailgate at the DKE House on Roanoke Street. House tours of the DKE House will be available for anyone who so desires to visit all corners of the property. We will be having barbeque catered and refreshments will be served. We also will be "unveiling" the DKE Hokie Bird at 1:00pm and hope to get a group picture of all parents, alumni, active brothers and all our guests. All are welcome to come, and as always go Hokies!

FFTHF, Christopher James Large



Page 3 - VT-DKE Annual Giving now part of VT Foundation

We have completed all the paperwork, shortly will undergo the extensive training required and in anticipation we are rolling out a new way to support Dekes. Virginia Tech, similar to many universities/colleges has now set up a process whereby giving to VT can be earmarked to DKE and vice versa (donations made to DKE can also count at VT donations!). Over the past 17 years since the DKE Alumni Association was restructured (essentially recreated out of the ashes of a condemned DKE House property) we have had on average 90 contributors *per year* to the DKE Annual Giving Fund. With approximately 750 living DKE/DKS alumni this calculates to a 12% participation rate *each and every year!* Now compare this to the rather paltry 7-10% annual giving participation at VT overall you can see why VT wants to leverage off of our success.

To encourage greater participation of alumni to the Annual VT Giving Campaigns; our University now provides for the earmarking of gifts to VT directly to DKE! Likewise, we are now formally shifting our primary donation vehicle from the Rampant Lion Foundation – Sigma Alpha Fund to the Virginia Tech Foundation (DKE earmarked of course) and in effect you will be getting a double whammy for the same donation (and hopefully getting your VT donations earmarked for DKE for a triple whammy effect!). Now of course you all are thinking “how did they pull this one off” and “what is the catch”? The short answers are “the program is offered to any VT registered student organization” and “VT increases its overall alumni support numbers and takes a 7% administration fee cut”. Your donations are recognized as donations to VT and the University will issue the tax-deductible receipt and acknowledgements. You can even go through the VT channels to earmark donations via wills, life insurance, IRA’s and all that kind of stuff to the benefit of VT (and DKE). Hey before too long, I suspect we will offering VT-DKE travel packages (likely trips of no return). Beyond the VT benefits, you still get to keep all your VT-DKE Alumni Association tier benefits; which of course are way too numerous to mention. Dekes will continue to acknowledge any and all cash gifts to us via the VT program and of course, we always directly accept, in-kind, non-cash and direct contributions (albeit non tax-deductible) to the DKE chapter.

It sounds exciting, because it is! (and really legit too, as we get to piggy-back on the all the efforts of the University’s Advancement Office.) As many of you are aware, DKE Brother **Charlie Phlegar ‘S75** was hired on at Virginia Tech as VP of Advancement with a primary mission to get the VT Foundation endowment and VT giving participation rates up to ‘respectable levels’. For example, in Charlie’s previous job at Cornell; the annual alumni giving for 2014 was \$546 million; with a 33% alumni participation rate; and a total endowment of some \$6 BILLION! If we combine the VT-DKE Annual Giving Fund efforts, together with the earmarking of VT-DKE alumni gifts made VT to Dekes, we could easily increase the VT-DKE “endowment” to levels that can pay off debts and maybe start a true VT-DKE endowment otherwise known as slush fund for DKE Board meetings to be held in Aruba each year! (please note that the previous statement is a joke.....and the Board has *not officially* decided on the Aruba destination yet).

So how does it work? Well we will finish the mandatory training sessions in two weeks and will set the system up by month end. As a kick start, we have enclosed our standard, DKE Annual Giving Fund, and return envelopes for your use and we will record your DKE donations and consolidate to forward to VT similar to our past RLF process. Likewise we will set up a direct link to VT’s website (DKE earmarked) on our vtdke.com website. Also, you can simply respond to the barrage of mailings you receive directly from VT soliciting your support (albeit you gotta remember to earmark to DKE!). Furthermore, when the ‘VT student ambassadors’ phone bank cold calls your house you can respond – “absolutely I will make a pledge a VT donation as long as you can assure me that it will be earmarked to good ole DKE!”. Maybe down the road we can have targeted VT-DKE student ambassadors to provide direct feedback of VT and the fraternity’s activities while drumming up some financial support. However, have NO FEAR that our “*non-winning of any Pulitzer Prize*” DKE Newsletters will no longer be forthcoming. Our crack editorial staff has been making up stuff for years, long before all this fake news stuff.

Make a donation the DKE 2017 Annual Giving Fund and support both VT and DKE together!



Alumni Treasury Report -

Wesley Johnson F'08

The 2016 VT-DKE Annual Giving Fund closed out the year with 95 brothers donating over \$38k in cash and other in-kind donations. Our RLF-SA Fund, inclusive of activities in Q1 of 2017, has an impressive balance of \$174k (although \$158k of this amount is represented by the "ultra" sub-prime Promissory Notes/Second Mortgages issued by Sigma Alpha Properties LLC Housing Corporation. Coupled with outstanding primary mortgage principal balance (\$210k) and the remaining balance of the demand loan (\$6k), you can add up that we still carry a debt load of \$364k on the DKE House as of 3/31/17. Our alumni operating account has \$6k balance and we have fully rented the DKE House for next academic year. Our goals for 2017 are to pay off the remaining portion of the demand loan; support ongoing capital and maintenance projects at the DKE House; and support other VT-DKE alumni activities. We are looking forward to a bump up with our new program of donating via the VT system. Please show your support with a donation to the 2017 VT-DKE Annual Giving Fund and get doubly recognized from VT also. Thanks!

FFTHF, Wesley Johnson

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Alumni Association of the Sigma Alpha
Chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon Fraternity
P.O. Box 18231
Richmond, VA 23226