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Omegalite

FALL 2020/SPRING 2021

PURDUE UNIVERSITY



Physician Assistant Tom Moretti in South Bend hospital emergency room

Omega alumni on front line of Covid battle

From interacting directly with patients to being behind the scenes developing new treatments, Omega alumni are assisting in the battle of treating or helping to conquer the challenges Covid-19 patients are facing.

Purdue is not generally known for expertise in the medical field, but notable alumni in this field exist. Since the 1980s, Indiana University medical students could start their studies at Purdue, but had to finish them in Indianapolis or Bloomington. After the turn of the century, medical students could do all their training and much of their residency from the West Lafayette campus.

Since 1963, Purdue has had a nursing program, too. The Boilermaker pharmacy program has existed since 1884. Biomedical health sciences, formerly known just as health sciences and established in 1979, often is a starting point for Boilermakers considering medicine as a career.

And, the world-renowned research in microbiology and molecular sci-

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Plans made for Omega's 100th

Plans for Omega's 100th anniversary in 2022 are now underway.

Alumni, undergraduates, guests and friends are welcome to a banquet tentatively scheduled for **Oct. 29, 2022**, in the Purdue Memorial Union's north and south ballrooms, which have a capacity for more than 500. That weekend is an open football weekend, which opens up a lot of hotel rooms and facilities on campus. The event date is considered tentative at this point, because if the Purdue football schedule changes, our planned large blocks of hotel and banquet rooms will not be honored.

Online registration and hotel reservations will start in July 2022. In the meantime, we will need your assistance.

Omega's two Mr. Pi Kappa Phis – the highest honor in the national fraternity – **David Lane** (Omega 835) and **Greg Linder** (Omega 951) are serving as the co-chairmen of the celebration. They will help coordinate efforts of volunteers who are willing to reach out to chapter alumni of their era to encourage attendance at the historic event.

"I am pleased to co-host Omega Chapter's 100th anniversary celebration with Greg Linder," Lane said. "We collaborated on the house renovation fund-raising drive in the late '80s following the 1987 fire and are committed to achieving the same level of success as celebration co-hosts. We look forward to your participation in the October 2022 event!"

The pair were instrumental in assisting the chapter house rebuild and also in coordinating Omega's 75th anniversary celebration that drew 400 people in 1997, too.

"I am honored to co-chair this



David Lane



Greg Linder

historic event with David Lane," Linder said. "The celebration of 100 years since our founding at Omega is truly a milestone. It is important for you see just how strong we have become. Every one of our alumni must get involved to spread the word to your brethren to attend this event."

And spreading the word is where the volunteering comes into play. We will need decade and class chairmen to assist us in making the 100th anniversary the largest chapter-level event in Pi Kappa Phi history.

Decade chairmen will oversee up to 10 class chairmen. The decade chairmen will work with Lane and Linder to help divide up alumni contact information alongside class chairmen. Those class chairmen will be responsible for making personal contact with alumni from their era.

Those who wish to serve as a decade or class chairmen should make contact with chapter advisor Pat Kuhnle, who will handle a lot of the logistics of dividing up contact lists. We anticipate class chairmen will have 25-50 names on their lists, depending on the number of volunteers from their time in the chapter.

Kuhnle can be reached at pkuhnle@gmail.com, or by cell phone at 765/743-1256. We hope to have all the decade and class chairmen volunteers in place by June 2021, some 16 months before the celebration.

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ences at Purdue was established long ago.

Pi Kappa Phi has produced many physicians, pharmacists, nurses and researchers. Accordingly, seeing Omega's impact on the Covid front is no surprise, and this glimpse of some alumni on the forefront is in no terms complete. Their perspectives on the pandemic gripping the world ranges from being overwhelmed to having hope.

**RICHARD GALAT (OMEGA 2016), RN,
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO**

Galat, who graduated in nursing in 2018, cannot recall the number of Covid patients he's encountered.

"Throughout the last year," he said, "I've cared for more COVID patients than I can recall – three shifts a week on a 46-bed unit full of positive patients for three or four months full-time."

As a nurse, he helps treat patients' symptoms.

"Medications are used, but often our care is based on monitoring and adapting based on the condition of the patient," he said. "Because we are the largest system in the region, we often see patients who, while having Covid, also must manage other acute and long-term ailments. While many were able to recover, many others have not had the same outcome. I know many of my colleagues and I have seen more loss of life in the last year than we care to admit."

Dealing with Covid cases is part of the routine nowadays.

"It's been a very long year," Galat said. "I've been lucky enough to be fully vaccinated, but we continue to push through and show up every day to take care of people who need us."

**BRIAN HEIWIG (OMEGA 1659), RN, LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER, CHICAGO**

Heiwig, who graduated in 2005 with a Purdue health sciences degree and a 2013 BS in nursing from the Calumet campus, sees the toll the pandemic has taken on the medical industry as well as stricken families.

"Covid has wrecked the health care industry," he said. "Providers are at their breaking points and running to get away from the bedside. Covid has highlighted societal issues as well as health care's shortcomings."

He said that early in treating the pandemic, medical staff was unable to get enough protective gear. Then there's the isolation for the patients who cannot see family. Even doctors would keep their distance, often seeing patients through a window.

Being a nurse working primarily in the

cardiovascular and thoracic intensive care unit, Heiwig would see the sickest patients who needed life-saving surgeries postponed due to Covid.

Some patients would get Covid while others were unable to have surgery due to the overwhelming stress on the healthcare system diverting its resources to treating those with the virus.

Heiwig recalled a patient in his 60s in need of a heart transplant. While awaiting an open surgery date the charismatic, chef-turned-businessman's health declined.

"As time passed, I watched his heart fail and put more and more pressure on his lungs," Heiwig said. "But talk of all transplants ceased due to the unknown issues surrounding Covid."

Other short-term techniques to assist his failing heart were not provided because of the amount of time around-the-clock medical monitoring would take. While not a Covid patient himself, the man died awaiting acute treatment.

"After a decade of nursing and countless poor outcomes, it was the first time my emotions consumed me," Heiwig said.

He's worked with pandemic patients, too.

"I have worked in three different Covid units," he said. "Each had a different acuity of patient and each unit provided a different logistical challenge. I might see a physician 10 minutes in a 12-hour shift. They were spread so thinly. They only had time to put out large fires."

He recalled a younger patient, a mid-20s female, who faced an emergency C-section to deliver her fourth child. She was Heiwig's first patient requiring an extracorporeal membrane oxygenator, a type of respirator that is similar to a heart-lung by-pass machine used for open heart surgery. The new mother would Facetime her own mother daily, as the grandmother held the child.

"The patient was never able to be fully awake and meet her fourth child in person. After two long months, the patient died."

As an intensive care unit nurse, Heiwig's seen his share of poor outcomes.

"I have had a hard time during the pandemic watching patients that we cannot adequately treat," he said. "I do not see the patients who have only a little bit of trouble. I see the worst patients who have a very little chance of recovering."

"The sad part is that these patients are all alone in glass boxes with the doors shut tight. I visit for short periods and doctors knock on the windows to ask questions. It is one of the loneliest places I have ever seen."

He and his wife used to interact regular-

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ly with the neighbors. In a pandemic, knowing what he does for a living, those same neighbors kept their distance.

JOHN MESSINA (OMEGA 1303), SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT-CLINICAL DEVELOPMENT, OPTINOSE US, DOWNTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

Messina, who graduated with a PharmD degree in 1995, is at the cutting edge of development of a spray intended to kill the coronavirus in the nasal passages before it reaches patients' lungs.

"We have a nasal delivery device that was developed for delivering medications to areas of the nasal cavity not effectively reached with regular nasal sprays," he said. "The device is already approved for use with a steroid for a condition called nasal polyps. As we began to learn about Covid in the spring of 2020, it came clear that the virus sets up shop in the upper regions of the nasal cavity and begins to replicate in the cells located there."

His company's research has indicated that as a nasal antiseptic, it had "the potential to significantly reduce the viral load in the nose."

If that theory works, then "there would be less virus that could enter the lungs and thereby give the body more time to fight the virus before more significant symptoms such as pneumonia developed."

As a result, there is potential it reduces the host person's ability to spread the virus.

"We have been able to formulate an antiseptic that is highly effective at killing the coronavirus and in early studies has shown to be safe," he said.

The next study in the treatment research is to use the spray with Covid patients to verify it actually

reduces the virus spread in a person's body and from person to person.

"While vaccines are super important and are going to save millions of lives over the next year, Covid-19 is not going away completely," Messina warns. "We are hopeful that the product we are developing can have a role in mitigating the impact of the virus and the mutations that may occur."

"Research is by its very nature unpredictable, but if all goes well we hope to have this product available for public use in a year or so."

DR. STEVE HILTON (OMEGA 1718), PHYSICIAN, DERRY MEDICAL CENTER, BEDFORD, NEW NH

Hilton, who graduated with an interdisciplinary engineering degree in 2010, helps diagnose and treat symptoms of patients in his physician-owned primary care clinics in five locations in New Hampshire.

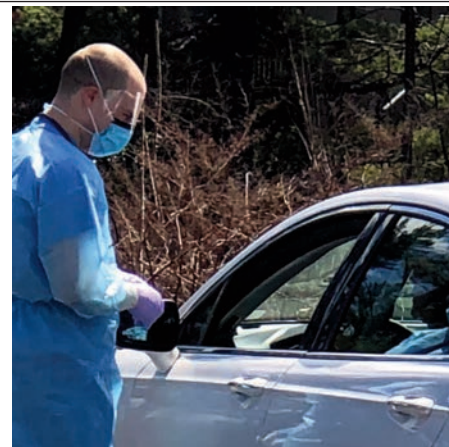
"There certainly has been an evolution starting in March 2020 when things were largely unknown," Hilton said.

He said the infection rate in his locale has remained significantly lower than the national levels. His medical group was the first in the state to set up drive-through testing.

"New Hampshire was fortunate to remain relatively low Covid burdened through these months until things exploded across the country in the last few months," he said. "My interaction with Covid patients following the establishment of carside testing was limited to telemedicine visits, largely coordinating testing for systematic and exposed patients as well as keeping tabs on patients who carried the Covid diagnosis. We did have several patients who had to go to the hospital due to combination of factors. To my knowledge, I have had only one patient whom I cared for succumb to this novel disease, but numerous others requiring hospital or intensive care and others who grapple with the long-term effects."

He said early in the virus' spread, there was an "anything but the hospital" mentality.

"We tried to do our best to offer supportive care to these folks, largely recommending traditional care such as prednisone, antibiotics and inhaled medications rather than these experimental treatments."



Dr. Steve Hilton, Derry Medical

He said his 20-physician group had to pivot when finishing its fifth location early in 2020.

"By the middle of March, we had a Covid testing location – a facility we had just finished building. We had to repurpose that location to serve as our Covid headquarters. Testing was performed outside, patients could be seen in special dedicated negative pressure rooms with employees donning appropriate PPE. Clinicians were performing telemedicine for the first time while X-rays and imaging services were coordinated through a nurse's station. It certainly wasn't seamless, but it was nimble and patient-oriented."

Hilton and his wife whom he met during a Christian-based sports camp in Western Pennsylvania after his freshman year at Purdue, have three children with a fourth on the way.

JOHN MICHAEL AUGUSTINOVICZ (OMEGA 1988), MEDICAL SCRIBE, PRE-MED STUDENT, INDIANAPOLIS

Augustinovicz, who graduated in 2017 in sales and sales management, sees countless suspected and actual Covid cases in emergency rooms each shift.

"At the beginning of the pandemic when the virus was a mystery, suspected Covid-19 patients would only come into contact with one doctor and one nurse," he said. "The purpose was to mitigate the risk of spreading the virus throughout the emergency department. Then, scribes were required to stay at the doctor's station and doctors would come back and report to scribes to complete patient charting."

Anyone in contact with those

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John Messina, VP, Optinose

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patients was required to keep a distance and wear protective gear.

"At the peak of last year's pandemic cases, I would estimate 50 percent of the cases in the ER were suspected Covid-19. In 2021, the number has dropped significantly to around 10 percent. This may be attributed to the virus' growing resistance, vaccines or that people were learning to quarantine themselves."

He's seen just shy of 500 suspected cases in his ER work.

"The majority of the patients that I saw were discharged home with a quarantine plan, possibly antibiotics to treat Covid-related pneumonia and strict return precautions if their symptoms worsened," he said.

Despite being alive during SARS and Ebola outbreaks, he never really thought about dealing with a pandemic until February 2020.

"I hope that this state, country and world are able to come together to create and manifest quicker solutions," he said. "Whether it be wearing a mask, having to quarantine for a short time or get the vaccine, I wish that people would understand that all these measures are to protect the public. If you had to quarantine for one month or wear a mask for one year and it saved one human life, would it be worth it?"

He recognizes the medical industry has had its issues with hospital bed capacity and being short-staffed.

"The world was just not prepared to deal with a virus of this magnitude," he said. "My fear is that the world will be stricken by a worse virus than Covid-19 and that the world will not have the capacity to deal with it."

TOM MORETTI (OMEGA 1495), EMERGENCY MEDICINE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT, MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

Working in an emergency room can reveal all sorts of medical issues and Covid-19 is no exception.

"At first, Covid was just another thing that we had to deal with," Moretti said. "Nothing really happened during the early months. Nothing compared to New York and California."

But things changed after the summer of 2020.

"Starting in December, we had a dramatic increase in cases and

severity," he said. "We peaked mid-to late-December with an average of 80 patients in the hospital and eight in ICU from day to day."

Then after the first of the year, numbers dropped.

"There has been great advancement in management of inpatient and outpatient care," he said.

"Hopefully, as more people get vaccinated we get back to 'normal' as all of us are tired of this pandemic and its impact on society."

He described four patients whose experiences reflect the range of how Covid affects the body. Three of them survived while one did not.

One case was with a 60-year-old male who came to the ER with abdominal pain. What was initially thought to be a kidney stone turned out to be clotted spleen due to increased clotting due to Covid. Soon thereafter, clots appeared in his right arm and right kidney. Within two hours blood flow was critically blocked in both places, and the patient was moved to the Intensive Care Unit. He survived.

Another case involved a 28-year-old male with shortness of breath. Upon entry into the ER, his oxygen level, which normally is in the upper 90 percent range, was 65 percent. His lungs had filled with blood clots due to Covid. "Unfortunately, the patient died from the clots in his lungs despite aggressive treatment."

And there was a 16-year-old male who lost his sense of smell.

"That's it, his vital signs were normal," Moretti said. "He had no cough, no fever, no shortness of breath, just loss of smell."

That patient was diagnosed with Covid and sent home.

Then there was a 32-year-old female.

"She was suspected Covid as she had a fever, cough, shortness of breath and some mild chest pain," Moretti said.

After testing positive, she developed pneumonia. When she arrived, she had a 95 percent oxygen level; within an hour, it had dropped to 80. She was admitted, her symptoms were treated effectively and she went home after a few days.

"Realistically, there is no rhyme or reason of why it affects certain individuals one way and others another way," he said. "Simple things like overall health, chronic conditions and age to a point have

an influence, but overall we are still trying to determine why certain people are so much worse off than others."

Moretti said he had treated approximately 100 Covid cases from the ages of 13 to 90.

"Some were admitted to Covid floors," he said. "A few went to the ICU and a couple passed away in the emergency department."

Moretti started working in the ER two years ago. Prior to that, he assisted with orthopedic trauma surgery.

MARK MCGOLDRICK (OMEGA 2012), PRODUCTION ENGINEER, TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICALS, ATLANTA

McGoldrick, a 2018 graduate in chemical engineering, works to support plasma manufacturing from patient donors who have recovered from Covid. The efforts produce "hyperimmune globulin treatment for severely infected victims."

He chose his major at Purdue to have a broad discipline that could make a difference.

"I had a desire to work in an industry where my day-to-day work had an impact on the life surrounding me," he said. "I think of myself as very fortunate and blessed to have been accepted to this role with Takeda, especially during the troubling times of the Covid-19 pandemic."

The alliance of multiple agencies lists its mission simply on its website – "You are a survivor. You could be a hero."

McGoldrick values his part in improving the lives of Covid patients.

"CoVig-19 Plasma Alliance was formed with other plasma companies in order to collect donations of convalescent plasma from recovered patients, possessing vital antibodies," he said. "These donations could then be used to produce therapies to potentially help save others infected with the Covid-19 disease. The production process was developed and overseen by a team of engineers and scientists, myself included."

The alliance efforts are beyond corporate profits.

"It really puts into perspective the fundamental teaching of service leadership and doing one's part to give back for the betterment of society," McGoldrick said.

Try organizing a fraternity in Covid times

Navigating Covid-19 with constantly changing regulations and unexpected cancelations while trying to keep your sanity seems like a job description for a small business owner or a corporate CEO.

Consider how challenging that might be for a fraternity president.

“Getting through last year has probably been the biggest positive,” said **Erik Wilson** (Omega 2125), chapter archon (president) during 2020.

“Communication and leading by example were definitely important things I got out of the year. The fatigue is real, like being a Zoom zombie. The university is depending on you being responsible. One of the things (Purdue associate dean of students for fraternity, sorority and cooperative life) **Brandon Cutler** told me going into the fall semester is that ‘this year we really need our great student leaders to be great.’

“He’s definitely right, but it can be overwhelming.”

Consider the challenges Wilson had to face.

- Right before spring break in March, Purdue announced in-person classes would cease. How does that impact members’ housing? Will there be refunds? How might they get their food?

- Coordinating times when guys could move stuff out in pre-determined windows with limited capacity during those windows.

- Throughout the summer, Purdue mandated certain guidelines, required plans to be submitted and approved then changed the guidelines almost weekly.

- Developing a fall semester move-in plan in predetermined time windows with limited capacity.

- Working with food services for plans to distribute bagged meals and find contractors for regular cleaning and sanitization.

- Marking one-way paths throughout the house per Purdue guidelines to limit interactive traffic flows that later were determined to be in violation of fire codes.

- Making sleeping arrangements in cold-air dorms that tried to achieve social distancing.

- Coordinating recruitment that prohibited prospective members from coming into the chapter house and that scheduled one-on-one meetings with them away from the house.

- Maintaining a brotherhood that could not assemble for chapter meetings, could not sit together during meals and could not have social events or intramurals.

- Finding alternatives for the highly successful programming the chapter does for the Ability Experience, which helps set the chapter apart from other fraternities.

- Developing quarantine and/or isolation plans for anyone who tested positive.

- Dissecting the constant barrage of almost weekly emails with new regulations or interpretations from the university and national organization and participate in monthly mandated online forums for Covid prevention.

- Trying to develop a budget that was hit by hard by spring semester refunds and added expenses for the fall.

The announcement that Purdue would switch from in-person classes to online only came days before spring break last March.

“It was like a waiting game because the university wants to see what the other universities are doing,” Wilson said. “It was kinda like a game of chicken to see the first one that was going to move. Purdue ended up sending everyone home and then how do you deal with the finances of that? What do you miss out on? What do you owe people? And how are guys going to do at home when they’ve come to rely on people around here for their social interaction and collaborating on classes?”

The first round of decision making had 10 days until implementation.

“Everyone was so blindsided so it was difficult to coordinate that,” he said.

In consultation with the housing corporation officers, it was decided that the chapter house would be open for at least two weeks after break while guys decided how they were going to move forward – staying on campus, which was discouraged, or go home.

About 30 of the 50+ guys living in during the spring 2020 tentatively decided to come back to campus at least temporarily.

“And as time went on that number was progressively dwindling when guys realized that others were leaving, so they were going home, too,” Wilson said. “After the first week that had dropped to 12 and thereafter we had

four guys living here for the last six weeks of the semester.”

For the first two weeks, sack meals were prepared for those living in, but that became cost prohibitive quickly. Then guys were on their own for food.

The next challenge was coordinating times when guys could move their stuff out of the house. The university dictated individuals were given two-hour windows and could only bring one other person with them to move stuff out.

“It was a very chaotic time – figuring out how and when we could have the house open and guys could safely come in was challenging – but the guys were very understanding,” he said.

Next was addressing university rules of moving back to campus and parents’ concerns. The rules changed through email edicts and the ever-changing submitting of plans that included cleaning, sanitation, move-in times, isolation and quarantine plans. And even traffic patterns had to be established inside the facility to reduce face-to-face interaction – in a FRATERNITY!

Wilson was in constant contact with housing corporation president Matt Clark, reworking the housing contract and food service among other issues.

“We had to have all these plans in place and when the Protect Purdue guidelines are not finalized either until two weeks before the fall semester – all summer it was just projections that were subject to new rules and interpretations,” Wilson said. “We had to submit plans to Purdue for approval when it was still changing the standards. Every week it seemed like we’d plan and say ‘let’s see where we are next week’ with new guidelines.”

The planning process was complicated.

“We had to develop entrance and exit doors that had to be marked,” Wilson said. “Then when we mark exit doors to accommodate Purdue plans, they conflicted with fire code requirements. So, if we follow Covid guidelines you are likely going to have to break fire code.”

Wilson and Clark had to draw up alternatives for chapter members who contracted Covid-19, consistent with the back-to-campus Protect Purdue guidelines.

“If somebody got Covid while living in the house, you could send them to a

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Purdue isolation area, to a different living location or live in their rooms in quarantined space," Wilson said. "But positive cases had to have their own bathroom and showers because those are common areas where you don't necessarily have masks on. From the layout of our house, it was impossible to meet those requirements, so we had to send guys out."

Purdue tested 10 percent of the student body each week for the virus on a randomized schedule. However, within that campus-wide number of 10 percent, upwards of 50 percent of the Greek and cooperative system was checked each week due to the close proximity of its members.

Covid arrived at 330 N. Grant St. the fourth week of fall classes. On that Wednesday, the first case was diagnosed, and on Thursday, there were three more cases.

"Within five days after that probably 30 guys had it," Wilson said. "Eventually, we had 40+ in-house guys test positive in the fall semester."

When a member tested positive, he was notified by the university. That member was not allowed to enter the fraternity house and one of his brothers had to bring his personal items to outside the house and lay them out so the brother could pick them up. Those who tested positive had three options – move to an on-campus isolation area, to a local hotel or home.

During the sixth week of classes, fewer than 10 guys were living in the house. Many of them were ordered to isolation, others moved home for the next two weeks. Pretty much the only guys remaining were out-of-state members or those whose parents did not want them back home. Some guys arranged to live off campus in an Airbnb location.

Chapter members, being young, had no significant symptoms. The most severe were headaches or body aches or indigestion for a couple of days.

All this was going on when recruitment was happening. The process disallowed prospective new members from entering Greek facilities. Chapter members were only allowed to meet with prospective members one-on-one outside the house somewhere on campus or on Zoom individually or with a group. And if the chapter wanted to do a recruitment function via Zoom, it had to submit a plan three weeks prior and get approval from the Protect Purdue office.

"The day I tested positive, I was supposed to meet three kids for recruitment," Wilson said. "I was driving away from campus to isolate and I was calling these guys I was supposed to meet."

The fall pledge class somehow ended up being 25 guys.

"The rushee had to make the determination by meeting two guys whether this was the chapter they wanted," Wilson said. "And we would have to make the determination when only two of our guys have met a rushee so do we trust their judgement enough?"

"That's very difficult to coordinate, but it worked out surprisingly well. The pledge class in the fall was a little bit on the small side, but not undersized by any means."

The 20-member fall class was followed up with another 20-man class in the spring. Typically, between the two semesters the chapter recruits 50 new guys.

Once Covid infections were behind them, then acting like fraternity was still anything but normal.

"During Covid you'd see guys staying in their rooms because we are not supposed to interact much at all," Wilson said. "It did not help unity."

Implementation of the fall new member class worked out well, but for the most part they stayed away from the house in large groups. Those new members did not get to see or participate in many of the chapter outreach programs for people with disabilities because that was disallowed, too.

"Now, we are faced with a situation that fewer pledge classes have even seen our events, no less coordinated them," Wilson said. "How do you write down what a bike-a-thon looks like and how's the scheduling work?"

With positive Covid cases on campus dropping, restrictions have started to be eased. So long as proper distancing can occur chapter meetings and eating meals together has resumed as of February 2021.

"Now it's fun just waiting in a line for meals again because there are 30 people near each other who can now talk to each other," Wilson said. "Just the little things are better now because you really did feel isolated at times."

Wilson, a computer engineering major from near Cleveland, had to drop a fall class just to keep his sanity.

"It was my hardest semester academically," he said. "Personally, I had to drop a class last semester and I was only in 12 credit hours anyhow. It was tough at multiple levels. I would not



Erik Wilson

- **Computer engineering major;** economics minor; deans list; May 2022 anticipated graduation
- **2020 archon**, previously chapter secretary, standards board chairman, 2019-20
- **Council of Archons**, an advisory board to national council and national fraternity staff, 2018-20
- **Pi Kappa Phi Diversity & Inclusion Committee**, 20-member advisory panel, national fraternity
- **Director of Finance**, Purdue IFC, 2019
- **Order of Omega**, Greek leadership honorary, 2020-present
- **Eta Kappa Nu**, Purdue electrical and computer engineering honor society
- **Computer Society**, chairman, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, 2019-2020

have been able to get through it without relying on the guys in the chapter, knowing they had my back, too. Brotherhood was not helped by this situation, but there were other ways in which it actually was helped through cooperation and flexibility."

His efforts did not go unnoticed by his chapter brothers.

Michael Bailey (Omega 2129), Wilson's Fall 2018 pledge brother and roommate, saw it first hand.

"Erik had to face numerous challenges," Bailey said. "Dealing with social distancing in the house, telling brothers certain rules about guests that they didn't want to hear and much more."

Bailey thought Wilson's efforts were monumental.

"He had a plan, a destination and a goal, and communicated with us effectively all along the way and led us to the other side," Bailey said.

Chapter News:

3rd straight RB Stewart

The fraternity was named the 2020 **RB Stewart Award** winner recognizing it as Purdue's best out of 42 fraternities. It was the third consecutive year of winning the award and 10th of the last 13.

Furthermore, the Purdue Pi Kappa Phi chapter had the Interfraternity Council Thomas Robinson Man of the Year and the Philanthropist of the Year winners.

During the 2020 Greek Awards announced in April, Pi Kappa Phi won three major awards including the top fraternity chapter at Purdue.

Chapter president Erik Wilson sees the award as recognition of Pi Kappa Phi's standing on campus.

"It's great to see our chapter continually set the standard not only at Purdue, but nationwide as well," Wilson said. "As someone who was on the fence about joining Greek Life as an incoming freshman, it's very encouraging and important that our chapter continues to challenge stereotypes set by many other fraternities in this day and age."

Programs include its highly successful recruitment process that highlights servant leadership as well as myriad programs and fund-raising efforts benefiting people with disabilities.

Graduating senior **Nathan Longo** was named the Greek Man of the Year. He was the 2018 chapter and the 2019 Interfraternity Council presidents. The recent accolade adds to his already impressive list of awards including the 2019 Steven Beering President of the Year and the 2019 national Pi Kappa Phi Phillip Summers Student of the Year awards.

"Pi Kappa Phi and the entire Purdue Greek community has given so much to me," Longo said. "Along with the lifetime friendships, I have grown immensely as a man and as a leader, and my time here has undoubtedly left a lasting impact on my life."

Campbell Boston was IFC's Philanthropist of the Year. He was the chapter's Ability Experience chairman for the last two semesters and was a member of the 2019 Gear Up Florida team.

"I'm just proud to be able to add to the legacy of our chapter's exceptional philanthropy and hopefully inspire some of the young brothers to do the same," Boston said.

Each school year the chapter hosts events that benefit people with multiple



disabilities. They include: The David Feltner Memorial 72-Hour Bike-a-Thon, Arctoberfest (a Halloween costume party for adults with disabilities), War of Roses (multiple week empathy events that culminates with a talent show), Lafayette Jefferson High School special needs class assistance, Pi Kapp/Best Buddy Second Chance Prom (for special needs adults who did not get a chance to participate in a high school prom), Pi Kapp 100 (a 100-kilometer cycling event) and Moms Day auction (charity auction that benefits the chapter's annual Ability Experience fund-raising).

Additional information and comments about the awards can be found on the chapter's website:

<http://purduepikapps.com/chapter-wins-top-fraternity-award/>

Purdue rankings

Pi Kappa Phi continued to be a high achiever among the 41 Interfraternity Council members at Purdue during 2020. Statistics bear that out.

Fall 2020 rankings:

- No. 1 in philanthropic dollars raised at \$46,097, more than four times the second-place finisher of \$10,058.
- No. 2 in size at 133 total members.
- No. 7 in cumulative GPA at 3.21
- No. 16 in semester grades with a 3.19 average GPA. The fraternity average was 3.17 and the all-men's average was 3.13
- One of 8 chapters with a 100% reporting compliance with Purdue.

Individually, Pi Kappa Phi had 75 percent of its chapter members earn a 3.0 or higher in the fall 2020. Eleven had a 4.0 last semester and 60 members earned dean's list and/or semester honors.

Among the nearly 200 Pi Kappa Phi chapters nationwide, Omega was No. 2 in Ability Experience fund-raising in

2020 with \$18,452, which included on-campus programming/fund-raising and alumni support.

Spring 2020 rankings:

- No. 1 in philanthropic fund-raising with \$73,563, almost double the closest competitor's \$40,708.
- No. 1 in service hours with 2,430, more than half again the second highest chapter that had 1,534 hours.
- No. 2 in chapter size at 166 members. The largest chapter had one more member, 167. The average Interfraternity Council chapter size was 75 members.
- No. 11 in average GPA at 3.14. The top chapter was Sigma Phi Epsilon with a 3.43 average GPA, but it had only 14 members. The all-male average was 3.03 and the all-IFC average was 3.02. Only 3 of the Top 15 chapters had 100 members or more, with Pi Kappa Phi having nearly 50 percent more members than either of the other two. Six of the chapters that ranked above Pi Kappa Phi had fewer than 50 members averaged into their GPAs.

Second chance prom

Pi Kappa Phi, alongside Best Buddies-Purdue and the Arc of Tippecanoe, brought together more than 100 people for a Second Chance Prom on Feb. 15, 2020, shortly before Covid-19 shut down the Purdue campus.

Pi Kappa Phi continued its commitment to people with disabilities through the event that allows adults who did not get a chance to have a high school prom to celebrate later in life.

The event is also the second step in the annual War of Roses, the fraternity's spring sorority competition. The first event was a dodgeball tournament on Feb. 8. Sheet signs, t-shirt sales, fund raising, ticket sales and participation in the various events culminated in the March 4, 2020 talent show in Purdue's Loeb Playhouse. The winning sorority now had its lead contestant named the "Rose Queen" on the fraternity's composite for 2020-21.

Delta Gamma brought the most sorority members to the Second Chance Prom on Saturday with eight sisters. In total, sororities brought 42 members to join the nearly two dozen people with special needs and more than 50 fraternity members to the three-hour event held in the Recreational Sports Center.

In addition to DG, the competing sororities include: Delta Delta Delta, Kappa Delta, Alpha Xi Delta, Alpha Chi Omega, Sigma Kappa, Kappa Alpha

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Theta, Sigma Rho and Sigma Delta Tau.

The Tri Delts won the Feb. 8 dodgeball tournament.

War of Roses

A Sigma Kappa was crowned the 2020 Pi Kappa Phi Rose Queen at the conclusion of the talent show on March 4, in front of a crowd of more than 400 people in Loeb Playhouse on the Purdue campus.

Rose queen Talia Jacobsen and her sorority sisters sold the most tickets, raised the most money (\$2,617) and won the talent show for the War of Roses competition. The March 4 show ended four weeks of the annual event.

Activities included a dodgeball tournament, sheet competition and a special needs prom prior to the talent show.

The 2020 War of Roses grossed \$10,293.52 – the highest level in history.

“Overall, the War of Roses was a big success, from the dodgeball tournament to the prom to the talent show we did our job of raising money and awareness for people with disabilities,” said Campbell Boston, chapter Ability Experience chairman. “At the end of the day, what’s important is that we spread awareness for people with disabilities and everyone has a good time doing that, and I think we did everything we could to achieve.”

Individual event winners included:

- Talent show winner, Talia Jacobson, Sigma Kappa
- Fund-raising winner, \$2,617, Talia Jacobson, Sigma Kappa
- Most tickets sold, Talia Jacobson, Sigma Kappa
- Dodgeball champions, Delta Delta Delta
- Second chance prom participation, Gamma Phi Beta
- T-shirt sales, Gamma Phi Beta
- Best sheet sign, Delta Delta Delta



Talia Jacobsen, of Sigma Kappa, performs at the War of Roses Talent Show. She was named the 2020 Rose Queen.

Pi Kappa Phi would like to thank all the participants, which included:

Delta Delta, Delta, Zeta Tau Alpha, Kappa Delta, Alpha Xi Delta, Alpha Chi Omega, Sigma Kappa, Kappa Alpha Theta, Gamma Phi Beta, Phi Mu and Delta Gamma.

Thank you once again for assisting people with disabilities locally and nationally.

Should you wish to contribute to the chapter’s annual fund-raising for The Ability Experience, you can do so at:

<https://www.classy.org/team/149721>

Feltner bike-a-thon

An abbreviated version of the 10th Annual David Feltner Memorial Bike-a-Thon was held in the fall despite all the challenges of Covid-19.

To get any fraternity event planned – including recruitment, initiation and even any gathering of chapter members – is at least a three-week long process through several levels of approval. The Purdue oversight was to make sure that detailed precautions were in place to avoid undue risk of spreading the virus. The chapter was limited to three 12-hour periods of riding in late November

and a limited number of chapter members could gather at the site near the Purdue belltower and no sorority competition could occur. Furthermore, riders and table volunteers had to wear protective masks and had to wipe down the bikes between riders.

The chapter was able to broadcast live on Facebook during the noon hour on the second day, Nov. 20. The hour-long broadcast was seen by 343 people as **Declan Kramper** (Omega 2151) served as host.

The annual event is held in memory of Feltner (Omega 1738) who died in 2011. Feltner was very involved in the chapter’s Ability Experience programming and was in the first group to visit with the special needs classes at Lafayette Jefferson High School. He had hoped to be an Omega representative in the 2010 Journey of Hope, but his cancer treatments prevented that.

Since that time, the chapter has conducted the annual event in his name raising money and awareness for people with disabilities in partnership with The Ability Experience. In previous years, the chapter rode 72 straight hours leading up to the annual homecoming football game, which did not occur in 2020.



Kyle Smith, Omega 2197, poses with chapter advisor Pat Kuhnle after the fall initiation. Smith became Kuhnle’s millennial son – 1,000 initiations since Kuhnle’s initiation.

Almanac

Died:

David N. Griffiths Omega 552), 9/22/20
Joseph S. Klee (713), 3/7/18
Jon R. Bentley (779), 4/7/12
Michel Vasil (1726), 3/27/20

Married:

Matt Neidow (1704) and Kayla, 9/12/20
Erik Moeller (1848) and

Meredith Brown 11/9/19

Matt McKee (Omega 1868) and Elizabeth Thompson, 3/30/19

Caleb Shoup (1825) and Allie Rogers, 12/31/19

Brant Fetig (1887) and Joanne Volenc, 12/28/19

Daniel Heinekamp (1892) and Laura Cavanagh, 9/15/17

Lucas Banter (1907) and Elaine Bottomley 11/30/19

Drew Rudman (1933) and Laura Cunningham, 4/12/20

J. Henry Papineau (1934) and Margaret, 10/24/20

Luke Millen (1869) and Veronica, 8/17/20

Austin Blessinger (1922) and Chloe, 9/6/20

Chris Arnold (2015) and Michelle 6/9/19

Brad Pawloski (2072) and Alice 7/18/19

Children:

John “Jack” Bonan Sparks, son of Mary Anne and Jae Sparks (1279), 1/15/19

Ava Lynn Cunha, daughter of Marcos (1562) and Andrea, 6/12/20

Maureen, daughter of Joe (Omega 1678) and Maureen Smith, 2/27/20

Harrison Yishiang Chen, son of Helen and Chris (1710), 4/8/20

Noah Scheil, son of Ashley and Andrew Schiel (1732), 12/7/20

Riley Kent Sowers, son of Laura and Branden (1803), 3/29/20