

VOL.
SPRING '23

SIGMA PHI EPSILON

RED DOOR READER



SOUTH DAKOTA ALPHA

SouthDakota.SigEp.org

President's Address



Spring 23 at South Dakota Alpha was a phenomenal semester. From our 26th Founders' Day to our first-ever Parents' Day, the chapter has reinforced traditional events while simultaneously initiating new projects. The undergraduate chapter cannot thank our amazing alumni and volunteers for their work to ensure our beloved chapter's continued & exceptional success. The 2023 executive team started out strong with a retreat to the Carlson leadership academy in Kansas City. The ideas our execs brought back with them reinforced the outstanding things we do at SD-Alpha and initiated new ideas to boost academics, involvement, financial management, membership development, programming, communications, recruitment, and executive leadership.

This semester marks the end of the first year in which the chapter house was at full capacity which is a phenomenal indicator that our cornerstone award was well deserved and the hard work our alumni put in to make this home a reality wasn't wasted. For alumni that haven't visited this house recently, with the help of Brother President (RET) Tinklenberg & Brother Vice President of Finance DeVries, the undergraduates constructed an Olympic regulation sand volleyball court (Jeremy Braun, eat your heart out) which has and will continue to serve as an invaluable sound body and recruitment resource. For those who weren't in attendance at Founders Day 26, my State of the Chapter address included the fact that we were awarded the outstanding chapter trophy for the past year. Since that address was given, SD-Alpha has received a second consecutive outstanding chapter trophy (so to say that we

are the best... is still factual). SD-alpha also retains its title of highest Greek Life GPA for 12 consecutive semesters now I am pleased to say that the standards board saw minimal use throughout the semester and am proud to announce that the Resident Scholar position will be filled by Brother Caden Wright for the upcoming school year. Rest assured that Caden will serve as an invaluable resource to the chapter. It was bittersweet to put five brothers through the Hoop of Steal ceremony a few weeks ago but I know our newest brothers that have joined the alumni ranks will go on to do great things. Additionally, we will be sending two brothers to the Ruck Leadership Institute, and the Grand Chapter Conclave this summer (Buc Cup #4, here we come!).

HFF | **Blake Gibney**, '25 | President

Programming Update



First off, my committee and I hope this update finds you in good health and high spirits. We are thrilled to share the latest news on the programming front at our beloved fraternity. As always, we are committed to upholding the values and traditions of our brotherhood while also embracing new opportunities for growth and engagement.

Intramurals: Competing with Gusto! Our intramural sports teams have been making waves on campus with their passion and dedication. Our brothers have been training hard and representing our fraternity with pride in various sports including basketball, soccer, and flag football. We have been consistently placing in the top ranks and showcasing our fraternity's competitive spirit and sportsmanship. Our brothers have also been actively supporting and cheering on our teams, creating a vibrant atmosphere at the intramural games.

Socials: Creating Unforgettable Memories! We have been organizing a series of exciting and engaging social events that foster camaraderie and create lasting memories for our fraternity members. Our Thanksgiving Feast with Chi Omega was a huge hit, which also allowed us the opportunity to recognize our new SigEp sweetheart: Allie Bauer. There have been several other game night socials with other organizations such as Alpha Xi Delta. These events have been well-attended and have provided opportunities for our connect with other Greek organizations on campus and create new bonds.

Other Special Events: Enriching the Brotherhood! In addition to intramural's and socials, we have also been hosting various special events that contribute to the holistic development of our fraternity.

This Spring semester, we had two philanthropy events for Sexual Assault Awareness Month including a "Take Back the Night" walk to raise support for the cause, which had over 200 participants! We have also upheld our involvement with volunteerism in the Brookings Community with the continuation of the Great Afterschool Program (GAP), in which brothers volunteer their time at local elementary schools on a weekly basis, helping monitor and spend time with the children. Many SigEp members find this experience to be valuable and important. This Spring semester also includes the very first SD-Alpha Family Day! This experience allows parents to come visit and see what our chapter is about.

Looking Ahead: Exciting Plans! As we look ahead, we have a plethora of exciting plans in store for our fraternity. We are exploring collaborations with other campus organizations to expand our reach and impact. We are also ready to begin planning Sexual Assault Awareness Week for September 2023. We hope to build upon the great success of last year, in which we raised nearly \$7,000 for the Brookings Domestic Abuse Shelter. I am beyond excited to see programming put together another unforgettable semester for the brothers of SigEp!

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our alumni for their unwavering support and encouragement. Your continued involvement and participation in our fraternity's programming efforts are invaluable and greatly appreciated.

Recruitment Update



My name is Jonah Dobbs, and I serve as the current Vice President of Recruitment at SD Alpha. I was previously on the recruitment board under Colton Hansen, as well as the Programming Committee under Jack Rabern. I am a rising junior, and this fall I will be entering my second semester in the nursing program as a student at SDSU. I plan to finish my college career with minors in Human Development & Family Sciences as well as Health Science. Spring recruitment thus far has been exciting and rewarding for our chapter, as we have seen our new members step into positions of leadership and, in general, get involved with such enthusiasm. In recruiting seven new members this spring, we are proud of our accomplishments and have broken the 60-man threshold for SigEp. Despite this, we are looking to make big improvements in the fall semester of 2023 with larger, more enticing recruitment events, increased on-campus exposure through public displays and advertisements, and upholding the goal of strong continuous recruitment throughout the semester. With these improvements planned in more ways than one, our team is looking to recruit upwards of 25 members for the upcoming fall cycle, and we are feeling confident, with our tools and facilities, that this is attainable.

My recruitment board is composed of brothers that I have become substantially more proud of as our days together go on. The six freshmen who comprise this board have developed so well, especially having began their term with no leadership position experience. They have worked with me diligently and with great passion for helping shape the future of this chapter we love. Our board has had bi-weekly workshops with our SigEp Regional Director, Ashton Russel, as well as meeting with alumni such as Mike Emery, Michael Saffel, Trevor Gunlicks, and others for guidance, strategy support, and fall recruitment

/BMS planning. Our board members include Joshua Georgeson, Joseph Nafe, Kadin Tuttle, Gage Scholting, Aidan Stadtfeld, and Harrison Klein. These young men have shown great promise and yearning for a successful fall recruitment and a heightened, well-run Balanced Man Scholarship cycle. The 2023 Balanced Man Scholarship process has been underway for the past two months. Rising Senior Grady O'Neill and rising sophomore Austin Allen will be my Balanced Man Scholarship co-chairs for the summer, who will aid myself and the recruitment board in interviewing applicants and planning events and the awards banquet for finalists. The process of sending out the scholarship applications has been completed, and we await eagerly as more applications flood in. Our chapter participated in a SigEp nationals BMS mailing list that brought our BMS application to 60,000 high schools across the nation. We have also sent our application postcard to over 1,300 high schools locally, with an additional focused e-mail recipient list of over 500 incoming freshmen who meet our chapter's desired requirements and showed outstanding merit, honor, and academic prowess in high school. With this scale of promotion that we have never had before, we are expecting a large increase in applicants and we expect to have 75 finalists at minimum. This is a tall task, but I have confidence in our team to handle such an exciting opportunity.

Once again, I am truly proud of the team that I have to work with and all the opportunities we have set ourselves up for in the near future. Keep a look out for great new things coming to SD-Alpha!

Mem Dev Update



The 2022-2023 school year has been one to remember for SD Alpha. As we enter the summer months, we are leaving behind a school year filled with new experiences as well as memories that we will never forget. I am proud to have served as the VP of Membership development this past semester alongside my committee, and I believe we, as a team, strongly advocated the three cardinal principles of SigEp as well as encouraged the lifestyle of a balanced man. My biggest goal as VP of Membership Development currently and in the coming months is to strengthen the Balanced Man Program by increasing the value of our challenge classes/family time. I am doing this by bringing in a multitude of professional speakers as well as getting brothers involved with meaningful activities that enhance their college experience. We were very grateful for the speakers that have volunteered their time to help our brothers gain knowledge over a wide variety of professional knowledge. I credit much of the successes of our challenge classes to my challenge coordinators, Max Miller, Gavin Baker (Sigma), Hudson Spoonemore (Phi), and Riley Williams (Epsilon). A big event that happened this semester was the Brother Mentor ritual. We had the opportunity to send a few seniors as well as multiple juniors through this ritual and we look forward to those BroMo juniors leading challenge classes next year as a way to continue their involvement in the chapter, even in their senior year. As we enter the new semester, I am enthusiastic to continue to grow our challenge classes and continue to diversify the lessons taught. As for promoting sound body, I believe we had an incredibly successful semester with an extensive amount of involvement from the entire chapter.

Along with extensive intramural involvement with basketball and soccer our brothers strive to improve their bodies every day. We also continued the PR board that was implemented by the last VP MD and the numbers continue to rise across the board. Many sound body events occurred, one of which was hosted here at the house utilizing our new sand volleyball court. Brothers set up a tournament and spent the afternoon trying to be the last team standing. Our brotherhood events continue to bring brothers closer together, as well as give everyone a chance to get to know brothers they may not have before. After classes we continue our routine Friday family time events, where brothers have the opportunity to sit down and enjoy a meal before the weekend. During this time, we often have brother spotlights where a brother will give a short slideshow presentation about himself to the entire chapter. These presentations are often met with a lot of laughter as well as a general appreciation for the brother presenting. . I joined SigEp my freshman year before the school year even started. And to see what the chapter has grown to today I am truly blessed to serve as the VP MP. I am very excited to continue my duties and give as much as I can to this chapter!

HFF, | **Carter Brost** '26 | VP of Membership Development

Learning Community Update



First, I would like to give a special thanks to the brothers who give up some of their free time to be part of my committee. My chairman is brothers who have held leadership positions before or are new to holding positions and it has been an honor watching them grow as future leaders of this chapter. Their hard work and dedication have allowed us to continually bring academic and mental health support to all of our brothers and I honestly can't thank them enough.

This past spring semester has been a huge success for me and my committee as we were able to tackle a lot of the ideas I had coming into this term. First and foremost, we announced Dr. Karin Emery as our newest faculty fellow. Dr. Emery is the assistant dean for the College of Nursing at SDSU and is also a fellow brother, as she was pinned by her husband, SigEp alumni Mike Emery last spring. With the help of Karin, we were able to get in contact with Erika Huber, who is a certified nurse coach that will start working with the nursing student on campus next school year but has started dedicating her time to work with our new members on how to navigate college life and balance the work aspect as well as the social aspect of college. This semester we also had exceptional grades with a 3.4 active average GPA which put us above all other Greek chapters on campus and above the all-campus average.

Looking forward, the learning community and I will have our hands full with an exciting and by far our largest SPELA event. We plan on having it at the performing arts center located at SDSU with hopes of a very special guest attending, which is still pending as of right now. We also plan to

continue valuing academics with study nights and helpful presentations and continuing to support our brother's mental health by having mental health checks more regularly with brothers that feel they need it. I am beyond excited to see what my committee and I are able to do next semester and hopefully continue to create more sound mind brothers in the process.

HFF | **Hudson Spoonemore '26** | VP of Community Learning

New Member Spotlight



Hello, My name is Harrison Klein. I have just completed my freshman year and have a major of Civil Engineering. I graduated from Louisville high school in Louisville, Nebraska. During my years in high school, I participated in Football, Baseball, Track, and Basketball, while also captaining our football team.

South Dakota State University was not really on my radar during my high school years, but I heard about the exceptional engineering program that Brookings had to offer and I could not turn down the opportunity. From the minute I stepped on campus it felt like home and I knew there was no other campus that I would want to spend the next four year of my life being a part of. Greek life was not really on my radar when I originally stepped on campus, but then I heard about all of the great opportunities and leadership positions that I could possibly hold and I was intrigued.

Upon joining this fraternity I instantly felt at home, everyone welcomed me with open arms. I immediately knew that I was a part of something bigger than myself. Since signing my bid I have become a part of the recruitment board, and a member of the IFC. SigEp is something that I am extremely thankful for and I look forward to spending more quality time with my brothers.

Harrison Klein, '26



AVC President's Address



"It's easy to build it, but it's extremely difficult to maintain it." – Brother Grand President Billy Maddalon.

That has never been truer than at this exact moment. Our great chapter is at an all-time high in membership. We are welcoming new members from various walks of life, disciplines, and backgrounds. I believe in the high level of excellence we have built over the past 25+ years, but I also believe it will be challenging to maintain. The larger we grow, the more difficult it will be for the chapter to excel in excellence and integrity.

Our members face new challenges and pressures never before seen in college life. 24/7 video coverage of their everyday lives, the advancement of AI tools melding into the day-to-day operations of many of their future jobs, and new social pressures. There are a lot of challenges these members face that many of us never did when we were their age. To maintain our level of excellence (then grow it), we all have to be aware of these challenges. It was easy to keep a pulse on the happenings of the chapter and individual members back when we were 20, 30, or even 40 members strong. Now we are a 60+ man chapter, and with every new member, it becomes increasingly more difficult to keep that same pulse on what is happening inside our chapter facility and with our brothers.

That all being said, none of what I am saying is meant to scare or alarm you older guys. It is, however, meant to be a reminder that we need all the help we can get whenever we can get it. In years past, we have operated with roughly 10-15 hyper-engaged volunteers since we were a 25-40 man chapter. Now that we're over 60 members, consider what that means for the number of involved volunteers needed. The undergrads themselves cannot "maintain" our excellent chapter alone. And definitely not at the rate of growth they are having. They need the support of alumni, campus leaders, and other adult role models. They also need to be more engaged with our current roster of volunteers. Keeping our undergrads involved in regular conversations about the business of our chapter will empower them to make the right decisions for the chapter.

This spring semester, we have made significant efforts to start working with our undergrads in more of a partnership. After Founders Day, I spent a month having long and thoughtful one-on-one conversations with every Exec Board member. I learned what is happening in their lives, within their SigEp positions, the chapter, and more. I heard some very encouraging and uplifting things and some things that concerned me. Overall, I took away a better sense of what was happening within the chapter and how people were feeling. I held similar one-on-ones with every AVC member.

Then, beginning in March, Exec Board members were invited to attend our monthly AVC meeting, and by April, we had rebuilt our meeting agenda entirely to focus more on the undergrads. Now, each AVC meeting has an agenda focused around each Exec Board member in which they provide the AVC updates, ask for help and guidance, and make suggestions. In just a few short months, we have begun a transformative process that brings volunteers and chapter leaders together, at minimum, once a month to discuss the chapter's happenings, obstacles, business needs, and more.

We will continue to have conversations in partnership with the undergrads. We will meet for a summer work session on August 18th and invite as many undergrads as they can attend. Starting next year, we'll find new opportunities to connect with not just the Exec Board members but all members. Engagement by the AVC feels like it's at an all-time high right now, and I hope we can keep that momentum going into the new school year. Brother Bylander and I are working on ways to connect with more alumni and recruit a new crop of mentors. If you think you might be one of those guys ready to help us on a volunteer level, [let us know](#). Any involvement by our alumni is greatly appreciated.

Chapter Counselor Report



I hope you are all enjoying the summer surrounded by friends, family, and loved ones! On campus, SDSU has wrapped up. We will very quickly be welcoming first-year students to SDSU and hopefully introducing many of them to SigEp.

The chapter continued to excel academically through the spring semester. The chapter posted a 3.360 spring GPA – the highest GPA among all fraternities and sororities, and for the fourth consecutive semester, SigEp has been the top-performing chapter. Of our 64

members, 52 maintain a cumulative GPA at or above 3.0, and 30 continue to hold a place on the Dean's List (3.5 cumulative GPA or higher).

During the Volstorff-Walder Awards, SDSU Fraternity & Sorority Life's annual awards banquet, the chapter was recognized with chapter awards for Outstanding Risk Management, Outstanding Financial Management, and Outstanding Scholarship. The chapter was additionally recognized with individual awards for New Member of the Year and Greek Man of the Year. I was honored to receive Chapter Advisor of the Year. The awards banquet culminated in SigEp being recognized as the Outstanding Chapter of the Year – a fantastic recognition of the chapter's dedication to all areas of operation.

Further, individual members continued to showcase and build their leadership potential. SD-Alpha has a long history of sending brothers to the Frank J. Ruck Leadership Institute. This year, we sent two SD-Alpha brothers to the University of Richmond in Richmond, Virginia. Brothers Blake Gibney and Christian Budig spent five days at the birthplace of Sigma Phi Epsilon participating in a curriculum based on the best-selling book, *The Leadership Challenge*, co-authored by Brother Barry Posner, California- Santa Barbara '70.

This summer, we will also bring a full delegate of brothers from SD Alpha to San Antonio, TX, for the 58th Grand Chapter Conclave. Alumni Jeff Lang, Andrew Waugh, Kyle Dvoracek, Jeff Nolz, Mike Hart, Troy Lambert, Luke Cardona, and I will be joined by undergraduate brothers Hudson Spoonemore, Jacob DeVries, Phil Baker, and Blake Gibney. It is sure to be an incredible weekend of education and brotherhood.

Outside of undergraduate operations, I'm pleased to share that recently retired Associate VP of Student Affairs Dr. Doug Wermedal has accepted an invitation to join our great organization as a Brother Renaissance. Doug has accepted a new role as Executive Director for the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, which he began on July 1st. While at SDSU, Doug has supported SD Alpha for nearly 20 years of our existence. He has been a key individual in elevating our great organization and has played an essential role in guiding us to our current status as the top chapter at SDSU. We cannot think of a better way to thank him for walking alongside our brothers all these years.

As we look to the future of SD-Alpha, there is much to celebrate and much more to be excited about. As noted in Brother Cardona's address, we are looking to refresh and engage our volunteer pool. If you're interested in volunteering in any capacity, please let us know by filling out [this form](#).

There are a lot of opportunities to connect – I sincerely hope to see you where you can attend. As always, thank you all for your continued support of this great organization!

Ed Foundation Update



I hope that you are all enjoying the warm weather that summer brings. It was great to see so many of you at Founder's Day this past spring.

Here is an update from the South Dakota Alpha Educational Foundation:

Housing Update: Please continue to fulfill your pledges!

Burning Heart Society: This is the fund that, as you give, you are able to have the customized commemorative hardware that was unveiled at Founders Day XXI. This program has changed to a cumulative program; you receive your hardware as you meet each giving level. The following link allows you to give online:

<https://squareup.com/store/sigma-phi-epsilon-sd-alpha-educational-foundation/>

Sigma Phi Epsilon Leadership Development Fund: This fund was originally established by Brother Michael Whitford for the ongoing leadership development and training for Sigma Phi Epsilon undergraduates and alumni. This fund is not an endowment. The funds can be dispersed as needed.

Sigma Phi Epsilon James T. Novotny Memorial Scholarship: This endowed scholarship fund now disperses \$1,000 per year to two current members of Sigma Phi Epsilon.

Sigma Phi Epsilon Balanced Man Scholarship: This is also an endowed scholarship fund that continues to disperse \$1,000 per year to the selected Balanced Man Scholarship finalist.

Our annual James T. Novotny Memorial Golf Tournament is at Spring Creek Golf Course on August 19th, 2023. Here is the link to register for the event:

<https://sigma-phi-epsilon-sd-alpha-educational-foundation.square.site/product/novotny-golf-tournament/3>

Please take advantage of the Early Bird rate of \$100 per player. This rate is good through July 1st, 2023. After that, the rate increases to \$125 per player.

If you are wondering, "How do I give, where do I start, and who do I contact?" I can be reached at jeremybraunslp@gmail.com or 612-803-6051.

HFF | **Jeremy D. Braun**, '99 | Educational Foundation Chairman



NEW MEMBERS

FALL 2022

Austin Allen

Major: Pre-Pharmacy

Hometown: Beaver Creek, MN

Kadin Tuttle

Major: Business Economics

Hometown: Harrisburg, SD

Easton Thomas

Major: Nursing

Hometown: Omaha, NE

Harrison Klein

Major: Civil Engineering

Hometown: Cedar Creek, NE

Caiden Tinant

Major: Business Economics

Hometown: Rapid City, SD

Kaeden Gomez

Major: Nursing

Hometown: Sioux Falls, SD

Gage Scholting

Major: Data Science

Hometown: Louisville, NE

Joshua Georgeson

Major: Pre-Pharmacy

Hometown: Mauston, WI

Grady O'Neill

Major: Architecture

Hometown: Groton, SD

Andrew Walter

Major: Business Economics

Hometown: Harrisburg, SD

Blake McDermott

Major: Electrical Engineering

Hometown: Sioux Falls, SD

Zander Wysong

Major: Computer Science

Hometown: Hills, MN

Joseph Nafe

Major: Entrepreneurial Studies

Hometown: Lake City, MN

Jack Brower

Major: Aviation Education

Hometown: Sioux City, IA

Aidan Stadtfeld

Major: Business Economics

Hometown: Sioux Falls, SD

SPRING 2023

Thomas Wetjen

Major: Natural Resource & Law Enforcement

Hometown: Norfolk, NE

Seth Johnson

Major: Exercise Science

Hometown: Bristol, SD

Kalan Collins

Major: Ag Business

Hometown: Wood, SD

Avery Barnhart

Major: Psychology

Hometown: Sioux Falls, SD

Bennett Geraets

Major: Civil Engineering

Hometown: Sioux Falls, SD

Tate Newman

Major: English

Hometown: Spicer, MN

LEADERSHIP & VOLUNTEERS

EXECUTIVE BOARD	ALUMNI & VOLUNTEER CORPORATION
<p>President: Blake Gibney VP Programming: Phil Baker VP Finance: Jacob DeVries VP Membership Development: Carter Brost VP Recruitment: Jonah Dobbs Chaplain: Issac Kyokov VP Community Learning: Hudson Spoonemore VP Communications: Christian Budig</p>	<p>President: Luke Cardona VP Finance: Jeff Lang VP Relations: Jonathan Schmit VP Housing: Mike Emery VP Communications: Chase Habben Director at Large: Austin Kott Director at Large: Andrew Waugh Chapter Counselor: Nathan Bylander Faculty Fellow: Dr. Rebecca Bott-Knutson Faculty Fellow: Dr. Karin Emery</p>

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION
<p>Chairman: Jeremy Braun Vice Chairman & Secretary: Mike Satterness Treasurer: Mike Ehlers Member: Mike Harstad Member: Tyler Aldren Member: Noah Anderson</p>

Spring Graduates

Rick Kittleson, Rhett Tinklenberg, Paul Schlotman,
Matthew Halley, Adam Forsberg

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars, grab your tickets, and join your fellow brothers at one of these upcoming events!

Saturday, August 19 - Annual **Jim Novotny Memorial Golf Tournament** at Spring Creek golf course in Harrisburg, SD. Fun in the sun day golfing for a good cause. The shotgun start will begin at 2 p.m. The cost to play will be \$125 this year with an early bird special of \$100 until July 1st. [Learn more](#) and [register online](#).

Saturday, August 19 - **BMS Banquet** at a soon to be announced location on campus.. Head back to Brookings to gather with your brothers and help our undergraduate chapter recruit some strong potential new members. Time TBD.

Saturday, September 16 - **Jacks football pre-game event in Minneapolis**. Spend the day by enjoying food and drink at InBound brewery and then take in SDSU vs. Drake at Target Field. The cost is \$12 dollars to attend the pre-game event. Football tickets must be purchased on your own. [Learn more and purchase tickets to the pre-game event](#).

Saturday, February 24 - **Founders Day XXVI** will be held at the Swiftel center in Brookings. Save the date for our annual celebration. More details to follow in the coming months.

