



# NEW YORK ALPHA NEWS

NEW YORK ALPHA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION • CORNELL UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER: A NEW CHAPTER IN OUR HISTORY



**Gus Noojin '69 | President,  
New York Alpha Alumni  
Association**

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It has been a long journey to get to this point: 12 ½ years, \$2 million invested in Hillcrest, 2 applications for rein-

statement, a pandemic (with virtual rush), brothers not living together for 3 semesters, a rigorous chartering process. But, finally, here we are. Active members are living at Hillcrest and the chapter has been awarded a charter by the National Fraternity. NY Alpha is back!

To mark the beginning of this next chapter in our history, a new agreement for the use of Hillcrest by ΣΑΕ has been entered into by the Active Chapter, the Alumni Chapter and the University. I get questions about this arrangement all the time, so it is worth reviewing the main points of this agreement.

The Operating and Management Agreement sets

out the rights and obligations of the three parties with respect to the use of Hillcrest. The Active Chapter may use Hillcrest as its chapter house and must abide by all of Cornell's rules and regulations (and, of course, the law). The governing principle is "self-supporting operation in lieu of rent". The Active Chapter is responsible for maintaining the house in good condition and paying all operating costs (with room rates collected from those living in the house).

The University allocates some overhead (for services provided, including casualty insurance) but charges no rent. There are no property taxes because Cornell is tax exempt.

The Alumni Chapter's role is to support the Active Chapter by mentoring its members with respect to particular planning and financial issues and raising funds for capital improvements to Hillcrest and educational programs.

This new arrangement marks a major shift in activity and responsibility for us, the Alumni. For the last 12 years, we have led the charge – planning,

investing, overseeing projects, making decisions. Now, the Actives will do the planning, make the decisions and be accountable for the outcomes. This self-governance is part of the educational experience that comes with fraternity membership. We will now offer our guidance and experience, make recommendations, and do fund raising.

The primary mechanism by which we will provide guidance is the Chapter Advisory Board, chaired by **Dave Martin**. Members of this board have a one-to-one mentoring relationship with House Officers. Also, Facilities co-chair **Gregg Klein** collaborates with the House Manager and Cornell Facilities staff in a monthly ZOOM call to plan, prioritize and track projects.

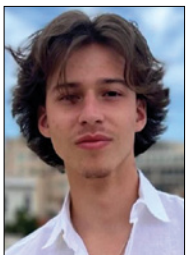
It has been a long road to get to this point, but now it is time to shift gears and play a different role in creating the future of NY Alpha. Let's celebrate!

Yours in the Bonds,

*Gus Noojin*  
**Gus Noojin '69**



## EMINENT ARCHON'S LETTER



**Jake Salas '25**

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. It is with immense pride and gratitude that I write to you today to share the latest updates from our beloved fraternity. At the end of last year, I was re-elected as the EA of our chapter, and I am truly humbled to continue serving in this role.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of the alumni who joined us during our rechartering weekend. This was an unforgettable moment in the history of NY Alpha, as we successfully regained our charter. The presence of our alumni played a significant role in reaffirming our commitment to the principles and values that have always been the bedrock of ΣΑΕ. The impact of that weekend on our undergraduate brothers cannot be overstated; it instilled in us a deep sense of tradition, purpose, and connection to our alumni community. It was a weekend that will be etched in our memories forever.

The past year has been a resounding success for our chapter. Our fall recruitment cycle was highly successful, yielding nine new members who have already become valuable assets to our fraternity. This brings our total membership to 35 strong individuals. Additionally, I am pleased to inform you that we plan to extend bids to five more individuals in the coming week. Our goal is to reach a total membership of 55 by the conclusion of Spring rush.

Our chapter's vision has evolved significantly in recent times. With a steadily growing membership base, we have redirected our focus towards expanding our on-campus influence. We aim to create a greater presence in both social events and campus-wide philanthropic endeavors, fostering positive change and making a lasting impact. This evolution in our mission is, in large part, a result of the inspiration we drew from the alumni who joined us during Rechartering weekend. Hearing your stories and experiences has reaffirmed our commitment to our fraternity's principles and has motivated us to strive for greatness.

In addition to our increased on-campus influence, we have been dedicated to enhancing the culture within our house. We believe that a strong, supportive, and inclusive brotherhood is the key to our long-term success. The bonds we formed during Rechartering weekend and the wisdom shared by our alumni have been instrumental in strengthening these connections, making us more resilient as a chapter.

In conclusion, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our alumni for your continuous support. Your presence, your stories, and your commitment to our fraternity have been a guiding light for our chapter. I want you to know that you can reach out to us at any time; your insights and wisdom are invaluable to our continued growth and development.

Thank you for being a part of our journey. Here's to a bright future for our chapter!



## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD

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**Augustus "Gus" Noojin '69**

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### Board Members

Chapter Advisory Chair

**David Martin '94**

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**Benjamin H. Roberts '10**

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**Cory Jackson '86**

and **Gregg Klein '06**

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**Andy Rung '03**

**Neil Teague '66**

### Emeritus

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**Jim Becket '85**

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: DAVID EINHORN '89



David Einhorn '89

**David Einhorn** graduated *summa cum laude* from the College of Arts and Sciences in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in government. After interviewing on campus with several companies, including the CIA, he took a job as an investment banking analyst for two years before joining the hedge fund Siegler, Coltery & Company, where he learned his craft. In 1996, a mere five years after graduation, he founded his own hedge fund, Greenlight Capital, with Jeff Keswin, a co-worker at Siegler, with \$900,000 from investors. Greenlight Capital currently has over \$2.6 billion in assets under management.

David's daughters Rachel and Naomi, graduated from Cornell in 2019 and 2021. He joined the Cornell Board of Trustees in 2015, where he served for 8 years. He is currently a Trustee Emeritus and on the Cornell Tech Council. David founded the David M. Einhorn Center for Community Engagement. He is an avid poker player (a regular at the annual World Series of Poker Main Event where his highest finish was 18th in 2006).

### What advice would you share with others who want to start and run a business?

Get started! When you have your idea there is no better time to start than immediately. Businesses take time to build. If you start now, in 3 years, you will have a business that is 3 years old. Don't worry about it maybe failing. If it does, you will find your next opportunity. Worst case is you wind up working for someone else.

### You've been very successful in your career, which has enabled you to start the David M. Einhorn Center for Community Engagement and fund charities through the Einhorn Collaborative. What is your philosophy on charitable giving?

First, I realized a long time ago that I was going to be fortunate enough to be able to give a large amount of money away over time. While some might take the view that if I investment the money and let it compound, I could give away more later, my view is that there are plenty of problems that need help right now. So, I wanted to get started.

Over time, the Einhorn Collaborative has come to focus on the crisis of human connection. We are attacking loneliness and various social ills that stem from it. Our main areas today are early relational health (connecting mothers with babies), engagement and service in the community (like the center at Cornell), and pluralism (bridging across difference with the

recognition that Americans have a lot in common and agreeing to disagree isn't a bad outcome for an argument).

### How has your experience with SAE influenced your life?

I developed some life long friendships and improved my social skills. I grew up and matured a bit in the fraternity. Having about 80 brothers... well, that's a lot of brothers. Personalities changed across pledge classes. By the time I graduated, I was reasonably confident I would not have been given a bid to pledge. So, like most of my life, my timing was excellent.

### What is your favorite memory of SAE?

I remember our first beach party. It was just really cool. The sand was warm and so many people came to the house. I remember how awesome it felt to be one of the hosts of such an amazing party. This was college! Shoveling the sand both in and out...didn't feel like work at all. I was among friends.

### What advice would you give the young men restarting SAE at Cornell?

First, Congratulations! This has been a long time coming. I am excited for you. SAE is a great fraternity and the house is truly special. When you identify possible new brothers/pledges, concentrate on people you want to spend time with that are fun to hang out with. Don't worry about anything else.

## NEW WEBSITE

Our website at [www.sae-cornell.org](http://www.sae-cornell.org) has been fully revamped with a simpler, more modern interface. The public side has a new 3D view of the common areas of Hillcrest including the Great Hall, Library, Dining Room and the Sieling Lounge.

To access the member section, please click on the "Member Portal" at the top of the home page. For returning users, please click on the "Forgot Password" link and use the email that you previously used. If you have problems with access, please send an email to [alumnirecords@sae-cornell.org](mailto:alumnirecords@sae-cornell.org).

In the members section, you can update your profile and communication preferences. Please update your email as we periodically send updates, reminders and good wishes at the holidays electronically.

You may now also see your donation history. The members directory may also be accessed in the members section. New features are being added so please send in suggestions.

## THANK YOU

We would like to thank **Ron Demer '59** for his 20+ years of service to the Board of the New York Alpha Alumni Association. Ron repaired the 12 surviving large composites, and stored them, awards, memorabilia, plaques, and trophies during our suspension. He also sought 11" X 14" mini composites from the 1930's thru 2025's, framed them, and oversaw their hanging on the south wall of the living room. As he anticipated, the first thing visiting alumni do when visiting is to look for their photos.

He recently made a new white oak exterior Sigma Alpha Epsilon sign and crest with four coats of marine grade spar varnish, as well as create a memorial for former EA Lance Peters MD ('89) in the library, among many other behind the scenes tasks.

# RE-CHARTERING WEEKEND

## Darryl Tom '92

On October 14, 2023, the NY Alpha Chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon received its new charter, which was revoked as a result of the death of **George Desdunes** in 2011. The day began with a full initiation ceremony of the active brothers, except a few who had transferred and previously been initiated. As an emerging chapter (formerly called a colony), the active brothers only experienced a shortened version of the ceremony.

We then hosted a dinner at Hillcrest for the brothers, guests from ΣAE National, including **Noah Haddaway**, Emerging Chapter Services Coordinator, Eminent Supreme **Harold Ben Johnson II**, and Chapter Services Coordinator, **Adam Lippy**. **Kara Miller**, director of Sorority and Fraternity Greek Life, and **Kathleen Wilhite**, Assistant Director of Sorority and

Fraternity Life, attended on behalf of Cornell. **Dave Martin ('94)**, **Beth Kunz**, **Frank Kruppa**, and **Chuck Bechtold ('64)** from the Chapter Advisory Council attended. Several alumni, both local and from out of town, attended including **Ron Demer ('59)**, **Gus Noojin ('69)**, **Cory Jackson ('86)**, **Jamie Wright ('90)**, **Keith Barr ('92)**, **Darryl Tom ('92)**,



**Dan Roitman ('91)**, and members of the class of 1994 including **Brian Anderson**, **Justin Antonipillai**, **Chris Bonn**, **Brian** and **Mark Nicholson**, **Scott Shambo**, and **Kirk Vashaw**.

It was my first time seeing the fully renovated Sieling Lounge. Everything looks great. Keith Barr, Brian Anderson, Dan Roitman and I had fun staying in some unoccupied rooms in the house. We were able to spend some time with some of the active brothers, who reported that they are building a lot of momentum to grow the house in the coming year.

# FUNDRAISING CHAIR'S LETTER

## Benjamin H. Roberts '10

Dear New York Alpha,

I hope this letter finds you and your family in good health and high spirits this season. As brother Skalko takes some well-deserved R&R from fundraising activities, I'm stepping in as interim fundraising chair for New York Alpha. In the coming months, we'll be updating you on everything from Hillcrest, like the upcoming exterior painting project—an undertaking first-of-its-kind in about 100 years—to charitable efforts by our current brothers made possible by alumni like you.

We all have our reasons for giving (and not giving) this past decade, but the reality is that we have a new group of brothers connecting in the great hall, watching MNF in the new Seiling Lounge, and representing our customs as True Gentlemen across Cornell's campus. What sort of impact would you like to have on our new brothers? Where would you see our efforts and resources be directed to help magnify that impact?

Please write to me at [bhr24@cornell.edu](mailto:bhr24@cornell.edu), or give me a call sometime at (914)-434-6298 to have that conversation—we need minds as much as dollars. It's time to get off the sidelines and pay it forward to this generation, ensuring their experiences mirror those from your time at Hillcrest.

The alumni dues account ensures communications like these make it around the order, while the house development fund takes care of maintenance and improvements as we push to have full occupancy at Hillcrest.

Thank you all for what you do, and continue to do for New York Alpha.

# WE'RE BACK!

## Dave Martin '94

There was lots of excitement at Hillcrest during the weekend of October 14th, 2023, with the official re-chartering of the New York Alpha chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. We had a great turnout of active brothers (now 35 strong), parents, alumni, officers from ΣAE National, and representatives from Cornell, join to celebrate this hard-earned achievement.

The weekend kicked off with the representatives from ΣAE 's national office hosting the house officers to a Friday evening dinner, which was followed by a very meaningful Pass the Gavel event, where active and alumni brothers shared what their ΣAE experience has meant to them. Based on the responses from the active members, it was clear that the same True Gentlemen values that we have all cherished are alive and well at Hillcrest.

On Saturday, we initiated the entire group of new members, since previously, as a Phoenix Chapter, they had been unable to fully initiate each rush class. Because of this, the ceremony was probably one of the largest initiations in chapter history, and was expertly led by a group of alumni brothers and the contingent from ΣAE National. The passing on of the ritual of our fraternity to this new group was a powerful reminder of our core values and shared experiences. The formal initiation ceremony was followed by a reception and catered banquet at Hillcrest. The house had been prepared well by the brothers, and the evening was enjoyed by the 80 guests in attendance. Four of the active brothers (**Jake Salas**, **Jesse Castillo**, **Chris Bird**, and **Alden Hey**), were awarded the Order of the Phoenix, in recognition of their contributions to the chapter; Kara Miller McCarty, Cornell's Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life, was on-hand to accept a letter of recognition from the chapter and ΣAE National for her leadership and assistance during the re-application process, as well as letters of recognition for other key members of Cornell's administration; and the NYA alumni association presented a plaque to the new brothers recognizing their hard work in achieving their goal of rechartering the chapter.

The brothers were tremendous hosts during this weekend and are anxious to host future alumni events as they continue to build and develop the chapter.

## ALUMNI NEWS:

### BILL KINGSTON '59

Bill has been a strong supporter of NY Alpha, and served as EA. He was elected to Sphinx Head, the Senior Honorary Society.

ΣAE helped him when he was a pledge in 1956, and he lacked the funds to fly home to Denver for his widower father's funeral. The Brothers chipped in to buy him a ticket. Another brother, **Kent Hewitt '59** (great uncle of current ΣAE junior **Ben Hewitt**) introduced Bill to his wife. For more information on Bill, read this article published through Cornell <https://alumni.cornell.edu/profile/fhtr-award-william-kingston/>.



William Kingston '59

### BRITT STITT '58

**From 1992:** My greatest recreational pride was soloing my sailboat to Hilo from the Golden Gate Bridge. Thousands of amateurs have done this trip as a part of racing groups for trophy cups. I chose to go alone without any support or safety backup to avoid the embarrassment of being last among a highly experienced group. So great fun was being 1 out of 1, sharing the ocean with dolphins, sharks, flying fish, a pair of whales, and more birds than I could imagine.

Brothers, make this wonderful downwind trip to bring peace to your soul for the rest of your lives.

ΦA  
Britt *Stitt*

### WAYS TO GIVE TO SAE

There are two ways to give to SAE, and both are important to continuing to keep Hillcrest and SAE NY Alpha going strong.

**Hillcrest SAE Development Fund:** Gifts are tax deductible and go towards renovations and capital improvements to Hillcrest.

**Annual Alumni Dues:** While not tax deductible, dues support maintaining the website and mailing newsletters as well as alumni events such as reunion.

Go to [sae-cornell.org/ways-to-give](http://sae-cornell.org/ways-to-give) to for more information and to donate online or scan the QR code above.



## WHAT'S COOKING AT HILLCREST:

### Cory Jackson '86 | Facilities Co-Chair

With ΣAE's return to Hillcrest, we needed to also resurrect food service for the active brothers. The Alumni board has had this task on its radar for several years and has finished executing a three-step plan. I am now very happy to report that the kitchen is back in business.

Several years ago, phase I was implemented. The platform where the cooking equipment is located was lowered to the same level as the rest of the kitchen floor allowing the equipment to be moved to provide better cleaning opportunities. The kitchen was painted, new LED lighting was installed, and the dish room walls and lighting were improved.

Phase II consisted of updating and/or replacing all the pots, pans, utensils, china and glassware. Improvements were made to provide a new steam table and refrigerated salad bar and a refrigerated sandwich prep table. With everything that was worn out, or simply no longer in the kitchen, the shopping list was about 150 items and the alumni board funded approximately \$28,000 to properly equip the kitchen for food service.

Phase III was the tricky part as we needed to determine who would be cooking the food. As the house was just being re-occupied and had relatively few brothers to start out, we needed to select a very cost-efficient model. Steve Sinaiko (past steward) and I (hotelie) joined forces to solve this puzzle. It quickly became evident that we needed to engage a professional catering company to provide the chef, and to order the food. After interviewing several companies, we selected Upper crust Food Service.

Upper crust is a national company that provides food service to fraternities and sororities. The active chapter contracts directly with the company and can now adjust the contract to provide exactly what food they desire or can afford. The chef is an employee of Upper crust and should they become ill or quit their position, Upper crust will immediately provide a substitute. I am pleased to report that our current food plan costs about 40% less than the equivalent Cornell Dining Plan.

Upper crust provides continental breakfast, a cooked to order lunch program (actives turn in a ticket and voila! Ten minutes later have their custom sandwich and sides.) Evening meals are buffet style. The actives are given access to an app where they can rate the menu, the chef. Should the actives have a meal they dislike, they can tell Upper crust to never serve it again. Conversely, they can request specific meals and the company will provide them.

When I was an active brother, I asked my girlfriend if she wanted to come to Homecoming with me. Of course, she said yes. I said good, you can help me cook for 200 people then! Subsequently we cooked the homecoming dinner. Upper crust can provide special meals for homecoming, parents weekend etc.... upon request and priced separately from the regular meal plan.

I am pleased to report that after a brief startup period, things seem to be going well with our food program.

With guidance from our website chair, **Jon Hyduke ('06)**, Elevate IMS, our alumni communication and fundraising vendor, has revamped our website at [www.sae-cornell.org](http://www.sae-cornell.org). Everyone should have received a password reset email to access the private members section. If you haven't, please contact Emily O'Neill at [eoNeill@elevateims.com](mailto:eoNeill@elevateims.com).

The interface has been simplified, and we have added a 3D virtual tour of the common areas of Hillcrest, including the great hall, library, dining room and Sieling Lounge.

The members section allows you to search the directory of alumni as before. You are also now able to edit your own profile and see your donation history.

If you have news about yourself or other brothers, please send a note to Emily as we will be regularly updating the website and also testing a quarterly electronic only newsletter in addition to this one.

**DON'T FORGET: LOG ON TO [WWW.SAE-CORNELL.ORG](http://WWW.SAE-CORNELL.ORG) & UPDATE YOUR PROFILE!**

**New York Alpha News** is published by the NY Alpha Alumni Association for our members and friends. News and pictures may be sent to [alumnirecords@sae-cornell.org](mailto:alumnirecords@sae-cornell.org) or to Alumni Records Office, NY Alpha Alumni Association of ΣAE, P.O. Box 876, Ithaca, NY 14851-0876.

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