



The Pioneer

Vol. 102, No. 1

Sigma Pi - Upsilon (UCLA)

Jan. 2025

Remembering those brothers who served our country in the pursuit of peace and freedom and made the ultimate sacrifice:
Robert "Ace" Calkins (#193), Donald Hesse (#195), Liston Comer (#214), Lane Donovan (#234), Ralph Neis (#348)



SIGMA PI - Y
612 LANDFAIR AV
FEB. 24, 1923
BALL&CHAIN 1919

The Pioneer

About four years ago, a small and unassuming volume made its appearance within the halls of Upsilon. It aroused interest within the Chapter. It awakened and bound even more tightly the bonds between active members and alumni. It quickened the life blood of the fraternity, and brought still closer the men of Sigma Pi. It began a dream of a greater fraternity at Westwood, and today, when its footprints are nearly lost in the sands of time, its effect is still felt... it was a Pioneer.

Since that time, other volumes have made their bow, each one finer and more pretentious than the last, and each one a Pioneer, bringing with it its measurement of accomplishment. If this volume can, with pride, take its place by the side of its predecessors, then we may consider that it has achieved its goal.

To one who has served his fraternity faithfully and well, to one who exemplifies the spirit of fraternalism which is the heritage of Sigma Pi, this book is respectfully dedicated.

-- Forward and dedication,
Upsilon Pioneer, June 1928

Dempsey returns to Kenya

1960s alumnus Thomas Dempsey visited Nairobi and its Dandora community as part of his St. Monica's parish (Santa Monica, Calif.) periodic trip to Kenya He begins his Trial Lawyer's Mission.

As my plane touched down at Jomo Kenya Atta International Airport, I had the same feelings of anticipation and anxiety that I had on my past two trips to Kenya. I had been seven years since the St. Monica's community has sponsored a pilgrimage to Dandora, and a larger than normal group was making the trip.



The customs line is long and tedious, but my luggage arrived intact, and I walked from the terminal into the African air with its distinctive small and clear blue sky that seemed to extend forever in all directions. Our mission driver was there holding a "Tom Dempsey" sign, and what a relief and comfort to know that I was in good hands after a grueling 23-hour flight from Los Angeles.

I was whisked away to the Safari Park Hotel, and I checked in, left my luggage in the room, and set out to meet the group at our late morning mass. We drove straight to Dandora. Despite its abject poverty, Dandora is a fully functioning town with hard-working people. The main street is lined with small huts and corrugated metal shops that house true capitalists. The government provides little assistance to the poor, and corporations and venture capitalist provide no investments. You succeed or don't eat.

In the epicenter of town is a standout medical facility, original sponsored with the financial investment of St. Monica's parish. It has grown from a simple pharmaceutical dispensary to a fully functional hospital with the equipment, technology and staff to provide near state-of-the-art medical care. Its existence far exceeds the humble surrounding of its location. Brother Andrea's Hospital is a beacon light for the residents of not only Dandora, but for those as far as 50 kilometers away.

The next day, our destination is a home for HIV-positive men, women and children -- Veronica's Place. It was also established by a St. Monica's parishioner. We distributed food, clothing, and detergent -- along with hope -- to its residents in need. While handing out the staples of rice, beans and flour, these humble people received these basic items with expressions of gratitude unlike anything that I have experienced in my world.

The morning we are driving to the newly constructed Brother

Dempsey (continued) →



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Notice: UAA

Annual Meeting Feb. 22, 2025

Alumni members are invited to the Annual Meeting of the Upsilon Alumni Assn., which is re-scheduled for Feb. 22 at Sigma Pi Manor at 612 Landfair Ave. in Westwood, at 5:00 pm.

Agenda: All actions of the past year are on the agenda for approval by the members.

The following members are nominated as Officers:

President and Secretary - Jay Ross

Treasurer and Asst. Secretary - Scott Scheffler.

The following are nominated as Boardmembers:

Jay Ross (Executive Director), Brad Reichard, Sean Bloch, Richard Marcus, Sebastian Perkinson.

Chapter financial advisor: Spencer Hertler.

Top Donors

Emerald Society: Dan Romero, Past Chapter Advisor Taek Chang, Liron Nelik, Carl Moroney, Dr. Kent Shoji, Mark Helmick, Ralph Rea, Steven Schechter, Past Sage Brian Letourneau, Rob Webster, Tim Howell, Claude Keyzers.

Dempsey

(continued): Andrea church, and celebrated in a local mass. We again passed through the slums of Nairobi, where thousands of people were hurrying through the dirt streets. Unfinished buildings and makeshift commercial structures lined both sides of the rut-filled road. One wonders how people survive in the chaos and unsanitary conditions that exist everywhere.

At the church, we are immediately greeted by a large group of wide-eyed children, who are attending the mass with their parents. Hands reached out to us, and smiles lighted up their faces. Handshakes, high fives, and hugs were ubiquitous. This is clearly the best experience of the pilgrimage.

The mass is filled with dancing, hand-clapping, singing, all the praise of God. Being the only whites at the service, we were the center of attention. We are welcomed by the pastor and introduced to the parish council. They treat us like celebrities. In the end, the popular African saying, "God is good... All the time," rang out throughout the church.

Our next visit is to the Sisters of Charity Center, which is Mother Theresa's order. This was the most profound portion of our pilgrimage. These dedicated nuns provide care for the most mentally disturbed, physically grotesque, and neurologically challenged women. The feeding, clothing, health and companionship that these nuns provide is nothing short of outstanding.

Upon our arrival, we attend a special mass with the sister, and one immediately felt their sense of devotion to caring for the most deprived people. The noise, smell and atmosphere is jarring when you enter the rooms where the women live and are cared for.

These women have been rejected by their families and communities because of their physical ailments. Many are abandoned outside, and die from starvation or attacks from animals. I have visited Kenya three times, and those trips have altered my response. I felt a warm toward the patients unlike anything that I had felt previously. I was able to elicit a smile and a reaction in speaking and sing to and feeding them. Our group also felt the worth of being totally present in this moment of service. Laughing and gyrating movements reigned for the hours that we spent there, and we were reluctant to leave at the end. I especially needed to be dragged out because of the engaging elation in our goodbyes.

We visit other slums and shantytowns outside Nairobi every day, and distribute the basic needs in these desperate communities. The resilience of these residents, however, has created city-like living arrangements with the basic necessities of life, but at a level that most of us consider intolerable. Still, everyday life goes on.

We also visit schools that are underfunded and underequipped, Dempsey (continued) →





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Dempsey (continued):

but still provide a basic education. Walking into the classrooms, I witnessed industrious, smart and motivated children working on their lessons. One of the saddest aspects of this part of the pilgrimage is that very talented individuals will never achieve their dreams and ambitions because the lack of funding for higher educations. This waste of human talent is unacceptable in the modern, wealthy world.

The disparity between rich and poor in Nairobi is massive. The region where government offices, embassies, and prosperous individual live compared to the downtrodden was one of the starkest contrasts that I have seen.

On our last day, we visit the NIMBANI orphanage, a facility dedicated to providing a proper living condition for children whose parents died of AIDS or are infect with HIV. Part of the function is finding local families to adopt these children. Screening is very rigid, and most of the children will spend their entire life here until they turn 18 years old.

Dempsey(continued) →

102nd Founders Day and UAA Annual Meeting - Sat., Feb. 22

Our 102nd Founders Day and UAA Annual Meeting will be Sat., Feb. 22, at the Upsilon Manor in Westwood.

Sage Michael Gallagher will lead the Opening Ritual.

Scholarships funded by generous Upsilon alumni will be presented in honor of Joseph Marsalek, Gary Gross, Ray Carlisle, Carl Moroney, Charles Osterlund, Julian D'Avanzo, William Meyer, Robert Webster, Tim Howell, and Princeton Kim, Esq.

1st Counselor Sean Anderson will lead the Memorial Ritual that remembers brothers who have passed to the Adytum on High: Anthony Orfila and Robert Moore.

Dinner will be a tasty tri-tip steak dinner. The bartenders will be the Lovely Ladies of Won Park, and drinks will be served by the Lovely Little Sisters of Upsilon.

Attire is coat and tie – dress for success and to impress (black tie optional).

Schedule: 4:00 PM - Welcome Reception + Drinks

4:30 PM - Ritual, UAA Annual Meeting + Awards

5:00 PM - Dinner

6:00 PM - Cigars in the Courtyard

7:00 PM - Westwood Pub Crawl

▲ Register: <https://uclasiigmapi.com/2025-founders-day>

2024-25 Executive Council

Grand 1st Councilor Peter Georgetopolous (UC Irvine) traveled to Westwood to initiate Upsilon's new E.C. officers in November.

Good luck!

Sage: Michael Gallagher

1st Councilor: Sean Anderson

2nd Councilor: Thomas Wells (UCLA club hockey team!)

3rd Councilor: Matthew McLeod

4th Councilor: Ishaan Chada

Herald: Daniyal Sameer

Past Grand Sage Larry Rovira of CSU Fullerton has volunteered as Interim Chapter Advisor. He was a great friend of Joe Marsalek and has supported our chapter for decades.





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Dempsey (continued):

On my previous visits, we were able to meet with and take photos with the friendly children. Unfortunately because of the proliferation of "dark web" child pornography, and the fear that residents may fall prey to exploitation, our interactions were restricted.

On my departure, I feel the same reluctance to leave as I have felt in the past. The Kenyans, especially the children, give one such a feeling of hope that goodness still exists in the world, and the future may be better than the past.

Alumni update: **Scott Scheffler**

Brother Scheffler was appointed interim Police Chief for UCPD in December.

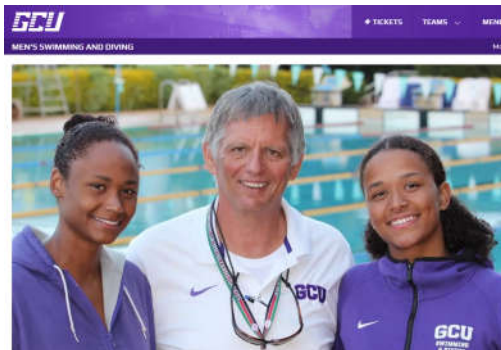
Congrats, Brother Scott, for your decades of keeping our campus safe and protecting all of the students, staff and faculty!

In his first public comment as Acting Chief, UCPD posted a video with the caption, "A message from Acting Chief Scheffler."

Scheffler replaced the chief Gavin Gibson, and he

Scheffler →

Alumni update: Steve Schaffer



Brother Schaffer has led the burgeoning Grand Canyon Univ. men's and women's swimming program for a decade into one of the best in the Western Athletic Conference. The university, which is located in Phoenix, Ariz., is now moving to the larger Mountain West Conference.

Last season, two of his GCU swimmers, swam in the World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka, Japan. Maria Brunlehner and Emily Muteti represented Kenya, and Mohamed Mohamady competed for Egypt. Schaffer coached Kenya and his two Lopes swimmers.

Schaffer grew up in Pittsburgh and New Jersey, even celebrating a New Year's Eve Party at Willie Stargell's house, and attended high school in Phoenix before matriculating at UCLA in the early 1980s. He was roommates with Dan Peterson, and friends with John Tsukahira, Jim Lipow, Mike Dykstra, Dan Pence, Bruce Peterson, Mark Helmick and Sage Ron O'Bara

After college, he moved back to Phoenix, where he coached club swim teams. Grand Canyon College was starting a swim program, and tapped Schaffer as its first coach.

Schaffer is Upsilon's first NCAA Div. 1 coach since the legendary Elvin "Ducky" Drake coached the Bruins track and field team through the 1960s, including Olympians Rafer Johnson and C.K. Yang in the decathlon.

Also, Robert Hillen coached the USC crew team in the 1950s, and Cecil Hollingsworth coached the UCLA gymnastics team in the 1930-40s.

▲ GCU website: <https://gculopes.com/sports/mens-swimming-and-diving>



Alumni **Golfers**

Dan Romero and Michael Antonucci joined Sage Michael Gallagher and Herald Daniyal Sameer at the Orange County Alumni Assn. annual golf fundraiser on Nov. 22 in Fullerton.



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Scheffler (continued):

previously worked as administrative bureau captain, department spokesperson and served on the campus Safety Oversight Committee.

He has been with UCPD for two decades – working up as a dispatcher and and promoted to detective – since 2003 and received an undergraduate degree from UCLA in mathematics/ applied science.

Several Upsilon brothers have served in law enforcement:

Arturo Ramos works for the Dept. of Homeland Security on border issues.

Russ Hess is a detective with the Los Angeles PD in West Los Angeles.

Burke Farrah is a supervisor with the Fresno PD.

Andy Capps is a famed supervisor with the Redlands PD.

Thayer Lake was a detective with the Los Angeles PD - Rampart precinct.

Official Beer of Founders Day



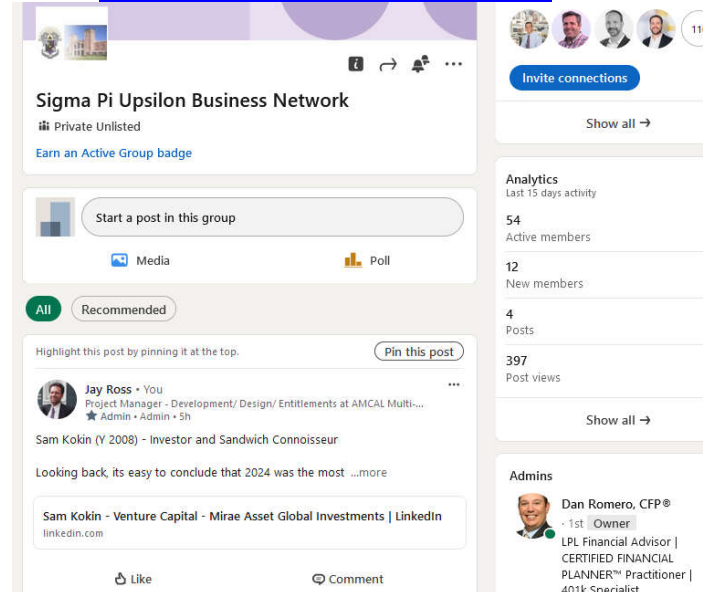
Upsilon Business Network

Join the "Upsilon Business Network" on LinkedIn, and post about your career.

You can find Upsilon brothers with whom you can collaborate or mentor in almost any industry – law, medicine, education, politics, sports, arts, film, theology, military, sales, marketing, communications, public policy, urban planning, engineering, environmental, academia, finance, accounting, medicine, public health, etc.

Update us with your career progress, if you seek employment, or if you offer employment.

▲ Link: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1344387/>



Upsilon Heritage: Lester Madden

Upsilon's long-time building supervisor Donald Lester Madden retired in 2021 after three decades of caring for and curing the Upsilon Manor House.

The Housing Board with President Tom Miller hired Madden to help with a big house renovation in 1994. In subsequent years, Madden and his white van fixed everything – he crawled under the floor to repair broken pipes, re-routed electric conduits, replaced hot water heaters, and installed back-up sewer lines.

The house would not be standing without his constant efforts and tinkering.

Lester regaled his lovely wife Loretta with tales of Upsilon success and buffoonery, and some actives served as pallbearers at her funeral. Lester recently celebrated his 90th birthday, and lives with his daughter's family in Orange County.





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Upsilon Chapter Housing Assn.

The Housing Board has 7 members, but we need more involvement to help the house.

Please volunteer – we meet quarterly and discuss repairs, insurance, legal issues, financing, risk management, etc.

We need another brother from the 1970s to join James Lipow. We need two brothers from the 2010s (we have none), and one brother from the 2020s to join Nick Rackauckas.

Many brothers have served for 20 years and will retire soon. We must perpetuate the board with new members from the younger generation.

▲ Members:

Matt Sumrow, President; Past Sage David Finkel, Treasurer; James Lipow; Jay Ross, UAA President; Josh Trifunovic, Chapter Advisor; Alfred Hernandez; Nick Rackauckas; Past Sage Tom Miller, President Emeritus (Adytum on High); Arturo Martinez, Secretary Emeritus.



Alumni on Jeopardy!

Justin Brandt is the first Upsilon brother to qualify for the show. Congrats! He faced off against a very tough returning champion on April 25, so he didn't win. Here's a wrap of it --

<https://thejeopardyfan.com/.../final-jeopardy-4-25-2024.html>](<https://thejeopardyfan.com/.../final-jeopardy-4-25-2024.html>)

Brandt is an attorney in private practice in Los Angeles, and Public Counsel been honored him for his pro bono work in helping poor families fight evictions

Final Jeopardy! was -- "Ken, I'll take College Fraternity Parties for \$1,000."

Answer: "Moonshiner!"

Question: "What is UCLA's best party?"



Senior dinner: Class of 2024



Alumni James Lipow, David Finkel Sebastian Perkinson and Jason Kelly, Esq. hosted the Upsilon Class of 2024 in June in Westwood.

Congratulations to graduating seniors: Mariano Velez, Josh Saidfar, Faraz Saiyed, Oliver Ortiz, Past 1st Councilor, Sebastian Lipstein, Past Sage Will O' Halloran, Past 3rd Councilor, Andrew Polonsky, Past Sage Thomas Wilson,

Jason Reyes, Antonio Yambot, Ali Niazi, and Past 1st Councilor Matthew Lombera



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We need your help

As part of our Centennial, please volunteer to help the brotherhood.

If you haven't contributed with time or donations, help the next generation of brothers, as the 1940-50s alumni did for us.

We need help with the following tasks:

1. Founders Day:

Someone on the ground to help organize the event (Jay lives in Phoenix, and can't be there).

It entails attending Monday Night meetings to promote the event, meeting with the 1st Councilor to ensure progress, and being at the house early to monitor the set-up.

2. Website: We need a new website that is more functional and not so outdated.

Who is a computer science major or web developer?

3. Events: Plan the poker night, senior dinner, end of year BBQ, and tailgater with help from the 1st Counselor.

4. Treasurer: Manage the donations, and write checks for expenses. Maintain the Quickbooks. Can a past 3rd Counselor volunteer for this?

Upsilon road trips



Penn St.: Alfred Hernandez and John Rhode in "Happy Valley"



Louisiana St.: Dave Riley, Rich Marcus, Alfred Hernandez, and Ed Rhee at "The Swamp".

Fall 2024 Pledge Class



Welcome to Upsilon's newest pledges: Venti Claveau, Communications, Fontainebleau, France; Joey Gentle, Business Econ, Kelseyville HS (Cal); Reid Henderson, Communications, Rancho Bernardo HS (S.D.); Arsh Malhi, Political Science, Jurupa Hills H.S. (Fontana); Chris Molina, Psychology, CATCH HS (Los Angeles); Alex Ng, Business Economics & Film, Palo Alto HS (Calif.); Tommy Rudowicz, Mechanical Engineering, Coronado HS (S.D.); Jeremy Tan, Business Economics, Loyola HS (Los Angeles); Erick Valencia, Political Science, Eastlake HS (S.D.); Tony Yanni, Philosophy & Math, Temple City HS (Calif).

ROLL SIG PI

EDITION 1

● DEC 20th, 2024

● THE ACTIVES



House Flower: Lavender Orchid, alternates of White Rose and Lilac, Goldenrod as auxiliary.

House Animal: Sebastian the Owl.

Founding Fathers:
Rolin Rosco James,
William Raper Kennedy,
James Thompson
Kingsbury, George Martin
Patterson.



FOUNDERS DAY

The Upsilon Chapter of Sigma Pi was founded in 1923. We are excited to celebrate our 102nd Founder's Day
Saturday, February 22nd



We are excited to welcome all alumni back to 612 Landfair for this years Founder's Day. We look forward to reliving the memories that we have made in the manor that was once built by John J. Landon in 1931. We hope to see brothers across generations connect displaying the true strength of the bond of Sigma Pi. Look to the next few pages to see **brothers of this house and what we have been up to.**



MEET THE ACTIVES



Brother Michael Gallagher, newly elected Sage of the chapter hails from New York City and leads the chapter with excitement and wisdom. Michael is a 3rd year student studying Communications, who often looks forward to taking pictures for the Daily Bruin UCLA Newspaper on the sidelines of our Division I sports games and throughout various campus events. You may find Michael surfing the beaches in Malibu, or playing hoops for our 3v3 intramural basketball team.

On campus, Michael also works as a FITWELL consultant at UCLA Rec. While he enjoys his involvements on campus, Michael has truly cherished his time as a gentleman of Sigma Pi. His favorite memories have come during his time living in over the Summer for “C-Sesh.”

As he looks out to his future, Michael hopes to break into the field of Journalism carrying all he’s learned from UCLA and Sigma Pi wherever he goes.



Meet Brother Ricky Alvarez, our esteemed Party Planning Chair. When he is not helping out the house consistently with endless support, Ricky can be found cheering on the newest World Series Champions, The Los Angeles Dodgers. Despite being from San Diego, Ricky carries the Dodger pride, and the pride of Sigma Pi in everything he does. He is a 4th year Labor Studies major of the Winter 2024, Delta Zeta pledge class.

On campus, Ricky is involved in Compas, a farm worker advocacy organization. Overall, Ricky hopes in his future to be a successful man along with helping many people.

When Ricky is not working on things he is incredibly passionate about, he loves playing basketball and going on hikes throughout Los Angeles. Through his time in Sigma Pi, his favorite memory is our most recent Secret Santa Brotherhood Gift exchange, that he also organized as well!

MEET THE ACTIVES



Meet Brother Evan Rome, a 3rd year student from the Bay. Evan, our most recent Social Chair, consistently puts himself out there to promote a positive image of Sigma Pi. His endless connections he has fostered shows his true embodiment of the creed of Sigma Pi, especially developing character of our chapter and encouraging chivalry.

Evan is pursuing a degree in environmental science, and hopes to utilize these skills in some sort of environmental consulting role in the future. Along with working on his degree, Evan has taken full advantage of attending UCLA, consistently encouraging the brothers to join him on various activities and events the school and Los Angeles has to offer. Evan also loves surfing and continually shares his skills with the chapter teaching any willing member how to surf as well!

Evan's favorite memory through his time here at Sigma Pi has been living in over summer for "C-Sesh," especially the house Big Bear Trip, where all the brothers and friends enjoyed each others company getting out of the city for a weekend.



The Active Chapter has enjoyed some incredible visits from notable alumni this past quarter, including a visit from **Sirrele Steinfeld**, who has aided the active chapter in organizing various office visits to expand our professional network. Thank you once again for your support Sirrele!



This year, **Ricky Alvarez**, has created a new tradition that was loved by every member of the chapter to celebrate this holiday season. Pairing brothers up in a **Secret Santa gift exchange**, brothers bought gifts for each other and presented them to one another by telling a story about this bro, and then celebrating with them in taking a shot together. This event allowed our brotherhood to share in each others company one last time before going off to our homes for the Holiday Season. We ended off our night with a Holiday Sweater wine night inviting all of our close friends to celebrate one last time this year.

Upsilon Alumni Association
c/o Jay Ross
2307 S. Amherst Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90064-1103

Annual Dues are Due!

Please help the Alumni Association by paying Annual Dues for 2025. Donations fund scholarships for actives (Meyer and D'Avanzo scholarships) and renovate the house.

Payment is on an 'ability-to-contribute' basis. We do a lot – please support the brotherhood!

Purchases include new robes for the Executive Council, a Brooks Brothers tie for the outgoing Sage, framing photos of WWII veteran brothers, and framing photos of varsity athletes.

Emerald level: \$100.00.

Gold level: \$50.00-Graduates
before 2020.

Lavender level: \$35.00-Graduates
after 2020.

▲ Issue checks to "Upsilon Alumni Association"

▲ Mail to J. Ross, President at:

* 2307 Amherst Ave., Los Angeles, CA
90064-1103

* PayPal: Alumni@SigmaPiBruins.com

* Venmo: <https://account.venmo.com/u/SigmaPiAlumniUCLA>

* Via website: www.SigmaPiBruins.com



Upsilon Superfans Tim Howell, Josh Levy and Josh Trifunovic follow Bruins hoops to Las Vegas.