

Pi Ides Newsletter

Phi Gamma Delta | Worcester Polytechnic Institute | Summer 2022



Pi Iota Summer Reunion a Big Success!

Over 80 in Attendance

The annual Pi Iota reunion was held on Saturday July 16th at the home of F.A. Morse President **Henry Fitzgerald '75** in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. There were over 80 in attendance including brothers and guests who were representing classes ranging from 1972 to 2025.

F.W. Madigan opened the construction site at 99 Salisbury Street for walk-through tours in the morning with their team. Several groups of brothers came by to see the facility for the first time.

A special thanks to brother **Bob Ferrari '74** for being the driving force behind these Pi Iota gatherings over the years, and a special thanks to Henry and Jean Fitzgerald for graciously hosting and organizing everything!



New 99 Taking Shape!

Check out the Latest Updates

In case you missed any of the video updates from our F.A. Morse President, be sure to check out the time-lapse progress of our new chapter house at <https://www.tmsaerialsolutions.com/fiji-timelapse>. Our new home stands prominently at the corner of Boynton and Salisbury and is already starting to look fantastic! Further details to follow below from our F.A. Morse President.

Not for College Days Alone...



A note from the Chapter President

Jake Scalise '23

Hi Brothers!

The summer flew by after another busy academic year and the fall semester has already started. Our undergraduate brothers were hard at work over the past few months with internships and enjoying their time off. We are extremely excited to see the progress on our new chapter house. We hope to gain a lot of interest for recruitment this fall.

In the spring we initiated 17 new brothers through the hard work and efforts of our recruitment chairs despite the challenges of living in a temporary residence a little further from campus. Our new brothers have varied backgrounds and come from near and far. Don't be afraid to stop by and introduce yourselves.

Sixteen of our brothers graduated in May and have moved on to notable firms such as Johnson Controls, Mercury Systems, Pratt and Whitney, NEI General Contracting, Oracle, and more. We wish these brothers well as they transition into starting their professional careers!

Pi Iota finished the 2021-2022 academic year strong with many proud recognitions and accomplishments. Our chapter had the highest GPA among all the fraternities on campus and our involvement with extracurricular activities and philanthropic efforts increased significantly. We have brothers on the football, baseball, hockey, swimming, and club lacrosse teams as well as brothers sitting on the Interfraternity Council.



Not for College Days Alone...



Brother **John Puksta '23**, who maintains a 4.0 GPA, was recognized as WPI's "Fraternity Man of the Year" and received the Dr. Leland Atwood award for the highest GPA. Brother Puksta was also recognized with the **Ray Cherenzia (Pi Iota '73) Unsung Hero Award** for his performance in WPI Men's Swimming and Diving. This award goes to one member of every varsity athletic team who works hard, puts their team first, does the little things without much recognition, and is vital to their team's success.

Pi Iota was recognized in the Fraternity's Condon Cup which is awarded to the Fiji chapters with significant improvement in scholarship, extracurriculars, and fraternity relationships. Our Faculty Advisor, **Dave Ortendahl '19**, won the Fraternity's Crowder Cup which is awarded to the most outstanding faculty advisor in all of Phi Gamma Delta, and our Purple Legionnaire, **Dave Willens '09**, was recognized in the Fraternity's Durrance Award which is awarded to the most outstanding Purple Legionnaire in all of Phi Gamma Delta.

On behalf of the undergrads, I want to thank all the graduate brothers who support us on a regular basis. Pi Iota has one of the best and closest graduate support bases in Phi Gamma Delta. The undergraduates are very appreciative of all your efforts, especially with the planning and coordination of our soon-to-come chapter house.

Mighty Proud!

Jake Scalise '23, Chapter President

Remarks from the Purple Legionnaire

Dave Willens '09

Brothers,

I'm frequently humbled and amazed at what I see going on in Pi Iota from both the undergraduate and graduate perspective. We have a high functioning undergraduate chapter and a graduate support base which is second to none. Even during challenging times and rough patches our brothers are persistent in their attitude and growing achievements.

I recently had the pleasure of attending the 174th Ekklesia in Washington, DC with three of our undergraduate brothers; **Jake Scalise '23**, **Dan Barmakian '24**, **Colby Jones '24**. You'll be proud to know that Pi Iotas were represented on the Nominations committee for electing the Archons of the Fraternity, and on the Amendments of Laws committee for vetting and presenting changes to constitution and by-laws of the Fraternity. Our fellow brother **Tim Kilduff (Kent State '68, WPI '18)** was elected to the position of Archon Vice President - a role which carries strategic responsibilities in helping Phi Gamma Delta to grow stronger and maintain longevity.

Phi Gamma Delta has been working on innovative programming and techniques to address new member education, hazing, and continued member engagement through the senior year. Several momentous changes related to these efforts were set in motion at this Ekklesia. Most

notably, by July 1st, 2024, the pledging process will be completely eliminated. When in full effect, new members will be initiated immediately following the acceptance of their bid and will participate in member education which is spread out through their senior year. The concept of "365" recruiting will take the place of the pledging process where brothers will have the opportunity to get to know perspective new members over a longer period and will not be limited by a single scheduled initiation period.



These historical changes were voted on by nearly 600 undergraduate delegates from 140 chapter across the country to help combat the egregious hazing activities we have seen in the news AND to allow Phi Gamma Delta to continue to operate based on their ability to obtain liability insurance policies for the organization and all its chapters.



Recent hazing activities, especially where alcohol was involved, have senselessly cost human life and left others with permanent physical damage. It has become a self-destructive behavior which stems from the abused power dynamic that often exists between initiated brother and pledge. It threatens the existence of the entire Greek system.

Phi Gamma Delta's liability insurance premiums skyrocketed 146% this past year alone with reduced coverage for claims

related to hazing and assault. The organization was forced to begin making policy-level changes which address the most significant source of claims.

I imagine many of you are reading this with pure apprehension and cannot imagine how the fraternity can operate without pledging. I challenge you to imagine a world where Phi Gamma Delta no longer exists because it took no steps to help stop the meaningless and self-destructive behaviors.

Several chapters will be piloting the changes over the next two years to help work out the logistics and challenges that arise before a full launch takes place. Phi Gamma Delta will be the 7th national fraternity to adopt this style of operation. 84% of Phi Gamma Delta chapters exist on campuses where at least one fraternity already operates without pledging. There are two such national fraternities on the WPI campus already. We will find a way to make this work to ensure the strong fraternity experience and the longevity of big Phi Gamma Delta.

As always, I want to thank our graduate brother leadership in F.A. Morse, the Board of Chapter Advisors, and our faculty advisors for volunteering their time in support of Pi Iota. The most successful chapters in Phi Gamma Delta have strong graduate leadership at all levels. Graduate support gives true meaning to our principle of *"Not for College Days Alone"*.

I look forward to another successful year in Pi Iota and I can't wait to see the opening of our brand-new chapter house.

Mighty Proud to be a Fiji!

Dave Willens '09, Purple Legionnaire

F.A. Morse President's Update

Henry Fitzgerald '75

Great news to report!

The framing and the roof are now complete. The windows will be installed over the next month and there is a big push to get the HVAC ductwork, rough plumbing, and electrical wiring installed. The water line is in, and the sewer line will be going in next.

Please check out the time-lapse videos at the link provided above and the monthly progress videos that are emailed out for the latest updates. Over the next month we will do a video tour of the interior to give you a better feel for the layout. The new house shares a lot of the same layout characteristics as the former house, but you'll also notice that it's a bit roomier.



Not for College Days Alone....

Special thanks to all that have worked to get us this far from the design team in 2019 to the dedicated construction team that participates in our weekly meetings. This has truly been an unbelievable alumni effort; one that will be hard to match by any other organization at WPI for years to come. We are currently on track for a certificate of occupancy toward the end of December.

The construction cost of our project is just under **\$4.6 Million**. With all the added softs costs including architectural and engineering fees, legal fees, furniture, fixtures, kitchen items, and other equipment we are looking at a total project cost of

just over **\$6 Million**. This is slightly higher than anticipated. Please, please, please, continue to make your pledge payments to allow us to finish this facility with all the other necessary amenities we need to make it a functioning home. Many of you have been extraordinary generous, and it speaks volumes of who we are as Pi Iota's. Let's keep pushing to see this project through to the end.

Mighty Proud!

Henry Fitzgerald '75, F.A. Morse President

Update from the Pi Iota Campaign Committee and F.A. Morse Treasurer

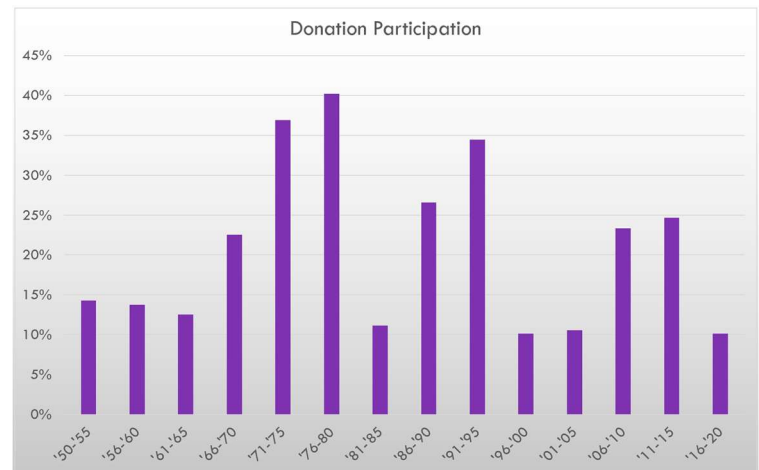
Andy Williams '93, Dave Vogt '77, Jason Hutchins '09

As our F.A. Morse President stressed, we need your continued help and support to make our project a complete success. While the construction team is constantly doing their best to monitor and keep costs under control, we must face the reality of inflated costs over the last several months and unexpected and unavoidable overages eating up contingencies. Cash flow is now critical as the larger construction bills are starting to come in and will be due by the end of the year.

We currently face two immediate challenges that we need your help to overcome. We need the brothers who have not paid their pledge commitment on time to please do so for us to maintain cash flow. And we have an immediate need to raise another **\$250k** beyond what is already pledged to keep us on track to finish this project so our brothers can move-in.

For those who have paid your pledges on time or upfront in full, we are eternally grateful. For those who could pay any of your future amounts now or earlier than expected, it would help us immensely. If you know any of your fellow brothers who you think may be willing to increase their pledge or pledge for the first time, please feel free to reach out to them and let us know. We still have room for more bricks in the walkway with their name on them.

We have heavy participation from some classes and very little from others. The chart shows where we're lacking. We would like to boost the overall participation rate across the board. Even our undergraduates are individually supporting the campaign on top of their existing fiscal responsibilities. No amount is too little!



Your support can be made by credit card through www.fijicampaign.com and/or by check which can be sent to the F.A. Morse PO Box listed on the bottom of the website.

Moving forward we will begin addressing the longer-term cash needs for servicing our debt as this first phase of the campaign ends when our project is completed. More to come on that.

Thanks again for everyone's efforts. Remember this is to perpetuate and provide the experiences that we remember so fondly to future Pi Iota Fijis!

Fraternally,

Andy Williams '93, Dave Vogt '77, Pi Iota Campaign Committee

Jason Hutchins '09, F.A. Morse Treasurer



Pi Iota Graduate News

Pi Iota's Living a Life of Service

Three entrepreneurial and philanthropic Pi Iota graduate brothers are continuing a life of service to others after serving in the military or in support of military personnel by founding their next adventure, **OWL Overland Outfitters, LLC**.

Zach Hartzell '15, Tanner Landis '15, and Kyle Foley '16 are all avid outdoorsmen who share a passion for adventure and helping others. Owl Overland designs, manufactures, and sells truck bed kitchens, storage solutions, and other outdoor accessories for overland vehicles to make its customers feel at home in the outdoors.

After founding their company in early 2021, these brothers have been building their brand and taking their entrepreneurial spirit to the next level. They have recently committed to donating 5% of their profits annually to improving availability of mental health treatment for veterans through the Veterans Outdoor Advocacy Group and Military Mobility Organization.

A fundraiser has been organized to raise awareness and support of these non-profit organizations which lead the way in combating the veteran mental health crisis in the US at <https://gofund.me/3d3843e8>.

For more information and further details involved in these efforts you can check out the following links provided.

<https://www.owloutfitters.com/>

<https://www.militarymobility.com/>

<https://www.voag.org/>

<https://www.npr.org/2021/01/27/958138926/new-va-program-investigates-outdoor-therapy-for-veterans>



Pi Iotas Honored among Worcester's 40 Under Forty for 2022

Two of our Pi Iota brothers were recently selected by the Worcester Business Journal for the 2022 40 under Forty award. Each year forty individuals are selected from the central Massachusetts community who have had early success in their careers and hold the promise of having even bigger impacts as business leaders and leaders in the community. We are proud to have not one, but two honorees in our midst this year.



Dave Ortendahl '19 (left) who is our faculty advisor and Director of Corporate Relations at WPI, and our Purple Legionnaire, **Dave Willens '09**, who is Director of Research and Development at Kinefac Corp. in Worcester, were proudly selected as part of this year's honorees.

Our brothers will be recognized at a special event at Mechanic's Hall in Worcester this September. You can read about their achievements and the other distinguished nominees on the Worcester Business Journal site <https://www.wbjournal.com/event-honorees/40-under-forty-class-of-2022>.

Mighty proud of all these brothers!

General Contact Info

Corresponding Secretary, **Evan Russell '24**
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Purple Legionnaire, **Dave Willens '09**
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Follow us on Social Media

For the latest updates from Pi Iota

Learn about what's happening in the chapter more frequently by following us on Facebook and Instagram. You will see updates on chapter activities, and you will be able to stay more closely connected with the fraternity and your graduate brothers.

Don't forget to also check out our chapter website at www.fijjwpi.com, and start marking your calendars for the next **Pig Dinner** tentatively planned for **Saturday April 29th, 2023**.



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Phi Gamma Delta - Worcester Polytechnic Institute is at Worcester Art Museum.
3h · Worcester · 🌐

Huge thank you to Work on Worcester and the Worcester Historical Museum for hosting a community service event. The brothers helped with moving storage boxes. #phigammadelta



You, Greg Bagdis, Mano Michaelidis and 2 others



PHI GAMMA DELTA

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