



GAMMA UPDATE

Gamma Chapter of Alpha Gamma Sigma • Spring 2025

OUR FOCUS ON FRATERNAL DIRECTION

Developing a Healthy Path Forward for Gamma Chapter

“Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth.” That quote would be a great way to sum up the start of Gamma Chapter’s fall 2024 semester. Errors in judgement caused the chapter to be put on social probation until the end of spring 2025. The chapter is also on University of Nebraska-Lincoln probation until the end of fall 2027.

OUR ROAD AHEAD

Was the Alumni Association Board troubled by what we learned? Absolutely. The fact is that the world, and the collegiate experience at NU, is different than when any of us were undergraduates. We need to understand, accept, and embrace the challenges presented. If we are truly meeting our mission, “Preparing men for life by coming together as scholars, living as brothers, and becoming leaders of tomorrow,” undergraduates and alumni need to not only change but also be the change.

How do we adapt and get in front of the change? We thought it best to ask members about their experiences and what is creating the problems and/or holding them back. It became apparent that accountability (or lack thereof) was a key factor. Thomas Pain maybe said it best: “A body of men holding themselves



The newly elected 2025 executive board attending the annual alumni and undergraduate member executive retreat in Raymond for training and leadership development.

accountable to nobody ought not to be trusted by anybody.” How does the fraternity begin to make that change?

SHAPING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

The first step was an executive leadership workshop on January 25, developed and run by Culture Partners of Temecula, California. It was a full day of training, interaction, and practice of how these 13 men can build a foundation of accountability, along with steps to take individually and with the members.

I was fortunate to witness this workshop, which I believe will pay huge dividends over the next

year and beyond. We must thank **Rick Gestring '83, F450** for organizing this workshop and the Gamma Foundation for funding it. The Alumni Association Board had long discussed the need for executive officer training—this was a wonderful start.

COMMUNICATING WITH ALUMNI

The next step was the undergraduate executive team and Alumni Association Board retreat held one week later. The day began with an executive presentation summarizing their experience the week prior, while also illustrating their plan for the next twelve months.

(Continued on page 3)

Gamma Foundation Supports ΑΓΣ Undergraduates

The Gamma Foundation’s primary purpose is to fund scholarships and the *Aspire* Leadership Program, with funding coming from generous alumni. This past year, the Foundation Board initiated a Give to Gamma Day campaign. It started after the Big Red Tailgate reunion, and a Zoom call was held to share campaign success and highlight the on-campus chapter’s accomplishments on November 7.

The call’s date is important because it coincides with the date when Gamma Chapter was colonized at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln 71 years ago. A total of 44 alumni supported the campaign through online donations and checks, contributing more than \$51,000! This will be

an annual campaign, so we look forward to our second annual day of giving this fall!

SCHOLARSHIP DISTRIBUTION

Scholarships are important for recruiting high-achieving new members. Once they are house members, scholarships help finance their education and recognize academic achievement. A total of 23 men made the dean’s list last fall, and another six made the dean’s commendation list. A GPA of 3.5 or better is required for the dean’s list, and 3.7 or higher for the commendation list.

Almost a third of our men made these two lists! Scholarships are awarded for grades but are also

given to men in leadership positions within the fraternity and in campus organizations.

BUILDING YOUNG LEADERS

The *Aspire* Leadership Experience is unique to Gamma Chapter and continues to evolve and gain appreciation. Members of the Alumni Board of Trustees and the house executive board conduct *Aspire* to ACTIVATE sessions for new members, and *Aspire* to ASSOCIATE sessions (alumni and undergraduate member leadership development program.)

A new SIGMA SIX executive leadership program was launched this year. This program
(Continued on page 2)



Gamma Foundation Supports ΑΓΣ Undergraduates



High-achieving members attend a scholarship dinner hosted by housemom Pat and housedad John.

(Continued from page 1)

is comprised of six leadership competencies and subsequent development learning journey activities which transpire through the year of service as an executive board member.

The learning experience began with an accountability workshop facilitated by Culture Partners (culturepartners.com). This was followed by a joint alumni-undergraduate executive board retreat and subsequent mentoring that included leadership competency development assignments and personal development planning.

GET INVOLVED TODAY

If you are interested in joining the *Aspire* alumni leadership team, which collaborates with the active Fraternity Education Committee and executive board to create

and facilitate program content and activities, please contact **Rick Gestring '83, Γ450** at (415) 794-4800. We would be thrilled to have you join this unique opportunity to support every member of Alpha Gamma Sigma to "Be the Best Man You Can Be."

The availability of scholarships and the *Aspire* Leadership Program affords AGS a competitive advantage compared to other campus living options. These programs will ensure that AGS continues to be a leading fraternity at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Fraternally,
Eli Thomssen '56, Γ77
President, Gamma Chapter Foundation

We Appreciate Your Support

Thank you to the alumni who contributed to Gamma Chapter Foundation in 2024 listed below. We want to especially thank the 44 alumni who contributed over \$51,000 on our inaugural Give to Gamma Day 2024!

Anonymous

Dale Van Vleck '53, Γ22
Eli L. Thomssen '56, Γ77
John Miller '63, Γ144
Dwight G. Kanter, Ph.D. '64, Γ153
Wayne E. Hake '65, Γ168
Terry Bussear '69, Γ210
Dale Ekart '70, Γ227
James Ronhovde '73, Γ278
Lynn Neujahr '74, Γ315
Steve Dietz '77, Γ352
Paul Lear '79, Γ373
Dwight Dam '80, Γ401
Michael Barrett '83, Γ449
Rick Gestring '83, Γ450
Dr. Dean R. Folkers '84, Γ468
Timothy Gregerson '84, Γ469
John Bergmeyer '85, Γ485
Jerry Lentfer '85, Γ493
Michael Miller '86, Γ502
Shane A. Belohrad '87, Γ515
Cory Bergt '88, Γ535
Cary L. Sandell '88, Γ541
Corey Huck '88, Γ547
Bill Smith '88, Γ552
Mike Underwood '90, Γ588
Bruce Williams '91, Γ590
Matthew Jedlicka '91, Γ605
Kevin Wemhoff '92, Γ624
Chad D. Villwok '95, Γ666
Brian Wieman '95, Γ674
Craig George '96, Γ686
Grant M. Wallace, M.D. '05, Γ852
Taylor Collins '11, Γ949
Garret Gregerson '13, Γ978
Trey Mogensen '13, Γ982
J. Joe Herrick '14, Γ992
Gage Hoegermeyer '15, Γ1004
Trevor Spath '15, Γ1013
Cooper Hicks '15, Γ1015
Austin Robinson '15, Γ1020
Nolan Casey '16, Γ1044
Brent Lemmer '17, Γ1058
Brandon Jelinek '18, Γ1070

Mark your calendars now for Give to Gamma Day
2025 on Saturday November 7, 2025.

Keep an eye on your inbox and mailbox for more information!



OUR FOCUS ON FRATERNAL DIRECTION

(Continued from page 1)

During a working lunch, each officer met with their Alumni Board “mentor” to discuss individual goals and formulate how their mentor can assist. The day concluded with addressing immediate issues in an open discussion that aligned with much of the format from the Culture Partners training.

This was the fifth such retreat I’ve participated in, and it certainly felt different. Thank you once again to Rick and **Rich Katt ’71, Γ255** for organizing and facilitating. A major thanks to Alumni Board members that traveled great distances at their own expense to participate. It speaks volumes to this group’s commitment.

LOOKING FORWARD

Please know that the sky isn’t falling. Rick Gestring noted that we are a *very good* fraternity, but we want to be a *great* fraternity! My key takeaway from that experience is that for us to create the change needed, we need to first change the experience, which will modify beliefs. In turn, the actions will change, leading to the desired results. It makes sense when reading it, but doing it is the challenge.

Mark down September 20 for the next Big Red Tailgate event. This annual gathering is a great opportunity to reconnect with fraternity brothers. Sharing memories and experiences can renew old bonds and foster new ones.

Your financial support is always appreciated to finance scholarships and the *Aspire* Leadership Program that provides professional development. Please visit the fraternity, and if you can’t, visit the website. Share your thoughts with us because we can always improve.

I want to thank those that serve on the Alumni Association and Gamma Foundation Board. Alumni involvement is paramount to ensure a successful active chapter.

Fraternally,
Shane Belohrad ’87, Γ515
shane_belohrad@ajg.com
(402) 676-7854

STRENGTHENING THE NARRATIVE

How Bill Smith ’87 Plans to Share Our Success Story

Growing up with no Greek legacy, **Bill Smith ’87** new nothing of the value that the Greek system provided to young people. That began to change in late June before Bill’s freshman year. During his FFA service as a Nebraska state officer, he visited Alpha Gamma Sigma with his mentor, **Mike Barrett ’83**.



Bill (right) with Dean Folkers ’84 (left) and Shane Belohrad ’87.

“Mike introduced me to AGS and showed what it could provide for my future,” Bill recalled. “After that introduction, I was sold!”

Bill and his new brothers made unique memories from pledge sneaks to Ames for the Nebraska vs. Iowa football game to visiting the Beta Chapter at Mizzou. One of his most pivotal moments, however, came from his first annual alumni meeting as a freshman.

“I met brothers who traveled from all across the country and who were involved in multiple areas of agriculture,” he said. “That’s when I knew AGS was a lifetime investment that paid off beyond college.” Sure enough, Bill is still inspired and challenged daily by his college brothers; this pays dividends personally and professionally.

GETTING THE MESSAGE

As a new Alumni Board of Trustees member, Bill will support Gamma Chapter’s alumni communications efforts (courtesy of his background in agricultural marketing). The role includes coordinating with Chandra Spangler on social media content (read more

about this on page 6) as well as educating alumni about our boards and creating a cadence of accountability with communication among key alumni members. “Our goal is to streamline all communications and social content to have the same voice while

striving to meet our overall objective of telling the AGS story to both internal and external audiences.”

Knowing that every person’s time is valuable, Bill made the conscious decision to join the Board of Trustees and give back to Gamma Chapter. He believes every member has some type of expertise that can support the brotherhood and hopes they will all contribute their time, talent, or treasure when possible. “At the end of the day, simply showing up sends a signal that you benefited from the AGS experience.”

Bill has moved across several states over the years, attending annual meetings, Red Rose Formals, and Husker Tailgates whenever he can. As empty nesters, he and his wife enjoy traveling and spending time at their cabin in Northern Arkansas. In addition to AGS, Bill most recently served as president for the Mid-South Fly Fishers. He also manages Helena Agri-Enterprises’ presence at the FFA national convention, and this spring he will receive the Tennessee Honorary FFA Degree at their state convention.

To learn more, catch up with Bill at [linkedin.com/in/bill-smith-08b1a46](https://www.linkedin.com/in/bill-smith-08b1a46).

Bill’s Thoughts on the Future of ΑΓΣ

“In one of my previous roles at Helena Agri-Enterprises, I worked closely in college recruiting of talent for nearly 18 years across the U.S. I truly look forward to helping the *Aspire* program evolve into a cornerstone for career development. This may be one of the most crucial programs to help our members prepare for a very competitive career market. I can truly say there is no other fraternity or club that is setting up their members with the level of professional and career development than Gamma Chapter has today. I encourage our undergraduates to embrace this experience, as this is truly a major value proposition that will separate you from other students across the nation.”



Making the Most of Our College Experience

GAMMA BROTHERS STAY ACTIVE ACROSS CAMPUS

The men of Gamma Chapter eagerly anticipate another promising semester of growth, leadership, and academic excellence. With 89 on-campus members, we continue to make significant impacts across campus and within the agricultural industry.

ACADEMICS AND LEADERSHIP

Our chapter is maintaining a strong GPA of 3.26, with 23 members earning spots on the fall dean's list and six achieving dean's commendation list honors. Alumni support remains invaluable, as 31 members received academic scholarships this year.

Our executive board participated in an accountability workshop led by Joe LaStoria from Culture Partners, an experience we deeply valued. The workshop provided our executive board with valuable insights into accountability and cultivating a strong chapter culture.

Joe guided us through three key focus areas: academic excellence, unparalleled leadership, and making a difference. He also outlined a

four-step process to achieve these goals. Since the workshop, the executive board has applied these principles, using the three targets to guide decision-making and strengthen our chapter's foundation.

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

Chapter members continue to hold leadership roles across campus:

- The CASNR Career Services program features three members as peer career coaches: **Caleb Burnside '23, Γ1195**, **Henry Coleman '23, Γ1196**, and **Grant Nielsen '23, Γ1214**. We are particularly proud of **Michael Bequette '22, Γ1163** and **Gavin Dozler '22, Γ1166** for their induction into the Order of Omega.
- Five brothers are serving on the Nebraska Agricultural Youth Council: **Seth Wert '22, Γ1182**, **Evan Svanda '22, Γ1186**, **Caleb Burnside '23, Γ1195**, **Alex Boudreau '23, Γ1208**, and **Braydon Binger '23, Γ1218**. Alongside NAYC, Alex contributes

to the Engler Program as a member of the Engler Experience Team.

- We are also proud to recognize **Reagan Choat '24, Γ1227**, who serves as Nebraska's FFA State President.
- The chapter maintains a strong presence in professional organizations. **Trevor Parde '23, Γ1200** serves as vice president of the Block and Bridle Club alongside five other members. Seven members of the NHRI Leadership Mentoring program demonstrate our commitment to leadership development. Eleven AGS members benefit the Agronomy Club, and two represent us on the Crops Judging Team.
- Focusing on the future betterment of our chapter remains a constant goal. Our members continually seek to make a positive impact on our campus, community, and each other. Gamma Chapter is evolving, celebrating our successes while striving for improvement every step of the way.

Fraternally,
Gavin Dozler '22, Γ1166
President

Our newest members enjoy a Cornhuskers basketball game together.

Back row, from left: Henry Coleman '23, Γ1196, Caleb Burnside '23, Γ1195, and Grant Nielson '23, Γ1214 serve as CASNR peer career coaches through CASNR Career Services on campus.





CHAPTER OFFICERS

President
Gavin Dozler '22, Γ1166

Vice President
Caleb Burnside '23, Γ1195

Secretary
Spencer Bartek '23, Γ1212

Fraternity Educator
Trevor Parde '23, Γ1200

Treasurer
Alex Boudreau '23, Γ1208

Recruitment Chairmen
Trev Peters '23, Γ1207
(402) 710-3497

Carter Holtmeier '23, Γ1202
(402) 806-5080

Social Chairman
Nolan Williams '24, Γ1225

House Manager
Clay Witthuhn '23, Γ1206

Alumni Relations Chairman
Braydon Binger '23, Γ1218

Public Relations Chairman
Henry Coleman '23, Γ1196

Scholarship Chairman
Luke Kimbrough '24, Γ1234

Risk Management Chairman
Kolton Kriete '24, Γ1226

Chapter Goals

1

Achieve an all-house cumulative GPA of 3.45.

2

Improve campus relations by establishing a successful, annual philanthropy.

3

Revitalize chapter events and traditions to foster a strong and welcoming culture.

ALPHA GAMMA SIGMA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL BOARD

There are six Alpha Gamma Sigma Chapters in the United States (The Ohio State University, the University of Missouri, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Western Illinois University, and Tennessee Tech University).

All six chapters are members of the National Executive Council. The role and purpose of the NEC Board includes:

1. Establishment of policies and guidelines for how AGS operates on a national level.
2. Provision of guidance when necessary to maintain the integrity of the AGS brand.
3. Providing leadership development by conducting training programs for chapter executive boards.

4. Offering a medium for chapters to share information and ideas.
5. Evaluation of expansion and growth opportunities to other universities.
6. Resolution of other issues that require broader consideration beyond the local chapter.

The NEC Board includes at least one alumnus and the president from each chapter. Gamma Chapter currently has three alumni serving on the NEC Board: **Eli Thomssen '56, Γ77**, **Monty Larsen '85, Γ496**, and **Mark Frank '90, Γ581**. The chapter president currently serving on the Board is **Gavin Dozler '22, Γ1166**.

The Board meets monthly and schedules a conclave once per year. The next conclave is April 11-12, hosted by IlliDell Chapter at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The first day is an evening event and provides an opportunity to establish relationships and build comradery. The agenda for April 12 will be sessions discussing subjects of mutual interest including new member recruitment, member development, chapter philanthropy projects, maintaining and/or improving house GPA, alumni chapter involvement and engagement, expansion opportunities, etc. Conclave will conclude with the election of officers and a dinner.

Gammas in Prominent Roles



Mike Jacobson '72, F266

We have two men in the Nebraska legislature. **Mike Jacobson '72, F266** represents District 42 and was appointed in 2022, and **Dan McKeon '84, F483** represents District 41 and was elected in 2024.



Dan McKeon '84, F483

Troy Bredenkamp '87, F530 is the senior vice president of government and public affairs for the Renewable Fuels Association. Troy was a guest at the 2025 presidential inauguration.



Troy Bredenkamp '87, F530

NEBRASKA LEAD PROGRAM

The Nebraska LEAD Program began in 1981 to develop leaders to help shape the future of the state's agricultural industry. Since then, several Gamma alumni have completed the two-year development programs. Did YOU

participate in Nebraska LEAD program? We want to hear from you!

LEAD 42, graduating in March 2025, includes **Brett Storer '15, F1016**.

LEAD 43, which will graduate in 2026, includes **Trevor Spath '15, F1013**, **Jared Stauffer '16, F1031**, and **Jake Judge '17, F1050**.

FOLLOW US ONLINE



agsunl.org



Alpha Gamma Sigma - UNL



[ags_unl](https://www.instagram.com/ags_unl)



Alpha Gamma Sigma Fraternity - Gamma Chapter



GAMMA UPDATE

Gamma Chapter of Alpha Gamma Sigma
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
P.O. Box 442100
Lawrence, KS 66044-2100

Address Service Requested

PSRST-STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
KANSAS CITY, MO
PERMIT NO. 5264

GAMMA STAYS SOCIAL

The Alumni Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board have an agreement with Chandra Spangler of Bright Meadows Marketing to help manage the AGS social media platforms. These include our website, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. The goal of these platforms is to keep alumni informed and engaged. House members use these platforms to promote events and activities and to recruit new members.

Social media is a powerful tool and is constantly changing; maintaining and keeping these platforms up to date and informative has been a challenge. Rather than relying solely on alumni and undergraduates making changes, Chandra can ensure that AGS has a professional media strategy. Input will still need to come from alumni and house members, and a form has been developed to make suggestions.

The form is available by scanning the QR code or visiting **forms.office.com/r/XetstNQKmU**.

Chandra will chair a team of alumni and undergraduates to review all suggestions and create content that aligns with Alpha Gamma Sigma's identity and image.



Chandra Spangler of
Bright Meadows Marketing

BRIGHT MEADOWS MARKETING