



beta button

Beta Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity at MIT • Winter 2018–2019

Upcoming Events

ALUMNI WEEKEND

April 26–28, 2019

OPEN HOUSE

June 7, 2019

Past Events



Freshmen and Board Dinner



Graduation 2018

THETA CHI
FRATERNITY

Reunion Open House Held at 528 Beacon

A very good time was had at 528 Beacon during MIT's Commencement/Reunion weekend, once again. The annual June receptions are a great time to connect with alumni that return for Reunions, as well as to honor graduating seniors and welcome their parents. The event held this year, on Friday, June 8, 2018, included brothers and family members from seven decades!



Alumni from spanning seven decades at Theta Chi.

Normally, the undergrads are the organizers of all social events at 528, this time the Theta Chi Alumni Corporation

(OxBetaCorp) officers took care of all the arrangements and invitations, including
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Brothers Assist Greater Boston Area

In April this year, house brothers participated in Boston's annual "Alley Rally" community service event. Each year, the neighborhood association of the Back Bay hosts a street-sweeping day to clean up the neglected parts of Back Bay. For the event, residents of Boston team up to move through the various back alleys within the neighborhood to pick up trash and clean up debris. The event tends to draw a large number of MIT fraternity members, and Theta Chi made a significant showing of support with multiple brothers trekking out to Boston Commons at 9:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning.

little coffee after the event's opening remarks before walking all the way back home to begin with sweeping their own beloved back alley behind 528 Beacon. Over the next few hours, brothers removed dirt, sand, trash, and broken glass that had likely thrived in the alley since prehistoric times. They met and worked alongside a number of nearby residents, helping those neighbors gain a greater appreciation for the house than the image of weekly parties and the remnants of such. The actives' continuing community service chairs, Alex Evenchik and Eesam Hourani, hope to encourage house participation in the event next year as well.

The brothers gathered their tools and a



Images taken during 2018's Alley Rally, held by the Back Bay neighborhood association.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Are you interested in getting involved as an alumni brother of the Beta Chapter?

We have a number of potential ways you could contribute, regardless of your geographical location:

- Regional meet-up coordinator
- Social media coordinator
- Fundraising committee
- Direct advisor/mentor to undergraduates
- Corporation board member
- Beta Chapter Historian

Have any other ideas or particular interests?
Let us know!

thetachi@mit.edu

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

ANDREW KOMO

"I am from Maryland, so I am not looking forward to a New England Winter!"

ARMAN DAVE

Arman was ranked #1 in Texas for tennis and will be playing on the varsity team at MIT.

ERIK THOMPSON

Erik is a cadet in MIT's Army ROTC. "I am excited to become a part of Theta Chi!"

CONRAD OAKES

A pre-med student from Pasadena, California, Conrad also plays water polo.

ROBERTO SARABIA

Roberto will study mechanical engineering and focus on business management.

JULIAN HAMELBERG

Julian is involved with gymnastics, rock climbing, and the MIT a capella group.

Brothers of the Beta Chapter: It's Time To Pay It Forward!

We need your help!

This past semester, MIT and all the Fraternities, Sororities, and Independent Living Groups (FSILGs) cooperated to fund a professional facilities assessment in order to get a comprehensive picture of over three dozen FSILG residences. The building at 528 Beacon St. did not escape their attention. There are a number of issues within the structure—including plumbing and updated safety code requirements—that should be addressed, along with fixing the front and rear doors, repairing the front walkway, repointing exterior brickwork, and a series of other important projects. Our chapter corporation is still working out the details on this, but we already know it will cost the house over \$200K.

Yes, we did do a major renovation recently. Beginning about 10 years ago, we put in about \$800K to fix a lot of things around the house, some of which was cosmetic, but a majority was primarily structural. Of course, our house is over 125 years old, and 25–30 energetic college guys have lived in it for 95 of those years. It is no surprise that we didn't get all of it with our first renovation, even though that fixed the "big stuff." The inspectors looked a little more closely than we did on the first try; there has since been another 10 years of wear-and-tear, and some building codes have changed. The house still looks great from the recent work we did, but we need to get to a couple more layers below the paint and plaster.

Fraternity (and now sorority) life is still a very important part of the MIT experi-

ence. At this point, 55% of the male population resides in a fraternity house—well up from the 30% that was typical when many of our brothers were students. Today men are now just over 50% of the institute's undergraduate population, instead of over 90%, yet fraternities are still the preferred residential choice for many. Beta Chapter still houses more than 20 students—roughly what it has always been—and remains a great place to live. MIT is still very supportive of the fraternity system.

We want to address all our facilities issues within the next five years, so we are looking for at least \$50K in each of the next four years. A few brothers have come forward to provide matching gifts, and more are welcome to do this! Our goal of getting the list of necessary projects completed is achievable, thanks to this generosity. But since there are only about 600 living Beta Chapter brothers and alumni, we are all going to need to kick in to make this happen.

Fraternally,

David Baumgartner '08

Alumni Corp. President

Axel Martinez '15, Alumni Corp. VP

and Alumni House Manager

Ken Schumacher '12

Alumni Corp. Secretary

David Campanella '76, Alumni Corp.

Communications Chair

Jason Ku '09, Alumni Corp. Treasurer

Bob Ferrara '67, Alumni Corp. Director

Jim Poitras '63, Alumni Corp. Director

Ryan Andrews '10, Alumni Corp. Director

Interested in donating?

There are three ways that you can give to the Beta Chapter of Theta Chi. See the enclosed giving form included with this newsletter. You can also give online at <http://ox.mit.edu/alumni/#giving>.

Questions? Ask us at thetachi@mit.edu.

Summer Boasts Successful Work Week

This year, the actives made some major improvements to the house over August's work week. The house inverted the work week fine system to an earned-back deposit in order to garner the highest participation for a fall work week in years. From indoor touch-ups to outdoor renovations, the brothers ensured that the house looks well-loved. Additionally, brothers responded to a spring facilities assessment to fix long-term safety concerns in coordination with the alumni corporation.

Out back, brothers painted parking lines with durable outdoor paint and patched holes in the asphalt with a fill and a tamper. The brothers even extended a helping hand to the rest of the back-alley's users, filling holes and cracks behind their neighbors as well. Out front, brothers undertook a major project to replace the five-year-old OX rocks. After spending a few hours every other weekend putting rocks back in their place, the actives decided to make the front space more usable. They carted the old red and white rocks out on rolling chairs,

leveled the ground with buckets of sand, and finally laid fresh turf to make a lawn. Already, the lawn has seen a great deal of use—the rush griller proved especially successful, with brothers lounging on the turf and playing lawn games with the freshmen.

Inside, the brothers patched and repainted numerous holes and cracks throughout the house, repainted the front entrance—in addition to the bannister up to the third floor—and refinished the old piano that they put back together during winter work week last year. In the library, they touched up a DJ table that had been built as a pledge project the previous year, and completely

renovated the sound system for the second floor. A couple of brothers teamed up with a music shop near the Berklee College of Music to correct parts of the old system, and then they then rewired the whole system with professional advice.

The actives' work week managers, Bobby Upton, Alex Evenchik, and Eric Koch, are looking forward to tackling even more improvements this winter.



During a work week in August, brothers added new grass to the front of the house (above), and touched up an old DJ table (left).

Ladies' Head Gets A Facelift

At the corporation meetings this past year, month after month we would check the status of the renovation of the house's first floor bathroom—known to all as the "Ladies' Head." This is the bathroom smaller than a closet; this is the bathroom that hadn't changed in over fifty years, except for an occasional new coat of paint. It seemed to take forever getting permits, coordinating having someone available to let the various tradesmen into the house, and waiting for inspections.

As the project progressed, we took a few photos along the way. I didn't remember any photos being taken before we started,

but along with some of the boiler room photos there was one of the back corner. Ick—wonder who picked that yellow color!

But that's part of the charm of the house: each year there are new guys and new choices. This was one project we needed a contractor for, and we found a good one. Next time you're in town drop by the house and check her out.

Upcoming events include Alumni Weekend (April 26–28, 2019) and Open House (June 7, 2019), or there's always any other time you're on Beacon Street. Maybe the roof deck will be open by then!



Alumni from spanning seven decades attend the open house at Theta Chi.

Reunion Open House

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heading down the block to Mass. Ave. to buy provisions. By afternoon, the senior alums, along with parents and the seniors, enjoyed a relaxing break after a long morning's commencement ceremony.

Our open houses are now a June commencement and graduation weekend fixture, so plan on visiting 528 Beacon. You will see a lot that is familiar, and have the opportunity to meet some new brothers and friends!



John Helferich '79: A Brother to Remember

John Helferich '79 was simply an exceptional person. He was a great family man, wonderful teacher and mentor, a thoughtful, generous, and true friend to all who knew him. He passed away suddenly while on a business trip to Washington, DC, last April. It was a shock. Though his life ended too soon, John had a remarkable and successful life, and found ways to contribute to every community he was a member of, including Theta Chi, where he served most recently as vice president of the Beta Chapter Corporation, known more familiarly as OxBetaCorp.

He had a hugely successful career at Mars (the candy company), rising to become vice president of research. His interests there led him to become an adjunct professor of business at Northeastern in Boston. His occasional trips back to the Hub allowed him to reconnect with MIT and Theta Chi. Along the way, he decided he wanted to go back to the institute and get a PhD! With a secure financial future and their two sons finishing college, he and his wife, Lynn, picked up and moved to Rockport, north of Boston, and created a new life. Theta Chi was a beneficiary, as he quickly became an important figure in guiding all of our major activities of Beta Chapter's Alumni Corporation.

As a seasoned and skillful businessman, John became a beloved and trusted men-



Brother John Helferich '79

tor of many students in the MIT Systems Design & Management Program. As the SDM program's Academic Director and (Theta Chi) Bryan Moser '87 can attest that the students and faculty there just loved him. So when the new semester came, they planned a lovely tribute to John on September 12 in Andover, Massachusetts, at the Oak & Iron Brewing Co., a lively pub that John opened with a friend just over year ago. Those from MIT even chartered a bus from the institute for his many friends. Five of us local Theta Chis—Charlie Albright '80, Ken Schumacher '12, Dave Kress '67, Dave Campanella '76,

and Bob Ferrara '67—were able to join the tribute. Many people, including John's Theta Chi roommate, Charlie Albright, spoke movingly of what John meant in their lives. Toward the end, we also presented his wife Lynn a framed poster signed by a wide swath of Oxen.

Another impressive group assembled the Oak & Iron Brewery a few weeks later, on September 30, this time having come from all over the country. There were 18 of them in total—every one of them a Theta Chi brother from John's time, '79 to '82. Dave Summa '81 contributed the great picture below of the assembled band of brothers. Thanks, Dave!

Both gatherings were a testament to the wonderful human being that John was, and what an amazing impact he had on those around him. John loved his family, friends, and MIT. In a letter to the MIT community, MIT President Rafael Reif put it this way:

"John's story is quintessentially MIT: He loved to teach and he loved to learn. A lucid thinker and an engineer's engineer, he devoted his career to the mind-and-hand advancement of industrial food production, and in his retirement, he joyfully took up a new kind of hands-on learning: With a friend, he opened a brewery. On his second excursion at MIT, John also invested himself in the life of the campus, serving as vice president of the alumni corporation of his old fraternity, Theta Chi, and becoming a champion of and donor to MIT's new maker program, Project Manus". He truly is a brother to remember.



The 18 brothers who attended the September event. Back Row: Art Shick, Ralph Hulseman '80, Gary Smith '80, Al Ringen '82, Charlie Albright '80, Jeff Yorz '79, Middle Row: Mark Lehrer '80, Jim Flatt '81, Carey Rappaport '80, Dave Summa '81, Sandy Wilgus '80, Greg Wilson '79, Front Row: Chip Hance '81, Dave Ryter '80, Art Neergaard '82 (behind), Ed Heinle '82, Hank Rappoport '79, Rick Bryant '79.

deceased

King Cayce '44

Alfred H. Heckel Jr. '44

Richard L. Ballman '46
August 11, 2018

Alfred F. Kenrick '49

Edgar L. Vaughn Jr. '57

Arthur J. Nintzel '59
June 7, 2018

John D. Helferich '79
April 27, 2018