



# beta button

Beta Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity at MIT • Fall 2022



## WANTED:

### A Few Good Men

Just like the Marines, a few good men are always welcome to join Beta Chapter's alumni corporation. The obligation is not overwhelming; the monthly meetings are the biggest time commitment. The corporation has all the traditional and fiduciary responsibilities of a non-profit organization. In our case, it means keeping up a magnificent Back Bay mansion, communicating regularly with the membership, holding special events, and engaging with key partners like MIT and municipal officials. The rewards are many. You can help the chapter thrive through yet another century. The undergrads are excellent partners, and the top undergraduate officers are also members and active participants of the board. While all members formerly were of necessity residents of the Boston area, with the advent of Zoom there are additional opportunities. One special advantage for the locals, however, is that we typically have dinner together at a local tavern just before the monthly meetings at 528 Beacon Street.

The hope is always to have many different generations of Theta Chis represented. Two very senior members, **Jim Poitras '63** and **Chet Riley '62**, are now rolling off the corporation after having made enormous contributions in recent decades. Any Beta Chapter alumnus can join the corporation by signing a letter of intent and attending regularly. If you'd be interested in exploring this, please get in touch with Alumni Chapter President **Ken Schumacher '12** at [drkenneth@gmail.com](mailto:drkenneth@gmail.com) or contact any of the board members listed below.

**Ken Schumacher '12**  
Alumni Corp. President

**Ryan Andrews '10**  
Chapter Advisory  
Board Chair

**David Campanella '76**  
Alumni Corp. Vice-President

**Ade Esho '12**  
Alumni Corp. member

**Bob Ferrara '67**  
Alumni Corp. Treasurer

**Waciuma Maina '10**  
Alumni Corp. member

**Charlie Albright '80**  
Alumni Corp. Secretary

**Jim Poitras '63**  
Alumni Corp. member

**David Baumgartner '08**  
Alumni Corp. House Mgr.

**Chet Riley '62**  
Alumni Corp. member

**Jason Ku '09**  
Alumni Corp.  
Assistant Treasurer

**Ross Runnion '04**  
Alumni Corp. member

**Andre Hamelberg '24**  
Chapter President

**Mario Scott '11**  
Alumni Corp. member

## Theta Chi celebrates 100 years at 528 Beacon Street

During the weekend of September 30 to October 2, approximately 95 alumni and guests were able to celebrate the momentous occasion of Theta Chi living at 528 Beacon Street for over 100 years.

Between 1919 and 1922, Theta Chi resided at 161 Bay State Road. According to a newsletter circulated to all alumni at the time, this house was "one of the poorest at Tech considering location, size, and appointments." Therefore, in 1922, the members of the Theta Chi Trust (the predecessor of the current Beta Chapter Corporation) faced the choice of renting a new building, building a new house, or purchasing an existing house. As we all know, they elected to buy 528 Beacon Street. The purchase price was \$40,000, which was considered "reasonable given that [the] house alone cost over \$60,000 to build." For reference, in 2022 dollars, the chapter house would have cost just over \$700,000.

The weekend began with an informal reception, with many alumni from the 1960s to 2020s in attendance. The undergraduates were eager to show visiting alumni all the renovations that have been completed over the last 10 years, including a totally rebuilt roof deck and brand-new third-floor bathrooms and showers. On Saturday, a small group of dedicated alumni toured the MIT campus. One of the newest additions to MIT is the nanotechnology laboratories.



Photo courtesy of Ben Hill, Chief Communications Officer of Theta Chi International Headquarters.

Corporation President Kenneth Schumacher '12 (left) and Chapter Advisor Ryan Andrews '10 (center left) receive a formal commendation from the Theta Chi Grand Chapter and a brick from the site of Theta Chi's founding at Old South Barracks of Norwich University. Presenting these gifts are International Chaplain James Black (center right) and International Secretary Al Copeland (right).

Outside of the lab space are large mosaics of the MIT Great Dome and the MIT seal. At first glance, these seem purely decorative, but at a closer glance, you will find the names of over 320,000 MIT faculty, staff, students, and alumni who were at MIT from 1861 to November 2020! To find your own name, you can go to [onemit.mit.edu](http://onemit.mit.edu). After the MIT tour, the festivities continued with lunch at a local Mexican restaurant.

The highlight of the weekend was the cocktail hour and dinner at the MIT Lobdell Dining Hall. Beta Chapter alumni and guests were joined

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## "Raise the Roof" Campaign Ends



Sunset on "Raise the Roof." The five-year Raise the Roof campaign will be closing on a high note at the end of 2022. Every key safety and maintenance issue noted in a 2018 MIT-sponsored physical plant study of 528 Beacon Street has been addressed, along with several other improvements suggested by the undergraduates. We all owe thanks to the more than 150 brothers and friends who donated, the thoughtful oversight of Alumni House Manager **David Baumgartner '08**, undergraduate flexibility, and some good work week activity by the undergraduate brothers. We were also very fortunate in having

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# Paul Tompkins Fundraiser announcement

Some sad news to report: on Friday, February 4, 2022, **Paul Tompkins '92** died from injuries sustained during a scuba diving accident in British Columbia. On February 6, he would have turned 52 years old. Paul graduated from MIT with a degree in Course 16, and later earned a master's degree from Stanford University in 1997. Never quite done with his academic pursuits, he earned a second master's degree, followed by a Ph.D. in 2005 from Carnegie-Mellon University in Robotics. Paul's love of space exploration led to a stellar career which included employment at Hughes Space and Communications from 1992 to 1998, Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies (NASA AMES) from 2005 to 2010, SpaceX from 2010 to 2019, and Blue Origin from 2020 to 2022. Paul achieved academic and professional excellence and was consistently recognized and awarded for his intellectual contributions and innovative problem-solving skills. Paul also enjoyed the outdoors and exploring. He was an avid mountain climber. His feats include summiting Mt. Rainier, Denali (formerly known as Mount McKinley), Mt. Robson, Volcan Cotopaxi (Ecuador), and Cholatse (Nepal). He also earned

a private pilot's license in 2018, and after moving to Seattle in 2020, he took up scuba diving.

Paul leaves behind a legacy of a life well lived with passion, humor, and grace. Paul was a happy man and he loved his life. Countless friends and colleagues have expressed their joy in having known him. He will be greatly missed. During the commencement weekend this year (which would have been Paul's 30th graduation reunion weekend), his pledge brothers gathered to celebrate Paul's life and set up several donations in his memory. Collectively, \$73,000 from 73 donors has been raised so far for the World Wildlife Fund in Paul's honor. Theta Chi alumni have also initiated conversations with MIT to raise over \$100,000 for the Department



of Aeronautics and Astronautics in support of their Small Satellite (SmallSat) Center, which aims to educate future aerospace engineers on the design and implementation of small satellites in support of our space systems. The hope is that the \$100,000 (or

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## 100 years at 528 Beacon Street

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by special guests from the MIT Division of Student Life and several representatives from the International Headquarters and Grand Chapter of MIT. Toward the end of the dinner, the Grand Chapter presented Beta Chapter with a formal commendation of 100 years of residence at 528 Beacon Street. They also gifted the chapter an original brick from the Old South Barracks of Norwich University, where Theta Chi was founded.

On Sunday, **Ryan Andrews '10** and **Ricky Ramirez '09** finally ended their 2008–2009 midnight snack war, with both sides acknowledging that Ricky cooks higher quality food, but Ryan cooks a larger quantity of food. It

was left undecided as to which was ultimately better for the brotherhood. With these wounds finally healed, they combined forces to cook a copious amount of high-quality brunch food, which was enjoyed by all.

Overall, the weekend was a great success, and we encourage all alumni to consider returning to the chapter house soon! While the final date has yet to be set, alumni weekend 2023 is tentatively scheduled for the last weekend in April; a formal announcement will come soon.

*Fraternally,*  
**Ryan M. Andrews '10**



Robert Newhouse, EA'11 (Clemson), Mario Scott '11, Ricky Ramirez '09, Chapter Advisory Board Chair Ryan Andrews '10, Ade Esho '12, Alumni Corp. President Ken Schumacher '12, Alumni Corp. Vice President David Campanella '76, Alumni Corp. House Manager David Baumgarden '08.



Chapter Advisory Board Chair Ryan Andrews '10 (center), Alumni Corp. House Manager David Baumgarden '08, (right).



Bob Ferrara '67 (left) and Andrew Moran '14 (right) chat with FSILG Associate Dean of FSILGs Liz Jason (center left) and Director of FSILG Alumni Programs Pamela Gannon (center right) at the cocktail hour prior to the 100th celebration dinner. Photo courtesy of Ben Hill, Chief Communications Officer of Theta Chi International Headquarters.



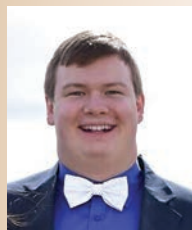


# Pledge Class of 2026



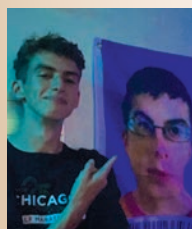
## Garrett Heller

Hi, I'm Garrett. I'm planning to major in physics (course 8). Outside of classes, I'm on the frisbee team and I'm active in chess club and the campus Hillel as well as Theta Chi. I enjoy hanging out in the New Vassar lounges, going into Boston, or watching sports in my free time.



## Ian Morris

**Major:** mechanical engineering; minor: nuclear engineering; **extracurriculars:** varsity football (center, right guard) and Army ROTC. I also build drones.



## Aidan Vaughn

**Major:** AeroAstro and political science; **extracurriculars:** Air Force ROTC; **hobbies:** flexing on everyone that I am Irish and always mentioning how great Chicago is.



## Richard Guo

I am majoring in course 15 as I attempt to become a future finance bro. I am also on the varsity dive team.



## Isaac Taylor

**Major:** 6-3, **extracurriculars:** MIT festival jazz ensemble, National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)



## Kaden Silva

I am studying computer science, economics, and data science with a concentration in music, and I am a social captain on the men's ultimate (frisbee) team.



## Harrison Coleman

**Major:** 6-14 BSU (course 6, computer science and course 14, economics); **extracurriculars:** National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), The Standard.



## Yash Agarwal

Hi, I am Yash and I use he/him pronouns. I am majoring in women's and gender studies. **Fun fact:** I have the smoothest hips east of the Mississippi.



The Beta Chapter has been as strong as ever before. We recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of the 528 Beacon Street house, where many undergraduates got to enjoy the multitude of events at MIT. Additionally, "Theta Chi has been owning Friday nights" parties at the house have been off the charts and extremely successful. We have been able to have mixers and joint-events with other Theta Chi chapters in the Boston-area and with sororities across the different Boston institutions. This has allowed us to build great connections with our neighboring communities and to foster future collaboration.

Additionally, the Beta Chapter had a successful rush of eight new members. After a fun week filled with jet skis, video games, dinners, and parties, eight students found a new home in Theta Chi.

Also, to begin the semester, we had an outstanding work week, where we were able to repair our roof deck by replacing damaged and worn planks and repainting the entire deck. On top of roof repairs, we fixed broken banisters throughout the house, we installed new light fixtures, and we repurposed some common areas around the house. All the hard work has been paying off; brothers have been able to utilize many of the new utilities and spaces around the house.

Lastly, we have had several brotherhood events where brothers came together and did whatever they pleased. To kickoff brotherhood events, we took a trip to Acadia, where brothers got to go on long hikes and swim at the beach. Later in the semester, we organized various events around the house that contributed to making the brothers much closer.

Life at 528 Beacon Street is better than ever, and the brothers are continuing to thrive!

## Campaign Ends

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a good partnership with MIT and finding some capable local contractors during the pandemic. Special thanks go to the four brothers who served as matching donors in various years of this campaign. They are **Jim Poitras '63**, an anonymous brother from the class '83, **Chip Hance '81** (who gave in memory of brother **John Helferich '79**), and **Ricky Ramirez '09**.

Last call: get your name on the plaque! Early in 2023, there will be a new plaque installed on

the first floor of the chapter house, and the names and class years of every "Raise the Roof" campaign donor will be that plaque. If you have not given already and would like to make sure your name is on the plaque, one way to guarantee it is with a donation before December 31st at [ox.mit.edu/alumni/#giving](https://ox.mit.edu/alumni/#giving).

**528 still looks good, 100 years later!** The

brothers who attended the celebration of Beta chapter's 100 years at 528 Beacon Street had a great opportunity to see how the chapter house is holding up after a century of our fraternity living in it. The actives were wonderful hosts and great partners for the 100th celebration planning team led by Chapter Advisor **Ryan Andrews '10**.

**And some work for the future.** Fortunately, 528 Beacon Street has "good bones" like so many of the residences built during the Gilded Age in Boston's Back Bay. However, this does not mean that we can rest on our laurels with respect to upkeep and maintenance! Over the last five to 10 years, MIT has been aggressively renovating its dormitories. The new dorm rooms are much more spacious and modern-looking, and they have amenities closer to those of luxury apartment buildings than the dormitories that most of us remember. To secure our future as a residential fraternity, we need to ensure that our chapter house remains a "steal" in the sense of providing undergraduates with a safe, clean, and

functional home while costing considerably less than the room and board costs that MIT now charges.

To that end, while the regular donor appeals will not be as frequent now that the campaign is ending, please be aware that there are at least two major future projects at 528 Beacon Street. First, we will be coordinating with MIT and the Association of Independent Living Groups (AILG) in a system-wide effort to replace the sprinklers at 528 Beacon Street and all the other Back Bay fraternities. Our sprinklers were installed over 30 years ago, so their replacement is long overdue. Relatedly, the second major project is upgrading all the fire alarm equipment at the chapter house. The timeline for both these projects is still uncertain, but we anticipate that they will begin within the next three years. These projects will be funded by alumni donations to Theta Chi, as well as grants from the MIT Independent Residence Development Fund (IRDF). If you donate to MIT, earmarking a portion for the IRDF is very welcome and will ultimately benefit Theta Chi.



**Alan Richman '57:** Here's a time perspective. I graduated from MIT in 1957 (BA in building engineering and construction), about 65 years go, but i assure you that I can still run up the stairs at 528 Beacon Street!

**Terrance Chinn '65:** God used my freshman year at MIT as a pivotal year in my life! I instead went to medical school and became a psychiatrist! But, i recall my time at Theta Chi with fondness and a bit of envy for all of you who have or will have completed a course of study there. Wishing you my best!

## Remembering Timothy P. Karpetsky '66

**Timothy P. Karpetsky '66:** Timothy died after a long and heroic battle with metastatic cancer and Alzheimer's Disease. Tim achieved a PhD from Johns Hopkins University in 1977 and had a successful career with the Department of Defense. He was the president and CEO of a biotech company and did national and international consulting in biodefense. He is survived by his daughters, who cared for him during his last years of life, which ended in home hospice. Through the last years and up to the last days of life, he was emotionally supported by Theta Chi Brother **George Howison '67**. In keeping with his respect and support of scientific education and research, Tim's body was donated to a local medical college, as he requested early in his disease.

## Return to Normal

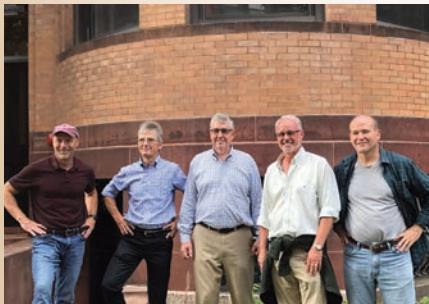
Spring reunion and open house were back to alumni v. actives softball and socializing at the house. The roof deck was repaired by the actives and had the opportunity to enjoy the fresh air and scenic view of the Charles. We hope that when the supply chain issues for trex® decking wain and costs become more reasonable we will be able to replace the original wooden decking. The annual board meeting was well attended both in-person and on

Zoom. President **Ken Schumacher '12** and Secretary **Charlie Albright '80** were elected for a second term.

Graduation weekend and open House have returned after a two-year hiatus. The star of the afternoon was the remodeled third-floor bathroom featured in our previous Beta Button. The reunion classes of '82 and '92 were well-represented. Catching up on the news of old friends was enjoyed by all.



Class of 1982 in the Library: Jim and Linda Murray, Alan and Debbie Ringen, and Patty Heinle



Class of 1982: Al Hollenbeck, Ed Wilcox, Jim Murray, Dave Miller, and Dave Hawes



## Chapter Eternal

We regret to inform you of the deaths of the following brothers:

**Joseph Harian Jr. '49**  
July 17, 2018

**William Brady '57**  
March 24, 2022

**Thomas Hagan '51**  
August 20, 2022

**Theodore Ansbacher '60**  
January 31, 2022

**Eric Thompson '55**  
January 4, 2022

**Phil Smith '65**  
October 14, 2022

**Timothy Karpetsky '66**  
May 9, 2022

## Fundraiser announcement

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more) will enable a namesake opportunity for the center.

If you would like to join Paul's family and friends to make a gift to the SmallSat Center in Paul's honor, please go to [giving.mit.edu](https://giving.mit.edu).

- Click on "Give Now"
- Under "Search for a Fund," enter Small Satellite Center Fund 3965364
- Make a gift
- Select Gift Type (One-time, Recurring, or Multi-Year Pledge)
- Check the box "Make this gift in honor or in memory of someone" and list **Paul David Tompkins**