



Cal Delta Spotlight

USC House Corporation of Phi Delta Theta | Winter 2016-2017 | University of Southern California

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USC House Corporation

A Final Word From Our President



There is a fringe benefit to having a chapter with a high quantity of high-quality young men. As they graduate, they form a great talent pool from which to draw new members of the House

Corporation Board. Our chapter is in good hands as a new generation steps up to lead the House Corporation.

For several years, the board has benefited from new blood in the person of **Ali Shoroghi**, one of the chapter's Refounding Fathers from its re-chartering in 2005. Brenton Caldwell became a member in 2015 after completing his master's degree in engineering management. With the addition in 2016 of **Kevin Fohrer**, **Nick Stubberfield**, and **Austin Vogel**, the veteran members of the board, who will continue their involvement, can't wait to see where the new guard takes us.

As of January of this year, **Brenton Caldwell '14** is the new president of the House Corporation.

He earned his bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering in 2014, graduating with USC's highest honors, including being named Mr. USC, the university's most prestigious award. The following year, Brenton continued to live at the chapter house, serving as resident advisor while earning his master's degree. When the House Corporation board members saw how well he handled that RA job, we were blown away. There's really no other way to say it. It was an easy call to invite Brenton onto the House Corporation, and now we're fired up to have his energy, organizational skills, and judgment at the head of our board.



Brenton Caldwell

I transition out as president with
USC House (Continued on Page 4)

Alumni Spotlight:

Joel Shine '81

Editor's Note: For this edition of the newsletter we're shining the Spotlight on Joel Shine '81. Joel is Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board at Woodside Homes, one of America's top 10 private homebuilders. A third-generation homebuilder, Shine has been active in the real estate industry for more than three decades. His strategic growth plan and "Better by Design" approach that focuses on the customer experience and quality has led to him being named 2012 Developer



of the Year by top industry trade publication Builder and Developer, and being honored with the Phoenix Award by Builder, the leading media brand in residential construction. He has also previously held positions as managing director at a boutique investment firm and President and Chief Financial Officer at American Beauty Homes. A respected leader who is committed to the professional real estate community, Shine is a 20-year member of the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO/WPO), the Urban Land Institute, the Building Industry Association, and the Leading Builders of America. In 2007, he was asked by the National Association of Home Builders to represent homebuilders on the National Mortgage Roundtable. Shine is a sought-after speaker on national housing topics, and frequently asked to speak as a host of industry conferences and other events. His speaking engagements include the University of Southern California, the Urban Land Institute, the Pacific Coast Builders Conference, and the Big Builder Conference. He has also been featured on numerous media outlets, including Builder, Big Builder, the Wall Street Journal, Reuters, CNN, and CNBC.

Back in school, what led you to join the chapter?

I transferred to USC as a junior from UCLA. In the third year, most students have a well-established group of friendships and social networks. I had a little catching up to do, and I knew the Greek system would provide the most efficient way to get integrated quickly. I was right.

What are a few favorite memories from your time as an active?

There are so many great memories. I enjoyed going to football games and ski trips with my fraternity brothers. Our chapter threw some pretty epic social events. More than anything, I appreciated just being in the house. With the inherent academic pressures and commitments, it was nice to be able to decompress with a great bunch of guys.

How do you stay in touch with your Cal Delta brothers today?

It's funny, I actually received these questions

on a flight from Utah to Los Angeles, where I will be celebrating the birthday of fellow fraternity member **Geoff Grant '81**. Since I'm based in Utah, I mostly stay in touch via email. My LA-based friends keep me in the loop on all the others from the fraternity. On bigger occasions and celebrations, I do my best to make the trip to be with everyone in person.

How did you get into the real estate business?

I guess you could say I was born into it. My professional life started in my family home building business. In 2009 Woodside Homes brought me in to help Sheppard Woodside through a complicated restructuring, and then in 2010 become CEO as Woodside emerged from the bankruptcy. It was a compelling challenge for me in my career. Woodside Homes was a private company with a solid foundation and a respected legacy in home building. The real estate crash forced us to revamp our business model. I'm happy to say,

Shine (Continued on Page 4)

CHAPTER NEWS



President's Message

Mark Miller

Greetings brothers! It has been a wonderful fall semester for the men of Phi Delta Theta, California Delta. With the close of 2016, there are a couple things I would like to update you on, including philanthropic efforts, to academic achievement, to electing our next chapter president.

Entering the fall semester, we hoped to recruit a quality pledge class that exhibited the cardinal principles of the fraternity. We are proud to say we were able to do so, and we recently initiated 20 new men into the fraternity. I am personally very impressed by the standards these men hold themselves to, and I look forward to seeing how they grow and develop over the coming years. Our total membership is nearing 130 people, making us one of the largest fraternities on USC's campus.

Moving forward into the spring,

we hope to have an even more successful recruitment period. We are always looking to make improvements to how we run our chapter, and we have a new executive council full of bright and talented young men who are always looking to do just that. New young leaders, such as recruitment chairmen **Grant Price** and **Chris Cochran**, are always trying to make sure that our chapter is performing to the highest standard.

This semester, we hosted a brand new philanthropy event to raise money for the ALS Association. Through hosting a volleyball tournament in our own backyard, we were able to raise a few thousand dollars, all of which went to funding ALS research. Additionally, we plan on holding our hallmark pre-finals philanthropy event, Phi Delt Puppies, in the spring. Our chapter continues to be innovators on the row at USC. We constantly try to come up with safe, new,



The 2016 men of Cal Delta.

and creative outlets for people to have fun, and we see our influence when other fraternities inevitably follow suit.

The level of academic achievement at California Delta has also been on the rise. Our chapter GPA saw a 2 percent increase from the previous semester, and I expect that

Chapter Spotlight:

Jack O'Grady

Editor's Note: Representing the chapter as Spotlight is Sophomore Jack O'Grady. From the hometown of Brookfield, WI, Jack is working toward a B.S. in physics with a minor in technology commercialization at USC. Our former chapter design chair, Jack is an entrepreneur and creator of Packup, a mobile app startup, and his company residence is at Science Inc. in Santa Monica. This past summer, he interned at Dornsife SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fund) and has worked as a research assistant in Professor Takahashi's lab studying nitrogen vacancies in diamond. Outside of school, he enjoys skiing, graphic design, and hiking.



What led you to join the chapter?

During rush, I met people who were studying chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, physics, biomedical engineering, business, accounting, real estate, international relations, and so many other majors. People were from Seattle, the Bay, Southern California, New York, Chicago, Texas, and lots of other places. This house is full of people from a ton of cool, different backgrounds all studying different, interesting things, and I figured they would be the best group to surround myself with. This, combined with Phi Delt's reputation for producing interesting people (from astronauts to founders to artists), and



Getting interviewed by Huckletree (a London-based coworking space) about Packup at Science Inc. in Santa Monica.

an awesome chapter house sealed the deal.

How did you come up with the concept for your start-up company?

I have a brother who's one year older than me, and he came back over his first Thanksgiving break with this idea to represent availability using three different lights in an app. I didn't see the need initially in high school, but after coming to USC it made complete sense. He never got past ideation, so I asked him if I could run with the idea, got his permission, and started building out the concept right away. It's come a long way from that one initial idea, and now has more of a focus on urban discovery and exploration.

What are your goals during your leave from school next spring?

this number will only continue to rise during subsequent semesters. We rank at number seven out of 21 fraternities in terms of GPA, and I would like to see this ranking rise in the coming years.

Another major update that I would like to give is that we have elected our new chapter president! I would like to congratulate Peter Roberson for carrying on the torch and leading our chapter. Peter, a current junior in the chemical engineering program, has been a member of the chapter since the fall of 2014. There is no one who I trust more to lead our chapter to greatness.

We're expecting great things out of 2017. Feel free to reach out to me at any time, and we would be more than happy to have you stop by the chapter

house to visit. Fight on!

Yours in the Bond,



Mark Miller
Chapter President



Alumni gathering at Homecoming 2016.

Have Alumni News?

We want to hear from you! Send your personal updates, accomplishments, adventures, and photos to our Account Manager Kasey Breedlove at kbreedlove@elevateims.com, or simply fill out the tear-away form at the bottom of your cover letter and return it in the mail. We want to share it in the next issue of the *Cal Delta Spotlight!*

With regard to the company, I want to lock in our seed round, achieve initial product-market fit and traction, reach the tip of the iceberg for viral growth, expand the team, produce compelling content, and, most importantly, help connect people and enable them to explore cities like never before. Personally, I'd really like to prove myself in the tech community and build a product people love. Having the opportunity to focus solely on Packup is going to allow me to make much more rapid progress growing the company and expanding operations.

How do you spend your free time (outside of work and school)?

Outside of work and school, I love exploring, traveling, and hanging out with friends. I'm from Wisconsin, so there's so much to explore and try in California,

from camping at Joshua Tree to skiing at Mammoth to surfing at Manhattan Beach. I'm super into skiing, so I'm always looking to go up to Mammoth with some guys from the house during winter weekends. When I'm not going somewhere or trying something new, you can catch me playing piano, doing graphic design, listening to new music, or kicking back with friends.

For more information on Jack's app, visit www.packup.io.



Skiing at Mammoth Mountain last January



Brothers Jack and Bill Gobbell.

Chapter Grand

We are saddened to learn of the passing of the following Cal Delta brother:

Willard "Bill" Harrison Gobbell '55, Cal Delta, passed away May 21, 2016, from Alzheimer's. A resident of Laguna Woods and former first lieutenant in the United States Marines, Bill led a full life: stroke/letter for four years with the USC crew team, 30 years in the auto business with Chevrolet and then Toyota. Bill, who grew up in Encino, leaves his wife, Marilyn, and three children after 61 years of marriage. Bill was the older brother of our spring Alumni Spotlight, Lt. John J. Gobbell '60.

because of that effort, we continue to be in a good place today.

What do you enjoy most about working in the industry?

The people, first and foremost. Even though it may sound corny, I have a great sense of accomplishment knowing I am creating places for people to live. Home building always has been a noble business. These houses not only provide the basic necessities of security and protection, they also serve as the backdrop to family memories and legacies.

How do you handle dramatic changes in the market?

I have been in the business a long time, so it helps me maintain perspective. The principles of people needing a home to fit their lifestyle will never change. In my position, I need to keep my focus on the long game – and avoid getting distracted by the day-to-day news cycle. The environment we operate in is always changing and we need to be ready to respond.

Beyond that, I am never done learning about this industry. You can never rest on your laurels. I read a lot and I surround

myself with people who are smarter than I.

As a speaker, which topics do you favor?

I speak frequently on trends in the housing market and the future of the housing market. Because of my initial role with Woodside Homes, I have some good lessons on how to survive a downturn market.

Outside of work, what do you do for fun?

I live in a great place for outdoor fun. I love traveling, good food and wine, golfing, biking, and hiking. And – as much as possible – I enjoy doing those things with close friends and family. Skiing is a favorite pastime for my family and me. Here in Utah we can get in a good half-day of skiing before lunch with only a few minutes of drive time.

What advice can you give the alumni and active members about building a career?

It is important to be a true expert at something you love. Don't rely on your original foundation of knowledge. Stay involved in the industry. At the very least, you need to be up to speed. At the very best, you should be ahead of the curve. I can't underscore enough the value of networking.



Joel Shine stands before a Woodside constructed home.

Every major career transition I experienced was a result of someone I knew who thought of me for a cool opportunity. Networking is a two-way road, so as much as I can I try to return the favor and lend a hand to others. It's good career karma.

Walk the Line

Steve Detrick '83 shared a copy of an old circa 1990 article that the Los Angeles Times and writer Steve Harvey did about "the line:"

"It's a shame to see yet another landmark falling into disrepair in L.A. We're referring to historic Route 901 on Fraternity Row at USC. It's the four-block-long, blue and white stripe that runs on the



The start of the route at USC.

28th Street sidewalk between Hoover Blvd and Figueroa Street. The path ends at the entrance to the 901 Club, an off-campus bar. Alas, time has taken its toll on the two-decade-old trail, which has

served as an eastward guide. The paint has grown faint at some points. At least, someone could erect a plaque."

Since our chapter house is at the beginning of the row and the 9-0 is at the end, it logically fell to us to paint the line that ran the length of the row to the 9-0. For decades through the 1990s, every pledge class was assigned to repaint the line each semester, although the tradition has fallen by the wayside in the last decade or two.



The watering hole.

USC House

(Continued from Page 1)

gratitude for the experience over the last four years. I got to work with board members who are smarter and wiser than I am and hand off to a new president who will do the job better than I did. Along the way I got to know so many of our chapter's alumni and actives: generous, interesting—and generally hilarious—guys

who constantly remind me why I'm Proud to be a Phi. In the years to come, attending Phi Delt alumni functions will be one of my priorities. There's no better place to connect with such high-quality people. **Fight On and Proud to Be a Phi!**

Bruce Buettell '82

President

USC Phi Delt House Corporation